



Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council Scientific and Statistical Committee Meeting

July 12, 2021

Draft Topics for Joint Council-SSC Meeting

Background

In August 2019, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) and its Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSSC) met jointly for the first time in order to discuss a number of pertinent topics and issues. The meeting also provided an opportunity to foster greater dialogue and build relationships between the Council and SSC given the limited interaction between the two groups. Given the overall success of the first meeting, a second joint meeting was convened in October 2020, and one is planned in 2021. The 2021 joint meeting is scheduled to take place during the August 9 – 12, 2021 Council meeting in Philadelphia, PA which will be conducted using a hybrid format, with some in-person components as well as continued virtual meeting access¹. The August meeting week was chosen in an effort to have the topics and discussion help provide input and direction on potential future Council and SSC priorities. This early feedback would allow for any potential priorities or topics be considered as the Council develops its Implementation Plan for next year and as the SSC considers future agenda topics.

At the July meeting, SSC members will discuss and identify topics or issues to covered in detail during the joint Council-SSC meeting. A short 1-2 page overview of each topic will need to be developed and any relevant background documents provided for the August Council meeting briefing book.

Potential Topics

Below are potential topics, along with a short description, developed by Council staff for consideration by the full SSC.

1. **Economic Work Group** – as part of the RSA re-development case study proposal, the Work Group planned to provide an update on the project to the Council at its August meeting. The update could include progress made to date, a quick report out on the Research Steering Committee workshop #1, the plan for remainder of year, challenges faced so far, and lessons learned. The Work Group is scheduled to give a final report/presentation on the RSA case study to the Council in December.

¹ The joint Council-SSC meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 11th from 3:30 – 5:00 p.m. The complete August Council meeting agenda and meeting details can be found at: <https://www.mafmc.org/briefing/august-2021>

The Work Group may also want to consider identifying future areas of engagement of the group. Greater utilization of SSC resources in order to provide economic advice from the SSC was a significant focus of the previous joint meetings. The Work Group will complete the RSA case study at the end of the year and will demonstrate the potential engagement process and highlight the types of information and advice that can be provided to help the Council in its management process and decisions. Future priorities and management topics to engage the Economic Work Group should be considered and offered for Council consideration in order to continue to advance the significant progress made by the Work Group.

2. **Ecosystem considerations** – in May, the SSC formed an Ecosystem Work Group to begin to identify ways to “operationalize” ecosystem reporting and information in the SSC decision making process and to help provide science advice to the Council regarding ecosystem priorities and planning. The Work Group will hold its first meeting on Wednesday, August 4th to begin developing short and long-term tasks and provide some initial input and ideas for the 2022 State of the Ecosystem (SOE) report.

This topic and discussion could focus on an update from the Ecosystem Work Group that would include the plan, approach, and potential outcomes of their work; highlight any ecosystem specific priorities/issues from the 2021 SOE and risk assessment and/or a broader use of SOE report, EAFM risk assessment, other ecosystem information to help identify potential Council priorities and considerations (management and/or research); potential updates and improvements to the EAFM risk assessment (i.e., revised and/or new risk elements) and potential application and integration to Council strategic planning.

3. **Other Miscellaneous Topics** – below is a list of additional topics for consideration that may/may not be of interest or relevant. Assuming the two topics above (or some version of them) are included and given the time allocated for the joint meeting, there will likely be enough space to cover one more topic – either from the list below or another topic determined by the SSC.
 - a. Science considerations and input related to offshore wind
 - b. Other areas of increased SSC engagement
 - c. Considerations for emerging fisheries
 - d. Science and research needs to provide advice for data limited stocks