

SARC Benchmark Process

TOR 3 Peer Review



**NOAA
FISHERIES**

Northeast
Fisheries
Science Center



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What's Ahead

History and Overview

NRCC (oversight body)

SAW/SARC Process

SAW Chair's Role

Assessment TORs

SAW Working Group

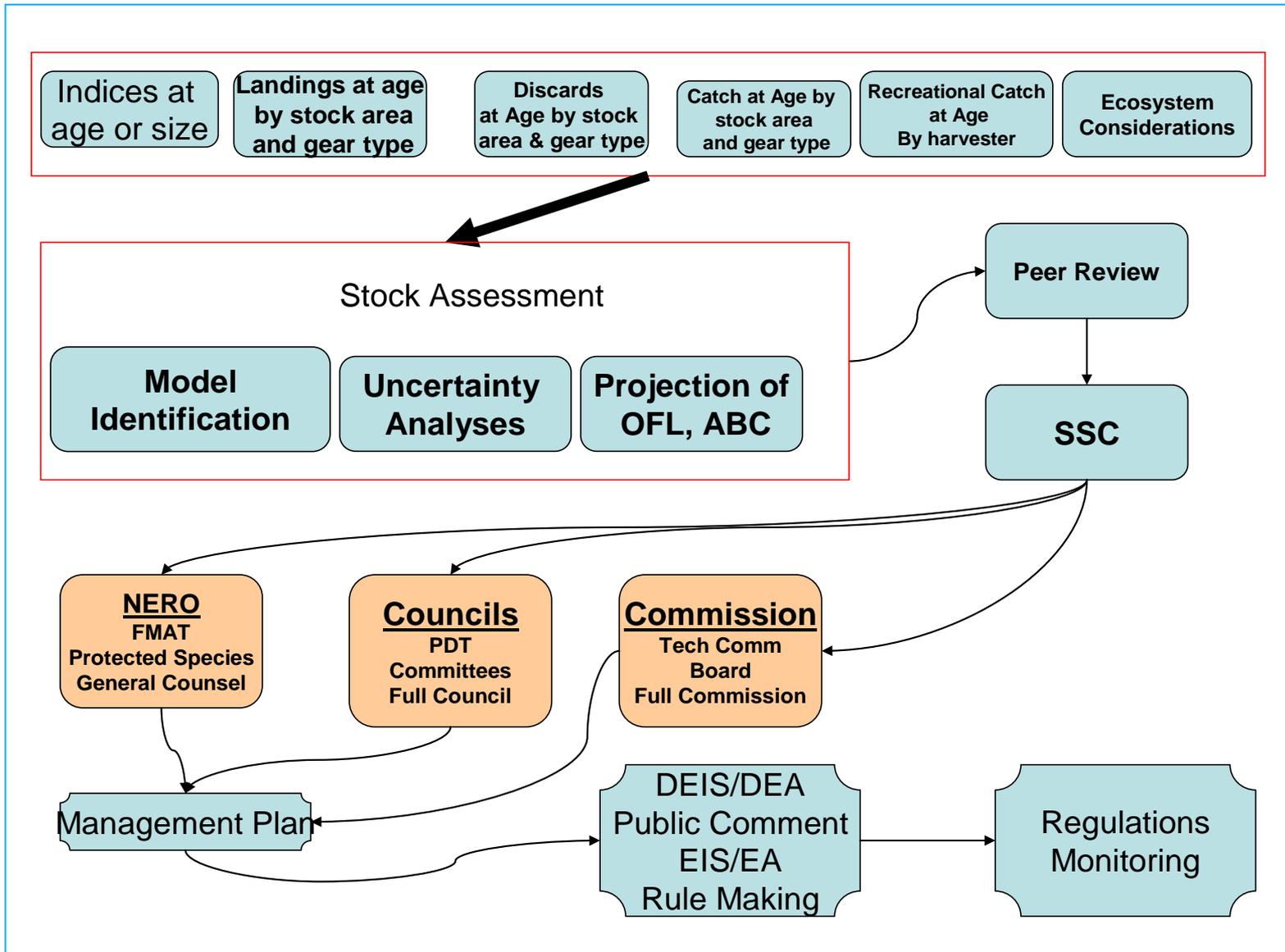
Peer Review Process

Assessment Report Publication

1. History and Overview

- Stock Assessment Workshop/ and Stock Assessment Review Committee (SAW/SARC)
- A process for carrying out and peer reviewing stock assessments
- Initiated in 1985 (~two SARCs per year)
- Developed jointly by NEFSC, GARFO, Councils, ASMFC
- Complies with NS2 guidelines
- Primarily benchmark assessments (but also GARMs, Data Poor, Operational Assessments, Assessment Updates)

Linkages in the Process:



2. NRCC (Northeast Regional Coordinating Council)

Oversight

- Oversees the assessment process (carried out by NEFSC)
- Membership: Directors and Chairs of leading partner organizations
- Meets twice a year + midTerm call

Assessment Scheduling

- Schedules stock assessments and other major reviews, 2 years out
- Provides external feedback on assessment TORs
- Final approval of stock assessment TORs

Weigh in on Policies

- SAW WG participation; communication during peer review

3. SAW/SARC Process

- NRCC oversees the SAW/SARC;
Councils and SSCs provide input to TORs
- NEFSC takes the lead on most assessments,
using four different Working Groups (WG)
- SAW WG Chair is typically from NEFSC;
SARC Chair is from the SSC; CIE reviewers
- Assessment development is followed by independent
peer review
- Accepted results are published and serve as a basis for
fishery management
- SSC will review reports and recommend an ABC
(Acceptable Biological Catch)

4. SAW Chair Role

- Coordinate SAW/SARC process
 - Assessment schedule
 - SAW WGs
 - Review panel
 - Peer review meeting
 - File management
 - Publication
 - Public presentation

5. Assessment TORs

- Specific analytical tasks and scientific questions to address
- Developed from generic TORs, with external input and final NRCC approval
- TORs are very comprehensive (from raw data through models, stock status, and projections)

Example of Assessment TORs (abbreviated)

- 1. Characterize the catch including landings, effort and discards by gear type.**
- 2. Characterize survey data used in the assessment.**
- 3. Characterize oceanograph/ habitat data wrt butterfish distribution/ availability.**
- 4. Evaluate consumptive removals of butterfish by its predators.**
- 5. Use assessment models to estimate F, recruitment, stock biomass.**
- 6. State the stock status definitions. Update or redefine BRPs.**
- 7. Evaluate stock status wrt newly proposed model and BRPs. Evaluate whether stock is rebuilt.**
- 8. Conduct stock projections, statistical distribution of OFL, and candidate ABCs.**
 - a. Annual projections (2 years). Report probabilities wrt BRPs.**
 - b. Describe this stock's vulnerability.**
- 9. Report on the status of the previous and new research recommendations.**

6. SAW Working Group

- Chaired by an NEFSC Task Leader or by an external assessment scientist
- Composition: scientists from NEFSC, state agencies, academia, industry representatives
- Takes the lead on the stock assessment (accomplish the assessment TORs, write the report, present the work to the peer review panel, publication of accepted results, describe results to SSC).

7. Peer Review Process

- Independent SARC peer review panel (SSC chair and CIE)
- 2-3 stock assessments reviewed per SARC (in 1 wk)
- Public process
- Complies with NS2 guidelines
- Results that are accepted by the peer review panel serve as a basis for fishery management

Charge to the SARC Peer Review Panel:

“the panel is to determine and write down whether each stock assessment TOR was or was not completed successfully. To make this determination, panelists should consider whether the work provides a scientifically credible basis for developing fishery management advice. Criteria to consider include: whether the data were adequate and used properly, the analyses and models were carried out correctly, and the conclusions are correct/reasonable.”

Sample timeline for the peer review:

Schedule of Milestones and Deliverables: The contractor shall complete the tasks and deliverables described in this SoW in accordance with the following schedule.

June 19, 2013	Contractor sends reviewer contact information to the COR, who then sends this to the NMFS Project Contact
July 9, 2013	NMFS Project Contact will attempt to provide reviewers the pre-review documents
July 23-26, 2013	Each reviewer participates and conducts an independent peer review during the panel review meeting in Woods Hole, MA
July 26, 2013	SARC Chair and CIE reviewers work at drafting reports during meeting at Woods Hole, MA, USA
August 9, 2013	Reviewers submit draft independent peer review reports to the contractor's technical team for independent review
August 9, 2013	Draft of SARC Summary Report, reviewed by all CIE reviewers, due to the SARC Chair *
August 16, 2013	SARC Chair sends Final SARC Summary Report, approved by CIE reviewers, to NEFSC contact (i.e., SAW Chairman)
August 23, 2013	Contractor submits independent peer review reports to the COR who reviews for compliance with the contract requirements
August 30, 2013	The COR distributes the final reports to the NMFS Project Contact and regional Center Director

8. Assessment Report Publication

- **Assessment Reports**
 - Assessment Summary (relatively short)
 - Assessment Report (long)
- **SARC Review Panel Reports**
 - SARC Summary Report
 - Individual reports from each SARC reviewer
- **Public presentation to Councils**

The broad view:

Strengths

Thorough process

Independent peer review

Documentation

Supports management and regulatory processes for two Councils

Solutions

NRCC oversight

Alternative processes

Standardized reporting

SSC involvement

Challenges

Many stocks to review

Scheduling

Work load and morale

SAW WG participation