

SAW/SARC Review Process

The Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop or “SAW” is a formal scientific peer-review process for evaluating and presenting stock assessment results to managers. The SAW protocol is used to prepare and review assessments for fish and invertebrate stocks in the offshore US waters of the northwest Atlantic. Assessments are prepared by SAW working groups (federally led assessments) or Atlantic States Maine Fisheries Commission technical assessment committees (state led assessments) and peer reviewed by an independent panel of stock assessment experts called the Stock Assessment Review Committee or “SARC”. The SAW/SARC process began in 1985.

The SARC is asked to determine the adequacy of the assessments in providing a scientific basis for management. The SARC panel may accept or reject an assessment. Following the peer review meeting, each SARC panelist provides a written review and the panel provides an overall written summary of the proceedings. SARC panelist reports are typically completed about five weeks after the peer review meeting.

Final SAW documents include a Stock Assessment Report, a Stock Assessment Summary Report and the SARC panelist reports. After the peer review takes place, final SAW assessment reports are published by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center and all final documents are made available online at <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/publications/> and <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsc/saw/>. Final published SAW reports reflect the written decisions and conclusions of the SARC panel regarding each of the assessment Terms of Reference.