

## Status of the Creation of the National Scientific and Statistical Committee

*Draft date: February 06, 2014*

At the Council Coordinating Committee Meeting held at the Kohala Coast, Hawaii on May 1 to 3, 2012, the CCC made the following recommendations:

“Recognizing the importance and benefits in the creation of the National SSC Working Group:

1. The CCC recommends the creation of a National SSC whose membership would be comprised of the eight SSC Chairs (or their designees) and a senior NMFS staff as an ex-officio member. Technical support for this committee will be provided by personnel from the NMFS Office of Science and Technology and Council staff;
2. The CCC recommends the development of Standard Operating Practices and Procedures (SOPPS) which would govern the operations of the National SSC and terms of reference to direct its activities;
3. The National SSC would be tasked with the development of a prospectus for proposed Working Groups and topics for future National SSC Workshops in consultation with the CCC. These proposals would be reviewed and approved by the CCC as part of the specification of Terms of Reference (TOR) and could be sponsored by one of the Councils or brought to NMFS for consideration for sponsorship.

The membership of national WGs approved by the CCC would be populated based on nominations from each Council's SSC (maximum of one SSC member per Council) and one member from NMFS. The Chair of the WG would be appointed by the National SSC (selected from the WG roster). The WG would submit a final report to the CCC which would include recommendations to address the TOR. The final report may be subject to external peer review, the level of which would be determined on a case by case basis based on agreement between the CCC and NMFS. Following peer review of the WG report, the report would be published as a NMFS Technical Memorandum, or other appropriate mechanism, such that it meets the requirements for formal national technical guidance to the Councils.”

The CCC sent a letter to NMFS requesting for the establishment of the National SSC Steering Committee (Appendix 1). In a response received in August 21, 2012, NMFS recommended that the National SSC be established as a subcommittee of the CCC and Terms of Reference for the National SSC be also established (Appendix 2). Council staff then developed a draft Terms of Reference (Appendix 3) which was sent to the CCC for comments during the October 2013 Webinar meeting. The draft TOR was sent to the respective Councils for comments.

During the National SSC Workshop V conference call held on November 13, 2013, the workshop steering committee discussed and provided comments on the draft TOR. The draft needs additional work and more time to vet through each Council's SSC. There were some concerns about the structure as well as the procedures in terms of peer-review. The steering committee considers the first draft as the ground rules rather than the actual "charge" for establishing the National SSC Steering Committee. Richard Seagraves and John Boreman are currently working on the "charge" document which will be sent out to the SSCs for comments. Once the "charge" document and topics for the National SSC Workshop V are approved by the CCC at its Winter Meeting, then the draft TOR will be used for planning the workshop.