



All About the Scientific and Statistical Committees

November 2023

Marine Recreational Education Program



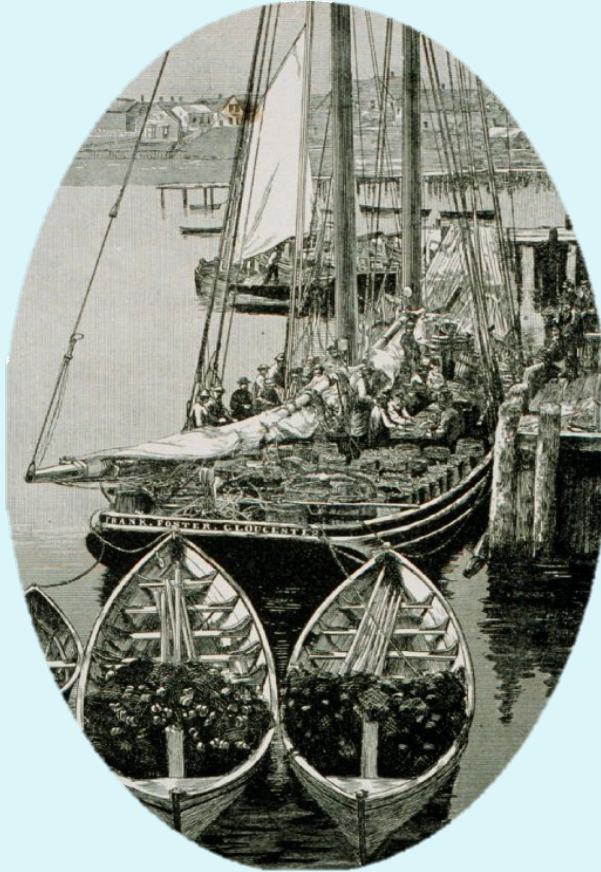
Generally:

Advise the Council on technical and scientific aspects of the fisheries:

- Review Stock Assessments (SEDAR) and Interim Analyses
 - Provide recommendations on stock status (Overfished/Overfishing)
 - Make recommendations for OFL, ABC, preventing overfishing, achieving rebuilding targets
- Provide scientific advice to the Council as requested
- Develop research and monitoring priorities



Gulf Special SSCs

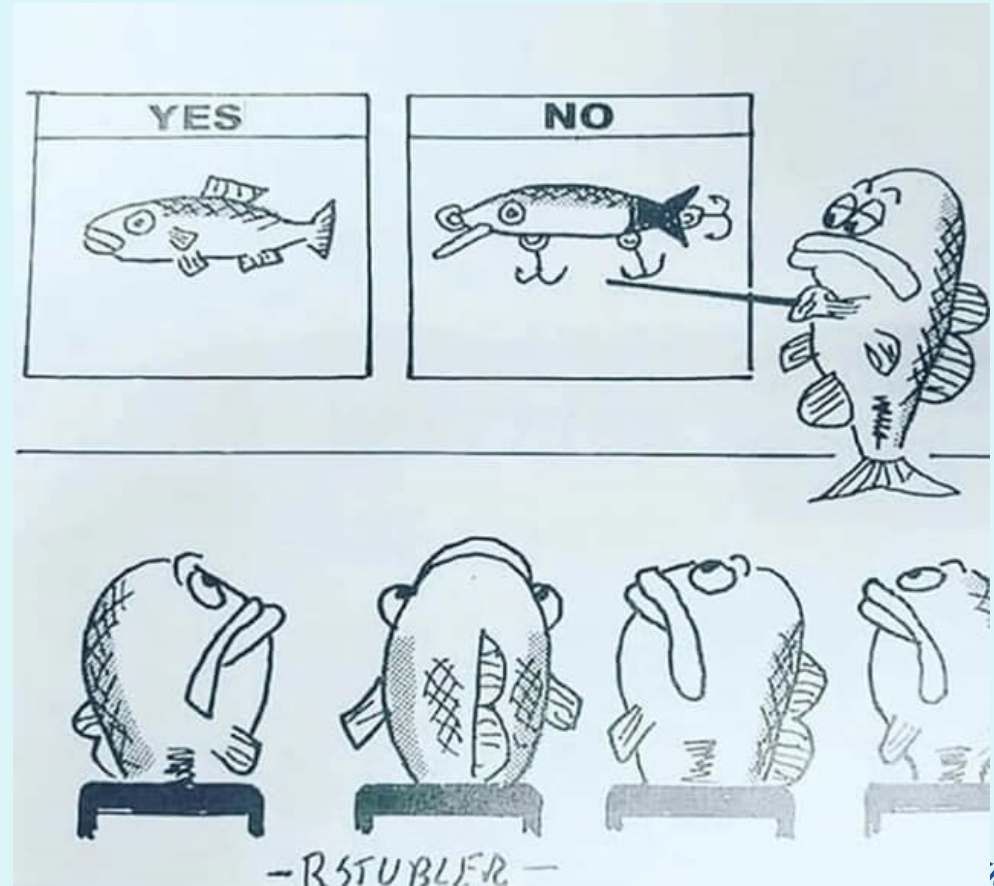


- Coral
- Mackerel*
- Red Drum
- Reef Fish
- Shrimp
- Socioeconomic
- Spiny Lobster*
- Ecosystem

*not currently populated

SSC Composition

- Biologists
- Economists
- Anthropologists
- Social Scientists
- Statisticians
- Other related or applicable fields



Appointment Process

- Council announces request for applications
- Interested applicants apply and provide a statement of financial interest
- Accepted applicants appointed for a 3-year term
- “...shall be Federal employees, State employees, academicians, or independent experts and shall have strong scientific or technical credentials and experience.”



SSC Structure

- Varies by Council, but generally:
 - Chair
 - Vice-Chair
 - Special SSCs
 - Special sub-committees



SSC Decision-making

- Most SSCs make recommendations by consensus
- Gulf SSC votes on all measures
- SSC representative communicates SSC recommendations to Council at next Council meeting



The Science

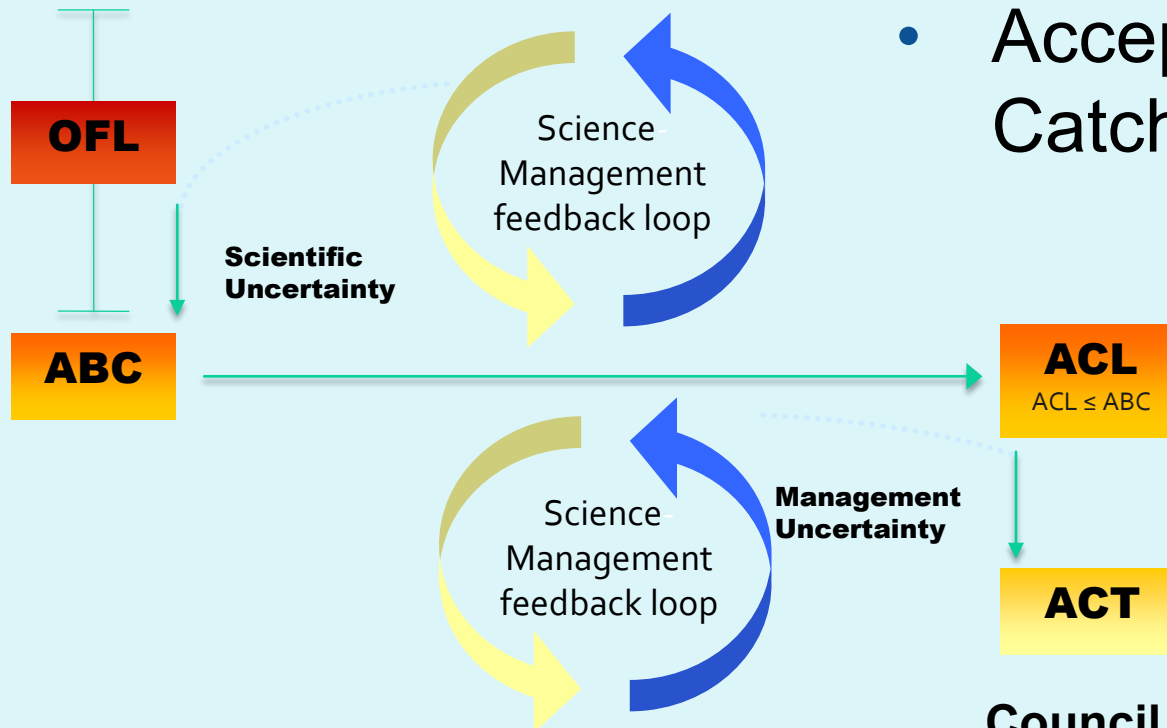
National Standard 2 requires that fishery management measures be based on the “best scientific information available.”



The Magnuson-Stevens Act

Gave the Scientific and Statistical Committee a greater responsibility for estimating:

SSC Role



- Overfishing Limit (OFL)
- Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC)



The Magnuson-Stevens Act

- The SSC sets the OFL and ABC
 - Legally binding decision
- The Council sets the ACL, which cannot exceed the SSC's ABC recommendation
- “..develop ACLs for each of its managed fisheries that may not exceed the fishing level recommendations of its SSC or the peer review process...”



Evaluating Stock Status

- **Overfishing:** a rate or level of fishing mortality that jeopardizes a fishery's capacity to produce maximum sustainable yield on a continuing basis.
- **Overfished:** when a fish population size drops below the biomass of that stock at maximum sustainable yield.
- **Rebuilding:** when a previously overfished stock is increasing in abundance to achieve a stock biomass that will produce maximum sustainable yield.

Examples of SSC Review

Stock Assessment or other Materials:

- Reviews stock assessment from analytical agency
- Uses terms of reference in evaluation, requests model modifications as necessary
- Determines whether model is consistent with BSIA
- If so, determines if model is suitable for providing management advice
- If so, sets parameters for catch projections
- Recommends OFL and ABC for set time period
- Offers research recommendations

Examples of SSC Review

Analyses for Management Action:

- Council requests SSC review of analysis drafted for informing management
 - E.g., bag limits, changes in effort estimation with season changes, changes to spatial closures
- Considers information presented with regard to stated Council goals for management
- Offers feedback to Council about suitability of analysis and how it applies to states goals
- Council considers feedback when determining management changes

Questions?

