

## Summary of Research Track and Operational Assessment Process

January 2020

### **Research Track Assessments:**

- Purpose: Build a robust assessment tool – will not provide management advice.
- Most similar to existing Benchmark assessments
- Process: can vary. Typical – 2-3 workshops – Data, Assessment, Review
- Peer Review: similar to current practice; independent panel utilizing CIE reviewers; usually an in-person workshop
- Participants: Same as the current benchmark steps; suggested participants list produced by Planning Team
- Public Participation: Same as current process. Open, public workshops with opportunity to comment throughout (through SEDAR). Additional opportunity once the product is disseminated to the Cooperator.
- Assessment Development Team: standing panel of participants who participate in both the data and assessment stages of the process to provide consistency in decision making process.
- TORs: Draft ToRs produced by Planning Team; approval of ToRs follows existing Cooperator approval process
- Product: A thoroughly documented, independent peer reviewed assessment report.
- Data Timeliness: Terminal year for RT will be set by Planning Team; the most recent data reasonably available for the DW should be utilized. Data will not be updated as the process proceeds, and the schedule will not be delayed to update a data timeseries.
- Expected Timeline: 12-18 months; this timeline does not include the Operational assessment to provide management advice.
- Frequency: SEDAR-wide: 1-2 Research Tracks underway at any particular time
  - Per individual stocks: variable, based on need. There are no “expiration dates” on the assessment tool built through a RT (or the benchmark)

### ***Specific Research Track Components:***

Planning Team (Organized for each assessment project)

Consists of the SEDAR Coordinator, Lead Analyst, Cooperator staff lead, SSC chair or representative

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### Charge

1. Develop a draft project schedule: identify and provide a timeline for the workshops/webinars, critical deadlines and milestones necessary for the project
  - Data delivery deadlines established during SEDAR/SEFSC Master Schedule Planning calls
  - Final delivery deadlines may be established by the Cooperator/Steering Committee. The planning team is responsible for setting up a schedule that gets the project completed by that time.
  - Approval of Project Schedule follows current practice (lead analytic team and Cooperator)
2. Develop initial TORs: What unique issues does this assessment need to address?
  - May begin with default TORs for all assessments, as done in the previous process. This step is for modifying and adding to the defaults to address the specific challenges of each assessment.
  - The role of Cooperator staff, analytical lead, and SSC participant is to ensure that issues of concern for their group are considered. For example, the SSC may be concerned about environmental impacts on a stock and add a TOR to have them considered.
3. Identify participants necessary to meet the TORs
  - The assigned lead analyst may not be able to address certain specific TORs (e.g. an environmental or survey examination). There may also be a need to bring in specific data providers.

### Assessment Development Team (ADT)

- This group is similar to the existing assessment panel
- This is a subset within the DW process
- High level of commitment, strive for balance of opinions and expertise

### Goals

- Improve consistency in decision making across workshops, particularly DW to AW
- Reduce the expectation that AW is obligated to follow all DW recommendations
- Improve consistency in decision making across regions, eg, addressing uncertainty ranges

Charge: The working group is collectively responsible for preparing the stock assessment.

- Attend Data and assessment workshops
- Participate in consensus decision making
- Contribute analyses as needed (based on expertise, esp if added to the working group to help with a specific analytical area)

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- Contribute to report preparation
- Present to RW as needed

### ADT Suggested Make-up:

- SEFSC: assessment leads; other analysts as needed – who will contribute to the report and analyses
- Cooperator: 1 SSC, 1 other analytical (or SSC)
- Other analytical: 1-2 others, based on plan team recommendations and additional expertise needed
- Technical Chair: Scientist appointed by lead analytic agency; ideally serve as Chair for both Data and Assessment stages

### ADT Impacts on Process:

#### *DW impacts:*

- Same DW process as used now
- DW work groups make recommendations, prepare report sections and documentation
- Decisions made during full plenary (no change), with the ADT members responsible for developing consensus recommendations as needed
- ADT will draft consensus recommendations for inclusion in appropriate DW report sections.

#### *AW impacts:*

- No changes required unless there is a change in chair roles
- AW may also include other participants who contribute, but are not part of the panel: Now this includes other analysts/data providers, fisherman observers

### Technical and Administrative Chairs

- Divide Chair duties into Technical and Administrative
- Technical tasks to be handled by lead analyst (or other designee of the lead assessment agency)
- Administrative tasks to be handled by SEDAR Coordinator

### Research Track FAQs

Is an RT required for existing, peer reviewed benchmark assessments?

No. A RT would only be required for an existing assessment if there is a need for major changes, such as those that would trigger a new benchmark in the current process.

Is an RT required for first time assessments?

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Yes. The RT will be used to build the model tool, similar to the current benchmark. This does not mean RTs will always be limited to single stocks. Multiple data limited stocks could be addressed, as has been done under the current process.

Will RTs only be applied to single assessments, similar to current benchmarks?

No. RT may be applied to a group of stocks to address a methods or data input change shared by all. For example, a RT could be used to develop indices for multiple species from a new survey dataset. A RT could also be used to develop and evaluate a change in model structure or assumptions that could be applied to multiple existing assessments.

Will RTs provide transparency and include opportunities for public involvement?

Yes. RT workshops and webinars will be functionally similar to existing SEDAR workshops.

What role will SSCs play in RTs?

SSCs will play a role in all phases, just as they do now for benchmarks.

How will Stock ID be addressed?

Stock ID will be determined at the start of the RT process, similar to how it is now addressed prior to benchmark DWs. Usually done through webinars. The Steering Committee will provide guidance on the stock ID determination process when there is a stock ID question to resolve.

Will data providers be expected to recompile or reanalyze data after submitted through DW/Pre-AW phase?

No. The intent is for data to be provided in such a way that the analytical team can compile it as necessary for the assessment.

### **Operational Assessment (not associated with a Research Track)**

- Purpose: Provide analyses to support management advice with up-to-date data.
- Most similar to existing Standard and Update assessments (will encompass both)
- Process: Will vary by project, may range from the current standard to update approaches.
  - Cooperators produce Statements of Work (SoW) that are submitted to the SEFSC for their review.
  - SoWs are Cooperator's request with regards to data inputs, assessment modifications, and process (webinars, workshops) for a particular Operational assessment
  - SEFSC informs Cooperators what can be accommodated during the SEDAR Steering Committee discussions regarding Project Scheduling

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- TORs: Draft ToRs produced by Cooperator and lead analytic agency; approval of ToRs follows existing Cooperator approval process.
- Peer Review: Provided by SSC
- Participants: Will vary by project, similar to current standard and update
- Public Participation: Same as current process for standard and update. Open, public workshops with opportunity to comment throughout when workshops are held (through SEDAR). Additional opportunity once the product is disseminated to the Cooperator.
- Product: A brief report similar to current update and standard assessment reports, that provides management quantities and addresses the TORs
- Data Timeliness: The intent is to use the most recent data so the advice is timely
- Expected Timeline: 4-6 months.
- Frequency: Variable:
  - Key Stocks - every 2-5 years
  - After RT: immediate, once updated data are available
  - Other Stocks – as requested

### Operational Assessment FAQs

If an Operational Assessment can range from a current update to standard, who will decide how it is done?

The SEFSC will decide what is necessary and can be accommodated in the overall schedule. The Statement of Work for a given assessment will outline the process, based on recommendations and requests from the Cooperator, including SSC and APs. The SEFSC will review the SoWs, along with research needs identified in the RT (or prior assessments) and consider if any are addressed and can be included. The SEFSC may also review any new research and data sources that may be relevant. All of these factors will need to be considered when outlining the process and how extensive it needs to be. The SEFSC will inform the Cooperator of its determination at the SEDAR Steering Committee meeting.

How will the interval between OAs be determined?

Intervals will vary between stocks, and should be determined through a collaborative effort of the SSC/APs/SEFSC (or other appropriate groups depending on the cooperator). Ideally, future timing will be addressed during the RT, and may be addressed during an OA. Future timing may change as a fishery or stock changes.

How will this expected timeline be achieved, given the data delivery issues we current face?

The expected timeline reflects the analytical time period, not the time necessary in advance for data preparation.