

SEDAR Assessment Categories Discussion Document

Background

During the Winter 2023 Steering Committee meeting the Committee received several presentations from the SEFSC on possible modifications to the Research Track (RT)/Operational Assessment (OA) approach and discussed the SEFSC's Portfolio approach to assessments. During this meeting it was acknowledged that the duration of an assessment process lies on a continuum, and better communication about the requirements of each specific assessment is needed to clearly explain the factors (for example the number of TWGs) that affect project schedules.

While the assessment portfolio contained a wide range of options to provide management advice, only the RTs and OAs are governed by the Committee. Several Cooperators indicated that the addition of another assessment category like the previous benchmarks would be useful for the following reasons:

- This follows the Center's recommendation to have project schedules with fixed dates,
- Would allow for the Cooperators to have a better understanding of when final assessment products would be available for their use,
- Avoids the issue of not knowing what will be required of an OA following a RT, which was a problem identified by the Center as impacting planning and throughput.

The committee did not make any final recommendations at the February meeting but requested the following:

SEDAR Staff will work with SEFSC Staff to refine the suggested categories and provide an updated document for discussion at the next meeting. Inclusion of more details/metrics to understand how changing the approach will help with efficiency was requested.

Summary of Modifications

SEDAR Staff updated the table presented by the SEFSC and modified by the Committee during the February 2023 meeting, to address the Committee's request. The updated version encompasses where the Committee was heading based on their discussions. It contains some of the flexibility the Center was looking for, specifically with regards to the OAs, but also includes the specificity that SEDAR needs to be able to describe the process to Cooperators and stakeholders, and logistically manage the various assessment projects according to Committee guidance.

SEDAR staff suggested the term "Foundation" to replace the previous "Benchmark". This assessment type would provide the foundation of the OAs, and the foundation for management advice. Also, it is believed that the term "Foundation" does not have the immediate connotation of "best" that was associated with "Benchmark". After several discussions with various stakeholders, the term Benchmark is still what most individuals think SEDAR should use and have stated that no matter what new name the Committee might propose, most will continue to refer to this type of assessment process as a Benchmark. There does not seem to be a desire by the cooperators to change the name. Benchmark assessment is what SEDAR was constructed around and it may be wise to return to that terminology to avoid confusion.

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A column for “duration”, was added by SEDAR Staff. The Center has stated that there are tradeoffs between the complexity of assessment and throughput. SEDAR Staff attempted to provide a metric for those tradeoffs by using average assessment duration based on experience with the different assessment types and, in the case of OAs, the number of Topical Working Groups required. It should be noted that to date, we have not had an OA with no TWGs completed in 6 months but improvements to the data provisioning may make that more realistic in the future.

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Table 1: Summary of assessment types, with the inclusion of a proposed category like the previous Benchmark assessment structure.

Assessment Type	Stock Status	Management Advice	Data & Model Requirements	Process Components	Review Body	Duration	Comments
Developmental Process	No	No	Varies	Varies	CIE/SSC Panel	Varies	First time assessment or region-specific, multi-species topic which influences multiple assessments
Foundation Assessment	Yes	Yes	Full and updated data provision. New information to be evaluated.	Data, Assessment, & Review Panels Stock ID if needed	CIE/SSC Panel	16 -18 Months (18-20 if Stock ID needed)	An assessment structured where the data requires a full review or requires extensive revisions to the previous model. Review of full assessment products (model, diagnostics)
Operational Assessment	Yes	Yes	Previously accepted assessment. Full and updated data provision. New information may be evaluated	2-3 TWGs	SSC	9-12 months	Moderate revisions to the previous data or models. TORs should be very specific
	Yes	Yes	Previously accepted assessment. Full and updated data provision. New information may be evaluated	0-1 TWGs	SSC	6-9 months	Minimal revisions to the previous data or model. TORs should be very specific
	Yes	Yes	Previously accepted assessment. Full and updated data provision.	No TWGs	SSC	6 months	No revisions to previous data or model, unless new Best Practices are implemented. TORs should be very specific