

# **SEDAR Procedural Workshop: Caribbean Data Evaluation I**

## **Statement of Work**

### **Overview:**

The Council-Federal cooperative SEDAR process provides stock assessments for fisheries resources of the Southeast Region. Assessment priorities are typically established by management need or perceptions of management or population problems, and often do not consider data availability. As a result, despite several attempts by SEDAR, no acceptable quantitative assessments have been developed for Caribbean stocks because data to support traditional stock assessment methods simply do not exist. Independent peer review panels suggest that a comprehensive review of available data, along with consideration of alternative assessment methods, are required before scarce resources are applied to develop another uninformative assessment. It is clear that alternative methods need to be developed that will allow assessing Caribbean fisheries resources in a manner that will withstand independent peer review. Identifying and evaluating available data sources across all managed species is a strong first step that is consistent with peer review and assessment report recommendations.

SEDAR will convene a workshop including representatives from Federal agencies, territorial governments, non-governmental organizations, Council technical and constituent advisors, and university researchers to catalog and evaluate basic data, address alternative assessment methods that will accommodate the available data, and recommend assessment priorities that are consistent with available data and methods.

### **Objectives of the workshop:**

- Review the available data and develop recommendations regarding their accuracy and reliability
- Review non-traditional assessment methods
- Recommend species or stocks for which informative assessments may be feasible
- Determine which species, if any, can be managed as species complexes

Academic and science agency participants will produce fisheries descriptions by region (Puerto Rico and USVI) it serve as background material, distributed prior to the workshop. Additional pre-workshop effort will include identifying university and territorial agency data sources that may not have been considered in previous assessment efforts and tabulating relevant descriptive characteristics of all datasets.

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Constituent representatives will contribute their first-hand knowledge of fishing methods, data issues, and historical perspectives of the species and fisheries being discussed.

Management agency staff will review and document regulatory histories for species and fisheries, with particular attention paid to reef associated species.

Analysts will present alternative stock assessment methods which may be appropriate for data poor species, and given the information discussed during the workshop recommend which species and methods would be best for use in future SEDAR assessments.

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