

DRAFT SUMMARY REPORT
FROM THE JOINT SSC and SSC SELECTION COMMITTEE MEETING
Charleston, SC
October 26, 2009

The SSC Selection Committee met with the SSC on Thursday, October 29th, 2009 in Charleston, SC to address the following items:

1. SSC Responsibilities and Council Expectations

The joint Committee reviewed the SSC job description and the SAFMC SOPPS addressing SSC operations. Much of the discussion centered around requests put forth to the SSC, including consideration of the process through which it is decided whether an issue is brought to the SSC as a document for review or a presentation, the nature and level of review the SSC is expected to provide to documents, and the role of the SSC in reviewing peer reviewed assessments. SSC members commented that their meeting time is limited and they often feel that the workload for each meeting is excessive, so therefore an efforts should be made to objectively screen the information presented to them to ensure that they are the most appropriate entity to handle the work and that they have both the expertise and information necessary. They also encouraged increasing meeting instructions and suggested developing TORs in the roadmap as a way to focus their deliberations. The committee offered several suggestions for further consideration by the Council:

- Include the SSC Chair in pre-meeting run-throughs, as done now with other committee chairs.
- Recommend developing a coordinating committee to review requests for the SSC and help manage and prioritize the SSC workload. Details for this group and a recommended process are provided as attachment
- Create a Council Liaison to the SSC.
- Develop a process for accepting and vetting submitted comments, especially criticisms of proposed council actions or issues previously reviewed by the SSC, that will ensure the SSC receives all sides of the issues and appropriate documentation to support their deliberations.
- Provide clear instructions to individuals making presentations to the SSC regarding submission of supporting documents, allotted time on the agenda, and the nature of questions appropriate for the SSC.

2. SSC Procedures

The joint committee discussed general SSC procedures, providing an opportunity for direct communication between the two bodies on a number of topics discussed over the last several years.

SSC role in member appointments:

The SSC would like the opportunity to participate in the appointment process, primarily as a source to identify applicants and needed expertise.

Recommend: that the SSC be allowed to submit nominations to the Selection Committee, based on qualifications and perceived expertise needs.

SSC Review of Stock Assessments:

The role of the SSC in reviewing SEDAR assessments and the nature of the SSC review of a SEDAR peer reviewed assessment continues to be a point of concern. Proposed changes in the SEDAR process may help, along with revised National Standards Guidelines that are pending. The joint committee agreed that confusion remains, but recognizes the need to see how ongoing changes perform before the issue can be settled.

SSC Meeting Report:

The committee discussed ongoing struggles to complete a meeting report in time for the Council Committees. It was agreed that moving SSC meetings away from the Council Meeting will help. SSC members requested that written transcripts of their meeting be provided sooner, so that they can be used as a reference for report preparation.

Recommendations:

- Request that the Council provide written minutes from SSC meetings within one week of the conclusion of the meeting.
- Request that time for report preparation be scheduled on future SSC agendas.

Public Comment:

The committee discussed increased public involvement in SSC meetings. Current guidelines on public comment are brief and may not provide adequate instructions to participants. Some members are concerned about an increasing trend by some constituents to lobby the SSC through direct emails.

Recommendations:

- Request that the Council consider revising the SOPPS to provide clearer instructions for public comment, and consider the guidelines of other councils when doing so.
- Request that the Council develop language to add to SSC agendas that clarifies the public comment process.
- Request that the Council develop language for the public comment process that clarifies that individual SSC members will not respond to individual emails addressing Council business.

Attachment 1. SSC Meeting Planning and Agenda Development.

SSC agenda oversight and vetting of requests for SSC actions will be handled by an SSC Organizational Committee. This committee will meet via conference call or webinar prior to SSC meetings to develop an agenda and determine how topics will be considered by the SSC. This committee will be responsible for determining the items to be added to the SSC agenda for each meeting.

1. Membership: SSC Chair, SSC Vice Chair, Council SSC Staff, Council Executive Director, Council Chair, Designated SSC Liaison, Science Center Director or Designee.

2. Charge:

- Agenda oversight.
- Filter issues and requests for SSC Review
- Review requests for SSC agenda entries
- Determine info needed for the SSC (reports, documents etc), how to handle requests (i.e. document review vs. meeting presentation), consider whether alternative viewpoint presentations or replies are necessary.
- Determine whether or not issues are appropriate for SSC review, or would be better dealt with elsewhere, and whether questions posed are beyond the SSC's expertise.

3. Process and timeline

- Meet 8 weeks prior to a scheduled SSC meeting to discuss preliminary topics and means of consideration (e.g., discussion, document review, presentations).
- Meet 4 weeks before meeting to review agenda requests and available documentation, and develop a draft agenda.
- Meet 2 weeks prior to the meeting to finalize the agenda.

Suggested Motions for consideration by the Council:

Move to appoint a Council SSC Liaison

Move to create an SSC Coordination Committee, consisting of the SSC Chair and Vice Chair, Council Chair and SSC Liaison, designated Council staff, and Science Center Council representative, to provide oversight of requests and agenda topics.

Move that the SSC be invited to submit nominations for SSC seats.