



Tab 5a.

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council:

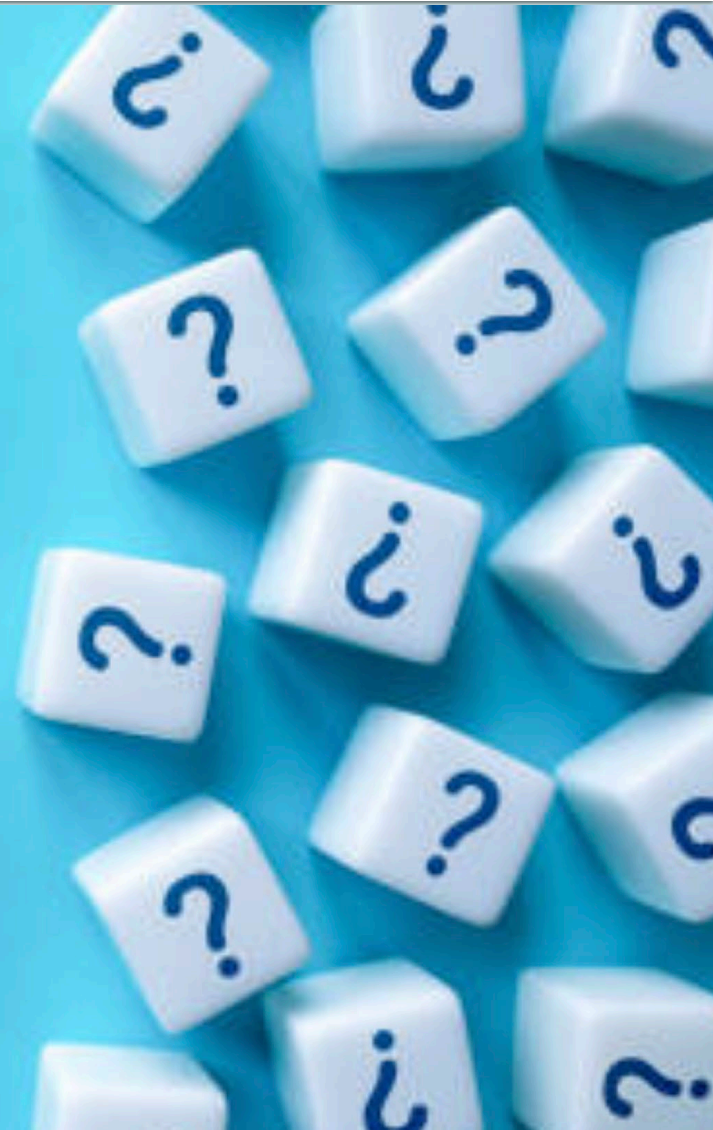
Scientific and Statistical Committee Orientation

July 31, 2024

Welcome Aboard!

As a new SSC member you may have some questions:

- How does the SSC function and what are my responsibilities?
- When will the SSC meet?
- How can I participate?
- How do I book travel and get reimbursed?



What is my role as an SSC member?

You are expected to review materials, attend in-person meetings, and participate in discussions to make recommendations to the Council.

Council members are not necessarily scientists, so they rely on your expertise to provide guidance on the science behind fisheries management.



How does the SSC Function?

The SSC will be chaired by one of its members and Council staff will provide meeting support.

- An agenda and background materials will be provided before the meeting.
- The SSC will select a chair who will run the meeting, review meeting summaries and verbatim minutes
- Often the SSC chair presents meeting outcomes to the Council, but a different SSC representative may do this.

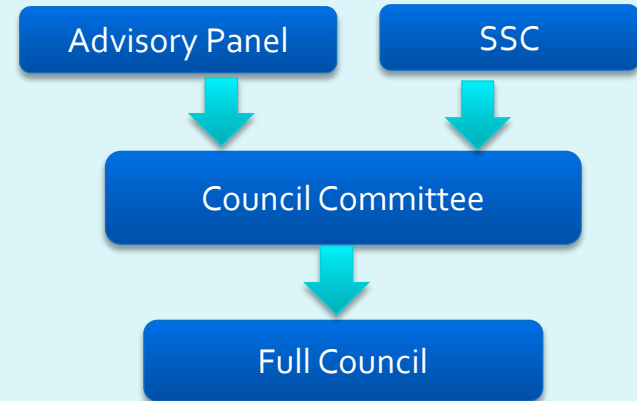
How does the SSC Function?

- The Standing SSC and one or more Special SSCs may meet as a single body (SSC) to deliberate and advise on appropriate stocks or assemblage of stocks
 - Special Mackerel
 - Special Shrimp
 - Populate later: Coral, Red Drum, and Spiny Lobster
- Staff will provide a Scope of Work for each agenda item and help answer questions with the assistance of the Council member representative attending the meeting.

What does the SSC do?

Advises the Council on scientific and technical aspects of Gulf fisheries for example:

- reviewing stock assessments and other analytical products;
- providing catch limit recommendations that prevent overfishing and achieve rebuilding targets;
- reviewing impacts of management measures and sustainability of fishing practices;
- reviewing contemporary and topical research germane to Council actions



What does the SSC do?

- Provide advice as to the effectiveness of the measures in achieving the objectives of the FMP or amendment.
- Advises on the adequacy of scientific information and supporting analyses in the stock assessment.
- The SSC makes recommendations to the Council by passing motions generally following parliamentary procedure (Robert's Rules). <https://gulfcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/Roberts-Rules-of-Order.pdf>
- Recommends whether these analyses are consistent with the best scientific information available. SE Region Framework for Determining that Fishery Conservation and Management Measures are Based on the Best Scientific Information Available is available on the NOAA website here: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/s3/2023-12/BSIA-framework-for-the-Southeast-Region-Final.pdf>

What are the SSC voting best practices?

- When the SSC is acting as the peer review body for a stock assessment or other study, an SSC member(s) should abstain from any motions and voting on the issue of BSIA if they have served as the analytical lead, or principal or co-principal investigator or had any direct participation as a member of the analytical team. During the BSIA deliberations the SSC member(s) is free to participate in the discussion, answer questions, and provide pertinent expertise and feedback to the SSC. If the SSC cannot reach a BSIA recommendation, it will provide rationale for this determination and provide recommendations for next steps to achieve a BSIA recommendation.

What are the SSC voting best practices?

- Once a BSIA recommendation has been reached, the SSC member(s) is at liberty to motion and vote on remaining management advice (e.g., catch limits, appropriateness of allocation calculations, decision tools developed to inform management action)
- Link on Council website: https://gulfcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/GMFMCs-SSC-Voting-Best-Practices-and-Procedures_08_2021.pdf

What happens to SSC recommendations?

A summary report of each meeting will be drafted by staff and presented to the Council Committee by the Chair or other SSC representative.

The Council Committee will then make recommendations to the full Council.

The full Council will decide what action to take after considering Committee recommendations.



When will the SSC meet?

The SSC typically meets 5 times a year.

1. A Council staff member will contact you to schedule a meeting.
2. You will be asked when you will be available to meet, and the meeting will be scheduled at a time that accommodates the most members. At minimum, we need a quorum.
3. You will be given an agenda and necessary background materials in advance.

You will also have opportunities to attend stock assessment meetings



Participation- Logistics

- The Council prioritizes holding in-person SSC meetings with the ability to freely discuss and exchange information
 - A request for virtual participation by an SSC member will require at least **14 days advance notice** to the Council staff lead for the SSC unless the member has an extenuating circumstance, in which case they should notify the Executive Director as soon as possible.
- Typically, 1-2 times per year, the Council may choose to hold completely virtual meetings of the SSC.

Council SOPPs in Section 2.5: https://gulfcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/Gulf-Council-SOPPs_June-2024.pdf



Participation- Logistics

Participation Planning and Logistics for SEDAR meetings:

- An SSC member who has volunteered to serve in person in the Southeast Data Assessment and Review (SEDAR) process should notify the Council staff lead for the SSC at **least 30 days in advance** if they cannot attend unless the member has an extenuating circumstance, in which case they should notify the Executive Director as soon as possible.



How do I book my travel?

Once a meeting date is selected, the Council's Travel Coordinator will send you a meeting notice with instructions on how to make your hotel and transportation arrangements.

- Your Meeting Authorization (MA) will list the allowable reimbursements for your hotel accommodations and food expenses (per diem).
- If staying at the selected hotel, rooms will be billed to our hotel master account; however, should you elect to stay elsewhere you will be responsible for paying for your room upon departure.



How do I book my travel continued?

Once a meeting date is selected, the Council's Travel Coordinator will send you a meeting notice with instructions on how to make your hotel and transportation arrangements.

- Flights should be booked no less than 14 days from the scheduled date of departure as noted in the travel guidelines to avoid excessive airfare which may not be reimbursed
- Book your flights to allow for full participation at the meeting unless you have received approval from staff.
- Flights can be booked through our travel account with AmTrav which are billed directly to us.



How do I get reimbursed for travel?

A travel expense report will be provided with your MA and will need to be filled out and submitted.

- Claims must be submitted within 60 days after the meeting
- Receipts for hotel and airfare are required if you stayed at another hotel or booked your flights directly with the airlines
- Receipts for meals are not required
- If travel deviates from the most direct or cost-effective means of travel, please provide an explanation in the 'remarks' section at the bottom of the form
- Rental cars are not usually approved, but if your circumstance requires one they must be pre-approved by the Travel Coordinator prior to the meeting
- You may submit your claim via email, fax, or mail



How do I get paid a stipend?

- Your stipend will be paid based on attendance and length of meeting (full day and half day)
- You must have a current completed with signature SOFI form and W-9 to participate in your first meeting



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