

US-Canada Pacific Whiting Agreement  
Scientific Review Group

Terms of Reference  
May 22, 2013

The SRG bases its terms of reference on the language of the US-Canada Pacific Whiting Agreement, and on the Pacific Fishery Management Council's Stock Assessment and Review (STAR) terms of reference which have been the basis for Pacific whiting stock assessment review for over ten years.

From the agreement language:

*"A Scientific Review Group (SRG) is hereby established to provide independent peer review of the work of the Joint Technical Committee (JTC). The SRG shall comprise up to six scientific experts, with up to two appointed by each Party and two independent members appointed jointly by the Parties from a list supplied by the Advisory Panel. All SRG members shall be different individuals than those who serve on the JTC. The Advisory Panel may also nominate, for appointment by the Parties, two public advisors to participate in SRG meetings. The public advisors shall have the right to provide their views on all aspects of the work of the SRG, both orally and in writing. The Parties shall jointly bear the travel expenses of the independent members and the public advisors for meetings of the SRG. In addition, SRG members may seek advice from others as they deem appropriate. SRG meetings shall be open to the public. The SRG shall meet annually, and more often as necessary, to:*

- (a) propose its terms of reference for approval by the JMC;*
- (b) review the stock assessment criteria and methods and survey methodologies used by the JTC;*
- (c) provide, by no later than March 1 of each year, unless otherwise directed by the JMC, a written technical review of the stock assessment and its scientific advice on annual potential yield; and*
- (d) perform other duties and functions that may be referred to it by the JMC."*

Pacific Whiting Scientific Review Group

1. The SRG will review the stock assessment criteria and methods and survey methodologies used by the JTC and provide a written technical review of the stock assessment and the JTCs scientific advice on annual potential yield;
2. The SRG will operate with co-chairs, one from the United States and one from Canada, as chosen by the membership of the SRG;
3. The SRG meeting will be chaired by a SRG member. From year to year, the responsibility to chair the meeting will be shifted among SRG members at the discretion of the SRG;
4. In 2012, the SRG will be able to operate with 2 US members and 2 Canadian members. If two independent members are appointed before the SRG meets on Feb 21, 2012, they will be treated as full members of the SRG;
5. SRG meetings will be conducted as public meetings including opportunity for public comment;
6. The SRG at its discretion or as directed by the JMC will occasionally seek advice from external experts to expand its capacity to review survey and assessment methodologies;
7. The SRG will seek consensus in all matters and will document the range of discussion regarding this consensus to the extent feasible. Where full consensus cannot be reached, minority reports will be included to convey alternative viewpoints. If an issue cannot be resolved without a vote, then only full SRG members will have a vote. External experts commissioned by the SRG will be expected to fully participate in review discussions and their advice will be sought as consensus is formed; however external experts will not be voting members of the SRG.
8. All draft stock assessment and survey documents will be provided to the SRG through the JTC;
9. Any alternative modeling approach not generated through the JTC will be provided to the JMC, AP, SRG, and JTC for review and comment prior to any detailed consideration by the JTC and

- SRG. If deemed useful, the modeling approach will be considered in the next cycle.
10. If public comment is directly considered in the review, both source and content of that comment will be documented in the SRG report;
  11. The SRG will discuss the technical merits and deficiencies of the survey methodology, input data and analytical models during the open review panel meeting and work with the JTC to correct any deficiencies;
  12. The SRG report will document relevant meeting discussions;
  13. Requests to the JTC for additional analyses will be provided in writing by the SRG;
  14. The SRG will work with the JTC to achieve a base case model result and to describe the uncertainty around this base case, including uncertainty represented by alternative model scenarios and uncertainty resulting from the statistical variance of the base case itself;
  15. The SRG will seek a consensus position with the JTC on advice on annual potential yield, as projected by the stock assessment and consistent with Article III of the Agreement.;
  16. The SRG will perform other duties assigned to it from the JMC, and provide recommendations to the JMC and JTC regarding issues that will need additional research; and
  17. A complete SRG report will be provided to the JMC by March 1 each year.