

**Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee
Report by the Science Subcommittee
May 15, 2003, San Diego, California**

**Organizational Restructuring and Improvement Initiatives
Request for Progress Reports and Updates**

Members present: Peter Leipzig, Chris Dorsett, Jim Cook, and Kate Wynne

The MAFAC Science Subcommittee met 15 May 2003 to discuss the presentation by Dr. Mike Sissenwine, identify unanswered subcommittee questions, and desires for future information. This report was submitted to the full Committee of MAFAC and unanimously adopted on May 15, 2003.

We thank Mike Sissenwine for presenting details on change in NOAA Fisheries' organizational structure and its effects on the organization's Science Structure. The subcommittee was encouraged by NOAA Fisheries' ' stated "foundation of Stewardship", emphasizing the goals that NMFS Science be Relevant, Responsive, Reliable, and Respected. Unfortunately, due to complexities and time limitations we believe he was unable to 1) deliver his full presentation or 2) address the Science Subcommittee questions posed in the January MAFAC meeting. We regret that time was not allotted for full presentation as some of our questions may have been addressed.

Consequently the Science Subcommittee has residual unanswered questions that we hope to have addressed. In addition, the full committee raised concerns regarding potential effects of restructuring on the interaction and communication between the Regional Offices and respective Science Centers.

Therefore, we request continuation of the discussion possibly at an extended, crosscutting session during MAFAC's December or spring meeting. Specifically we request updates on the following:

I. Initiatives - Follow Up Questions & Progress Reports:

- A. How will NMFS' research funds and resources be allocated between and within the regions?
- B. Progress on Stock Assessment Improvement Plan, including peer review processes.
- C. Progress on collaborative research efforts.
- D. NOAA Fisheries' efforts to
 - Deal with data gaps in recreational fisheries, including improving sampling strategies
 - Prioritize stocks for assessment and consider using proxies for assessing stock status, including trigger points, Signs of Stress, etc
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II. Update on How the New Organizational Structure is Functioning:

- Evidence of improved internal communication
- Finalized staffing
- Noted problems to date, including responsiveness of NMFS' research to meet regional management needs

