



NOAA FISHERIES

Who's Programs are Reviewed

- Alaska Fisheries Science Center
- Northeast Fisheries Science Center
- Northwest Fisheries Science Center
- Office of Science and Technology
- Pacific Island Fisheries Science Center
- Southeast Fisheries Science
- Southwest Fisheries Science Center

What is Reviewed

- Data collection and management
- Stock assessment programs
- Protected resource science
- Ecosystem, climate, habitat science
- Economics and social science



Program Reviews: Improving Our Science



Sound science is critical for making the right decisions when it comes to managing our nation's fisheries and protected species. To maintain world-class science, NOAA Fisheries continually strives to improve its research and monitoring programs. In 2012 we began a systematic peer review process at all six of our regional science centers and our headquarters Office of Science and Technology. Experts from within and outside the agency carefully examine our science programs on a 6-year review cycle to improve integration, find best practices, and share successes and challenges across our science enterprise. This process is part of our broader dialog with fishery management councils, fishing industry, and other stakeholders. Year one is dedicated to strategic planning.

Why Peer Review is Important

Peer reviews are an opportunity for scientific exchange, while maintaining and improving standards, performance, and scientific credibility. They are an important feedback mechanism to provide fresh ideas and contributions toward improving fisheries science programs. The newly established agency-wide peer review process will help NOAA Fisheries more effectively standardize and advance science nationally throughout all our science centers. Results will also provide guidance for future science investments.





Science Program Reviews: a stepwise process

- National Terms of reference for each year's review developed by the NOAA Fisheries Science Board
- Terms of reference tailored to Science Center specific areas
- Expert reviewers proposed and then approved by NOAA Fisheries Assistant Administrator
- Week-long review conducted
- Reviewers provide reports detailing observations and recommendations
- Science Directors respond to reviewer recommendations
- National report developed, providing a synthesis across all reviews
- Follow-up on actions taken to address recommendations



The Review Process

NOAA Fisheries selects the science topic area and defines the scope of the review. Independent experts in the topic area who are unassociated with the science center are selected to participate in the review as members of a peer review panel. Each science center prepares background information and presentations for the week-long review. In addition to presentations, reviewers will have time to discuss the state of the science with management and staff, as well as prepare their individual review report and recommendations. The review panel chair will summarize the meeting proceedings and highlight key recommendations. NOAA Fisheries will consider and respond to recommendations during the following year.

The 6-year Review Cycle

This 6-year cycle will review a new topic each year. The reviews will cover the same topic every six years to ensure progress. This process is the best way to fully evaluate our approaches, find opportunities for improvement, and learn from the successes and challenges found across the nation.

Public Engagement

Review presentations and most of the discussions will be open to the public, and agendas for each NOAA Fisheries science center review will list times for public engagement to allow interested individuals to provide input to the reviewers. We will publish results of each science center's review on NOAA Fisheries science center and national websites, as well as a national synthesis of the reviews.



More Information

NOAA Fisheries has developed a centralized website that provides access to:

- Terms of reference, schedule and location of reviews
- Links to science center program review websites
- Reviewer reports and agency responses to recommendations
- Synthesis of recommendations best addressed nationally

<http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/science-program-review/>