

47th ANNUAL MEETING OF NAFO - SEPTEMBER 2025

Process – The Commission's Request for Scientific Advice

NAFO adopted [FC Doc. 12/26](#) in 2012, which established the process for developing the Commission's annual "Request for Scientific Advice on Management in *year* and Beyond of Certain Stocks In Subareas 2, 3 And 4 and other Matters." The process it set out was not fully implemented for a number of years, during which the request document was often developed and finalized late in the Commission meeting, which limited the opportunity for dialog with the Scientific Council before its adoption.

In 2023, in light of the growing concerns about the SC's workload and recognition of the need to more clearly prioritize NAFO's work in line with the SC's capacity, the Commission agreed to begin the process to develop this document in advance, and ensure that it could be shared with the SC for its feedback earlier in the Commission meeting. For the past two Commission meetings, the initial document was prepared by the NAFO SC Coordinator and made available in advance of the annual meeting. The Steering Committee established in FC Doc. 12/26 – intended to include the SC Coordinator and members of Contracting Party delegations was then tasked with incorporating proposals and edits from CPs and preparing a draft that would be reviewed by the Commission, sent to the SC for its input and suggestions, and finalized by the Commission before the end of the annual meeting.

While this process has allowed additional transparency and a better opportunity for dialogue between the Commission and SC on the plans for the coming year, it could benefit from additional clarity regarding the timing and sequence of these steps.

Proposed process for the 2026 Annual Meeting:

- The Secretariat will circulate an initial draft request, informed by the outcomes of the June 2026 SC meeting, at the beginning of September.
- CPs will have two weeks to submit proposed additions and edits in writing.
- The Secretariat will post a revised draft, incorporating CP's suggestions, and will be posted on the annual meeting SharePoint at least one week before the start of the annual meeting.
- This draft can be further amended in the first few days of the meeting, facilitated by the Steering Committee; any input must be received by the lunch break on Wednesday.
- The Commission will review the draft incorporating all input received from CPs by the established deadline and the resulting draft will be transmitted to the SC for its review and feedback by the end of the day Wednesday.
- The SC feedback will be presented to the Commission by the end of the day Thursday.
- The Commission will consider the SC's feedback, make any needed changes including prioritization of the various requests, and adopt the final request before the end of the annual meeting.