
Council Updates

BSAI CRAB PLAN TEAM

NOVEMBER 6, 2025

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Guidance for CPT/SSC responses & reminders

- Consider SSC prioritization language, when the comment was made, and if its recurring
- Consider overall crab comments, as well as stock-specific
- Responses should include the following:
 - How comment was addressed
 - If comment was not addressed, explain why and the plan
 - Per SSC request: if comment was not addressed, include an estimated timeline for addressing it

Plan Team Handbook

SAFE Guidelines

Deadlines

Draft minutes – COB Nov 10th

Final SAFE – Sept 11th

Final report – Sept 12th



SAFE Guidelines

October 2025 *SSC Report*:

The SSC recommends continued progress towards making SAFE documents as consistent in structure and content as practicable. The SSC recognizes that assessments vary among stocks; however, documents that are as similar as possible will facilitate review and ensure accessibility to a wide audience.

We have noticed inconsistencies with SAFE docs -

- *SAFE Guidelines (Jan 2023)* are being reviewed and should be used by stock authors and reviewers.
- We are drafting a running list of changes or more specific guidelines, which will be presented at the May 2026 meeting.

Examples include:

- General structure (e.g., rebuilding plan status)
- Table types and formatting
- Document length



General SSC recommendations

General comments

General Crab Comments

The SSC recommends continued progress towards making SAFE documents as consistent in structure and content as practicable. The SSC recognizes that assessments vary among stocks; however, documents that are as similar as possible will facilitate review and ensure accessibility to a wide audience.

The SSC notes that crab stock assessment authors currently use the overfishing limits (OFL) for catch projections. The SSC recommends that the authors and CPT provide a justification if catches are set to the OFL in projections, or use a more realistic estimate of future catches as is done in groundfish assessments.

Excerpted from snow crab section:

- As with a similar SSC recommendation for Tanner crab, **the SSC recommends consideration of different inclusions/exclusions of hybrids into the snow crab assessment (i.e., in survey and catch data) to evaluate sensitivity to these options and ensure an internally consistent approach.**
- **The SSC recommends that research be conducted to evaluate whether clutch fullness is a reliable indicator of female reproductive output, using histology or lab rearing experiments.**
- **The SSC is willing to participate in a collaborative working group during spring 2026 to facilitate additional progress on the development of an ABC control rule for snow crab.**
- The SSC also reiterates its general comments from December 2024 suggesting that authors use likelihood profiles to describe uncertainty in model parameters and management quantities and use jittering analyses only to ensure that the results provided come from the model with the lowest negative log likelihood (the “MLE”).



General SSC recommendations

Risk Tables

We plan to make a priority list of questions for discussion in May and to include groundfish expertise

Substantial progress was made by BSAI crab assessment authors to implement draft risk tables this cycle. While the CPT discussed the implementation of risk tables at their September 2025 meeting, they did not define a complete approach for crab and a follow-up discussion is planned for the May 2026 CPT meeting. The SSC appreciates the work that the CPT and the authors have put into making risk tables useful for BSAI crab stocks and how risk tables interact with buffer setting. The SSC looks forward to hearing the results of those discussions. The SSC finds the summaries of information in the risk tables to be extremely valuable, particularly the ecosystem category, and continues to request risk tables for PIRKC, PIBKC, recognizing these will only be updated in four years, for the next stock assessment.

While the CPT highlighted differences in the assessment of risk and the application of risk tables between crab and groundfish, the SSC strongly suggests that there are many parallels that should be considered for BSAI crab and that the structure of the risk table approach is sufficiently general to be applicable to both crab and groundfish. The SSC discussed the definition of risk and the implicit acceptance of a relatively greater risk through the adoption of the $P^* = 0.49$ approach for BSAI crab, which implies that maxABC is essentially equal to the OFL. As for groundfish, the ABC may be reduced from its maximum value based on other considerations such as the potential for bias in estimated reference points (model uncertainty) or concerns about the appropriate definition of reproductive potential. The SSC continues to encourage the CPT to include groundfish experience when finalizing risk table guidance as some of the aspects under discussion have already been vetted by the GPTs. The SSC suggests the CPT consider evaluating buffers relative to the maxABC, rather than relative to the previous year, as a comprehensive assessment of risk is challenging when considering only year-over-year changes. Finally, the SSC is also concerned that renaming aspects of the risk tables might be confusing, given the stated goal of transparency.



Council Topics/Actions

- SSC HCR Workshop [motion](#) (June 2025) –updates at this meeting
- PTR Innovation [motion](#) (June 2025) – pollock fishery-BBRKC crab avoidance plan; scheduled crab research updates; public-facing research summary document
 - Pollock industry update via B Report scheduled for Dec Council meeting
- GOA Tanner crab protections Initial Review scheduled for June 2026 (April [motion](#)) –closure options around Kodiak Island
- EFH 5-Year Review Work Plan [discussion paper](#) (AP/Council Dec 2025; SSC Feb 2026) –will again focus on all 5 crab FMP species; EFH team will coordinate with Plan Team chairs to facilitate review process and develop a review timeline
- Dec Council meeting harvest specs – if the government does not publish the Federal Register (FR) notice in time, specs will be presented as prelim/final action, but the final approval would not occur until a later date. Other actions are impacted at this meeting.

