

Council Member Ongoing Development (CMOD) Proposal

A CCC-sponsored function

CCC CMOD Committee Recommendations to CCC

The CCC Workgroup recommends that the CCC establish an ongoing Council member training program, with the purposes and structure as laid out in this paper.

- The proposal is for a facilitated, 2-3 day workshop to occur every other year, for training ongoing Council members, as well as Council and NMFS staff (total attendees <50), on a particular topic relevant to fishery management.
- The Workgroup is leaning towards a cost sharing option between the Council and NMFS, described as funding option 3a in this paper. Under that option,
 - NMFS would pay 50% of shared costs (hiring meeting space, facilitators, and travel for invited speakers) for each event, as well as travel for NMFS participants. NMFS' portion of shared costs is estimated at approximately \$55,000.
 - Each Council would pay an equal part of the Councils' half of shared costs, and travel for its own participants. Estimate for each Council is approximately \$7,000 for shared costs, plus approximately \$11,000 in travel expenses for 4 representatives.

The Workgroup recommends that a CCC steering committee be created to manage the training program under the direction of the CCC, and this committee would oversee hiring of facilitators and setting the agenda. Councils would volunteer to host the training in their region on a rotating basis.

Purpose

The Council Coordination Committee proposes to establish an ongoing Council member training program, to achieve the following purposes:

- Promote the development of cross-Council information sharing at the Council member and staff level
- Provide ongoing opportunities for training and developing skillsets of individual Council members, including State and Federal members and alternates.
- Collectively explore issues and topics that are common to all Councils.
- Encourage member- and staff-level networking among Councils and with NMFS.
- Provide a policy-neutral environment for Council members to examine issues and compare experiences.

This program would serve a separate function from new Member training; the focus is on Council members who have served at least a year.

Background

Fisheries management is increasingly complex. Managers are faced with rapidly changing challenges (e.g. environmental change, shifting species distributions, aquaculture development, offshore energy

development, etc.). Scientific advances are changing the tools that are used (e.g. management strategy evaluation, state-based assessment models, ecosystem-based modelling approaches, etc.).

Appointed Council members come from a broad range of experience and education and serve for three to nine years. Over that time span the issues before a Council can change dramatically. The only formal training Council members receive is an initial three-day orientation course sponsored by NMFS that is required upon initial appointment. This course focuses on the mechanics of fishery management 101, with an introduction into the basics of fisheries science. Most Councils supplement this training with locally-designed orientation sessions that focus on regional issues and practices.

With the passing of the Fisheries Leadership and Development Forum, a non-profit group that was aligned with Duke and Stanford Universities and was focused on Council member development, there are no longer any organized opportunities for Council members to improve their understanding of fisheries science and management after these initial introductions, other than occasional presentations at Council meetings. While different Councils may have similar challenges, there are also few opportunities for members to learn from other regions and NMFS staff. The Council Coordination Committee meets twice each year, but attendance is generally limited to the senior leadership at a Council, and even at these meetings there is limited time available for sharing lessons learned. On the East Coast, there is some exchange between adjacent Councils through shared committee representation and the Northeast Region Coordination Committee, but this tends to be focused on specific management actions or resource allocation decisions.

Structure

We propose holding a biennial, facilitated, 2-3 day workshop for ongoing Council members, as well as Council and NMFS staff. The workshop would focus on intensive examination of a particular topic, in order to develop skillsets to increase effectiveness of Council members and facilitate information exchange among Councils, at the Council member level.

We propose to adapt the successful CCC Scientific Coordination Committee (SCS) model for managing the workshops, where an all-Council/NMFS steering committee recommends topics for approval by the CCC, and makes major decisions about the workshop (speakers, etc.), and individual Councils volunteer, on a rotating basis, to undertake the logistical arrangements for hosting the meeting. One major difference, however, is that the SCS workshops are not facilitated. In order to not impose a great burden on either the steering committee or the host Council, we have included costs for hiring a meeting facilitator in this proposal.

The agenda for each workshop would be organized around examining the selected topic, and include training on both current fishery management approaches that have cross regional application and specific skill development topics to help Council members increase their effectiveness.

In planning the workshop, the organizers should also build in an element of workshop follow-up, in order to establish ongoing opportunities for networking among members of different Councils, as well as to measure whether the workshops are meeting their intended benefits and periodically remind participants of tools and topics.

Steering Committee

The CCC would establish a CMOD steering committee, to include representatives from each of the eight Councils and NMFS headquarters. The Steering Committee would have the following responsibilities:

- Conduct the necessary planning to ensure that a CMOD workshop occurs every two years. Solicit for volunteers among the Councils to host the next CMOD workshop (perhaps taking into account east/west coast rotation for meeting locations). Identify workshop dates. Work with the host Council to contract with a facilitator.
- Provide the CCC with recommendations for potential topics to be the focus of each workshop. This should occur at the annual CCC meeting the year preceding the proposed workshop (e.g., in May 2020 for a 2021 CMOD workshop).
- In the six months leading up to the planned workshop, liaise with the CMOD facilitator to provide feedback on agenda development and proposed speakers, etc.

Participation

The intent would be to achieve attendance that is representative of all the different regions and NMFS, but also keeps the group small enough to engage in productive dialogue. The following is a guideline for representative membership, which would yield a total of just under 50 attendees:

- 4 seats from each Council (total of 32). Mix of Council members and staff would be at discretion of each Council, however the concept would be to have most Council members attend at least one meeting if appointed for the three term maximum. Members should have served at least one year on the Council to be eligible to attend.
- 10 seats for NMFS personnel
- 3-5 seats for invited presenters or experts
- 2 hired facilitators

The training meetings will be most effective if they can be held by invitation only. Open meetings cannot employ a Chatham House Rule, or similar tools, and a result may inhibit the free exchange of information which is necessary to fulfill the training's objective to allow Council members to compare experiences. While MSA Section 302(i)(2) requires that all meetings of a Council or its advisory groups shall be open to the public, it is specific only to regular or emergency meetings at which business is conducted. Given that these are cross-Council training sessions, with only a subset of Council members attending from any region, it does not appear that there is an MSA requirement for these meetings to be public. For comparison, the new Council member training sessions are also not open to the public; regulations requiring new members to attend training also allow it to be held in closed session.

Meeting logistics/host Council

In order to be as cost-efficient as possible, an individual Council (or pair of Councils to share the workload) would volunteer to host each workshop, and organize all meeting logistics. The intent would be for the responsibility for hosting to rotate among individual Councils, although not necessarily according to a fixed schedule. The responsibilities for the host Council(s) would be the following:

- Arrange for a meeting venue and provide registration, setup, and any other meeting resources as required.
- Work with the CMOD steering committee to contract with a meeting facilitator to plan and run the workshop.
- Track major shared costs (i.e. venue, facilitator)
- Assist facilitator with arrangements for extra-curricular activities during the workshop (e.g., venue for a group dinner, tour of fishery-related site of interest).
- If necessary, and in coordination with the facilitator, provide additional staff for rapporteuring, assistance with workshop report, or other planned follow-up.

Facilitation

Working with the host Council, the Steering Committee would issue a Request for Proposals and contract with a meeting facilitator to plan, organize, and run the workshop. The contract should be in place six months before the planned workshop dates, to allow sufficient time for agenda development, booking experts/presenters, and other preparation. Ideally, the Steering Committee would set up a contract structure that not only supports the upcoming meeting, but also includes option(s) to extend the facilitation contract for future training events, if all parties are satisfied. Responsibilities of the facilitator would include:

- Plan and organize the agenda, working with the CMOD steering committee and the host Council
- Contact and arrange for expert presenters related to the topic
- Facilitate at the meeting
- Provide a meeting summary that can be available on the regional Council web page

Cost sharing among Councils and with NMFS

If NMFS is to contribute to the cost of these training workshops, the mechanism for Councils receiving NMFS funds is fairly well established. For example, for the national SCS meetings, NMFS simply transfers the agreed-on amount of funding to the host Council's grant.

It is more complicated to consider how Councils can pay each other for shared costs, as no Council is allowed to accept donations or enter into an agreement whereby they will receive funds for services rendered (50 CFR 600.125). There are two models that the Councils have used in the past: eight individual contracts with the same service provider, or a single contract that is individually reviewed and agreed to by all contracting Council parties. In both cases, a longer timeframe may be needed to accommodate the complications of getting the contract(s) approved. Additionally, there may be other equity adjustments to account for, if the host Council is paying for the meeting venue (in order to minimize labor costs associated with requiring a facilitator to arrange the logistics of the venue). Complications of contracting also lend support to the value of setting up a contract structure that includes options to extend for future events.

The CCC Committee identified three possible mechanisms for Council cost sharing:

1. **(Recommended)** A single contract is negotiated by the Host Council with the facilitator that describes the deliverables (Statement of Work) and payment schedule that will be followed by each Council. Each Council uses this contract with the provider (but may modify general contract provisions as appropriate). If necessary, Host Council can verify deliverables to the other Councils. If the Host Council arranges and pays for meeting logistics (hotel, A/V equipment, etc.), that cost is factored into the Host Council's share of facilitator cost.
 - Advantages:
 - Does not require transfer of funds between Councils.
 - If NMFS supports event, NMFS funding can be funneled to the Host Council.
 - Similar to process used by three Councils for the 2018 Fisheries Forum.
 - Disadvantages:
 - One Council has the burden of developing the contract (this is primarily an issue for the first event; subsequent events can use the first contract as a template).
 - Requires each Council to use the same contract. While the contractor may have to sign multiple contracts they would all be identical.

2. The Host Council negotiates the structure of facilitator support and the total cost. The Host Council advises each Council of its share of the cost. Each Council develops an appropriate procurement document (form of document and specific deliverables to be met for individual council payment) for the facilitator and makes payments as per that document.
 - Advantages:
 - Allows each Council to structure its procurement document as it desires, giving local flexibility.
 - Familiar; this is the process used for the contractor who provides legislative information support.
 - Disadvantages: - Contractor may have multiple procurement documents to negotiate.
3. The Host Council negotiates a contract with the providers (hotel, facilitator, etc.). Once the total cost is known, each Council transfers its share to the Host Council through the grants system.
 - Advantages:
 - Simplifies payment to vendors, as only one Council makes all the relevant payments.
 - Disadvantages: - Transferring funds between Council involves several grants offices and may lead to delays.

Cost estimates

A rough cost estimate for a workshop in Denver, CO is provided below, based on the structure described in this proposal. The cost estimate for the Councils and NMFS for each workshop would be \$210,000. Of this amount, approximately \$110,000 is shared costs (facilitator contract, invited presenters, meeting venue), the remainder is individual Council and NMFS travel.

Council travel	Travel/ per diem/ Council member stipends for 4 people	~\$11,000/Council (~\$88,000 total)
Shared costs	Travel/ per diem for facilitators	~\$3,000
	Travel / per diem for invited experts/presenters	~\$3,800
	Meeting room / facilities	~\$10,000
	Facilitator contract (2 people, \$205/hour, 460 hours)	~\$94,300
	SUBTOTAL: Shared costs	\$111,100
NMFS travel	Travel / per diem for 10 people	~\$10,600

Funding

The CMOD committee discussed several different proposals for funding the CMOD workshops. The committee leans towards Option 3a, which provides a balance: on the one hand, Councils retain ownership of the training program and are thus able to cater it to Council member needs, as they are contributing to the cost. At the same time, NMFS' support helps to offset costs for individual Councils, and may help achieve the goal of full participation from across the regions, which for some Councils may otherwise be difficult given disparate costs of travel depending on the meeting location.

Options for funding CMOD workshops	Approximate cost to each Council?	Comments
<p>Option 1: Councils pay</p> <p>Individual Councils pay for costs for their Members attendance, host Council contributes staff time for logistics, Councils share costs of facilitators and venue. NMFS covers their travel costs.</p>	<p>\$25,000</p> <p><i>(\$11,000 travel + \$14,000 shared costs)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gives Councils the most control over the workshops and all decisions pertaining to them. - Most expensive option for Councils. May be that in some years, some Councils cannot afford to participate.
<p>Option 2: NMFS pays</p> <p>Option 2a: NMFS covers all costs that are covered for New Member Training</p> <p>Option 2b: NMFS covers all costs that are covered for the national SCS workshops.</p>	<p>Option 2a: \$9,000</p> <p><i>(\$11,000 travel minus cost of hotel)</i></p> <p>Option 2b: \$6000</p> <p><i>(Council member stipends only)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides least amount of Council control on choosing topics, venue, etc. - Cheapest option for the Councils.
<p>Option 3: Cost sharing</p> <p>Cost sharing between NMFS and Councils</p> <p>Option 3a: Individual Councils pay travel for own members, shared costs split with NMFS (e.g., 50:50).</p> <p>Option 3b: NMFS and Councils split travel and shared costs (e.g., 50:50).</p>	<p>Option 3a: \$18,000</p> <p><i>(\$11,000 travel + \$7,000 shared costs)</i></p> <p>Option 3b: \$13,000</p> <p><i>(\$210,000 divided by 2 then by 8 Councils)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Balances Council and NMFS control over workshop design and content, and costs. - (3a) If Councils required to pay own travel, some Councils may not send full complement if resources are constrained.

Potential Topics for a first meeting

The CCC loosely discussed planning a first forum for 2021. The following are suggestions for topics that could be part of an initial workshop:

Skill development:

- Chairing/facilitating an effective meeting
- Developing successful motions
- Understanding scientific treatment of uncertainty (P*, etc.)

Fishery management topics for exploration

- Movement of stocks,
- Managing in an era of increasing uncertainty,
- New approaches to EBFM