

Avoiding Political Science

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The article discussed the 2006 Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorization Act and its impact on the role of the regional councils' scientific and statistical committees (SSCs). The law borrowed heavily from the North Pacific model, putting SSCs in charge of setting the upper limit on annual catch levels. The decisions made by these committees have the potential to drastically impact those in the fishing industry.

The article noted the members of these councils' SSCs do not have a detailed working knowledge of the stocks, fisheries, fisheries, or management challenges under the council's jurisdiction. The article places heavy emphasis on the decision made by the SSCs. One SSC decision can impact millions of dollars and thousands of jobs within the fishery industry. The article suggests that an SSC should, as the law provides, meet at the same time and location as its council, and do so in open meeting with the relevant technical experts for the species under discussion.

The article outlined the role of scientific and statistical committees, and offered suggestions how these SSCs can interact more effectively and productively with the fishery management council system.