

Terms of Reference for the Peer Review

2025 Stock assessment update for the CNMI Bottomfishes

Peer Review under the Western Pacific Stock Assessment Review framework: *2025 Stock assessment update for the CNMI bottomfishes*

For questions 1-6 and their subcomponents, reviewers shall provide only a “yes” or “no” answer. If necessary, caveats may be provided to these yes or no answers, but when provided they must be as specific as possible to provide direction and clarification to NMFS. Question 7 also asks for additional details when answers to earlier questions were “no”. Each panel member will provide a report based on their answers to these questions, and the Chair will provide a report summarizing the answers to these questions across the review panel.

1. Are input data sources and filtering methods well documented and the same as those used in the 2019 benchmark assessment?
2. Is the CPUE standardization methodology the same as those used in the 2019 benchmark stock assessment?
3. Are the assessment model and methodology the same as those used in the 2019 benchmark stock assessment?
4. Are primary sources of uncertainty documented and presented?
5. Do results include estimated stock status in relation to the estimated biological reference points, and other results required to address management goals stated in the relevant FEP or other documents provided to the review panel?
6. Are methods used to project future population state the same as those used in the 2019 benchmark stock assessment?
7. If responses to questions 1-6 are “no”, indicate for each:

Why was the answer “no”

Which alternative set of existing stock assessment information/results should be used to inform fishery management in this case and why?

8. For consideration in future benchmark assessments, suggest and prioritize recommendations for improvements and research. For each recommendation prioritize to three categories (high, medium, low) dependent on importance to interpretation of this and future assessment results.
9. Draft a report (individual reports from each of the panel members and an additional Summary Report from Chair) addressing the above TOR questions.