

4. The functions of the Scientific Committee shall be to:
  - (a) recommend to the Commission a research plan, including specific issues and items to be addressed by the scientific experts or by other organizations or individuals, as appropriate, and identify data needs and coordinate activities that meet those needs;
  - (b) regularly plan, conduct and review the scientific assessments of the status of fisheries resources in the Convention Area, identify actions required for their conservation and management, and provide advice and recommendations to the Commission;
  - (c) collect, analyze and disseminate relevant information;
  - (d) assess the impacts of fishing activities on fisheries resources and species belonging to the same ecosystem or dependent upon or associated with the target stocks;
  - (e) develop a process to identify vulnerable marine ecosystems, including relevant criteria for doing so, and identify, based on the best scientific information available, areas or features where these ecosystems are known to occur, or are likely to occur, and the location of bottom fisheries in relation to these areas or features, taking due account of the need to protect confidential information;
  - (f) identify and advise the Commission on additional indicator species for vulnerable marine ecosystems for which directed fishing shall be prohibited;
  - (g) establish science-based standards and criteria to determine if bottom fishing activities are likely to produce significant adverse impacts on vulnerable marine ecosystems or marine species in a given area based on international standards such as the FAO International Guidelines and make recommendation for measures to avoid such impacts;
  - (h) review any assessments, determinations and management measures and make any necessary recommendation in order to attain the objective of this Convention;
  - (i) develop rules and standards, for adoption by the Commission, for the collection, verification, reporting, and the security of, exchange of, access to and dissemination of data on fisheries resources, species belonging to the same ecosystem, or dependent upon or associated with the target stocks and fishing activities in the Convention Area;
  - (j) to the extent practicable, provide analysis to the Commission of alternative conservation and management measures that estimates the extent to which each alternative would achieve the objectives of any management strategy adopted or under consideration by the Commission; and