

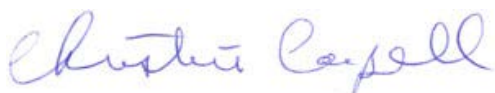
Activity Plan
Species Status Advisory Committee
2020 - 2023

Message from the Chairperson

The SSAC (Species Status Advisory Committee) is a category 3 government entity and as such is required, under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**, to provide performance plans based on activities.

As Chair of the Species Status Advisory Committee (SSAC), I am pleased to provide the Activity Plan for April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2023. This activity plan meets the requirements of the **Transparency and Accountability Act** for a Category 3 entity. The strategic directions of Government related to the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture have been considered in the preparation of this plan. The focus, as outlined in the Minister's mandate letter, is to oversee the efforts to conserve our wildlife resources through science-based management and collaborations.

This plan provides an overview of the duties and responsibilities of the SSAC and objectives to be accomplished between 2020 and 2023. It is anticipated that a more detailed work plan will be developed as part of the SSAC Annual Report under the **Endangered Species Act**, following the re-appointment of members and potential appointment of new members. I attest that the SSAC is accountable for the preparation of this plan and for the achievement of the specific objectives contained herein.



Dr. Christine Campbell
Chair, SSAC

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1. Overview

The Species Status Advisory Committee (SSAC) was established in 2003 under the Authority of Section 6 of the **Endangered Species Act** (the Act) which provides for an Advisory Committee to review the status of species at risk, and to advise the Minister on matters related to their designation and re-designation. The SSAC consists of up to nine members appointed by the Minister. Members serve for a period of two or three years and are eligible for re-appointment. The committee meets at least once every calendar year. Members may participate in meetings via telephone or other telecommunication device.

Information on the SSAC can be found at:

<https://www.gov.nl.ca/ffa/wildlife/endangeredspecies/ssac/>

The Act outlines the minimum qualifications for individuals appointed to the SSAC including:

- Post-graduate degree from a recognized educational institution in a relevant biological science such as conservation biology, ecology, wildlife management or equivalent expertise in a relevant biological science acquired through a combination of education and experience and current knowledge of relevant biological science; or
- Extensive and current traditional ecological or local knowledge about species in the province and their habitat;
- General knowledge about the species of the province;
- Detailed knowledge of a taxonomic group such as birds, mammals, vascular plants, invertebrates; or,
- Detailed knowledge of the species of a specific geographic region.

Committee members serve as volunteers; however, as per section 6 (5) of the Act, travel and related costs are provided for within the budget of the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture.

The current Committee is made up of the following members (all members are volunteers still awaiting re-appointment by Minister):

Name	Title	Expertise	Appointment Date	Expiry Date	Place of Residence
Arsenault, Dr. André	Member	Lichens	10/30/2015	10/29/2018	Corner Brook
Campbell, Dr. Christine	Chair	Aquatic Invertebrates	10/30/2015	10/29/2017	Corner Brook
Langor, Dr. David	Member	Terrestrial Arthropods	10/30/2015	10/29/2018	Edmonton Alberta
Marino, Dr. Paul	Member	Bryophytes	10/30/2015	10/29/2017	Outer Cove
Maunder, Mr. John E.	Member	Vascular Plants, Molluscs	10/30/2015	10/29/2017	Pouch Cove
Montevecchi, Dr. William (Bill)	Member	Birds	10/30/2015	10/29/2017	Portugal Cove-St Philip's
VACANT					
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2. Mandate

The mandate of the Species Status Advisory Committee is derived from Section 6 of the **Endangered Species Act** (Appendix A) which provides for an Advisory Committee to review and recommend to the Minister, designations of species.

3. Line of Business

The Species Status Advisory Committee undertakes the following line of business:

Advises government on the designation and re-designation of species under the Act (please refer to Appendix A of this document for sections of the Act relevant to the mandate of the Species Status Advisory Committee in their entirety).

4. Primary Clients

The Species Status Advisory Committee identifies its primary clients as:

- All native species of Newfoundland and Labrador

- The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador via the responsible Minister
- The public
- Industry and other land users

5. Vision

The vision of the Species Status Advisory Committee is the perpetuation of viable populations of all native species in Newfoundland and Labrador.

6. Values

The following values explain the character of the Committee. The following action statements indicate how the Committee intends to ensure that its values are visible through its activities.

Values	Action Statements
Inclusion	The Committee will consider scientific, traditional, and local knowledge for the purposes of advising the responsible Minister on matters related to the designation of species and the protection of critical and recovery habitat.
Accountability	The Committee will provide accurate and timely information to the responsible Minister using the best available information.
Responsibility	The Committee will work to ensure that the interests of wild species are protected.
Integrity	The Committee will diligently evaluate the information available to ensure accurate assessments of the status of species.

7. Objectives

The Species Status Advisory Committee (SSAC) was established under the Act. Its role is to develop a list of wildlife species of conservation concern requiring detailed status assessments, to commission status reports for assessments on these species, and to recommend, to the minister responsible, status designations for assessed species based

on the best scientific, traditional, and local ecological knowledge available. Under the Act, species can be assessed and recommendations can be forwarded under the following five categories: Vulnerable, Threatened, Endangered, Extirpated or Extinct. The SSAC may also assess a species as not at risk, or data deficient. Should a species be considered Vulnerable, Threatened, Endangered, Extirpated or Extinct the Minister is provided with a recommendation. Should a species be assessed as not at risk or data deficient, the agency responsible for the species' management is notified. Furthermore, the SSAC is responsible to update status designations every 10 years for previously assessed species (species status reviews).

The committee is also responsible for establishing and updating criteria for assessing species status and the templates for status reports to facilitate the assessment, review of status and evaluation of national assessments.

Issue: **Status recommendations provided to the Minister for species of conservation concern in Newfoundland and Labrador to maintain species diversity in Newfoundland and Labrador**

Objective 1: By March 31, 2021, the Species Status Advisory Committee will undertake a strategic review to determine how the Committee might more efficiently carry out its duties

Indicators:

- Review annually SSAC templates for assessments, including ten-year status review, and revise as required
- Discussions with Minister on how best to address data and information requirements for assessments
- Discussions with Minister on how best to address filling SSAC membership as required

This section of the plan outlines the key priority of the Agency for the period April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2023. The objective and associated indicators identified for the priority area apply to each year covered by the plan and will be reported on in relevant annual reports.

Objective 2: By March 31, 2021, the Species Status Advisory Committee will have maintained a list of species for future review of status.

Indicators:

- Reviewed list of candidates for species status assessment annually
- Updated list with additional species of concern based on new information and removal of species no longer of concern
- Provide responsible management agency with information on data gaps for individual species or groups of taxa that is needed to re-evaluate the priority list

Objective 3:

By March 31, 2021, the Species Status Advisory Committee will have initiated status assessments, or status reviews, for species of conservation concern as necessary.

Indicators:

- Commissioned or written and reviewed species status reports (for new species or previously assessed species)
- Reviewed COSEWIC recommendations and determine if there is a need to examine the provincial status
- Conducted status assessment
- Provided recommendations to the responsible Minister

Objective 4:

By March 31, 2021, status recommendations of data deficient provided to the responsible management agency to prioritize further monitoring of the species

Indicators:

- Provided Status assessments of data deficient species to the responsible management agency
- Advice provided to responsible management agency on new monitoring data required for a status assessment

8. Appendix A: Legislation Relevant to Mandate

(Source: **Endangered Species Act**)

6. (1) a species status advisory committee is established to review and recommend to the minister designations and re-designations of species.

(2) The SSAC shall base its decisions on the best scientific knowledge available to it and on traditional ecological and local ecological knowledge about a species.

11. (1) The SSAC shall

(a) develop and submit to the minister, criteria for the designation of a species under sections 7 and 9;

(b) develop criteria for species status reports which facilitate a review of the status of a species;

(c) commission and receive status reports;

(d) make recommendations to the minister about designating species and the protection of critical and recovery habitat;

(e) refer concerns about the status of species to COSEWIC where the species is of national importance;

(f) maintain a list of species for future review of their status;

(g) conduct periodic reviews of the status of designated species, at least once every 10 years after the designation;

(h) submit a report to the minister on the activities of the committee in the preceding calendar year, before April 15 of each year; and

(i) perform other duties that may be prescribed in the regulations made under subsection 44(1).

11. (2) the SSAC shall make the following documents available to the public:

(a) species status reports;

(b) criteria for designation of a species; and

(c) annual reports submitted under paragraph 11(1)(h) within 30 days after the report is released to the minister.

12. (1) the SSAC shall consult with groups or individuals that have traditional and local ecological knowledge about a species and its habitat.

(2) Traditional ecological and local ecological knowledge shall be considered by the SSAC in evaluating the status of a species.