

CSP project proposal prioritisation framework

CSP RAG 18 February 2015

Purpose

This prioritisation framework has been developed to aid the Conservation Services Programme (CSP) Research Advisory Group (RAG) in providing advice on prioritisation of research or other proposals, according to the principles described in the [CSP Strategic Statement 2013](#). The proposals prioritised by the CSP RAG will be used to develop the CSP Annual Plan.

Framework

Proposals will be considered by the CSP RAG if they are targeted at addressing one or more CSP Objective, which are:

Objective A: Proven mitigation strategies are in place to avoid or minimise the effects of commercial fishing on protected species across the range of fisheries with known interactions.

Objective B: The nature of direct effects of commercial fishing on protected species is described.

Objective C: The extent of known direct effects of commercial fishing on protected species is adequately understood.

Objective D: The nature and extent of indirect effects of commercial fishing are identified and described for protected species that are at particular risk to such effects.

Objective E: Adequate information on population level and susceptibility to fisheries effects exists for protected species populations identified as at medium or higher risk from fisheries.

Further details on the CSP Objectives are provided in the CSP Strategic Statement 2013.

The CSP Strategic Statement 2013 provides a number of prioritisation principles. These have been used to develop four scoring criteria:

1. Contribution to one or more CSP Objective
2. Fisheries risk and/or threat status
3. Cost effectiveness
4. Leverage

For each proposal, each criteria is scored on a scale 1-5. The criteria are weighted with 35% to each of criteria 1 and 2, 20% to criterion 3 and 10% to criterion 4. A weighted total between 1 and 5 is then calculated for each proposal, which is used to rank proposals in order of priority. Further details on the criteria and guidance on scoring is provided below, and a summary table with some worked examples is provided as Table 1.

This framework is only intended as a tool for prioritisation of proposals by the CSP RAG, and it should not be considered a decision making tool in regards to which projects are chosen for inclusion in a CSP Annual Plan or other delivery mechanism, nor the choice of funding mechanism.

Scoring

1. Contribution to one or more CSP Objective

This criterion is to assess the extent to which the proposal is considered to help achieve the relevant CSP Objective(s). Proposals that will make a significant contribution to achieving two or more objective should be scored 5, those making more modest incremental contributions should be scored 3 and those making only small contributions to part of one objective should be scored 1. Consideration should be given to both the number of objectives being addressed and the extent of contribution to achieving the objective. In accordance with the prioritisation principles outlined in the CSP Strategic Statement 2013, proposals that aim to conduct commercial fisheries risk assessment for protected species where this has not previously been assessed should be considered high priority.

2. Fisheries risk and/or threat status

This criterion is scored based on the risk or threat status of the protected species being investigated or impacted by the proposed project. In accordance with the prioritisation principles outlined in the CSP Strategic Statement 2013, where fisheries risk assessments for a given group of protected species have been completed, this will form the basis of scoring for this criterion, with proposals relevant to very high risk species scoring 5, those with negligible risk scoring 0. Where there is no adequate fisheries risk assessment for a group of protected species, the threat status of the species should be used, with critically endangered species scoring 5, not threatened species scoring 1. Interaction or mitigation projects may impact on a wide range of protected species, and in such cases scoring should be based on the most at risk or threatened species targeted. Most risk assessments to date have focussed on direct effects (bycatch) and do not consider potential indirect effects. Therefore, it may not be appropriate to base scoring for this criterion on risk assessment ranking for projects investigating indirect effects, and instead threat status should be considered.

3. Cost effectiveness

In accordance with the prioritisation principles outlined in the CSP Strategic Statement 2013, high priority should be given to proposals that most cost-effectively achieve the research goal, such as by utilising opportunities for multi-species/multi-project initiatives to enhance the application and cost-efficiency of research, and to provide for integrated management. When

considering research investment across a range of mitigation methods/approaches, the cost-effectiveness of developing and implementing such methods will be considered in prioritisation. Scoring should be on a relative scale of 5 for proposals utilising substantial cost efficiencies (such as joint delivery with other work) and/or at low cost, 1 for those that are high cost and have no cost efficiencies (stand alone projects).

4. Leverage

In accordance with the prioritisation principles outlined in the CSP Strategic Statement 2013, priority should be given to proposals that address information gaps where this knowledge will significantly enhance the value or application of existing knowledge to address adverse effects of commercial fishing on protected species (leverage). Scoring should be on a relative scale of 5 for proposals where the outputs will considerably enhance a much larger existing knowledge base, 1 for proposals where there is no such leverage.

Table 1. Example proposal scoring matrix. Text in parentheses provide rationale on the scoring. Note: this table is provided for the purpose of illustrating the prioritisation process only.

Proposal	CSP Objective	Indicative cost (\$ 000s)	Contribution to CSP Objective 35%	Risk/threat status 35%	Cost effectiveness 20%	Leverage 10%	Weighted score
INT-1 Identification of seabirds captured in commercial fisheries	B; C	80	5 [understanding which species are captured in fisheries is a vital contribution to understanding and quantifying direct impacts]	5 [a full range of species will be included, and as observer coverage will be targeted at interactions with the highest risk species this proposal is relevant to very high risk species]	4 [costs are relatively modest, build on existing structures and is integrated into fisheries management responses]	5 [the information obtained from this relatively small project enhances the data obtained from the CSP Observer Programme adding far more utility to the data]	4.8
POP-1 White-capped albatross: Auckland Islands population study	E	60	4 [the proposal makes an incremental, but important contribution to time series data]	5 [very high risk species]	4 [costs are relatively modest and achieve cost efficiencies through joint delivery with other projects]	4 [the information obtained builds on an existing data set and will be of direct use in risk assessments]	4.25
MIT-1 Inshore bottom longline seabird mitigation	A	100	5 [the proposal makes a very important contribution to a fishery that contributes a high level of risk]	5 [the fishery poses substantial risk to very high risk species]	5 [costs are relatively modest, and achieve efficiencies with delivery of observer coverage and seabird liaison officers]	5 [this fishery has been the subject of targeted interaction data collection and risk characterisation, which will inform the project]	5.0