

**INDEPENDENT PEER REVIEW SYSTEM FOR STOCK ASSESSMENTS AND RELATED MANAGEMENT
CONDUCTED BY NMFS**

LACK OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Background and Purpose

The Center for Independent Experts (CIE), administered by Northern Taiga Ventures, Inc. (NTVI)¹, conducts external peer reviews of stock assessments and other science products underlying living marine resource management advice for resources for which the NMFS has responsibility. Generally, review activities take one of two forms: (a) review of an existing stock assessment or other NMFS science product, or (b) review through active participation in a stock assessment working group or a review committee such as those NMFS has in place. It is of utmost concern that the specific input provided by the CIE reviewers be unbiased. This means that the selected individuals will provide their expert advice free from the influence of government managers, the fishing industry, or any other interest group. For this reason, anyone who has

- (a) received or has been approved any funds **in the past three years**, or is seeking funds or employment from sources with vested interests in resources for which NMFS has stewardship responsibilities (This applies to both funds or employment directly obtained from industry or environmental groups, nongovernmental organizations, trust funds, foundations, or other entities with vested interests, as well as to funds or employment from the same sources but indirectly obtained through an organization without vested interests such as a university contract or grant.);
- (b) received any funds in the past three years, has been approved for funds, or is seeking funds from NOAA or states and municipalities with vested interests in resources for which NMFS has stewardship responsibilities via a sole-source contract or other non-competitive award, or is seeking employment from NMFS;
- (c) received any funds in the past three years, has been approved for funds, or is seeking funds or employment from any entity that is a party to litigation involving the resources for which NMFS has stewardship responsibilities;
- (d) family members who have received any funds in the past three years, have been approved for funds, or are seeking funds or employment from groups described in parts (a), (b), or (c) above;
- (e) a well-formed position or history of advocacy for a specific viewpoint on a subject relevant to the review^{*}; or
- (f) **a perceived potential conflict of interest** in the specific issue/fishery being reviewed, which may adversely affect the perception of impartiality of the review

shall not be eligible to be a reviewer with this program.

Assurance of Lack of Conflict

I, _____, do not possess any said attributes that would be considered a conflict of interest associated with my work as a reviewer for _____.

When assigned a specific review task under this program, I will notify UM if there are any other reasons why I would be unable to provide an unbiased review.

Signed _____.

Date _____.

¹ Contact: M. Shivlani, NTVI, 10600 SW 131 Court, Miami, FL 33186. Email: mshivlani@ntvifederal.com

^{*} The individual shall provide the Center of Independent Experts with a curriculum vita that contains all professional activities, publications, and affiliations, along with other material – including participation in litigation involving resources over which NMFS has stewardship responsibilities – that may assist in determining whether the individual possesses an advocacy-based or perceived potential conflict of interest.