External Contributor Frequently Asked Questions

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Introduction

In 2014, SFP created an *External Contributor Program* as a solution for third parties to use the FishSource platform, methodology, and process to generate public evaluations of fisheries that would otherwise not be conducted. SFP maintains the FishSource database with standardized protocols and high standards to ensure scientific rigor. The *External Contributor Program* is held to the same protocols and standards. Detailed information about the program is available on SFP's website. If you have not already done so, please first familiarize yourself with that document before reading this one.

This document—External Contributor Frequently Asked Questions—is intended to set expectations about the process and roles of individuals considering participation in the program as external contributors. It also serves as reference for external contributors involved in the programs.

Frequently asked questions

This section is broken down into groups of questions participants often ask before becoming an external contributor in the program, during the program, and after the program.

Before the program

1. *How can I become an approved external contributor?*
   <u>SFP does not accept unsolicited requests to become an approved external contributor</u>. Potential external contributors must be invited by SFP to participate in the program. Once the targeted individual is screened and approved, s/he must sign the External Contributor Agreement (Appendix A) and then go through training. After successful completion of the training, the individual will be added to the approved list.

2. *What sort of qualities is SFP looking for in an external contributor?*
   External contributors' work must possess and maintain the following qualities:
   - Scientific and analytic – the individual must have familiarity with fishery stock assessments, fishery management systems, and the environmental impacts of fishing.
   - Fair and balanced – the individual must conduct research, make judgments, and write reports in an unbiased manner.
   - Thorough and persistent – researching and writing FishSource reports requires contributors to search for all available information on the fishery of interest.
   - Efficient and concise – FishSource reports are a brief investigation into a fishery's environmental sustainability; SFP and the initiator expect timely delivery of agreed products.

3. *What does training for the program entail?*
   Training includes reading the FishSource Authors' Guide and completing a session with a member of SFP's FishSource team to understand the process and standards required. Training also entails successful completion of at least one FishSource fishery report (i.e., profile) that will be uploaded to the FishSource website. SFP will choose the profile for the training and will compensate the contributor accordingly.

4. *How long does a fishery report take to complete?*
   The time it takes to complete a fishery report will vary based on a number of factors including the availability of an appropriate external contributor, the data availability of the fishery, and the complexity of the fishery. From initiation to publishing, the time it takes for a completed report to be added on FishSource ranges anywhere from one week to several months. On average, the entire process for one fishery report will take several weeks. SFP will provide to the initiator and external contributor rough guidance on the data availability and complexity of the fishery to assist in estimating how long the report could take.

5. *How much should I charge the initiator for my services?*
   External contributors can contract with the initiator for compensation on an hourly basis, per fishery report, or by some other arrangement. Contributor's hourly rates will vary based on expertise, how quickly and effectively fishery reports are completed, and other factors. Compensation for completed fishery reports will vary based on the anticipated time and effort required. SFP can provide no fixed compensation rates; however, please contact your FishSource team point of contact if you need advice.

6. *How is an external contributor selected?*
   Ultimately, the initiator selects the external contributor. SFP maintains a diverse pool of approved external contributors who have undergone screening and training. We provide suggestions for candidates from the approved list based on their expertise.

7. *Does SFP get involved in the contracting, invoicing, and payment?*
   No, that part of the process is handled exclusively between the initiator and external contributor. However, SFP provides a template contract that may be used between the parties.

8. *Can an approved external contributor sub-contract all or a piece of the report development for this program?*
   No, all work must be carried out by the external contributor approved by SFP for a particular project with an initiator.

During the program

1. *How does the information gathered and written by an external contributor get uploaded to FishSource?*

Initially, external contributors will complete offline templates (for text and data) and submit them to FishSource staff, who will then upload the information. As trust is gained (both with the individual and the quality of her/his work), the FishSource team will consider giving the external contributor permission to access the back end of FishSource to upload the information directly.

2. *How is the information compiled and written by an external contributor reviewed?*
Each contributor will be assigned a point person on the FishSource team. That person will review the work of the contributor. This can occur as the fishery report is being developed and is required before uploading to the FishSource website.

3. *What if the external contributor has process or technical questions at any time during the program?*
The individual can reach out to their contact person at SFP at any time to ask questions.

4. *What if there is disagreement between the external contributor and the point person on the FishSource team?*
The FishSource standards (noted throughout the FishSource Authors' Guide) will serve as the "measuring stick" to which all fishery reports will be compared. The FishSource method is a shallow (yet thorough) screening, often involving subjective decisions. Even within the current FishSource team, incorrect judgments are occasionally made. The external contributor and FishSource point person will work together to ensure standards are being applied as intended. If a resolution between the two cannot be reached, a more senior person within SFP will intervene to help find a resolution. If no resolution can be found, SFP makes the final determination of what is uploaded to the FishSource website.

5. *Can the initiator terminate the report development process at any point*?
Yes, but only if allowed within the terms of contract between the initiator and external contributor. However, SFP may choose to complete (internally or externally) the development of the fishery report(s) for publication on FishSource.

6. *Is it guaranteed that the fishery report(s) developed through the program will be published on FishSource?*
No, if the external contributor produces a product that is below the FishSource standards, SFP will not publish the report until it reaches or exceeds those standards. The initiator contracts with the contributor to provide a draft report to SFP for our consideration. SFP will work with the contributor to ensure that draft is sufficient for publication.

7. *What happens if the fishery report submitted by a contributor is purposefully biased or misleading?*

SFP reserves the right to make a judgment whether a report is purposefully biased or misleading. If this is found to be the case, SFP will remove the contributor from the approved list and from the program.

After the program

1. *Who can use the fishery report after it is completed?*
   After publication of the fishery report on FishSource, it becomes available for anyone to use. The data of the report can be downloaded and the content can be cited. Anyone can link to the fishery report from a document, website, etc.

2. *Can an external contributor receive acknowledgement for participating in the program?*
   Yes, if requested. Attribution can be displayed as "*Jane Doe* was the primary contributor of this profile."

3. *Can an external contributor add reference to experience in the program and publication of a report to her/his resume?*
   Yes, SFP encourages that.

Appendix A

<u>External Contributor Agreement</u>

In order to participate in Sustainable Fisheries Partnership's (SFP) FishSource External Contributor's Program, a candidate External Contributor must agree to the contents of this document as acknowledged by her or his signature. Once the agreement is signed, in order for an External Contributor to maintain her or his good standing within the program, she or he must adhere to the clauses below. The undersigned External Contributor will:

1. Fully understand SFP's FishSource External Contributor's Program by reading and maintaining familiarity with the program's Overview Document.
2. Successfully carry out training for the program. Training includes reading the FishSource Authors' Guide and completing a session with a member of SFP's FishSource team to understand the process and standards required. Training also entails successful completion of at least one FishSource fishery report (i.e., profile) that will be uploaded to the FishSource website. SFP will choose the profile for the training and will compensate the contributor accordingly.
3. Disclose to SFP any possible conflicts of interest that may exist if the External Contributor were to conduct work on behalf of an Initiator.
4. When carrying out work through the program, adhere to the guidance and standards of SFP's FishSource program.
5. When carrying out work through the program, maintain a high level of quality, professionalism, fairness, and objectivity. The External Contributor must use good judgment, when it is needed.
6. Be removed from the program, if SFP determines that the External Contributor conducts work that is purposefully biased or misleading.
7. Fulfill the contract terms agreed with an Initiator who has contracted directly with the External Contributor.
8. Execute the work agreed with the Initiator by herself or himself. The External Contributor cannot subcontract any portion of the work to another individual.
9. Seek assistance and guidance from SFP and the Initiator, if any questions or issues arise.

External Contributor (printed): _____

External Contributor (signed): _____

Date signed: _____