

**SECRETARIAT OF THE
PACIFIC COMMUNITY**

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In reply please quote file:
En réponse, veuillez indiquer :

21 April 2008

Jennifer Nielsen,
USGS/ Alaska Science Center
1011 East Tudor Rd
Anchorage, AK 99503

Dear Jennifer,

I give my full support to the nomination of Dr. David Fournier for the William E. Ricker Resource Conservation Award. The integrated approach to the analysis of fisheries data developed by Dr. Fournier (Fournier and Archibald 1982) and its subsequent extension to accommodate size data, forms the basis of stock assessment models used widely throughout the world today.

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community Oceanic Fisheries Programme is the organization charged with providing scientific advice for the management of tuna fisheries in the vast western and central Pacific region. The tuna fisheries in this region generate nearly 60% of the global tuna catch and have an annual landed value of in excess of USD3 billion. These fisheries are vitally important to the peoples of the Pacific Islands. Dr. Fournier has been instrumental in the development of a stock assessment modeling approach, MULTIFAN-CL, that extends the original Fournier and Archibald model and which is used extensively for tuna stock assessment in this region. Derivatives of this approach are used for tuna and other species stock assessments in most oceans.

In the development of these methods, Dr. Fournier has shown remarkable insights into what works and what does not in complex age- or size-structured fisheries models. Typically, modern fisheries management needs to consider many aspects of the dynamics of fish populations and their exploitation. This need has resulted in the requirement for fisheries models to explicitly deal with a range of process error that requires large numbers of parameters to be estimated. Likewise, fisheries management decision-making now demands a thorough evaluation of the uncertainty associated with the results of fisheries models. Robust, numerical stable models of this sort are notoriously difficult to develop. Dr. Fournier's success in doing so has created a new standard for fisheries modeling that I believe has greatly increased the value of scientific advice being provided to fisheries management decision-makers.

With the development of the AD Model Builder software, Dr. Fournier has shared many of his insights with the fisheries and ecological modeling community. The software underpins many stock assessment applications, and as a result, there is no doubt that better, more robust and more appropriate models are now being used in fisheries management throughout the world. Its value is reflected by the recent creation of the ADMB Foundation, whose objectives are to take the software open source to increase its accessibility and to provide a strong, well-resourced platform for its further development and use.

I have absolutely no hesitation in recommending Dr. David Fournier for the William E. Ricker Resource Conservation Award. I can think of no more deserving recipient.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J Hampton", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr. John Hampton
Oceanic Fisheries Programme Manager