![Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council logo]

MAFMC 2020 -2024 Strategic Plan Overview

This overview is intended to provide an abbreviated, "at-a-glance" view of the topics addressed in the Council's 2020-2024 Strategic Plan. Please refer to the complete plan for additional details.

www.mafmc.org/strategic-plan

Mission

The Council manages fisheries in federal waters of the Mid-Atlantic region for their long-term sustainability and productivity consistent with the national standards of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The Council is committed to the stewardship of these fisheries, and associated ecosystems and fishing communities, through the collaborative development of effective, science-based fishery management plans and policies.

Vision

Healthy marine ecosystems and thriving, sustainable fisheries and fishing communities that provide the greatest overall benefit to the nation.

Core Values

- Stewardship
- Integrity
- Effectiveness
- Fairness
- Competence
- Transparency

Communication: Engage stakeholders and the public through education and outreach that foster sustained participation in, and awareness of, the Council process.

1. Tools and methods
- Use a variety of traditional, web-based, and social media tools
- Upgrade the website content and organization
- Coordinate with management partners
- Expand media coverage
- Expand the use of "interested parties" lists
- Maintain online calendar
- Establish Communication/Outreach Advisory Panel

2. Stakeholder participation
- Hold workshops to develop innovative management approaches
- Develop outreach materials to facilitate stakeholder participation
- Schedule and conduct meetings/hearings in a manner that encourages participation
- Expand use of online comment forms
- Develop action-specific web pages
- Use webinars and other technologies to enable remote participation

3. Education and awareness
- Develop outreach and education materials on Council fisheries and process
- Promote partner organizations' workshops and educational opportunities
- Collaboratively develop outreach materials on fisheries science and data collection
- Use plain language in Council documents

Science: Ensure that the Council's management decisions are based on timely and accurate scientific information and methods.

4. Planning and addressing research needs
- Leverage opportunities to include Council research priorities in external funding programs
- Engage in regional collaboration on research priorities and planning
- Support the new NRCC stock assessment process
- Develop a process for cross-communication between SSCs
- Develop a comprehensive research plan

5. Collaborative research
- Expand/enhance existing Northeast Cooperative Research Program initiatives
- Identify research needs suitable for collaborative research
- Support the use of "vessels of opportunity"
- Support priorities identified by NEAMAP operations committee
- Support innovations in gear development to reduce bycatch
- Evaluate future RSA options

6. Data collection, monitoring and reporting
- Support Fishery Dependent Data Initiative
- Support development of a unique trip identifier
- Work to eliminate duplicative/unnecessary reporting
- Address inconsistencies in commercial and for-hire permitting/reporting/inspection requirements
- Consider phone apps for recreational reporting

7. Social and economic data
- Identify existing social/economic data sources
- Incorporate fishermen's knowledge in the stock assessment process
- Identify data/information gaps that can be addressed with on-the-water observations.
- Support improvements to social/economic analyses

8. Priority setting
- Conduct periodic reviews of Five-Year Research Priorities
- Review research needs identified in stock assessments
- Track progress toward addressing the Council's research priorities.

Management: Develop effective management strategies that provide for sustainable fisheries and healthy marine ecosystems and consider the needs of fishing communities and other resource users.

9. Coordinated management through partnerships
- Use the NRCC to enhance coordination and communication
- Coordinate with partners to ensure efficient allocation of staff resources
- Address inconsistencies across state/federal/regional boundaries

10. Adapt management approaches
- Monitor variability in species distribution, abundance, and availability
- Use FPRs and SOE reports to develop management responses to changing conditions
- Review the performance of existing measures

11. Consider social/economic impacts
- Expand the use of MSEs to determine social/economic impacts
- Evaluate the impacts of current measures on recreational participation and satisfaction
- Expand the use of multi-year management approaches
- Evaluate the impacts of management on fishing businesses

Ecosystem: Support the ecologically sustainable utilization of living marine resources in a manner that maintains ecosystem productivity, structure, and function.		
12. EAFM Implementation • Track EAFM implementation progress • Use the structured framework process as a tool to implement EAFM • Collaborate with science partners to address ecosystem information needs	**13. Climate change** • Identify climate-related data needs • Consider management and governance responses to shifting species distributions • Evaluate ability of current management approaches to respond to shifting species distributions • Consider management strategies that are responsive to the impacts of climate change on fishery allocations	**14. Habitat** • Identify the contributions of inshore habitats to offshore productivity • Review EFH designations • Participate in regional habitat partnerships • Develop the linkages between habitat science/conservation and fishery outcomes • Ensure that Council habitat policies reflect current scientific information and best management practices • Examine the use of EFH/HAPCs to ensure ecosystem integrity
15. Offshore energy • Collaborate with partners on offshore energy issues to identify information needs and evaluate impacts • Comment on proposed offshore energy projects	**16. Forage** • Consider the role of Council-managed species in the ecosystem • Consider and account for the impacts of Council-managed species on the forage base • Monitor unmanaged forage landings	**17. Ecosystem impacts** • Incorporate information from the SOE reports to identify impacts of Council decisions on the ecosystem • Consider measures that promote fewer regulatory discards and greater utilization of catch • Avoid/reduce negative impacts on protected resources

Governance: *Ensure that the Council's practices accurately represent and consider the interests of fisheries, fishing communities, and the public through a transparent and inclusive decision-making process.*			
18. Open, accessible process • Develop/update policies for Council committees and advisory/technical bodies. • Provide annual updates on Council activities • Review/update SOPP on a regular basis • Provide webinars whenever possible	**19. Collaboration with management partners** • Review/update regional operating agreement • Clarify roles, responsibilities, procedures with ASMFC for joint meetings/actions • Develop agreements with NEFMC and SAFMC • Review composition/operation of Council committees to address management partner concerns	**20. Stakeholder interests** • Create new opportunities for general public comment during meetings • Add opportunities for public comment on implementation plans • Evaluate the composition of advisory bodies • Improve communication regarding the use of public input in management decisions	**21. Member and staff training and development** • Provide opportunities for Council member training • Support staff development • Promote staff-to-staff collaboration with management partners

Managed Fisheries

Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass • Mackerel, Squid, Butterfish
Surfclams and Ocean Quahogs • Golden and Blueline Tilefish
Bluefish • Spiny Dogfish • Monkfish