



2021 Implementation Plan

DECEMBER 2020 COUNCIL MEETING



Objectives

- Strategic plan overview and update on 2020 deliverables
- Review draft 2021 Implementation Plan
- Discuss potential bullet/frigate mackerel action
- Approve 2021 Implementation Plan

Briefing Materials (Tab 2)

1. Strategic Plan Overview
2. End-of-Year Updates on 2020 Proposed Deliverables
3. Draft 2021 Implementation Plan
4. 2021 Deliverables – Supplemental Project Descriptions
5. Follow Up on Bullet and Frigate Mackerel Possession Limit

2020-2024 Strategic Plan

Vision:

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

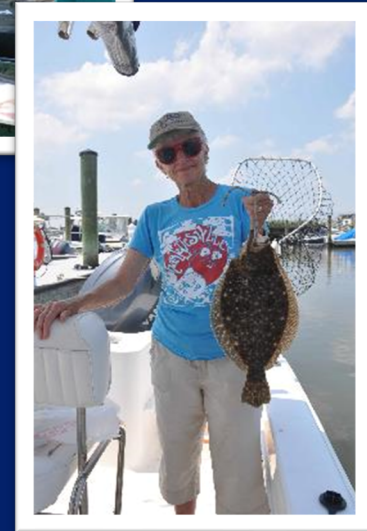
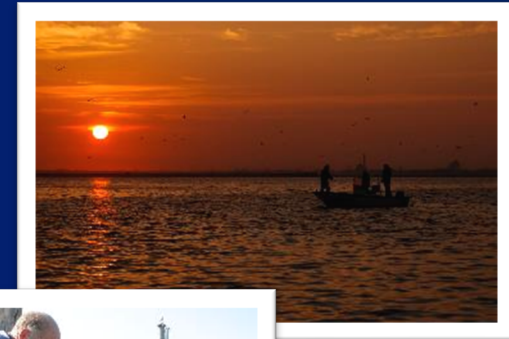


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2020-2024 Strategic Plan

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.



2020-2024 Strategic Plan

Goals:

Communication:

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

Science:

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

Management:

- Develop effective management strategies that provide for sustainable fisheries and healthy marine ecosystems while considering the needs of fishing communities and other resource users.

Ecosystem:

- Support the ecologically sustainable utilization of living marine resources in a manner that maintains ecosystem productivity, structure, and function.

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.

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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

<p>12. EAFM Implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track EAFM implementation progress Use the structured framework process as a tool to implement EAFM Collaborate with science partners to address ecosystem information needs 	<p>13. Climate change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<p>14. Habitat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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
<p>15. Offshore energy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with partners on offshore energy issues to identify information needs and evaluate impacts Comment on proposed offshore energy projects 	<p>16. Forage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<p>17. Ecosystem impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.

<p>18. Open, accessible process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<p>19. Collaboration with management partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<p>20. Stakeholder interests</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<p>21. Member and staff training and development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities for Council member training Support staff development Promote staff-to-staff collaboration with management partners
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Managed Fisheries

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



2020 End-of-Year Updates

- See Tab 2, document #2

What is an implementation plan?

- Link between the 5-year strategic plan and the Council's annual activities
- A tool for **planning** at the beginning of the year, **tracking** throughout the year, and **reporting** at the end of the year.

2021 Implementation Plan Organization

■ Proposed Actions and Deliverables

- At-a-glance view of Council work for the year
- Organized by FMP
- Includes major activities and projects

■ Priority Activities

- Organized by strategic goal and objective
- Includes all actions and deliverables, plus some non-deliverable activities and process-oriented priorities
- Will help the Council ensure progress across all objectives from year to year

Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass 1/3

1. 2022-2023 specifications for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass
2. 2022 recreational management measures for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass
3. Review and potentially revise commercial minimum mesh size regulations and exemptions for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass
4. Develop advisory panel fishery performance reports

Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass 2/3

5. Continue development of a framework action and technical guidance documents to address the prioritized Recreational Reform Initiative topics.
6. Begin development of an amendment to consider recreational sector separation and recreational catch accounting for summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, and bluefish.
7. Evaluate commercial scup discards and gear restricted areas

Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass 3/3

8. Complete the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Commercial/Recreational Allocation Amendment
9. Continue development of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM) management strategy evaluation (MSE) for summer flounder
10. Support management track assessments for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass

Bluefish

11. Develop 2022-2023 bluefish specifications
12. Develop 2022 bluefish recreational management measures
13. Develop advisory panel fishery performance report
14. Complete the Bluefish Allocation and Rebuilding Amendment
15. Support management track assessment for bluefish

Note: Deliverables #5 and 6 in the previous section will also address bluefish recreational management issues

Golden and Blueline Tilefish

16. Review 2022 golden tilefish specifications
17. Develop 2022-2023 blueline tilefish specifications
18. Develop advisory panel fishery performance reports
19. Review performance of private recreational tilefish permitting and reporting
20. Support management track assessment for golden tilefish
21. Initiate golden tilefish multi-year specifications framework (EO 13921 recommendation)
22. Review 2020 tilefish survey report and consider funding/logistics for 2022 survey

Mackerel, Squid, Butterfish 1/2

23. Review 2022 Atlantic mackerel, chub mackerel, longfin, and butterfish specifications
24. Develop 2022 Illex specifications
25. Consider modifications to the Illex incidental possession limit during closures (EO 13921 recommendation)
26. Consider modifications to the butterfish minimum mesh size regulations (EO 13921 recommendation)
27. Develop advisory panel fishery performance reports

Mackerel, Squid, Butterfish 2/2

28. Review butterfish cap performance report
29. Review HMS/chub mackerel diet study final report
30. Support management track assessment for Atlantic mackerel
31. Support research track assessments for butterfish and Illex squid (including possible additional Illex working group products)

River Herring and Shad

32. Review RH/S cap performance and RH/S update

Spiny Dogfish

33. Review 2022 spiny dogfish specifications
34. Develop advisory panel fishery performance report
35. Develop spiny dogfish trip limit white paper (EO 13921 recommendation)

Surfclam and Ocean Quahog

36. Review 2022 specifications for surfclam and ocean quahog
37. Develop advisory panel fishery performance reports
38. Continue work on an action to address issues with surfclam and ocean quahog species separation requirements
39. Review surfclam genetic study final report

Science and Research

40. Convene a workshop to review and consider redevelopment of the research set-aside (RSA) program
41. Conduct a biennial review and update of the 2020-2024 research priorities document
42. Convene a joint Council/SSC meeting
43. Review outcomes and recommendations from SSC Economic Workgroup
44. Support the Fishery Dependent Data Initiative (GARFO lead)

Ecosystem and Ocean Planning / Habitat

45. Develop and review the 2021 EAFM risk assessment report
46. Coordinate the Northeast Regional Habitat Assessment (NRHA)
47. Continue work on the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Redo
48. Maintain joint MAFMC and New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) offshore wind web pages
49. Develop habitat- and fishery-related comments on offshore energy development
50. Continue development of East Coast climate change and distribution shift scenario planning initiative

General

51. Review commercial landings of unmanaged species
52. Complete advisory panel reappointment for all APs
53. Develop comment letters to various agencies regarding E.O. 13921 recommendations

Communication and Outreach

54. Continue to implement the Council communication and outreach plan
55. Develop and maintain Council action web pages
56. Develop fact sheets and outreach materials as needed
57. Establish a Communication/Outreach Advisory Panel
58. Conduct virtual or in-person workshops to support commercial eVTR implementation
59. Maintain general and issue-specific email distribution lists

Staff Wrap-Up on Completed Actions

Completed actions requiring staff work in 2021 to finalize for submission to NMFS:

60. Black Sea Bass Commercial State Allocation Amendment
61. Illex Permit and MSB Goals and Objectives Amendment

Possible Additions

1. Initiate action to implement a possession limit for frigate and bullet mackerel in the Mid-Atlantic
2. Establish a working group to evaluate potential approaches for incorporating additional stakeholder knowledge and input in the stock assessment process
3. Review red crab and lobster fishery exemptions for discrete deep sea coral protected zones
4. Initiate action to address right whale issues
5. Develop a white paper on collecting fixed/variable costs and employment information (for all Northeast fisheries)
6. Modify list of ecosystem component species from Unmanaged Forage Amendment (e.g., addition of cancer crabs)

SAFMC Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 12

- MAFMC sought to protect bullet/frigate through Forage Amendment; disapproved by GARFO.
- MAFMC requested that SAFMC consider managing as ECs given their role as prey for wahoo.
- SAFMC Amendment 12
 - Added to DW FMP as ECs; no mgmt. measures.
 - Did not consider a commercial possession limit because NMFS advised that it could only apply in the South Atlantic to vessels with DW permits – would not provide any meaningful protections.

Bullet and Frigate Mackerel

- Staff recommendation: Develop options for a commercial possession limit in Mid-Atlantic federal waters through a FW to the Bluefish FMP.
- Rationale:
 - Important role in ecosystem as prey for HMS.
 - Simple “freeze the footprint” approach.
 - Don’t manage as a “stock in need of conservation and management” (requires ABCs, ACLs, AMs, etc.).
 - Most catch/landings occurred on trips where target species was bluefish, 2010-2019.