



Council Meeting Summary

October 7-9, 2014

The following summary highlights Council actions and issues considered at the October 2014 Council Meeting in Philadelphia, PA. Presentations, briefing materials, and audio recordings are linked from the relevant sections below. Additional information about the meeting is available at www.mafmc.org/briefing/october-2014.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee reviewed a draft list of priorities and activities for the 2015 implementation plan. The Committee recommended several revisions, including the addition of an amendment to consider reducing latent capacity in the longfin and Illex squid fisheries. Council staff will incorporate the Committee's recommendations and present a revised draft for Council consideration at the December meeting.

- [Briefing Materials \(Tab 1\)](#)
- [Webinar Recording](#)

Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Committee

The Council voted to take the draft Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog [Cost Recovery Amendment](#) out for public hearings and comment. The draft amendment considers management measures to 1) collect fees and recover costs associated with the management of the surfclam and ocean quahog ITQ fisheries; 2) facilitate incorporation of revised stock status determination criteria (i.e., biological reference points) into the Fishery Management Plan (FMP), and, 3) modify or eliminate the optimum yield (OY) ranges currently in the FMP. Public hearings will be scheduled this winter.

In addition, the Council provided comments to the National Marine Fisheries Service on the Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Information Collection Program proposed rule. The Council recommended that specific data collection elements on the draft *Application to Transfer Surf Clam/Ocean Quahog ITQ* form be removed.

- [Briefing Materials \(Tab 2\)](#)
- [Webinar Recording](#)

Forage Fish White Paper

The Council received a presentation on a [Forage Fish White Paper](#) that was written by Council staff and SSC members to inform the Council's consideration of forage fish management in its Ecosystem Approaches to Fisheries Management (EAFM) guidance document. The paper outlines potential forage fish management approaches that could be used to ensure sustainable fisheries on both the forage species and their predators while maintaining a healthy and productive ecosystem.

- [Briefing Materials \(Tab 3\)](#)
- [Webinar Recording](#)

River Herring/Shad Committee Meeting as a Committee of the Whole

The Council's River Herring and Shad (RH/S) Committee reviewed and approved a list of key questions for evaluating progress on river herring and shad issues. As part of an annual progress review in June, Council staff will address the items in the "[key questions list](#)". Staff will also work with NMFS to evaluate what would happen to observer coverage levels if river herring and/or shad were added to the Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology prioritization process for observer coverage.

- [Briefing Materials \(Tab 4\)](#)
- [Webinar Recording](#)

Omnibus Observer Funding Amendment

Council staff provided an update on development of the [Omnibus Observer Funding Amendment](#), which is being developed jointly by the New England and Mid-Atlantic Councils to facilitate industry funding of observer coverage. The Council expressed frustration at the pace and range of options developed to date, and the Amendment development team will continue work to develop options that can facilitate expanded observer coverage.

- [Briefing Materials \(Tab 5\)](#)
- [Webinar Recording](#)

Vessel Baseline Amendment

The Council reviewed public comments on the draft Vessel Baseline Amendment, which considers eliminating certain baseline restrictions to reduce the administrative and cost burden to industry and NMFS. The Council voted to recommend Alternative 4 as the preferred alternative and adopted the amendment for Secretarial review and implementation. Under Alternative 4, gross and net tonnage would be eliminated from baseline specifications and the one-time limit on vessel upgrades would also be eliminated.

- [Briefing Materials \(Tab 6\)](#)
- [Webinar Recording](#)

Spiny Dogfish Specifications

The Council reviewed spiny dogfish specifications for 2015, [which were set last year](#) as part of 2014-2015 multi-year specifications. After considering input from the Council's SSC and the Spiny Dogfish Advisory Panel and Monitoring Committee, the Council determined that no changes are warranted.

- [Briefing Materials \(Tab 7\)](#)
- [Webinar Recording](#)

Amendment 9 to the Consolidated HMS Fishery Management Plan

NMFS Highly Migratory Species (HMS) staff provided an update on Amendment 9 to the Consolidated HMS Fishery Management Plan. This Amendment primarily addresses smooth dogfish and shark gillnet issues. The Council agreed to send a comment letter regarding concerns about some provisions of the Amendment. A summary and link to comment is available [HERE](#) (Deadline: November 14). One final webinar hearing is scheduled for November 4 ([click here for details](#)).

- [Briefing Materials \(Tab 8\)](#)
- [Webinar Recording](#)

Monkfish

The Council received an update from the Joint Monkfish Committee and voted to support the Committee's recommendation to initiate Framework Adjustment 9 to the Monkfish FMP, including consideration of a measure to allow gillnets < 10" mesh while fishing on a monkfish Days-At-Sea in order to target spiny dogfish and/or other species.

Other Business

Sarah Cooksey, Delaware Coastal Programs Administrator, provided an update on Regional Ocean Planning in the Mid-Atlantic. Her presentation highlighted recent activities of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO) and the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body.

- [Briefing Materials \(Tab 9\)](#)
- [Webinar Recording](#)

Next Meeting:
December 9-11, 2014
Baltimore, MD

Visit www.mafmc.org/briefing-books to view the full 2014 and 2015 meeting schedules