



# **Aquaculture Policy and Update**

**Council Meeting**  
*7 June 2022*

# Today

- Objectives . . .
- Review the draft documents
  - Aquaculture Background Document
  - Aquaculture Policy Document
- Review Ecosystem and Ocean Planning Committee recommendations
- Aquaculture Policy Document Approval

Source: NOAA Fisheries



# Document(s) Development

- Staff used existing aquaculture background and aquaculture policy developed by the NEFMC
- NEFMC - Multilayered process
  - Staff from the NEFMC, GARFO, MAFMC, NEFSC
  - In addition, for the policy document
    - Multi-year process including Habitat Committee, PDT, Habitat AP meetings/input
  - NEFMC adopted aquaculture policy document in December 2020

# Document(s) Development

- Similar approaches have been used in the past, e.g., MAFMC Habitat Policy Document (HPD) was used to develop the NEFMC HPD



# Aquaculture Background

- Document scope
- Activity overview
  - What is aquaculture
  - Species cultured
  - Areas where aquaculture occurs
  - Permitting an authorization process (federal and state)





# Aquaculture Backgrounder

- Potential impacts on species and habitats
  - Positive impacts
  - Adverse effects (fish, shellfish, interactions between managed species and aquaculture)
- Potential interactions with other marine and coastal activities
- References and best management practices



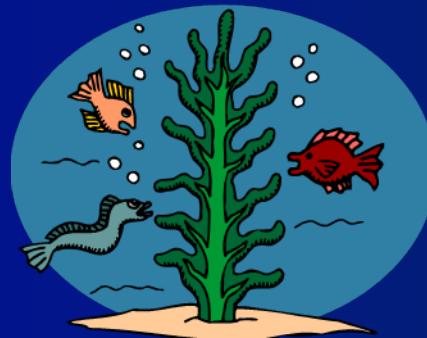
# Aquaculture Policy

## ■ *INTRODUCTION*

- States scope of activities the policy pertains to
- Mentions overarching MAFMC habitat policy and the Council's role in EFH and HAPC designation and consultation
- States that the Council is seeking development compatible with the protection of Council-managed species and their habitat, and with commercial and recreational fishing activities

# Aquaculture Policy (Introduction)

- *INTRODUCTION . . .*
- Emphasizes early and often approach, and the importance of considering cumulative effects
- Identifies audiences for the policy





# Aquaculture Policy

## ■ *AQUACULTURE PRINCIPLES*

1. Site and design projects in the context of ecosystem functions and services
  - Consider distribution of specific sensitive habitat, etc.
2. Adopt operational practices to reduce environmental effects
  - Secure gear, gear maintenance, use native/naturalized species when possible, etc.

# Aquaculture Policy



## ■ *AQUACULTURE PRINCIPLES . . .*

3. Consider cumulative effects
4. Contribute positively to local coastal economies
5. Develop in context of other sectors, policies, and goals
  - Consider distribution of fishing grounds and potential for adverse interactions, start with pilot scale projects, use high quality data to understand other uses

# Aquaculture Policy

6. Clear and ongoing communication is important
7. *The collection of baseline scientific data (e.g., baseline environmental surveys) should be a necessary part of the permitting process and should include completion of a comprehensive seafloor survey, robust hydrological, water quality surveys, and other environmental surveys as needed*

# EOPC Meeting – May 10

- Suggested some minor edits to the document for clarity
- Added an additional principle to the policy document (principle 7 on previous slide)
- Passed motion
  - *Recommend that the Council approve the Draft Aquaculture Policy as modified by the EOP Committee*

Duval/Winslow

Motion approved by unanimous consent

# Approval and Next Steps

- Questions? Discussion? Suggested edits?
- Approval will lead to inclusion in “Council Policy and Process Documents”
  - Policy could be revised over time if needed via Council action
- Continue dialog with NOAA Fisheries on how to best work together to provide input on specific projects, and on aquaculture planning in general
- Continue to work with the NEFMC on issues of shared interest