



2024 Implementation Plan

December 2023 Council Meeting



MID-ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

2020-2024 Strategic Plan

Approved December 2019

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

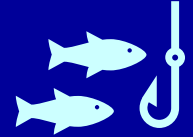
- Expand the use of MSEs to determine social/economic impacts
- Evaluate the impacts of current measures on recreational participation and satisfaction
- Expand the use of multi-year management approaches
- Evaluate the impacts of management on fishing businesses

Annual Implementation Plans

- 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.

2023 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN END-OF-YEAR UPDATES

Council Actions



Recreational Measures Setting Process Framework/Addenda (initiated)

Surfclam/Ocean Quahog Species Separation Requirements (in progress)

Recreational Sector Separation and Catch Accounting Amendment (delayed)

Sturgeon bycatch framework (in progress)

Omnibus EFH Amendment (in progress)

Illex Vessel Hold Capacity Framework (final action)

Atlantic mackerel emergency action request

Stock Assessments



Research Track

- Black sea bass
- Golden tilefish
- Applying State Space Models

Management Track

- Summer flounder
- Scup
- Bluefish
- Atlantic mackerel
- Longfin squid
- Spiny dogfish

Specifications (New)



Species	Year and Measures
Summer flounder and scup	2024-2025 specifications and rec measures
Black sea bass	2024 specifications and rec measures
Bluefish	2024-2025 specifications and rec measures
Atlantic mackerel	2024-2025 specifications and RH/S cap
Spiny Dogfish	2024-2026 specifications
Longfin squid	2024-2026 specifications
<i>Illex</i> squid	2024-2025 specifications

Specifications (Review)



Species	Year and Measures
Golden tilefish	2024 specifications
Blueline tilefish	2024 specifications
Chub mackerel	2024 specifications
<i>Illex</i> squid	2023 specifications
Butterfish	2024 specifications
Surfclam/Quahog	2024 specifications

Other Projects and Initiatives

Scup GRA evaluation

Evaluation of summer flounder commercial minimum mesh size regulations and exemptions

Golden tilefish IFQ program review

Consideration of RSA program redevelopment

Comprehensive review of EAFM risk assessment

East Coast Climate Change Scenario Planning Initiative

Exempted Fishing Permit Review Policy/Process Guidance Document

National Fishing Effects Database

NMFS Draft Procedural Directive on MSA 304(f) (“Climate Governance Policy”)

Science and Research



2023 golden tilefish survey

South Atlantic Deepwater Longline (SADL) survey expansion

Extended *Illex* contract in support of *Illex* ABC setting

SCOQ electronic monitoring project

Supplemental surfclam genetics project

SSC Ecosystem Work Group

Short-term forecasts of species distributions project

Note: The above list does not include a number of new projects initiated in 2023 and continuing into 2024. See the 2023 end-of-year updates document for a comprehensive list of projects.

Reviews and Updates



Commercial Landings of Unmanaged Species

Private Recreational Tilefish Permitting and Reporting

2023 State of the Ecosystem Report

Offshore Wind Updates

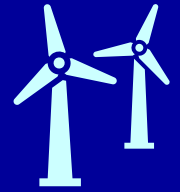
Habitat Updates



Council Comments

1. To ONMS: Hudson Canyon Sanctuary 304(a)(5) consultation
2. To GARFO: MSB Amendment 22 Disapproval Follow-up
3. To GARFO: 2023 SFSBSB Recreational Measures Setting Process Issues
4. To NMFS: NOAA Seafood Strategy Implementation
5. To GARFO: Black Sea Bass Commercial State Allocation Amendment
6. To NMFS: Public Outreach for Draft Fisheries Climate Governance Policy
7. To FDA: Biotxin Protocols Impact on the SC/OQ Fisheries
8. To GARFO: New England and Mid-Atlantic Geographic Strategic Plan
9. To GARFO: Atlantic Mackerel Emergency Request
10. To GARFO: Comments on HMS Amendment 15 and 16 and ANPR
11. To Senator Blumenthal: SHIFT Act Comments
12. To NMFS: ANPR Re: National Standard 4, 8, and 9 Guideline Revisions
13. To NMFS: NS1 Technical Guidance Document
14. To NMFS: Comments on 304(f) Procedural Directive (“Climate Governance Policy”)

Offshore Wind Comments



1. Draft EIS for Empire Wind Project off New York
2. MNMPARS Recommendations
3. Draft EIS for Sunrise Wind Project offshore NY, MA, and RI
4. Draft EIS for Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind Project
5. Draft EIS for New England Wind Project off Massachusetts
6. Draft EIS for SouthCoast Wind Project
7. Renewable Energy Modernization Rule
8. Atlantic Shores South Wind DEIS
9. EFH Conservation Recommendations for the Revolution Wind project
10. Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS for the Beacon Wind Project
11. Notice of Intent to Prepare an EA for Central Atlantic Wind Energy Areas
Draft EIS for Maryland Offshore Wind Project

QUESTIONS?

DRAFT 2024 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass

1. 2025 black sea bass specifications
2. 2025 summer flounder and scup specifications review
3. 2025 black sea bass recreational management measures
4. 2025 summer flounder and scup recreational management measures review
5. Recreational Measures Setting Process Framework/Addenda (continuing)
6. Recreational Sector Separation and Recreational Catch Accounting Amendment (continuing)
7. Advisory panel fishery performance reports
8. Black sea bass management track assessment support
9. Framework action to consider modifications to the commercial scup Gear Restricted Areas (GRA) or other measures to help reduce scup discards (initiation)
10. Scup bycatch prediction and avoidance modeling and research*

Bluefish

11. 2025 bluefish specifications review
12. 2025 bluefish recreational management measures review
13. Advisory panel fishery performance report

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

Golden and Blueline Tilefish

14. 2025-2027 golden tilefish specifications
15. 2025 blueline tilefish specifications
16. Advisory panel fishery performance reports
17. Update on private recreational tilefish permitting and reporting performance
18. Development of strategies to improve compliance with recreational tilefish permitting and reporting requirements*
19. Blueline tilefish operational assessment support
20. Golden tilefish research track assessment support
21. Golden tilefish management track assessment support
22. South Atlantic Deepwater Longline Survey expansion into Mid-Atlantic waters*

Mackerel, Squid, Butterfish

23. 2025-2026 butterfish specifications
24. 2025 Atlantic mackerel, chub mackerel, longfin squid, and Illex squid specifications review
25. Advisory panel fishery performance reports
26. Butterfish management track assessment support
27. Longfin squid research track assessment support*
28. Longfin squid biological sampling project*
29. Squid modeling project*

River Herring and Shad

30. RH/S run data portal development project*

31. RH/S bycatch prediction and avoidance modeling and research*

Spiny Dogfish

32. 2025 spiny dogfish specifications review
33. Advisory panel fishery performance report
34. Spiny dogfish ageing project*
35. Spiny dogfish ageing workshop
36. Joint framework action to reduce Atlantic sturgeon bycatch in the monkfish and spiny dogfish fisheries (final action)

Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog

37. 2025 surfclam and ocean quahog specifications review
38. Advisory panel fishery performance reports
39. Atlantic surfclam management track assessment support
40. SCOQ electronic monitoring project*
41. Supplemental surfclam genetics project*
42. Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Species Separation Requirements Amendment (continuing)

Science and Research

- 43. 2025-2029 Council research priorities
- 44. Updates to the SSC's Overfishing Limit (OFL) Coefficient of Variation (CV) Guidance Document
- 45. Supplemental port biological sampling*
- 46. Mid-Atlantic fish ageing project*
- 47. Northeast Trawl Advisory Panel (NTAP) coordination and facilitation

Ecosystem and Ocean Planning/Habitat

48. Joint Mid-Atlantic and New England Fishery Management Council offshore wind web page management
49. Council comments on habitat and fishery issues related to offshore energy development
50. 2024 EAFM risk assessment report
51. National Fishing Effects Database project*
52. Omnibus Essential Fish Habitat Amendment (continuing)
53. Northeast Regional Habitat Assessment maintenance and integration of products
54. Comments on Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) applications for Forage Amendment Ecosystem Component species (e.g., thread herring EFP application review)

General

55. 2025-2029 Strategic Plan

56. Reappointment of all advisory panels

57. Update on commercial landings of unmanaged species (including consideration of possible landings thresholds for further evaluation for management)

58. Participation on Council Coordination Committee Working Groups and Subcommittees (Habitat, Area-Based Management, Climate Change, Legislative, ESA/MSA Coordination, Equity and Environmental Justice, Council Member Ongoing Development)

59. Participation on marine mammal take reduction teams and protected resources working groups

60. Activities related to Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certifications/audits for Council-managed fisheries (i.e., respond to requests for information)

61. Legislative issue tracking (including development of comments upon request)

Climate Resilience and Governance

62. Program review of Council/GARFO processes for fishery management action development*

63. Evaluation of Council committee structure, use, and decision making (in collaboration with other East coast Councils; addresses scenario planning potential action G1)

64. Activities related to Inflation Reduction Act funded-projects for climate-ready fisheries (proposal development and project management)

Communication and Outreach

65. Ongoing communication activities to support understanding and awareness of the Council and its managed fisheries (development of web resources, email announcements, press releases, YouTube videos, webinars, face-to-face meetings, printed and digital communication materials, etc.)

66. Outreach campaigns to increase stakeholder awareness and understanding of Council actions under development and opportunities for participation

67. Council website improvements (continuing)

Staff Wrap Up on Completed Actions

68. Finalize and submit any outstanding specifications packages for 2024.

Possible Additions

69. Action to authorize an experimental Atlantic surfclam fishery in the Great South Channel Habitat Management Area (HMA)
70. Development of spatial management options for Atlantic surfclam open water aquaculture in the New York Bight and central Atlantic
71. Framework to allow quota transfer between commercial and recreational sectors for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass
72. Action to implement "did not fish" reports for commercial, for-hire, and private tilefish permit holders
73. Coordination on Monkfish FMP actions initiated by the New England Council
74. Review of Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) utility and its use for enforcement (in coordination with NEFMC)

Potential Revisions

- #9 (Scup GRA Framework) – move to Possible Additions
- Summer flounder flynet and small mesh exemption framework – add to SFSBSB
 - **Motion from 12/12/23:** I move to consider as a potential 2024 priority a framework adjustment/addendum to clarify the definition of a flynet and to consider moving the western boundary of the small-mesh exemption area. The intent of this framework/addendum is for possible implementation by November 1, 2024.

DRAFT MOTION:

Move to approve the 2024 Implementation Plan with the revisions approved by the Council today.