

# 2023 Actions and Deliverables

## End-of-Year Updates

### December 2023 Council Meeting

The table below provides an update on the status of proposed actions and deliverables from the Council’s 2023 Implementation Plan. This document reflects the expected status of each item by the end of 2023 (tasks may be marked as “Completed” if they will be addressed at the December meeting).

- **Completed:** The task is expected to be completed by the end of 2023. Amendments, frameworks, and specifications are considered “Completed” once the Council has taken final action.
- **In Progress:** The task is on track, and work will carry over into the following year.
- **Ongoing:** The task is part of the Council’s routine activities and does not have an expected end point.
- **Delayed or Postponed:** The original timeline has shifted.

(A) before an item signifies that it is an addition to the deliverables originally approved for 2023

Deliverable	Expected status by end of 2023	Notes
<b>Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass</b>		
1. Develop 2024-2025 specifications for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass	Completed	Given assessment timing, black sea bass specifications only adopted for 2024.
2. Develop 2024-2025 recreational management measures for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass	Completed	Will be considered at the December meeting. Given assessment timing, black sea bass recreational measures will only be developed for 2024.
3. Evaluate commercial scup discards and gear restricted areas	Completed	Evaluation completed and presented at the August meeting. Next steps as a result of the evaluation may include additional research and a Framework Action to be prioritized in 2024.
4. Review and potentially revise commercial minimum mesh size regulations and exemptions for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass	Completed	Will be considered at the December meeting.
5. Initiate development of action to replace Recreational Harvest Control Rule after sunset period, including enhanced use of the Recreational Demand Model and/or Recreational Fleet Dynamics Model	Completed	Recreational Measures Setting Process Framework/Addenda has been initiated. Development of this action will continue through 2025.
6. Continue development of amendment to consider recreational sector	Delayed	Delayed until 2024

Deliverable	Expected status by end of 2023	Notes
separation and recreational catch accounting for summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, and bluefish		
7. Facilitate development of summer flounder, scup, black sea bass advisory panel fishery performance reports	Completed	
8. Support black sea bass research track assessment	Completed	Peer review to occur in December 2023
9. Support 2023 management track assessments for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass	Completed for SF and Scup; delayed for BSB	
(A) Support development of Recreational Demand Model Decision Support Tool	In Progress	
(A) Develop comments on the agency's proposed partial disapproval of the Black Sea Bass Commercial State Allocation Amendment	Completed	
<b>Bluefish</b>		
10. Develop 2024-2025 specifications for bluefish	Completed	
11. Develop 2024-2025 recreational management measures for bluefish	Completed	
12. Facilitate development of bluefish advisory panel fishery performance report	Completed	
13. Support 2023 bluefish management track assessment	Completed	
(A) Develop bluefish management uncertainty tool	Completed	
<b>Golden and Blueline Tilefish</b>		
14. Review 2024 specifications for golden tilefish	Completed	
15. Review 2024 specifications for blueline tilefish	Completed	
16. Complete and review Golden Tilefish Individual Fishing Quota Program Review	Completed	The Council will receive a presentation of the final report in December.
17. Facilitate development of advisory panel fishery performance reports	Completed	
18. Review performance of private recreational tilefish permitting and reporting	Completed	

Deliverable	Expected status by end of 2023	Notes
19. Work with the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council to support the upcoming 2024 blueline tilefish operational assessment	In Progress	A stock assessment working group has been formed, and TORS and a schedule has been approved. Initial working group will take place in early 2024.
20. Coordinate the 2023 golden tilefish survey pending approval of funding/logistics	Completed	
21. Support 2024 golden tilefish research track assessment	In Progress	RTA to be completed in Spring of 2024.
(A) Coordinate and collaborate with the SEFSC, NEFSC, SAFMC, and South Carolina DNR to expand the South Atlantic Deepwater Longline (SADL) Survey north into the Mid-Atlantic region.	In Progress	The expansion of this survey will help collect catch and age information on blueline tilefish within the Mid-Atlantic. The first year of data will be available and shared with the Council in December.
<b>Mackerel, Squid, Butterfish (MSB)</b>		
22. Develop 2024-2025 Atlantic mackerel specifications	Completed	
23. Develop 2024-2026 longfin squid specifications	Completed	
24. Review 2023 specifications for <i>Illex</i>	Completed	
25. Develop 2024-2025 specifications for <i>Illex</i>	Completed	
26. Review 2024 specifications for butterfish	Completed	
27. Review 2024 specifications for chub mackerel	Completed	
28. Facilitate development of mackerel, squid, butterfish advisory panel fishery performance reports	Completed	
29. Support 2023 management track assessments for Atlantic mackerel and longfin squid	Completed	
(A) Initiate contract for longfin squid biological data (collection and ageing)	Completed/ In Progress	Contract initiated. Associated project extends to 2025.
(A) Initiate contracts for squid modeling (support of larger project)	Completed/ In Progress	Contract initiated. Associated project extends through 2024.
(A) Initiate contract for longfin squid research track assessment support	Completed/ In Progress	Contract initiated. Associated project extends to early 2026.
(A) Complete Atlantic mackerel emergency action closure request	Completed	
(A) Complete extended <i>Illex</i> contract in support of <i>Illex</i> ABC-setting	Completed	

Deliverable	Expected status by end of 2023	Notes
<b>River Herring and Shad (RH/S)</b>		
30. Develop 2024-2025 river herring and shad cap (paired with Atlantic mackerel specifications), including consideration of the river herring assessment	Completed	
(A) Initiate RH/S Run Portal contract	Completed/ In Progress	Contract initiated. Associated project extends to 2025.
<b>Spiny Dogfish</b>		
31. Develop 2024-2026 specifications and/or a rebuilding plan (possibly including trip limit changes), as appropriate given outcome of research and management track assessments	Completed	New England will take action in early 2024 due to assessment delay.
32. Facilitate development of spiny dogfish advisory panel fishery performance report	Completed	
33. Support 2023 spiny dogfish management track assessment	Completed	
(A) Initiate contract for dogfish ageing project	Completed/ In Progress	Contract initiated. Associated project extends to 2025.
<b>Surfclam and Ocean Quahog</b>		
34. Review 2024 specifications for surfclam and ocean quahog	Completed	
35. Facilitate development of surfclam and ocean quahog advisory panel fishery performance reports	Completed	
36. Oversee SCOQ Electronic Monitoring Project	In Progress	
37. Develop alternatives for the Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Species Separation Requirements Amendment	In Progress	
(A) Manage Supplemental Surfclam Genetics Project with Cornell University testing additional federal survey surfclam samples that were obtained in 2022.	In Progress	To be completed in early 2024.
<b>Science and Research</b>		
38. Conduct biennial review of the 2020-2024 research priorities document	See notes	This task was postponed due to time/staff constraints. The Council will conduct a comprehensive review of its research priorities in 2024 as part of the

Deliverable	Expected status by end of 2023	Notes
		development of 2025-2029 research priorities.
39. Approve Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) membership	Completed	
40. Review outcomes and recommendations from the SSC Ecosystem Work Group	In Progress	Work Group continues to address a number of short and long term projects and analyses that will extend into 2024.
41. Review past action and consider possible redevelopment of a revised Research Set-Aside program	Completed	
42. Review results and determine potential application of the research project on short-term forecasts of species distributions	Completed	
43. Support the 2023 Applying State Space Models Research Track Assessment	Completed	
44. Coordinate and facilitate the Northeast Trawl Advisory Panel	Ongoing	
(A) Initiate contract for supplemental port biological sampling	Completed/ In Progress	Contract initiated. Associated project extends to 2024.
(A) Initiate contract for ageing of Mid-Atlantic species	Completed/ In Progress	Contract initiated. Associated project extends to 2024.
<b>Ecosystem and Ocean Planning/Habitat</b>		
45. Continue development of Essential Fish Habitat Amendment	In Progress	
46. Maintain and integrate Northeast Regional Habitat Assessment products	Ongoing	
47. Oversee National Fishing Effects Database Project	In Progress	Expected to be completed in 2024.
48. Maintain joint MAFMC and New England Fishery Management Council offshore wind web page	Ongoing	
49. Develop habitat- and fishery-related comments on offshore energy development	Ongoing	
50. Complete comprehensive review and update to Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management risk assessment	In Progress	An updated report will be provided in April 2024.
51. Complete East Coast Climate Change Scenario Planning Initiative and identify priorities for resulting action	Completed	

Deliverable	Expected status by end of 2023	Notes
52. Continue to track thread herring Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) application and develop comments, if needed	Completed	Development of comments was not needed as the applicants have not re-submitted their application.
53. Develop a policy and/or process for reviewing EFP applications for new or expanding fisheries as it relates to the unmanaged forage amendment	Completed	Approval expected at December meeting.
<b>General</b>		
54. Review commercial landings of unmanaged species	Completed	
55. Participate on Council Coordination Committee Working Groups and Subcommittees (Habitat, Area-Based Management, Legislative, ESA/MSA Coordination, Equity and Environmental Justice)	Ongoing	Climate Change Work Group formed following May CCC meeting
56. Respond to requests for information associated with Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification or audits for MSC-certified fisheries (Atlantic surfclam, ocean quahog, Illex squid, longfin squid, spiny dogfish, scup)	Ongoing	
57. Track relevant legislation and provide comments as requested	Completed/ Ongoing	Comments on draft SHIFT Act submitted to Senator Blumenthal's office (8/11/23)
58. Continue to participate on marine mammal take reduction teams and protected resources working groups, and initiate necessary actions in response to protected resource issues	Ongoing	
59. Initiate action in response to the action plan developed by the Atlantic Sturgeon Bycatch Working Group to reduce sturgeon bycatch in gillnet fisheries	Completed	A joint framework action to reduce sturgeon bycatch in the dogfish and monkfish gillnet fisheries was initiated. Final action on this framework is scheduled for spring 2024.
(A) Collaborate on three-year SBRM report (joint Center, GARFO, MAFMC, NEFMC effort)	Completed	Expected completion by end of 2023
(A) Develop comments on draft NMFS climate governance policy; coordinate development of Council Coordination Committee (CCC) comments; conduct outreach to promote stakeholder awareness of the draft policy	Completed	Comments submitted on 11/17/23.

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(A) Develop comments on NMFS Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for National Standards 4,8,9	Completed	
(A) Initiate contract for program review of Council/GARFO processes for fishery management action development	In Progress	
<b>Communication and Outreach</b>		
60. Continue to inform and engage stakeholders using a variety of communication tools and channels, including the Council website, email updates, press releases, YouTube, webinars, face-to-face meetings, and a variety of printed and digital communication materials	Ongoing	
61. Conduct outreach to increase stakeholder awareness and understanding of Council actions under development	Ongoing	
62. Further develop and refine the Council's website content and structure to increase usefulness and functionality	Ongoing	
63. Develop fact sheets and outreach materials as needed	Ongoing	
64. Continue additional outreach to improve awareness of, and compliance with, private recreational tilefish reporting requirements	Ongoing	Applied for an ACCSP grant for funds to coordinate and conduct a variety of eFIN application improvements and outreach efforts in coordination with Harbor Light. Staff is also working with a contractor to develop an outreach campaign for winter/spring 2024.
<b>Staff Wrap-Up on Completed Council Actions</b>		
65. Finalize and submit any outstanding specifications packages for 2023	Completed	
<b>Possible Additions</b>		
<i>The items below were included in the 2023 Implementation Plan to be considered if time and resources allowed.</i>		
66. Develop framework to allow quota transfer between commercial and recreational sectors for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass		
67. Initiate amendment to address disapproved portions of <i>Illlex</i> Permit Amendment	Completed	

Deliverable	Expected status by end of 2023	Notes
68. Initiate action to implement "did not fish" reports for commercial, for-hire, and private tilefish permit holders		
69. Initiate action to implement a possession limit for frigate and bullet mackerel in the Mid-Atlantic		
70. Explore the use of unused ACL carryover for the Council's fisheries		
71. Develop an action to authorize an experimental Atlantic surfclam fishery in the Great South Channel Habitat Management Area (HMA)		
72. Develop spatial management options for Atlantic surfclam open water aquaculture in the New York Bight and central Atlantic.		