Bluefish Allocation Amendment
Draft Action Plan

(Updated as of February 2018 and subject to change)

Amendment Goal

The goal of this amendment is to review and possibly revise the allocation between the commercial and recreational fisheries and the commercial allocations to the states. This action may be needed to avoid overages, achieve optimum yield, prevent overfishing, and reduce the need for quota transfers off the U.S. east coast.

Fishery Management Action Team

The Council will form a team of technical experts, known as a Fishery Management Action Team (FMAT) to develop and analyze management alternatives for this amendment. The FMAT is led by Council staff and includes management partners from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO), the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC), the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC), the Southeast Fishery Management Council (SAFMC), and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). The FMAT will work with other experts to address specific issues, as needed.

FMAT Membership

Name	Role/Expertise	Agency
Matthew Seeley	FMAT Chair	MAFMC
Danielle Palmer	Protected Resources	NMFS GARFO
David Stevenson	Habitat Conservation	NMFS GARFO
Cynthia Hanson	Sustainable Fisheries	NMFS GARFO
Sarah Gurtman	NEPA	NMFS GARFO
Tony Wood	Population Dynamics	NEFSC
Trish Clay	Social Sciences	NEFSC
Caitlin Starks	Plan Coordinator	ASMFC
Mike Celestino	Bluefish Technical Committee	NJDFW

Applicable Laws

Magnuson-Stevens Act	Yes
National Environmental Policy Act	Yes – will require an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement
Administrative Procedure Act	Yes
Regulatory Flexibility Act	Yes
Paperwork Reduction Act	Possibly; depends on data collection needs
Coastal Zone Management Act	Possibly; depends on effects of the action on the resources of the coastal states in the management unit
Endangered Species Act	Possibly; level of consultation will depend on the actions taken
E.O. 12866 (Regulatory Planning and Review)	Yes
E.O. 12630 (Takings)	Possibly; legal review will confirm
E.O. 13123 (Federalism)	Possibly; legal review will confirm
Essential Fish Habitat	Possibly
Social Impact Analysis	Possibly
Information Quality Act	Yes

Expected Document

Acronym	NEPA Analysis	Requirements
EA	Environmental Assessment	NEPA applies, no scoping required, public hearings required under MSA
EIS	**Environmental Impact Statement**	**NEPA applies, scoping required, public hearings required**

Draft Timeline for Amendment Development and Implementation

Task Description	Date (all are subject to change)
Initiation and request of FMAT participants	December 2017
Formation of FMAT	January 2018
Initial FMAT discussion	March 2018
Council (or ASMFC) meeting - review scoping plan and document	April 2018 (May 2018)
Scoping hearings/scoping comment period	June-July 2018
Advisory Panel (AP) meeting - review amendment goals and objectives, FMAT recommendations, develop recommendations for alternatives; any amendment issues?	June or 2018
Council meeting - review scoping comments and FMAT, AP, and MC recommendations; discuss management alternatives	August 2018
FMAT Meeting – review comments and develop recommendations for alternatives	September 2018
Demersal Committee Meeting - review comments and develop recommendations for alternatives	November 2018
Council meeting - approve range of alternatives for public hearings	February 2019
FMAT Meeting	February/March 2019
Public hearing document and EIS - draft approval	April 2019
Public hearings	Spring-Summer 2019
AP meeting - recommendations for final action	Summer 2019
MC meeting - recommendations for final action	Summer 2019
Council meeting - final action	Fall 2019
Submission of draft EA/EIS to GARFO	Fall 2019
Draft EA/EIS revisions and resubmission	Winter 2020
Rulemaking (proposed rule)	Spring 2020
Rulemaking (final rule)	Summer 2020