



Research Set-Aside Workshop Overview

3 Webinars and 1 In-Person Meeting

July – November 2021

Redevelopment of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) Research Set-Aside (RSA) Program

Purpose

The Council is hosting a series of 4 workshops (3 webinars and 1 in-person meeting) to develop recommendations for the possible redevelopment of the RSA program. The goals of these workshops are to develop recommendations with insight provided from the list of participants (below) and members of the public outlining how a revised program can be successful. Each webinar will target a separate topic related to RSA (research, funding, and enforcement). The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Economic Working Group will work collaboratively with the Council's Research Steering Committee (RSC) to provide economic input specific to each webinar topic, as well as develop meeting reports and briefing materials for the in-person workshop in the fall. During the final in-person workshop, participants will review the recommendations from the first three webinars and develop final recommendations for RSA program redevelopment. Workshop participants will include a core group of individuals who will be invited to attend all four workshops. Staff may solicit additional participants with topic-specific expertise to participate in each workshop. All workshops will be open to the public.

Below is an outline of the workshop structure with meeting-specific goals and trigger questions, a proposed participant list, and timeline.

Workshop Dates, Topics, and Objectives

Workshop Webinar Meeting 1 (July 15th): Research

Objectives:

- Identify how research goals will be prioritized, projects will be screened, and results will inform management/be communicated to the Council and stakeholders.
- SSC Economic Working Group discussion on Research

Trigger Questions:

- How should research needs (to be fulfilled by RSA) be prioritized?
- What criteria should be met to qualify as a successful applicant?
- What criteria should be developed for how projects results will be reviewed and articulated to the Council?

Workshop Webinar Meeting 2 (August 19th, 23rd, or 31st): Funding

Objectives:

- Confirm how the program will be administered (federal grant program), discuss funding mechanism, and indicate that projects should be tied to management/assessment needs.
- Discuss how Council, RSC, and SSC input will impact project selection.
- SSC Economic Working Group discussion on Funding

Trigger Questions:

- How should the auction system or other funding mechanism be revised to improve RSA?
- What would be the benefits (if any) of adopting a posted-price offer per quota lot rather than an auction?
- What are the fishing exemptions that (achieving the same conservation objectives) would maximize revenue for the RSA program?

Workshop Webinar Meeting 3 (October 12th, 13th, or 14th): Enforcement

Objectives:

- Identify potential program modifications that could prevent reoccurrence of previous enforcement issues.
- Identify how the Council will collaborate with the Commission and other agencies to ensure compliance that addresses enforcement objectives.
- SSC Economic Working Group discussion on Enforcement

Trigger Questions:

- What recommendations should be made to improve enforcement efforts on RSA trips?
- What changes to enforcement have occurred since the suspension of RSA? Were they successful?
- Are there ways the Council can work more effectively with its management and enforcement partners to identify and address RSA enforcement issues in a timely manner?

In-Person Workshop (1-day) (November TBD): Final Recommendations

Objectives:

- Recap meetings 1-3
- Develop detailed recommendations (with timelines) for the Council identifying whether and how RSA should be redeveloped with input from the SSC Economic Working Group

Trigger Questions:

- Should the Council redevelop the RSA program?
- What changes should be implemented to address previously identified concerns related to the RSA program including research, funding, program administration, and enforcement?
- What timelines should be developed to improve the overall RSA process (e.g., data and research needs, incorporate RSA into specifications cycle, grant applications, fishing “season”, report deadlines, etc.)?

Participants

- **Primary Participants:**
 - MAFMC Research Steering Committee Members
 - Mid-Atlantic Council Staff
 - New England Council Staff
 - Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Staff
 - ASMFC Law Enforcement Committee
 - NOAA Office of Law Enforcement (OLE)
 - Northeast Fisheries Science Center
 - Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO)
 - Scientific and Statistical Committee (e.g., Economic Working Group members and SSC Chair)
 - NOAA General Counsel
- **Other Invited Participants:**
 - National Fisheries Institute
 - State representatives (e.g., MAFMC and ASMFC Administrative Commissioners)
 - MAFMC Advisory Panels
 - Previously successful RSA participants
 - Science Center for Marine Fisheries
 - Other individuals

Timeline

Date	Event/Topic
April Council Meeting	RSC Committee Report detailing the RSA Workshop structure
June 2 nd	RSC Meeting – Finalize workshop logistics (e.g., dates, participants, agendas, structure, trigger questions)
July 15 th	RSA Workshop Meeting 1 (Webinar) - Research
August	Council Meeting: Economic WG progress report to Council
August 19 th , 23 rd , or 31 st	RSA Workshop Meeting 2 (Webinar) - Funding
September	SSC Meeting: Economic WG progress report to SSC
October 12 th , 13 th , or 14 th	RSA Workshop Meeting 3 (Webinar) - Enforcement
November (TBD)	RSA Workshop Meeting 4 (In-person)
December	Council Meeting: RSC and Economic WG report to Council