



Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

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MEMORANDUM

Date: May 27, 2022
To: Council
From: Mary Sabo, Council Staff
Subject: Presentation on New Jersey Ocean Acidification Monitoring Network

On Tuesday, June 7th, the Council will receive a presentation from Dr. Grace Saba (Rutgers University) about ongoing efforts to develop a comprehensive, statewide ocean acidification monitoring network in New Jersey. An overview of the presentation is provided below.

Recommendations for Developing a Statewide New Jersey Ocean Acidification Monitoring Network

Summary:

Acidification in coastal shelf systems can have significant societal ramifications that range from economic losses and ecological consequences. In studying the effects of ocean acidification (OA) on organisms, it was found that acidification can have strong, negative impacts on survival and calcification, and milder, but still negative, impacts on growth, development, energy allocation, acid-base equilibrium, and reproduction. A vulnerability study found that because of a combination of New Jersey's economic dependence on vulnerable commercial species and the presence of OA drivers in the area, southern New Jersey was determined to be one of the most socially vulnerable regions to OA effects. New Jersey's climate change and ocean acidification efforts were advanced by Executive Order 89 which was signed into law by Governor Murphy in 2019. It directed NJDEP to write the Statewide Climate Change Resiliency Strategy with a Coastal Resilience Plan, and the first Scientific Report on Climate Change. As a result of these concerns, the Bureau of Climate Resilience and Bureau of Marine Water Monitoring combined efforts to create the NJ Coastal Management Program (NJCMP) OA Team that has been collaborating with experts at Rutgers University to develop an OA action plan for New Jersey. Given the nature of state OA initiatives that rely on risk assessments informed by scientific monitoring results, the NJCMP OA Team and Rutgers University recognized the development of a comprehensive, statewide monitoring network in New Jersey as a "first order" action. This presentation will discuss monitoring gaps in the state and how a planned monitoring network would address those gaps.

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