



Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

800 North State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901

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Michael P. Luisi, Chairman | P. Weston Townsend, Vice Chairman

Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

Date: March 24, 2023
To: Council
From: Chris Moore, Executive Director
Subject: Executive Director's Report

The following materials are enclosed for review during the Executive Director's Report at the April 2023 Council Meeting:

1. 2023 Planned Council Meeting Topics
2. 2023 Council Meeting Schedule
3. 2024 Council Meeting Schedule (Draft)
4. Action Plan: Omnibus Essential Fish Habitat Amendment
5. Action Plan: Recreational Sector Separation and Catch Accounting Amendment (SF/Scup/BSB and Bluefish)
6. Action Plan: Recreational Harvest Control Rule 2.0 Framework/Addenda (SF/Scup/BSB and Bluefish)
7. Staff Memo: Draft timeline for development of a policy/process for reviewing EFP applications for Unmanaged Forage Amendment ecosystem component species
8. Staff Memo: Update on Sea Turtles
9. Staff Memo: Golden Tilefish Survey Update and Expansion of South Atlantic Deepwater Longline Survey
10. Staff Memo: Offshore Wind Updates
11. New Climate Change and Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Web Page
12. Email to Advisors: March MREP Management Workshop

2023 Planned Council Meeting Topics

Updated: 3/23/23

April 4-6, 2023 Council Meeting – Durham, NC

- 2023 *Illex* Specifications: review
- 2024-2025 *Illex* Specifications: approve
- [Illex Permit Action Follow-Up](#)
- Habitat Activities (including aquaculture and wind): update
- ~~Offshore Wind: update~~
- East Coast Climate Change Scenario Planning: update
- 2023 Mid-Atlantic State of the Ecosystem Report: review
- Short-Term Forecasts of Species Distributions Project: review results and discuss next steps
- ~~NTAP Restrictor Rope Research: review results~~
- Ocean City Video Project: review results
- ACCSP Update
- MRIP Update
- [Scup Federal Recreational Season: discuss Board recommendation and consider Council action](#)

June 6-8, 2023 Council Meeting – Virginia Beach, VA

- 2024 Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Specifications: review
- 2024 Blueline Tilefish Specifications: review
- 2024 Golden Tilefish Specifications: review
- Monkfish and Dogfish Joint Framework to Reduce the Bycatch of Atlantic Sturgeon: review and approve range of alternatives
- 2024 Atlantic Chub Mackerel Specifications: review
- 2024 Butterfish Specifications: review
- ~~Offshore Wind: update~~
- Unmanaged Commercial Landings Report: review

August 8-10, 2023 Council Meeting – Annapolis, MD

- ~~2024-2025 Summer Flounder and Scup, and Black Sea Bass~~ Specifications: approve (joint with ASMFC SFSBSB Board)
- [2024 Black Sea Bass Specifications: approve \(joint with ASMFC SFSBSB Board\)](#)
- Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Commercial Measures: review (joint with ASMFC SFSBSB Board)
- Scup Commercial Discards and Gear Restricted Areas (GRA): review analysis and discuss next steps
- Recreational Harvest Control Rule 2.0 Framework/Addenda: discuss next steps (joint with ASMFC Policy Board)
- 2024-2025 Bluefish Specifications and Recreational Management Measures: approve (joint with ASMFC Bluefish Board)
- 2024-2025 Atlantic Mackerel Specifications: approve
- 2024-2025 Atlantic Mackerel River Herring and Shad Cap: approve
- Research Set-Aside Program Redevelopment: update

October 3-5, 2023 Council Meeting – New York City, NY

- 2024-2026 Spiny Dogfish Specifications: approve
- SCOQ Species Separation Requirements Amendment: review and approve any additional alternatives
- 2024-2026 Longfin Squid Specifications: approve
- Executive Committee: review progress on 2023 Implementation Plan and discuss draft 2024 deliverables
- [Policy/Process for Reviewing Exempted Fishing Permit Applications for Unmanaged Forage Amendment Ecosystem Component Species: approve](#)~~Council Process for Reviewing EFP Applications: approve~~
- Private Recreational Tilefish Permitting and Reporting: review performance
- EAFM Risk Assessment Review: approve
- Biennial Review of 2020-2024 Research Priorities Document: review and approve
- Habitat Activities (including aquaculture): update
- Offshore Wind: update
- [NTAP Restrictor Rope Research: review results](#)

December 11-14, 2023 Council Meeting – Philadelphia, PA

- [2024-2025 Recreational Management Measures for Summer Flounder and Scup, and Black Sea Bass: approve](#) (joint with ASMFC SFSBSB Board)
- [2024 Recreational Management Measures for Black Sea Bass: approve](#) (joint with ASMFC SFSBSB Board)
- Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass Commercial Minimum Mesh Size Regulations and Exemptions: review and discuss next steps (joint with ASMFC SFSBSB Board)
- Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass, and Bluefish Sector Separation and Recreational Catch Accounting Amendment: review and approve draft scoping document (joint with ASMFC Policy Board)
- Recreational Harvest Control Rule 2.0 Framework/Addenda: review and discuss next steps (joint with ASMFC Policy Board)
- Monkfish and Dogfish Joint Framework to Reduce the Bycatch of Atlantic Sturgeon: final action
- 2024 Implementation Plan: approve
- Golden Tilefish IFQ Program Review: review final report

MID-ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

2023 Council Meeting Topics At-a-Glance

	April	June	August	October	December
Mackerel, Squid, Butterfish and River Herring and Shad (RH/S)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023 <i>Illex</i> Specifications Review 2024-2025 <i>Illex</i> Specs <i>Illex</i> Hold Issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024 Chub Mackerel Specs Review 2024 Butterfish Specs Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024-2025 Atlantic Mackerel Specs 2024-2025 RH/S Cap 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024-2026 Longfin Squid Specs 	
Recreational Reform			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rec Harvest Control Rule 2.0 FW: Discuss 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rec Sector Separation and Catch Accounting Amd: Approve Scoping Doc Rec Harvest Control Rule 2.0 FW: Discuss
Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass (SF/S/BSB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scup Recreational Season: Discuss 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024-2025 Summer Flounder and Scup Specs and Commercial Measures 2024 Black Sea Bass Specs and Commercial Measure Scup GRA Review 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024-2025 Summer Flounder and Scup Rec Mgmt Measures 2024-2025 Black Sea Bass Rec Mgmt Measures SF/S/BSB Commercial Min Mesh Size Review
Bluefish			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024-2025 Bluefish Specs and Rec Measures 		
Golden and Blueline Tilefish		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024 Blueline Tilefish Specs Review 2024 Golden Tilefish Specs Review 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private Tilefish Permitting/ Reporting Update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Golden Tilefish IFQ Program: Review Final Report
Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog (SC/OQ)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024 SC/OQ Specs Review 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SC/OQ Species Separation Amd: Review/Approve Additional Alternatives 	
Spiny Dogfish		<i>See protected resources</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024-2026 Dogfish Specs 	
Monkfish		<i>See protected resources</i>			
Science Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-Term Forecasts of Species Distributions Ocean City Video Project 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RSA Redevelopment Update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2020-2024 Research Priorities Document Review NTAP Restrictor Rope Results 	
EAFM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2023 State of the Ecosystem Report 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EAFM Risk Assessment Review: Approve Council Process for Reviewing EFP Applications: Approve 	

	April	June	August	October	December
Habitat/ Wind/ Aquaculture	• Habitat Update	• Wind Update		• Habitat Update • Wind Update	
Protected Resources		• Dogfish/ Monkfish FW to Reduce Sturgeon Bycatch: Review Alternatives			• Dogfish/ Monkfish FW to Reduce Sturgeon Bycatch: Review Alternatives: Final Action
Other	• Scenario Planning Update	• Unmanaged Commercial Landings Report		• Executive Committee: Draft 2024 Deliverables	• 2024 Implementation Plan: Approve

Acronyms/Abbreviations

ALWTRP	Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan
Amd	Amendment
EAFM	Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management
EFH	Essential Fish Habitat
FMP	Fishery Management Plan
GRA	Gear Restricted Area
HMS	Highly Migratory Species
Mgmt	Management
MREP	Marine Resource Education Program
MSB	Mackerel, Squid, Butterfish

NEFSC	Northeast Fisheries Science Center
NTAP	Northeast Trawl Advisory Panel
Rec	Recreational
RH/S	River Herring and Shad
RSA	Research Set-Aside
SC/OQ	Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog
SF/S/BSB	Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass
Specs	Specifications
SSC	Scientific and Statistical Committee



2023 Council Meeting Schedule

(As of September 20, 2022)

February 7 – 9, 2023	Hotel Washington 515 15 th Street NW Washington, DC 20004
April 4 – 6, 2023	Hyatt Place Durham Southpoint 7840 NC-751 Hwy Durham, NC 27713
June 6 – 8, 2023	Hilton Virginia Beach Oceanfront 3001 Atlantic Avenue Virginia Beach, VA 23451
August 8 – 11, 2023	Westin Annapolis 100 Westgate Circle Annapolis, MD 21401
October 3 – 5, 2023	Yotel NYC 570 Tenth Avenue New York, NY 10036
December 11 – 14, 2023	The Notary Hotel 21 North Juniper Street Philadelphia, PA 19107



2024 Council Meeting Schedule

(As of March 24, 2023)

February 6 – 8, 2024	The Westin Arlington Gateway 801 North Glebe Road Arlington, VA 22203
April 9 – 11, 2024	Sheraton Atlantic City Convention Center Hotel 2 Convention Boulevard Atlantic City, NJ 08401
June 4 – 6, 2024	Hyatt Place Long Island/East End Atlantis Banquets & Events 431 East Main Street Riverhead, NY 11901
August 12 – 15, 2024	The Westin Philadelphia 99 South 17 th Street at Liberty Place Philadelphia, PA 19103
October 8 – 10, 2024	Hyatt Place Dewey Beach 1301 Coastal Highway Dewey Beach, DE 19971
December 9 – 12, 2024	The Westin Annapolis 100 Westgate Circle Annapolis, MD 21401

**Action Plan to Develop an Amendment to address
Essential Fish Habitat requirements for all Council FMPs (i.e., omnibus)
(Updated as of March 20, 2023)**

Council: Mid-Atlantic

Type of Action: An omnibus “EFH Amendment” with a concurrent EFH Review.

Applicable Fisheries: All Council fisheries with EFH designation requirements. Monkfish is excluded, as MAFMC is not the lead Council.

Objective of Action: This action will address the 10 components of the Essential Fish Habitat Review for the Council and the Council will consider revising EFH components or associated management measures as part of this an omnibus action to amend all FMPs simultaneously.

Expertise Sought:

Fishery Management Action Team (FMAT)		
Agency	Expertise	Person
MAFMC	FMAT Chair	Jessica Coakley
MAFMC	Habitat	Tori Kentner
NMFS GARFO	Habitat/GARFO Lead on Action	Jessie Murray
NMFS GARFO	Sustainable Fisheries	Doug Potts
NMFS GARFO	Protected Resources	Danielle Palmer
NMFS GARFO	NEPA	Sharon Benjamin
Monmouth U/NEFSC/NEFMC	Habitat Modeling	Chris Haak
NEFSC	Habitat, Economics	TBD
NEFMC	Habitat	Michelle Bachman

Type of NEPA Analysis Expected: Document expected to be an EA.

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

* If significant impacts are identified the action will be elevated to an EIS.

Types of Measures to be Considered: The Council will consider measures that address the 10 components of the EFH review for the FMPs.

1. Description and Identification of EFH

Evaluate new scientific literature and information from other relevant sources to see whether species-specific EFH description and identification, as written in the FMP as text and provided as maps, is appropriate and reflects best available information and methods. Suggest changes to EFH text or map designations as appropriate.

2. Fishing activities that may adversely affect EFH

Review whether there have been changes in or newly available information on fishing activities that may adversely affect EFH. Evaluate the impact of fishing activities on EFH.

3. Non-Magnuson-Stevens Act fishing activities that may adversely affect EFH

Review whether there have been changes in current Non-Magnuson-Stevens Act fishing (e.g., state water fisheries). Evaluate the impact of non-MSA fishing activities on EFH.

4. Non-fishing related activities that may adversely affect EFH

Review whether there have been changes to or newly available information on non-fishing activities affecting habitat. Evaluate the impact of non-fishing activities on EFH.

5. Cumulative impacts analysis

Review cumulative impacts discussions across all FMPs, and update if appropriate.

6. Conservation/Fishing Impact Recommendations

Review fishing and non-fishing activities and determine whether actions to minimize impacts on EFH or other conservation actions are appropriate.

7. Prey species

Review prey species information and determine if updates are appropriate.

8. Identification of HAPC

Review current HAPC designations and approach, and consider new approaches and/or new candidate HAPC designation and approaches.

9. Research Needs

Review existing habitat research needs and determine whether updates are appropriate.

10. Develop approaches to better integrate goals and objectives into habitat actions.

Consider how habitat goals and objectives can be used to make the Council’s use of its habitat authorities more effective.

Applicable Laws/Issues:

Magnuson-Stevens Act	Yes
Administrative Procedures Act	Yes
Regulatory Flexibility Act	Yes
Paperwork Reduction Act	Unlikely, depends upon the actions taken
Coastal Zone Management Act	Possibly; depends upon effects of the action on the resources of coastal states in the management unit
Endangered Species Act	Possibly; level of consultation, if necessary, depends upon the actions taken
Marine Mammal Protection Act	Possibly; level of consultation, if necessary, depends upon the actions taken
E.O. 12866 (Regulatory Planning and Review)	Yes
E.O. 12630 (Takings)	Unlikely; legal review will confirm
E.O. 13132 (Federalism)	Unlikely; legal review will confirm
Essential Fish Habitat	Yes
Information Quality Act	Yes

Other Issues: At this time, no additional issues have been identified.

Timing Issues: At this time, no timing issues have been identified.

Amendment Timeline (Development/Review/Implementation; as of March 20, 2023):

2023-2025 Development Track	
October 2022	Council initiated action and omnibus Amendment
January 2023	FMAT Formed
February 2023	First FMAT meeting to review draft action plan and identify next steps
March – August 2023	Develop approaches for EFH and HAPC designation alternatives (1 & 8); begin to address other aspects of the EFH Review (2-7); may include meetings of FMAT and additional habitat experts)
Early Fall 2023	Ecosystem and Ocean Planning (EOP) Committee reviews approaches/alternatives to develop EFH and HAPC designations (1 & 8)
Fall 2023 – July 2024	Continue development work. May include meetings of FMAT, EOP Committee and EOP Advisory Panel
August 2024	Council approves public hearing draft
September/October 2024	Public Hearings and Comment Period
November 2024	EOP Committee meets to consider public comment/develop recommendations to Council
December 2024	Council considers taking final action – submits to NMFS for review, rulemaking, and implementation
January – April 2025	Rulemaking document finalized
December 2025	Final Rule by NMFS



Recreational Sector Separation and Catch Accounting Amendment to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass and Bluefish Fishery Management Plans

Draft Action Plan

2/22/2023

Amendment Goal: The purpose of this amendment is to review and consider options for managing for-hire recreational fisheries separately from other recreational modes (referred to as sector separation) as well as options related to recreational catch accounting, such as private angler reporting and enhanced vessel trip reporting (VTR) requirements for the summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, and bluefish fisheries. This action aims to address expressed interest in sector separation to make better use of for-hire VTR data, which some anglers perceive as being more accurate than the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) data. In addition, this action considers options to improve recreational catch accounting with the intent to reduce uncertainty in the recreational data. This amendment is being developed by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) and Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission).

Types of Measures Expected to be Considered: The Council and the Commission's Interstate Fishery Management Program Policy Board (Policy Board) will review and consider options for managing for-hire recreational fisheries separately from other recreational modes (referred to as sector separation) as well as options related to recreational catch accounting for summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, and bluefish. In previous conversations on these issues, the types of measures for potential consideration included:

Sector separation

- No action/status quo
- Managing the recreational for-hire and private/rental fisheries with separate allocations of catch or harvest, including possible options for:
 - Separate Annual Catch Limits (ACLs) for each recreational sector
 - Separate Recreational Sub-ACLs for each recreational sector
 - Separate Recreational Harvest Limits (RHLs)
- Managing the recreational for-hire and private/rental fisheries with separate management measures (bag limits, size limit, seasons, or other measures). Although this is already done for some species/state/mode combinations, this amendment may consider a more uniform approach to separate measures. If the Council and Policy Board choose to prioritize separate measures over other types of sector separation, an amendment may not be necessary depending on the options considered.

Recreational catch accounting

- No action/status quo
- Mandatory private angler reporting
- Tagging programs (i.e., anglers or groups of anglers are issued tags for specific number of fish each year)
- Mandatory tournament reporting

- Enhanced VTR requirements
- Voluntary angler reporting programs to supplement or enhance recreational survey programs

Expected Amendment Timeline:

This amendment was initiated in October 2020 along with several other [Recreational Reform Initiative Topics](#). However, in February 2021, work on this amendment was put on hold to prioritize development of the Recreational Harvest Control Rule Framework/Addenda. In December 2022 the Council and Policy Board agreed to continue to develop the Recreational Sector Separation and Catch Accounting Amendment.

The expected amendment timeline (as of January 2023; assuming an environmental assessment; subject to change) is as follows:

Spring/Summer 2023	Form Fishery Management Action Team (FMAT)/ Plan Development Team (PDT)
Summer-Fall 2023	FMAT/PDT develops issues for consideration and draft scoping document. Possible Advisory Panel (AP) and Monitoring Committee discussion.
December 2023	Council and Policy Board approve a scoping and public information document for public comment
January-February 2024	Scoping hearings and comment period
Spring 2024	APs review scoping comments and provide input to Council and Policy Board on scope of amendment and possible approaches
Spring 2024	FMAT/PDT reviews scoping comments and AP input and provides recommendations to Council and Policy Board on scope of amendment and possible approaches
Spring 2024	Council and Policy Board review scoping comments and FMAT and AP recommendations; define scope of action
Summer 2024	FMAT/PDT begins to develop draft alternatives
August 2024	Council and Policy Board review preliminary alternatives
Fall 2024	Continued FMAT/PDT development and analysis of alternatives; AP input on draft alternatives
December 2024	Council and Policy Board approve final range of alternatives for inclusion in a public hearing document/Commission draft amendment document
Winter 2025	FMAT/PDT develops public hearing document/Commission draft amendment document
Spring 2025	Council and Policy Board approve public hearing document; Policy Board approves draft amendment document for public comment
Spring/Summer 2025	Public hearings and comment period
Spring/Summer 2025	AP meeting to provide input on preferred alternatives; FMAT/PDT meeting to provide recommendations to Council/Board
August 2025	Final action
Fall 2025	Staff develop and submit draft environmental assessment (EA)
Winter 2026	NMFS and other agencies review EA; final edits completed; Rulemaking and comment periods (4-7 months after EA finalized)
TBD	Target effective date (may or may not need to line up with start of fishing year depending on measures approved)



Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass, and Bluefish Recreational Harvest Control Rule 2.0 Framework/Addenda

Draft Action Plan

2/22/2023

<https://www.mafmc.org/actions/hcr-framework-addenda>

Framework/Addenda Goal: This management action is being developed by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission). This is a follow-on action to the [Recreational Harvest Control Rule Framework/Addenda](#), which implemented the Percent Change Approach for setting recreational management measures. In adopting the Percent Change Approach, the Council and the Commission’s Interstate Fishery Management Program Policy Board (Policy Board) agreed that it should sunset by the end of 2025 with the goal of considering if an improved measures setting process should be used starting with the 2026 measures. The Council and Policy Board agreed that the other alternatives in the Recreational Harvest Control Rule Framework/Addenda should be further developed, including consideration of fishing mortality-based approaches, example management measures, and concerns raised by the Council’s Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) during their [spring 2022 review](#) of the alternatives.

Alternatives to be Considered: In June 2022, the Council and Policy Board passed the following motion when taking final action on the Recreational Harvest Control Rule Framework/Addenda: “Move to further develop Alt. B (Pct Change Approach), Alt. D (Biological Reference Point Approach) and Alt. E (Biomass Based Matrix Approach) for implementation no later than the beginning of the 2026 fishing year. Further development should consider, at minimum, F-based approaches for Alt. B and development of measures using modeling or other approaches for Alts. D and E. Further evaluate the issue of “borrowing” as raised by the SSC for alt B, D, and E.”¹ These alternatives are briefly described below and are described in detail in the [reference guide](#) and [final framework document](#) for the previous action. The Council and Policy Board may also identify other alternatives to address the objectives of the action.

- **Percent Change Approach** – This approach was implemented starting with the 2023 recreational management measures for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass. It will also be used for bluefish once that stock is no longer under a rebuilding plan. Under the Percent Change Approach, a determination is made to either liberalize, restrict, or leave measures unchanged based on two factors: 1) Comparison of a confidence interval around an estimate of expected harvest under status quo measures to the average recreational harvest limit (RHL) for the upcoming two years and 2) Biomass compared to the target level, as defined by the most recent stock assessment. These two factors are used to define a target harvest level for setting management measures. The target is defined as a percentage difference from expected harvest under status quo measures.
- **Biological Reference Point Approach and Biological Based Matrix Approach** - These alternatives use a combination of indicators to place the stock in one of multiple potential management measure “bins.” The indicators vary by alternative and include expected harvest

¹ The report from the SSC review is available at <https://www.mafmc.org/ssc-meetings/2022/may10-11>.

under status quo measures, biomass compared to the target level, fishing mortality, recruitment, and/or trends in biomass. Bins associated with poor indicators would have more restrictive management measures and bins with positive indicators would have more liberal measures. Measures would be assigned to all bins the first time the approach is used through the specifications process.

- **Target metric for setting measures** – The previous framework/addenda considered if recreational measures in state and federal waters should collectively aim to achieve a target level of harvest (e.g., based on the RHL), recreational dead catch (e.g., based on the recreational annual catch limit), or fishing mortality.
- **Other alternatives** – This new management action may consider other alternatives, as appropriate. For example, this could include potential revisions to the accountability measures, considerations related to conservation equivalency, and other topics.

Draft Timeline – *Subject to change*

Spring 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fishery Management Action Team (FMAT)/Plan Development Team (PDT) formed
Spring and Summer 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMAT/PDT meetings to review previously considered alternatives, lessons learned from first application of Percent Change Approach and use of Recreational Demand Model for setting 2023 measures, and initial discussions of path forward, including potential role of the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC). • Monitoring Committee (MC)/Technical Committee (TC) meeting to discuss process used to set 2023 measures and potential future improvements.
August 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council and Policy Board meeting to review progress and discuss next steps, including potential role for the SSC.
Fall 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMAT/PDT meetings to continue development of alternatives. • AP meeting to review progress and provide input (potentially combined with AP meeting for 2024 recreational measures).
December 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council and Policy Board meeting to review progress and discuss next steps
Early 2024 - Summer 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMAT/PDT meetings to continue development of alternatives and develop draft document for public hearings.
August 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council and Policy Board meeting to approve final range of alternatives and approve draft document for public hearings through Commission process
Fall 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public hearings
Late 2024/Early 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FMAT/PDT and AP meetings to provide input to Council and Policy Board prior to final action.
April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council and Policy Board meeting for final action.
Spring-December 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development, review, and revisions of framework/addenda documents. • Federal rulemaking. • MC/TC use new process to set 2026 recreational measures.
Late 2025 or early 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective date of implemented changes.



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Michael P. Luisi, Chairman | P. Weston Townsend, Vice Chairman

Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

Date: March 24, 2023
To: Chris Moore, Executive Director
From: Julia Beaty, staff
Subject: Draft timeline for development of a policy/process for reviewing EFP applications for Unmanaged Forage Amendment ecosystem component species

The Council included the following as a deliverable on their [2023 Implementation Plan](#): *Develop a policy and/or process for reviewing EFP applications for new or expanding fisheries as it relates to the unmanaged forage amendment.* This deliverable refers to Council considerations regarding issuance of Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs) to allow vessels to retain greater than the 1,700 pound combined possession limit for species listed as ecosystem components (ECs) under the [Unmanaged Forage Omnibus Amendment](#). In implementing this possession limit, the Council aimed to prohibit the development of new and expansion of existing directed commercial fisheries on unmanaged forage species in Mid-Atlantic federal waters until the Council has had an adequate opportunity to assess the scientific information relating to any new or expanded directed fisheries and consider potential impacts to existing fisheries, fishing communities, and the marine ecosystem. The Council requires an EFP as a first step towards consideration of allowing landings beyond the 1,700 pound possession limit. The Council considered the first such potential EFP in 2021 and 2022 when they reviewed an EFP application for Atlantic thread herring. The Council agreed to develop a process to help guide their review of future EFP applications.

The draft timeline below outlines proposed next steps for developing this policy/process. An Ecosystems and Ocean Planning (EOP) Committee meeting has been scheduled for April 27, 2023 to provide initial guidance for this process. EOP Advisory Panel (AP) meetings are also planned, as shown below.

Council staff will work closely with NOAA Fisheries staff to ensure that the relevant regulations and procedures regarding issuance of EFPs are considered throughout this process. Formation of a Fishery Management Action Team is not needed given that development of Council policies does not require a fishery management plan amendment or framework adjustment.

Draft Timeline – *Subject to change*

<p>April 27, 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EOP Committee meeting via webinar: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review relevant outcomes from the Unmanaged Forage Omnibus Amendment. ○ Review the Pacific Fishery Management Council’s operating procedure for consideration of EFPs for ecosystem component species. ○ Review lessons learned from recent thread herring EFP application. ○ Provide guidance to staff on development of a draft policy/process.
<p>May 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EOP AP meeting via webinar to provide input on development of a draft policy/process.
<p>June 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council meeting (June 6-8, Virginia Beach, VA) to review Committee discussions, review AP input, and provide guidance to staff.
<p>July – August 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff develops draft policy/process based on Council guidance.
<p>September 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EOP AP meeting via webinar to review draft policy/process and provide input to Committee and Council. This may be combined with EOP AP meetings on other topics (e.g., risk assessment, essential fish habitat review). • EOP Committee meeting via webinar or in person to review draft policy/process, review AP input, and provide recommendations to the Council. This may be combined with EOP Committee meetings on other topics (e.g., risk assessment, essential fish habitat review).
<p>October 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council meeting (October 3-5, New York City, NY) to review draft policy/process, consider AP input and Committee recommendations, and consider adopting a policy/process.



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MEMORANDUM

Date: March 21, 2023
To: Chris Moore, Executive Director
From: Karson Cisneros, Staff
Subject: Update on Sea Turtles

Background

At the April 2022 Meeting, the Council received an update from NOAA Fisheries staff on their public outreach efforts related to sea turtle bycatch, gear research, and potential mitigation measures in trawl fisheries in the Greater Atlantic Region. Background information, descriptions of gear designs, research results, type of information needed, and recordings from informational webinars can be found on their [website](#). Stakeholders had many questions and concerns and the feedback throughout the outreach is [summarized here](#).

Next Steps

NOAA Fisheries staff have indicated that their current plan is to complete the outstanding research on squid turtle excluder devices (TEDs) and data loggers, and then evaluate potential management responses as needed. There is no timeline for when a proposed rule may be out, as it depends on the ongoing research. NOAA staff intends to reach out to the Councils during that proposed rule process.

The Cornell Cooperative Extension received funding through NOAA's Bycatch Reduction Engineering Program (BREP) to conduct additional testing with TEDs in the longfin squid fishery with field work planned for 2023. As part of this project's outreach, they organized a workshop with longfin squid fishermen at Superior Trawl in Narragansett on March 3, 2023. The purpose of this workshop was to discuss TED measures under consideration for the longfin fishery, collect industry comment, show fishermen the cable TED gear, and get design feedback for an additional industry recommended design to be tested. A meeting summary from this event is not yet available, however the meeting was well attended with 34 attendees in person and 3 virtual. The comments in the below email from Mark Philips reference this March 3rd workshop.

From: Mark Phillips <mark.st.phillips@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 14, 2023 12:42 PM
To: Moore, Christopher <cmoore@mafmc.org>
Subject: Turtle Excluders

Questioning turtle excluders

I went to a meeting about turtle excluders in Pt. Judith at the beginning of March. While I am not denying turtle interaction I do question the frequency of interaction.

I started fishing on deck in 1964 when I was 8 years old. So I am in my 59th year of fishing and in those years I have caught 2 turtles. When I was at my peak I put 280 days in the ocean, now it's more like 150-170 days and doing the math from Carrie Upite. That meant I should have caught 162 turtles in my career. That's a long way from 2.

I have been involved in a lot of different fisheries, one of them was tuna pair trawling. We were under a 2 turtle bycatch cap for the 6 pairs. We carried technically 50% observer coverage which meant each pair had 1 observer but in reality it was closer to 100% because the observer was required to observe the other boat's haul. In 4 years the 12 boats never caught the 2 turtle cap. We were shut down for political reasons not scientific reasons. I can't help but think this is the same.

It seems that if the turtle people are that concerned about turtle interactions maybe they should look at the 476 yearly recreational boat strikes in their Biological Opinion.

Mark S Phillips
F/V Illusion



Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
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Michael P. Luisi, Chairman | P. Weston Townsend, Vice Chairman
Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

Date: March 24, 2023
To: Dr. Chris Moore, Executive Director
From: Hannah Hart and José Montañez, Council staff
Subject: Golden Tilefish Survey Update and Expansion of South Atlantic Deepwater Longline Survey

Golden Tilefish Survey

The 2023 golden tilefish fishery independent bottom longline survey will take place in Mid-June to early July. This 14-day survey was designed using the results from the pilot golden and blueline tilefish survey conducted in the summer of 2017 and builds on the golden tilefish survey conducted in the summer of 2020. The goal of the 2023 fishery independent bottom longline survey is to extend the timeseries to derive an index of abundance for the golden tilefish stock and collect other biological information to support the golden tilefish stock assessment. The survey will be conducted by Dr. Jill Olin, assistant professor at Michigan Technical University. PI Olin will be responsible for project design with NOAA-NEFSC personnel, and all work proposed. For continuity purposes, the same commercial vessel and crew that assisted in prior surveys will be used to conduct the 2023 survey.

Expansion of South Atlantic Deepwater Longline Survey

Background

The South Atlantic Deepwater Longline (SADL) survey is a cooperative survey with industry that targets several deepwater snapper/grouper species, including blueline tilefish, in waters from the North Carolina/Virginia border to the Florida Keys. The objective of the survey is to generate indices of abundance and collect biological information to support stock assessments and management of several federally managed stocks. The survey was initially conducted in 2020 and since then has occurred annually.

Although blueline tilefish along the Atlantic coast makes up a single population, the stock is split into two management areas, a Mid-Atlantic management area north of the North Carolina/ Virginia border and a South Atlantic management area from North Carolina to Florida, so that each Council can set their own specifications. There is currently no stock status information relevant to the Mid-Atlantic management area due to insufficient data. The expansion of the SADL north into Mid-Atlantic waters will allow scientists and managers to collect information on blueline tilefish throughout its range as well as monitor potential distribution shifts of other deepwater species.

Proposed Expanded SADL Survey

The proposed expanded survey would utilize the same methodology used in the south Atlantic, but the areas fished would include waters off Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and New Jersey (Figure 1).

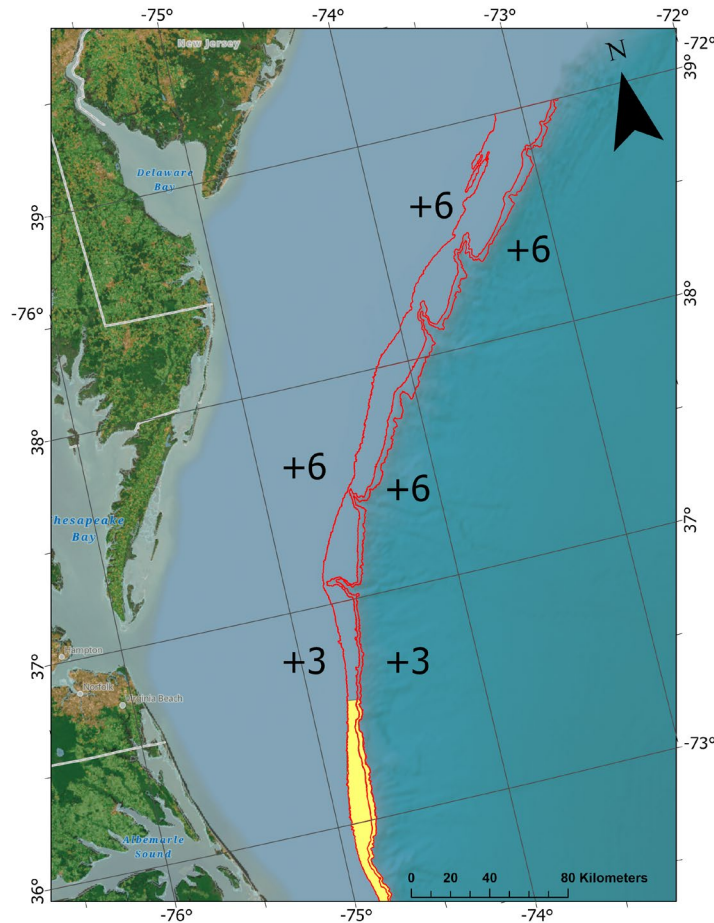


Figure 1. 2023 proposed northern extent of the SADL survey shown by the red outlined area. Proposed northern extent extends to 39 degrees north to approximately Delaware Bay/Wilmington Canyon. The distance from shore (+/- 10 km) will be approximately 90 km to 160 km depending on depth and latitude. Yellow shaded area shows the current northern survey boundary at the NC/VA boarder.

Based on catches from the Mid-Atlantic 2017 Pilot Tilefish Survey and a 2015 South Atlantic Cooperative Research Project, the proposed area would encompass the range of the Atlantic blueline tilefish stock and meet up with the southernmost latitude fished in the Mid-Atlantic Golden Tilefish Survey. More information related to the background, methods, and 2020-2021 SADL results can be found [here](#).

The Council has committed to funding the expansion of the SADL north in 2023 and is coordinating with staff from the Southeast Fishery Science Center, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, and Northeast Fishery Science Center on survey logistics and permitting requirements.



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Michael P. Luisi, Chairman | P. Weston Townsend, Vice Chairman

Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

Date: March 21, 2023
To: Chris Moore, Executive Director
From: Julia Beaty, staff
Subject: Updates on Offshore Wind Energy Development

This memo summarizes select recent updates in offshore wind energy development. This list is not intended to be exhaustive and focuses on updates of greatest relevance to the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council.

- **Submitted comment letters:** Since the February 2023 Council meeting, the Council submitted the following comment letters:
 - [MAFMC and NEFMC Letter to BOEM: Draft Environmental Impact Statement for New England Wind Project off Massachusetts \(2/21/23\)](#)
 - [MAFMC and NEFMC Letter to BOEM: Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Sunrise Wind Project offshore New York, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island \(2/14/23\)](#)
 - [MAFMC and NEFMC Letter to BOEM: Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind Project \(2/14/23\)](#)
- **Comment letters in progress:** Council staff are working on a comment letter to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) on the [draft environmental impact statement for SouthCoast Wind](#) (formerly Mayflower Wind; comments due 4/3/2023)
- **Ongoing construction:** Construction is underway for the South Fork and Vineyard Wind 1 projects.
 - **South Fork Wind:** Export cables are being installed off Long Island. Vessels anchoring or using bottom contact fishing gear are requested to avoid certain areas during installation. See the [Northeast Mariners Briefings](#) for more information, including maps of active work zones and boulder relocations.
 - **Vineyard Wind 1:** Scour protection materials are being installed for 17 turbine foundations. There are no surface markings for these locations. Vineyard Wind is recommending that vessels using bottom tending gear avoid these areas until they are marked on NOAA charts later this year after the turbine foundations are installed. More information, including maps of the locations, are available [here](#).
- **Ongoing survey activities (geotechnical, geophysical, fisheries, etc.):** Several offshore wind projects are undertaking geophysical, geotechnical, fisheries, and other types of survey work throughout the region. These surveys use a variety of gear types, including

some equipment that is installed in a location for extended periods of time (e.g., buoys, acoustic receivers). The best way to stay informed of these survey activities is to sign up for email updates from individual wind developers (see the project specific links available [here](#)). Some developers are also using the [Waterfront App](#) to share information such as survey vessel locations.

- **Offshore wind and whales:** NOAA Fisheries has updated their [FAQ page](#) to provide more information on offshore wind energy development and whales. An additional page provides answers frequently asked questions about [marine mammal necropsies](#).
- **New Jersey solicitation:** The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities opened its third offshore wind energy solicitation, seeking to award between 1.2 GW and 4 GW of offshore wind capacity. More information is available [here](#).
- **National Academies Standing Committee on Offshore Wind Energy and Fisheries:** This new committee held their first meeting in closed session on March 15, 2023. The next two meetings will be held on April 13 and April 26-27 and will be open to the public. More information will be posted [here](#) once it is available.
- **Transmission planning:** The Department of Energy (DOE) and BOEM are carrying out a number of efforts to improve energy transmission planning and development, including offshore wind energy transmission. For example, a two-year [Atlantic Offshore Wind Transmission Study](#) is underway and the agencies held a series of [stakeholder workshops](#).
- **Floating offshore wind:** DOE is leading an initiative to reduce the cost of floating offshore wind energy by more than 70% by 2035. As part of this effort, the agency held the Floating Offshore Wind Shot Summit in February 2023. More information is available [here](#).
- **BOEM Director:** In January 2023, the [Department of Interior announced](#) Liz Klein as the new director of BOEM.
- **NOAA Fisheries Senior Advisory on Offshore Wind:** Katie Westfall joined NOAA Fisheries as a Senior Advisor on offshore wind. In this role she will focus on improving the efficiency of offshore wind permitting at NOAA and enhancing external coordination and engagement with other agencies, senior officials, and external groups.
- **Fisheries liaisons outreach:**
 - **New England Council meeting:** Fisheries liaisons from multiple wind projects are hosting an outreach event during the New England Fishery Management Council meeting. The event will take place at the Hilton Mystic in Mystic, CT from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm on April 18, 2023.
 - **Other events:** Fisheries liaisons for most offshore wind projects periodically host port hours, dock visits, and other outreach events. The best way to stay informed of these outreach events is to sign up for email updates from individual wind developers (see the project specific links available [here](#)).
- **Mid-Atlantic Ocean Forum:** The fifth annual Mid-Atlantic Ocean Forum will be held in New York City on May 17 and 18, 2023. The agenda has not been finalized but will

likely include sessions on offshore wind. More information will be posted [here](#) as it becomes available.

- **Stay informed:**

- A wind agenda item, including a presentation from BOEM staff, is planned for the Council's June 2023 meeting in Virginia Beach. More information will be posted to the [meeting page](#) once it is available.
- To stay up to date on individual wind projects, including development of fishery communications plans, details on offshore survey operations, outreach events, and other updates, see the project-specific links available at <https://www.mafmc.org/offshore-wind-notice>.
- The Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal maintains a list of current and recent government agency actions and public comment opportunities relevant for the Mid-Atlantic Region. This list can be viewed [here](#).
- The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) maintains an archive of free, publicly available webinars for stakeholders interested in issues relating to offshore wind and the environment. The archive is available at <https://www.nyetwg.com/webinar-library>.

Climate Change and Mid-Atlantic Fisheries



Climate change is having profound impacts on our oceans, fisheries, and coastal communities. Over the past century, the Northeast region has experienced some of the greatest warming and highest rates of sea-level rise of any area around the world. As the marine environment becomes warmer and more acidic, some species are experiencing changes in distribution and productivity. Understanding and adapting to climate change is critical to the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's mission of managing sustainable and productive fisheries.

How is the Mid-Atlantic Council responding to climate change?

Building resilient, "climate ready" fisheries is a long-term endeavor. The Council is coordinating closely with its science and management partners to explore governance issues, address climate science needs, and develop new tools and adaptive management approaches. This page highlights a selection of the Council's actions to build climate resilience in Mid-Atlantic fisheries and ecosystems, as well as to increase the Council's capacity to respond to climate change. These actions are organized around eight themes:

1. [Strengthening partnerships to prepare for governance challenges](#)
2. [Addressing changing distributions](#)
3. [Monitoring emerging fisheries](#)
4. [Implementing an ecosystem approach to fisheries management](#)
5. [Incorporating climate information in management decisions](#)
6. [Ensuring healthy fish habitat](#)
7. [Advancing climate science](#)
8. [Planning for the future](#)

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS TO PREPARE FOR GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES

East Coast fisheries management relies on coordination among multiple fishery management organizations. Climate-driven changes in species distributions are expected to introduce new jurisdictional issues. To prepare for these challenges, the Mid-Atlantic Council is working with its science and management partners to explore potential solutions and next steps for adapting and responding to climate change.



Climate Change Scenario Planning: The Council is currently collaborating with other East Coast fishery management organizations on a climate change scenario planning initiative. The goals of this project are to assess how climate change might affect stock distribution and availability of East Coast marine fisheries over the next 20 years and to identify implications and potential actions for fishery management and governance. Learn more at [East Coast Climate Change Scenario Planning Initiative](#).

Council Committee Structure: The Council has taken steps to increase representation of New England states in the Mid-Atlantic Council process by adding seats for New England Fishery Management Council members on the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Committee and the Mackerel, Squid, Butterfish Committee. The Council may explore other changes based on recommendations from the scenario planning process.

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ADDRESSING CHANGING DISTRIBUTIONS

The Mid-Atlantic region has experienced rising ocean temperatures over the past several decades, along with changes in the geographic distribution of many fish stocks. The Council has initiated a number of fishery management actions to address new management and governance challenges that have resulted from changing stock distributions.



Photo Credit: Michael Eversmier

Blueline Tilefish: In 2015, the Council initiated management of blueline tilefish in the Mid-Atlantic in response to evidence that commercial and recreational landings of blueline tilefish in the Mid-Atlantic were increasing rapidly. The Mid-Atlantic portion of the stock was added to the Council's Tilefish Fishery Management Plan in 2017. The South Atlantic Council continues to manage the fishery south of the NC/VA line. Learn more at [Blueline Tilefish Amendment](#).

Black Sea Bass Allocations: In 2021, the Council and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission modified the state allocations of the black sea bass commercial quota in response to changes in stock distribution that have occurred since the state allocations were first established. The allocations are now based on a combination of historical allocations and biomass distribution. The revised allocations are dynamic and will be updated each time the stock assessment or other appropriate data source suggests that the regional distribution of the stock has changed. Learn more at [Black Sea Bass Commercial State Allocation Amendment](#).

Surfclam/Ocean Quahog Species Separation Requirements: The Council is currently considering changes to the species separation requirements for the Atlantic surfclam and ocean quahog fisheries. Although current regulations do not allow for the two species to be landed on the same trip, industry has reported that it is becoming increasingly difficult to avoid mixed catches as Atlantic surfclam have shifted to deeper waters. Learn more at [Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Species Separation Requirements Amendment](#).

Allocation Review Policy: The Council has adopted a policy which requires allocations to be reviewed at least every 10 years. This will help ensure that the Council regularly considers new information, including changes in distribution, that may inform the need for allocation revisions. Learn more at [MAFMC Allocation Review Policy](#).

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MONITORING EMERGING FISHERIES

Climate change can also give rise to emerging fisheries for previously-unmanaged stocks. The Council has taken steps to avoid the potential overexploitation in these emerging fisheries.



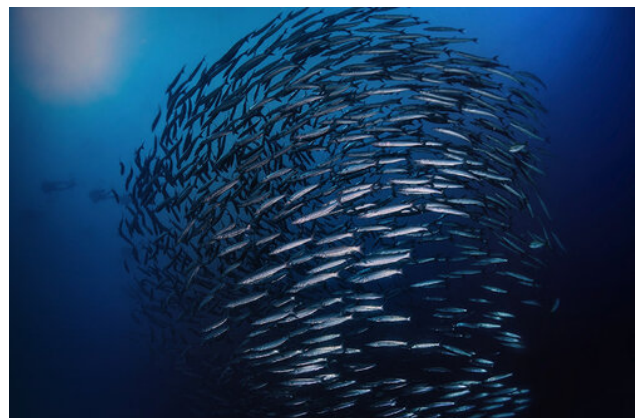
Unmanaged Forage Protections: In 2016, the Council approved a commercial possession limit for more than 50 forage species which were previously unmanaged in Mid-Atlantic federal waters. The goal was to prohibit the development of new and expansion of existing commercial fisheries on unmanaged forage species in mid-Atlantic waters until the Council has had an opportunity to assess the scientific information and consider potential impacts. Learn more at [Unmanaged Forage Omnibus Amendment](#).

Annual Report on Landings of Unmanaged Species: The Council receives an annual report on commercial landings of “unmanaged” species (i.e., species not managed by the Mid-Atlantic, New England, or South Atlantic Councils, NOAA Fisheries, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, or states). These reports allow the Council to monitor landings for evidence of emerging unmanaged fisheries and determine if further evaluation is needed. Learn more at [2022 Unmanaged Commercial Landings Report](#).

Policy to Evaluate New or Expanding Fisheries: In 2023, the Council plans to develop a policy regarding the use of Exempted Fishing Permits as first step in considering the potential for new or expanded fisheries for species covered by the [Unmanaged Forage Amendment](#).

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IMPLEMENTING AN ECOSYSTEM APPROACH TO FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

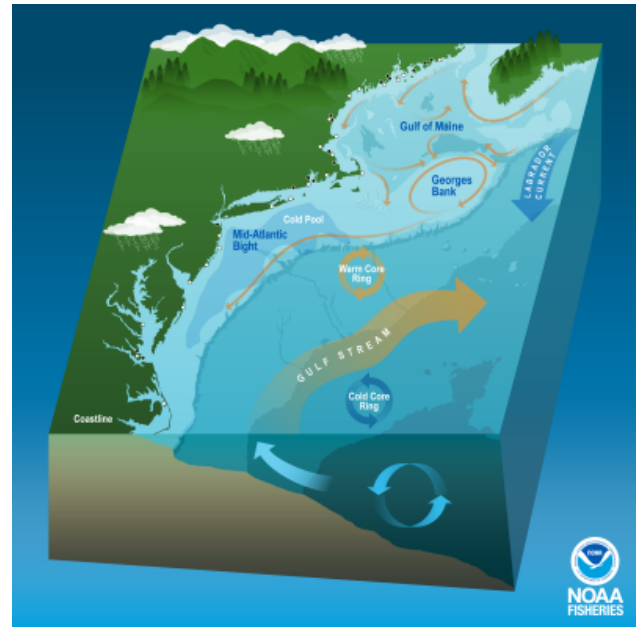


Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management: In 2016 the Council approved an [EAFM Guidance Document](#) which outlined a path forward to more fully incorporate ecosystem considerations into marine fisheries management. The EAFM Guidance Document is designed to help the Council incorporate key ecosystem considerations, such as climate change and climate variability, into decision making. Learn more at [Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management](#).

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INCORPORATING CLIMATE INFORMATION IN MANAGEMENT DECISIONS

As part of EAFM implementation, the Council has collaborated with science and management partners to develop new ways of considering ecosystem information in the management process.



State of the Ecosystem Reports: The Council reviews an annual “State of the Ecosystem” report from NOAA Fisheries that synthesizes information about recent ecosystem conditions. These reports contain detailed summaries of climate change trends (ocean temperature, heatwaves, currents, acidification) and the apparent impacts of those trends on ecosystem health. Learn more at [2022 State of the Ecosystem Report - Mid-Atlantic Bight](#).

Risk Assessment: The Council also uses a comprehensive risk assessment, updated annually, to help decide where to focus limited resources to address priority ecosystem considerations. The risk assessment takes into account 25 different ecosystem risk factors, including climate vulnerability and distribution shifts, and highlights priority species/issues for more detailed evaluation. Learn more at [2022 EAFM Risk Assessment Update](#).

Climate Vulnerability Assessments: The Council and its Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) review vulnerability assessments developed by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center. These assessments identify species, habitats, and communities that are most vulnerable to a changing climate. The Council and SSC use this information to understand ecosystem risk, identify research priorities, and prepare and plan for a changing environment. Learn more at [Climate Vulnerability Assessments](#).

SSC Ecosystem Working Group: A working group of the Council's SSC is developing strategies to advance the operational use of ecosystem information in science and management decisions.

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ENSURING HEALTHY FISH HABITAT

Climate change is impacting the function, suitability, and distribution of fish habitats. Understanding how climate change will impact these habitats is necessary to inform decisions about habitat conservation and restoration, fisheries management, and coastal and offshore planning. The Council is engaged in several initiatives aimed at assessing and protecting fish habitat.



Photo Credit: Michael Eversmier

Essential Fish Habitat Amendment: The Council is developing an omnibus amendment that will review and update essential fish habitat (EFH) designations for all Council-managed stocks. This action is an opportunity to utilize the best available fish habitat science to improve EFH designations and support the Council's fish habitat conservation efforts. Learn more at [Omnibus Essential Fish Habitat Amendment](#).

Northeast Regional Habitat Assessment (NRHA): The Council also recently collaborated with its science and management partners on a comprehensive assessment of fish habitat distribution, abundance, and quality in the Northeast. This project resulted in a powerful [Data Explorer](#) Tool which allows users to explore information on fish distribution, habitat, and more. Learn more at [Northeast Regional Habitat Assessment](#).

Habitat Crosswalk: One particularly useful component of the NRHA Data Explorer is the Habitat Crosswalk, which identifies the dependence or occurrence of species on specific habitat types while conveying information about species and habitat vulnerability to climate change. Learn more at [NRHA Habitat Crosswalk](#).

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ADVANCING CLIMATE SCIENCE

Additional research is needed to understand the impacts of climate change on Mid-Atlantic fisheries. The Council is involved in several research efforts to address these climate data gaps.



Short-Term Forecasts of Species Distributions for Fisheries Management: The Council and Rutgers University are developing forecast models to predict short-term climate-induced distribution changes for four economically important Mid and South Atlantic managed species (summer flounder, spiny dogfish, *Illex* squid, and gray triggerfish). Learn more [here](#).

Expansion of the South Atlantic Deepwater Longline (SADL) Survey: The Council is collaborating with the NOAA Fisheries' Southeast and Northeast Fisheries Science Centers and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council to expand the SADL survey north to include areas off Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and New Jersey. The SADL survey currently uses industry fishing vessels to collect information on a variety of deepwater species, such as golden and blueline tilefish, from the Florida Keys to the NC/VA border. The expansion of the survey will allow scientists and managers to monitor potential distribution shifts of deepwater species and collect information on blueline tilefish throughout its range.

Climate/Ecosystem Terms of Reference for Stock Assessments: in 2020, the Northeast Region Coordinating Council implemented a new stock assessment process designed to improve the quality, timing, and planning of Northeast stock assessments. As part of this process, new Terms of Reference were developed that task scientists with identifying relevant ecosystem and climate influences on a particular stock and how those factors may impact the available data, modeling approaches, reference points, stock status, and projections.

Electronic Reporting: NOAA Fisheries recently implemented the Council's recommendation to require commercial and for-hire fishermen and some private anglers to submit trip reports electronically. The transition from paper to electronic reporting increases the timeliness and accuracy of fishery-dependent data, allowing fishery managers to identify and respond to management issues, including climate-related concerns, more quickly. Learn more at [Electronic Reporting](#).

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PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Managing fisheries for climate resilience and adaptability requires strategic thinking and long-term planning. The Council uses several planning documents that inform the Council's climate initiatives.



Photo Credit: John McMurray

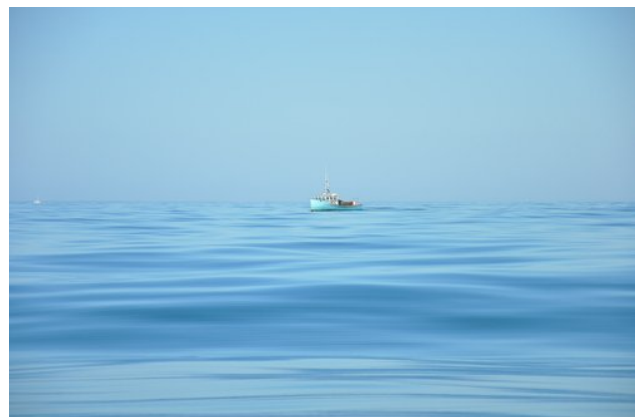
Strategic Plan: The Council's Strategic Plan serves as the primary framework for setting long-term goals, planning management activities, and tracking progress. The current strategic plan, for the years 2020-2024, contains several climate-related objectives and strategies, plus additional objectives and strategies that indirectly support the Council's response to climate change. Learn more at [MAFMC Strategic Plan](#).

Annual Implementation Plans: Each year, the Council develops a detailed Implementation Plan which describes the management activities the Council expects to undertake in the upcoming year within the context of the Council's five-year strategic plan. This process gives Council members and stakeholders an opportunity to raise new issues and ensures that the Council is continuing to make progress toward long-term goals. Learn more on the Strategic Plan page linked above.

Five-Year Research Priorities: The Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) requires that each regional Council develop a five-year research priorities document. The Council's current 5-year research priorities document identifies a number of climate-related research needs. Learn more at [2020-2024 Research Priorities](#).

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Mid-Atlantic Council

- [East Coast Climate Change Scenario Planning](#)
- [MAFMC Climate Science and Fisheries Workshop \(2015\)](#)
- [East Coast Climate Change and Fisheries Governance Workshop \(2014\)](#)

NOAA/NOAA Fisheries

- [Climate Change in the Northeast U.S. Shelf Ecosystem](#)
- [The Northeast Shelf: A Changing Ecosystem](#)
- [Northeast Regional Climate Action Plan](#)
- [NOAA Fisheries Distribution and Analysis Mapping Portal \(DISMAP\)](#)
- [Current Conditions of the Northeast U.S. Shelf Ecosystem](#)
- [Climate Vulnerability Assessments](#)
- [Integrated Ecosystem Assessment](#)
- [NOAA Climate Program Office](#)

Other

- [Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Climate Change Page](#)
 - [Ocean Adapt - Changes in Marine Species Distributions \(Rutgers University\)](#)
-

From: Didden, Jason <jdidden@mafmc.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 8, 2023 4:55 PM
To: Didden, Jason <jdidden@mafmc.org>
Cc: Elizabeth Moore <emoore@Gmri.org>
Subject: RE: March MREP Management Workshop - a few spots left!

Greetings AP'ers!

A few seats opened for this month's March 21-23 (Tues-Thur) **Fisheries Management Workshop** by the Marine Resource Education Program (**MREP**). It's in Hanover, MD near BWI airport.

Travel and hotel costs are covered for participating attendees.

[MREP is designed by fishermen for fishermen](#) to help them engage in the management process (active fishery participants are prioritized).

If you're interested in attending, please fill out the **short** application at this link:
<https://mrep.gmri.org/apply>.

Council staff participate, and we have not encountered fishermen who regretted attending. Many of you have already attended, but for folks who haven't, please consider applying! Or if you know someone who might be interested, please forward this to them.

If you have questions, you can reach out to me or Liz Moore (cc'd, emoore@gmri.org or 207-228-1680). Liz is the MREP program manager for our area.

Thanks!
Jason

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