

STATUS UPDATE: 2026 New England Fishery Management Council Priorities (September 2026)

Ref #	Plan/Topic	Priority/Task	Estimated Timing	Status - Sept 2026
G1	Groundfish	Complete and submit FW72	Complete early 2026	Completed
G2	Groundfish	Action to set ABC/ACL for groundfish stocks for FY2027-FY2031; US/CA stocks for FY2027; additional management measures	2026	In progress, part of FW74, expected final action in Dec
G3	Groundfish	Groundfish Management Track Assessments (June - Georges Bank haddock; Sept - Gulf of Maine haddock, American plaice) and data updates (halibut, witch flounder, pollock)	2026	In progress, Sept 22-23 MT peer review
G4	Groundfish	Updates for transboundary management (TMGC; cod, haddock, yellowtail flounder)	2026	In progress, TMGC meeting in Oct, part of FW74
G5	Groundfish	Review redfish sector exemption program	2026	Completed
G6	Groundfish	Amendment 23 monitoring system review including complete development of metrics	2026	Completed
G7	Groundfish	Continue work to revise ABC control rules for Northeast Multispecies stocks	2026	In progress, expected final action in April 2027; IRA project completion
G8	Groundfish	Review white hake rebuilding plan and reference points	2026	Paused, coordinate with 2027 MT assessment
SC1	Scallop	Complete and submit FW40	Complete early 2026	Completed
SC2	Scallop	LAGC IFQ program review (2016-2023)	Complete early 2026	Completed
SC3	Scallop	Action to set ABC/ACL for scallop stock with specifications for FY2027 (FY2028 default); Develop sub-management units in NGOM and regional allocations of Limited Access DAS/analyze carryover provisions	2026	In progress, split 2027/28 specs (final action in Dec) and initiated FW42 for area management (final action in Apr 2027)
SC4	Scallop	Develop new projection methods	2026	In progress, expected completion in mid-2027
SC5	Scallop	Scallop Strategic Plan Menu Items	Multiyear	In progress, 2027-2029 work plan developed
SC6	Scallop	Scallop RSA Management (Share Day, Proposal Review)	Ongoing	Ongoing
HE1	Herring	Action to set ABC/ACL for Atlantic herring stock for FY2027-FY2031; Develop measures to minimize interactions with river herring and shad	2026	In progress, split 2027-31 specs (final action in Sept) and initiated action for RHS (final action in Apr 2027)
HE2	Herring	Herring Management Track Assessment (June)	2026	Completed
HE3	Herring	Amendment 10: minimize user conflicts, achieve OY, and support rebuilding of the Atlantic herring resource	Multi-year, initiated in 2022	Paused; consideration to discontinue
HE4	Herring	Coordination with MAFMC/ASMFC for river herring/shad issues	Ongoing	Ongoing
M/SK1	Monkfish/Skate	Peer review of the monkfish Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) research projects and evaluate use of CPUE indices in monkfish assessment and management	2026	Completed
M/SK2/EO3	Monkfish/Skate	Scope an IFQ program for monkfish and/or skate wing fisheries; consider EO14276 response related to monkfish management modifications	Multiyear	Change in priorities to discontinue IFQ scoping and conduct Listening Sessions

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W1	Whiting	Action to set ABC/ACL for small-mesh stocks for FY2027-2031; additional management measures	2026	In progress, expected final action in Dec
HA1	Habitat	Develop revised EFH designations for groundfish, small mesh, and scallops	2026	In progress, expected final action in Sept
HA2	Habitat	Habitat impacts of management actions (NEPA analyses)	Ongoing	Ongoing
HA3	Habitat	Develop habitat and fishery related comments on non-fishing activities, including offshore energy	Ongoing	Ongoing
HA4	Habitat	Contribute to habitat and ocean planning science and management partnerships, through CCC Habitat WG, ASMFC Habitat Committee, Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership, and ROSA	Ongoing	Ongoing
HA5	Habitat	Continue to advance Fishing Effects Model analyses, integrate habitat information into Council initiatives, maintain expertise, and share habitat products with regional partners	Ongoing	Ongoing
HA6	Habitat	Evaluation of the Great South Channel Habitat Management Area surfclam exemption areas	2026	In progress, final report to Council in Sept
OD1	On-Demand Gear	Joint action with MAFMC and GARFO to revise gear marking regulations across FMPs	Multiyear, initiated 2025	Paused
RP1	Risk Policy WG	RPWG TOR #3: Communication strategies for revised Risk Policy	2026	In progress, applications of new Concept and Matrices in fall 2026
RP2	Risk Policy WG	Simulation testing of revised Risk Policy Concept for some FMPs/species/stocks with SSC review	Multiyear, initiated 2025	Completed
RP3	Risk Policy WG	Implementation of revised Risk Policy Concept for some FMPs/species/stocks, integrated with ABC control rule revisions	Multiyear, initiated 2025	Completed
SSC1	SSC	Support Council activities including recommending OFLs and ABCs and review of scientific information	Ongoing	Ongoing
SSC2	SSC	Support SSC Social Science Sub-panel	Ongoing	Ongoing
EN1	Enforcement	Reengage Committee; Q1 Committee meeting	2026	Completed
EN2	Enforcement	Address issues related to development and implementation of ropeless/on-demand gear	Multiyear, initiated 2024	Completed
NT1	NTAP	Continue the Survey Contingency Working Group; Industry-Based Survey implementation	Ongoing	Ongoing
CE1	Climate and Ecosystem	Spring and fall meetings of the Climate and Ecosystem Steering Committee; guidance for IRA initiatives, climate-resilient fisheries management, and ecosystem approaches	Ongoing	Ongoing
IA1	Inter-Agency	CCC participation	Ongoing	Ongoing
IA2	Inter-Agency	NRCC participation	Ongoing	Ongoing
IA3	Inter-Agency	East Coast Coordination Group and Climate Core Team; CEI Decision Support Team	Ongoing	Ongoing
IA4	Inter-Agency	NROC Ocean Policy	Ongoing	Ongoing

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IA5	Inter-Agency	Sanctuary Advisory Committees (Stellwagen, Hudson Canyon)	Ongoing	Ongoing
IA6	Inter-Agency	International Fisheries Management (US/CA TMGC, Steering Committee, ICCAT, HMS, NAFO); revisit TMGC biomass apportionment methodology	Ongoing	Ongoing
IA7	Inter-Agency	Take Reduction Teams; Protected Species Issues	Ongoing	Ongoing
IRA1	IRA	Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) Control Rules for Northeast Multispecies	Multiyear, completion 2027	In progress, expected final action in April 2027
IRA2	IRA	Atlantic cod management transition (pending implementation of A25)	Multiyear, completion 2027	Paused, expected completion in 2027
IRA3	IRA	Operationalizing ecosystem approaches in NE fisheries management, evaluate possible management approaches for cusk to inform ESA listing review	Multiyear, completion 2027	In progress, expected completion in 2027
IRA4	IRA	Operationalizing the East Coast Climate Change Scenario Planning Initiative	Multiyear, completion 2027	In progress, expected completion in 2027
IRA5	IRA	Holistic strategic plan for climate resilient NE fisheries management	Multiyear, completion 2027	In progress, expected final action in Sept
IRA6	IRA	Enhancing participatory processes for climate resilient fisheries	Multiyear, completion 2027	In progress, expected completion in 2027
EO1	EO14276	Modifications to Vessel Baseline Restrictions	Multiyear	In progress, final report to Council in Sept
EO2	EO14276	Fishery Management Plan Revisions	Multiyear	In progress, consideration for 2027 action
EO3/M/SK2	EO14276	Monkfish management modifications - coordinated with Monkfish priority	Multiyear	In progress, Listening Sessions completed