

Holistic Strategic Plan Overview

Updated September 4, 2026

1. Correspondence/Reports (September 15-17, 2026) M #15d

Vision:

We are a global leader in fisheries management and directly engage a broad array of stakeholders to provide a trusted, predictable, and well understood process that leads to successful and sustainable fisheries by applying flexible and efficient tools to address emerging and dynamic conditions.

We have enduring and abundant fishery resources that support:

- a) adaptive, profitable, and globally competitive fishing industries;
- b) thriving recreational opportunities; and
- c) robust fishing communities

Mission:

The New England Fishery Management Council, one of eight regional councils established by federal legislation in 1976, is charged with conserving and managing fishery resources from three to 200 miles off the coasts of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut to prevent overfishing and rebuild overfished stocks, and to protect, restore, and promote the long-term health and stability of the fisheries.

Goal 1: Build flexibility and adaptability into Fishery Management Plans and streamline the process of developing management measures.

The Council will refine its management focus and respond to fishery management needs with greater agility by identifying, prioritizing, and completing initiatives more efficiently and effectively. The Council will expand capacity for Council members, staff, and partners by aligning intended outcomes with requested analyses, improving process efficiency, and reducing redundancy across operations.

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| • Optimize Council member, staff, and partner time for the development of actions. | • Support the implementation of actions across all plans by the start of the fishing year. |
| • Refine information streams to reduce duplication, minimize preparation time, and streamline products, including the use of artificial intelligence and automation. | • Increase the ability to adjust management measures in a timely manner. |

Goal 2: Grow and strengthen partnerships between science, management, and fishing communities

The Council will foster and improve engagement among scientists, managers, fishermen, and other partners to enhance participatory processes, build and maintain trust, and ensure clear, timely, and relevant input for decision-making. Transparent communication of scientific information, coupled with clearly defined management objectives and targeted stakeholder input, will support an environment that reduces system shocks and enables respectful dialogue and constructive collaboration.

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| • Increase participation from all user groups throughout the Council system and processes. | • Enhance the ability to communicate information in a professional and decision-relevant manner. |
| • Facilitate opportunities to improve science and management decisions by connecting all user groups. | • Ensure representative involvement in the development of science and management products. |

Goal 3: Improve accessibility, quality, and use of data to inform decisions

The Council will optimize the suite of presented information and data streams to support transparent and adaptive management approaches. Adopting a dynamic approach to incorporate emerging data from fishery-dependent and independent sources will ensure the continued coproduction of fisheries information and collective ownership of management outcomes.

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| • Improve user understanding of data streams (i.e., collection methods, analysis tools, interpretation of results). | • Enhance opportunities to provide input about data needs to external partners. |
| • Balance consideration of quantitative and qualitative data to support management recommendations, including socioeconomic information. | • Apply the Council’s Risk Policy in specification-setting. |
| • Enhance application of emergent data to inform management recommendations. | • Conduct routine review of reports and analytical documents to ensure summary sections capture key concepts, clear actions/outcomes, and readability for all. |

Goal 4: Optimize capacity to reflect fishery resources and improve fishing efficiency and safety

The Council will focus on forward-facing fishery management optimization. Ensuring that fishery capacity aligns with current and projected management objectives will improve the Council’s ability to identify and prioritize management activities to support safe, profitable, and sustainable fisheries.

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| • Determine the appropriate level of investment for stocks, management plans, fishery components, and community factors. | • Define “optimal capacity” and establish metrics for harvesting capacity and/or system capacity (e.g., processing, infrastructure, labor, regulatory structures). |
| • Build consensus for identified objectives related to fleet size and vessel characteristics, community dependence, diversity, and accessibility of permits. | |



Goal 1 Key Performance Indicators

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Goal 1 Strategies	Actions	Key Performance Indicators
Strategy 1.1: Revise the annual priority setting process	• Identify objectives to inform priority activities	1.1.1 The number of FMPs with multi-year strategic plan (as basis for work priorities)
	• Build consensus to prioritize top management needs	1.1.2 The number of motions to substitute recommended priorities (Decrease = +)
	• Recommend priority activities within realistic capacity parameters, including all partners	1.1.3 Total Priorities do not exceed resource capacity
Strategy 1.2: Reduce redundancy in information sharing throughout action development	• Enhance joint meeting opportunities among Plan Development Teams (PDT), Advisory Panels (AP), and the Committees (CTE)	1.2.1 Number of joint meetings held by FMP, annually (Increase = +)
	• Focus meeting presentations and materials to target audiences and bundle routine items	1.2.2 Percentage (%) of Actions that have Committee Recommendations (CTE Motion) at Final Action
	• Encourage participation in stock assessment and SSC meetings	Not tied to a formal key performance indicator at this time
Strategy 1.3: Set specifications through streamlined processes, decoupled from other management measures	• Ensure timely development, review, and implementation of annual catch limits, recreational seasons and bag limits	1.3.1 Optimize the number of days between final action and submission of an action. (Decreasing = -)
	• Consider revising specifications through in-season adjustment or streamlined analyses	1.3.2 Use of SIRs, CE, and in-season authority. (Increasing = +)
	• Allow flexible timelines for the development of management improvement actions	1.3.3 Percentage of specifications (OFL, ABC, allocations) vs. other management actions (by FMP)
Strategy 1.4: Focus analyses and documentation on identified action objectives	• Optimize the range of alternatives considered for action	1.4.1 Percentage % of priorities that are linked to HSP Goals and Objectives
	• Prepare meeting documents in accordance with required analysis (e.g., NEPA or other statutory requirements)	1.4.2 Count Action documents by type, NEPA analysis, length
	• Use AI/automation tools where applicable to generate summaries for user accessibility	1.4.3 Track use of modern tools (e.g. automation) to support decision making. (Increasing = +)