

New England Fishery Management Council

50 WATER STREET | NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS 01950 | PHONE 978 465 0492 | FAX 978 465 3116 Eric Reid, *Chair* | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 15, 2022

TO: Council

FROM: Tom Nies, Executive Director SUBJECT: 2023 Management Priorities

- 1. The September Council meeting will include our first discussion of Council priorities for 2023. The goal of this first step is to identify the possible tasks. The actual selection of priorities will occur at the December meeting. As a reminder, we don't usually debate the merits of additions to the list at this meeting.
- 2. I've attached a memo and draft of the possible tasks for 2022 that was prepared for the September 8. 2022 Executive Committee meeting. This list identifies, but does not recommend, possible tasks. This list does not contain tasks identified by the Groundfish, Scallop, and Herring Oversight Committee meetings, or suggested by correspondence, after the Executive Committee met. I will bring any additions that surface at those meetings to the Council.
- 3. The priorities process is described in our <u>Council Operations Handbook</u> (page 75). In brief, there are five key steps:
 - a. Possible tasks are identified no later than the September Council meeting.
 - b. Each Council member will be asked to categorize every task (including required tasks) as either a low, medium, high, or "Don't Do This" priority. The latter category is new this year and was added in response to a suggestion received last year.
 - c. If possible, Committees will identify the tasks they prefer to address for their Committees (some have already done this).
 - d. The Executive Committee reviews the list, ranking, and Committee preferences, considers available resources, and develops a recommended list for review and approval.
 - e. The Council considers the Executive Committee recommendations and approves the final priorities at the December meeting.
- 4. The staff will once again estimate the time needed for the various tasks. This information will be provided to the Executive Committee and Council for the final decisions.

Attachment: ED memo to Executive Committee dated September 1, 2022 (with attachments)



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MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 1, 2022

TO: Executive Committee

FROM: Tom Nies, Executive Director SUBJECT: 2023 Management Priorities

- 1. The September Council meeting will include our first discussion of Council priorities for 2023. The goal of this first step is to identify the possible tasks. The actual selection of priorities will occur at the December meeting.
- 2. I've attached a first draft of the possible tasks for 2023. This list does not recommend any specific task. Several Oversight Committees will meet in September before the Council meeting. I will add in any additions that surface at those meetings or suggested by the Executive Committee before the Council meeting. This list may also be expanded at the September Council meeting.
- 3. The staff will once again attempt to estimate the time needed for the various tasks. This information will be provided this year as well.
- 4. I am planning one change to the Priorities process based on a suggestion made last year. When Council members are asked to rank the importance of each possible task, they will choose from the categories of High/Medium/Low/Don't Do This. The new category addresses concerns that there was no way to indicate a belief that a task should not be pursued, at any level of priority.
- 5. This year marks the third year since the Council adopted a requirement that mid-year changes to priorities must first be considered by the Committee and must be approved by a 2/3 vote at a Council meeting. Enclosure (2) summarizes mid-year priority changes made since 2014.

Enclosure: (1) Initial 2023 Priorities Task List for Executive Committee

(2) Mid-year changes in priorities since 2014

1-Sep-22	This worksheet ident	ifies possible priorities or tasks for 2023. This list has not been	prioritized b	y the Ex Comr	n.	
9/1/2022						
Number		Priority/Task Title	Status	Multi_Year	Legal/Regula- tory Requirement ?	Source
	Groundfish					
1	Groundfish	Set ABCs/ACLs as necessary for groundfish stocks for FY2024-FY2026 and US/CA stocks for FY2024-FY2025			Y	Requirement
2	Groundfish	Develop measures to reduce gillnet interactions with protected species (sturgeon, large whales).			Υ	Requirement
3	Groundfish	Develop a transition plan for Atlantic cod management from the current two management units to up to five management units.		Y		ACSSWG
4	Groundfish	In consultation with the SSC, continue work to revise ABC control rules for Northeast Multispecies stocks - modify the existing controls (Approach 2) or replace the existing control rules/conduct MSE (Approach 3)	Ongoing			
5	Groundfish	Review commercial sector PSC allocation as per Council allocation review schedule.				Council Operations Handbook: 2018-2020
6	Groundfish	Review groundfish sector sub-ACLs as per Council allocation review schedule.				Council Operations Handbook
7	Groundfish	Implement recommendations from the white paper on potential approaches to allocate "Georges Bank" cod to the recreational fishery, delivered in 2022 to inform the 2023 priorities discussion.	Ongoing	Y		April 2022 Council meeting

Number		Priority/Task Title	Status	Multi_Year	Legal/Regula- tory Requirement ?	Source
8	Groundfish	Consider adjustments to sector program suggested by sector catch share review				
9	Groundfish	Develop a recreational angler permit with reporting requirements for cod				Groundfish Committee September 2021
10	Groundfish	Revise the small vessel category trip limits – tied to changes in catch limits / changes in stock size				Committee, 9/2021
11	Groundfish	Review sub-ACL allocations for GB YTF (scallops), GB YTF (small mesh), SNE/MA WINP (scallops), SNE/MA WINP (large mesh)				Council Allocation Review Policy (window 2021- 2023)
12	Groundfish	Complete development of metrics to be used in the review process that will evaluate the monitoring system, as per Amendment 23, and have SSC review	Ongoing	Y	Y	Amendment 23; 2022 priorities
13	Groundfish	Review Sector Redfish Universal Exemption after redfish assessment				FW 61
14	Groundfish: Staff	Research track assessment (working group participation) - Atlantic cod, yellowtail flounder		Υ		NRCC
15	Groundfish:Staff	Groundfish management track assessments				NRCC
16	Groundfish:Staff	TRAC/TMGC				
	Monkfish					
17	Monkfish	Develop measures to reduce gillnet interactions with protected species (sturgeon, large whales).			Y	2021 BiOp for ten fisheries
18	Monkfish	Address monkfish recommendations in the NOAA Fisheries Action Plan to Reduce Atlantic Sturgeon Bycatch in Federal Large Mesh Gillnet Fisheries.				Monkfish Committee August 2022

Number		Priority/Task Title	Status	Multi_Year	Legal/Regula- tory Requirement ?	Source
19	Monkfish	Review recommendations from the RSA program review and develop measures to improve the Monkfish RSA program's effectiveness. Revisit use of RSA DAS and ability to flip to a directed RSA DAS while at sea.				Monkfish Committee, September 2020
20	Monkfish	Form a work group of fishermen, NOAA and Council staff, Monkfish Committee members, etc. to discuss the Monkfish RSA program and identify potential improvements.				Monkfish Committee August 2022
21	Monkfish	Address latent effort in the fishery; consider 1) developing a DAS leasing program that would allow markets to drive DAS availability and cost, or 2) moving to a quota management program to increase profitability, flexibility, and efficiency (eliminate the DAS program). Consider updating the control date that was established in May 2012 during development of Amendment 6.				Monkfish Committee August 2022
22	Monkfish	AP-PDT update performance report				Monkfish Committee August 2022
23	Monkfish:Staff	Develop a model that would help predict how changing effort controls would impact the monkfish fishery.				Monkfish Committee August 2022
24	Monkfish:Staff	Develop an economic analysis of the monkfish fishery to help understand the fishery and the outcomes of potential management actions, include further defining the distinctions between the northern and southern fisheries.				Monkfish Committee August 2022

Number		Priority/Task Title	Status	Multi_Year	Legal/Regula- tory Requirement ?	Source
25	Monkfish:Staff	Analyze the characteristics of the fishery, including the active monkfish participants and any impacts on the entry of latent effort from other fisheries.				Monkfish Committee, September 2020
26	Monkfish:Staff	Evaluate whether the reactivation of latent effort from unused permits is a potential problem in the monkfish fishery.				Monkfish Committee, September 2020
	Sea Scallops					
27	Sea Scallops	Prepare a specifications package to set FY 2024 (2025 default) specifications (i.e. setting DAS, access area trips, Northern GOM TAC, limited access general category IFQ allocations, etc.).			Y	Requirement
28	Sea Scallops	Complete ongoing actions (Framework 36)	Ongoing		Υ	
29	Sea Scallops	Subject to Council decision on 9/2022, continue development of limited access vessel leasing program	Ongoing			
30	Sea Scallops	Support action for access to Northern Edge HMA, including development of access area program for modified area		Υ		2018 priority
31	Sea Scallops	Modify RSA program as recommended by RSA Program Review, which includes implementing recommendations from the Sea Scallop Survey Working Group	Ongoing			RSA review and SSSWG
32	Sea Scallops	Consider increase to shell stock possession limit shoreward of the demarcation line				Committee
33	Sea Scallops	Develop management and policy approaches for scallop seeding and grow out				2021 RSA priorities; staff

Number		Priority/Task Title	Status	Multi_Year	Legal/Regula- tory Requirement ?	Source
34	Sea Scallops	Develop measures to improve enforceability of landings limits (bag tags)				Public comment, June 2020
35	Sea Scallops Consider increasing the LAGC IFQ possession limit for IFQ vessels fishing in the NGOM set-aside					
36	Revisit management of GBYT, including timing and					
37	Sea Scallops	5-Year LAGC IFQ program review (2016 to 2020)				
38	Sea Scallops	Develop long-term (3-5 year) strategic plan for managing scallop fishery, including possible use of MSE to explore strategy performance				
39	Sea Scallops	Consider possession limit for recreational divers				Scallop Committee
40	Sea Scallops: Staff	Management track assessment				
41	Sea Scallops:Staff	NMFS and PDT have annual responsibilities related to estimating scallop, yellowtail, and windowpane catch during the year (i.e. LA AM exception, reevaluation of YT sub-ACL based on updated information).	Ongoing		Υ	
42	Sea Scallops:Staff	Support annual scallop RSA process, including priority setting, and technical and management reviews.	Ongoing			
43	Sea Scallops:Staff	Research track assessment (working group participation)				
	Herring					
44	Herring	Complete FW 7, spawning protection for herring on GB (to be discussed at September 2022 Council meeting)	Pends	Y		Herring Committee, September 2020

Number		Priority/Task Title	Status	Multi_Year	Legal/Regula- tory Requirement ?	Source
45	Herring	Review of Herring IFM program required after 2 years			Υ	
46	Herring:Staff	Research track assessment (working group participation) - Atlantic herring				
47	Herring:Staff	Coordination with MAFMC, ASMFC on various herring issues (RH/S, etc.), including actions in response to 2023 assessment	Ongoing			
	SBRM					
48	SBRM	Conduct three-year review				
	Red Crab					
49	Red Crab	Develop and submit red crab specifications for 2024-2027(?)			Υ	
50	Red Crab: Staff	Management track assessment				
	Habitat					
51	Habitat	Participate in ROSA activities; collaborate with NMFS and other partners on offshore wind science issues	Ongoing			
52	Habitat	Develop an action to authorize and facilitate Atlantic salmon aquaculture in the EEZ				
53	Habitat	Assess the possibility of, and if possible, develop an action to revise Habitat Management Areas on Northern Edge of Georges Bank		Y		Habitat Committee, 2022
54	Habitat	Consider revisions to EFH designations				
55	Habitat:Staff	Habitat impacts (NEPA analyses) of management actions	Ongoing	Υ	Υ	
56	Habitat:Staff	Participate on ASMFC habitat committee	Ongoing			

Number		Priority/Task Title	Status	Multi_Year	Legal/Regula- tory Requirement ?	Source
57	Habitat:Staff	Develop habitat and fishery related comments on non-fishing activities, including offshore wind, aquaculture, and cable projects, using the Council's policies and aquaculture coordination plan, and in consultation with other agencies, (including NMFS, BOEM, and MAFMC).	Ongoing			
	Research					
58	Research	Complete annual update to research priorities				Council Policy
59	Research:Staff	Support S-K program	Ongoing			
	SSC					
60	SSC	Support Council activities such as <u>recommending</u> <u>ABCs</u> and making recommendations in the FMP development process	Ongoing		Y	
61		Support Council updates to Risk Policy				
62	SSC	Consult with Council on development of ABC control rules for Northeast Multispecies stocks				August 2019 SSC meeting; 2021 priorities
	Enforcement, Safety, VMS					
63	Enforcement, Safety, VMS	Continue to support enforcement, safety and VMS issues.	Ongoing			
	NA/le:14:					
64	Whiting Whiting	Approve and submit 2024-2026 Specifications Package	Ongoing		Y	Assessment schedule revised to match specs cycle

Number		Priority/Task Title	Status	Multi_Year	Legal/Regula- tory Requirement ?	Source
65	Whiting	Develop an action to consider changes to the overfishing definitions, making them consistent with new assessments resulting from the 2023 reseach track.				
66	Whiting:Staff	PDT receives annual monitoring report from Regional Office and advise Council whether management adjustments are needed	Ongoing		Υ	
67	Whiting:Staff	Silver/red/offhsore hake management track assessments				
68	Whiting:Staff	Silver hake research track assessment				
	Skates					
69	Skates	Develop measures to reduce gillnet interactions with protected species (sturgeon, large whales).	Ongoing	Υ		2021 BiOp for ten fisheries
70	Skates	<u>Develop 2024-2025 specifications.</u> With smooth skate and barndoor skate rebuilt, consider measures that would allow for expanded possession by the fishery.			Υ	Committee August 2022
71	Skates:Staff	Develop a white paper on potential approaches to support thorny skate rebuilding.				Committee August 2022
72	Skates:Staff	Support improvements to fishery data quality controls				Committee August 2022
73	Skates:Staff	Support management track assessment				
	0 : 5 (1)					
	Spiny Dogfish	Decreased as a second as a sec				
74	Spiny Dogfish	Respond as necessary to monitoring or trip limit reports				
75	Spiny Dogfish	Develop measures to reduce gillnet interactions with protected species (sturgeon, large whales).				2021 BiOp for ten fisheries
	EBFM					
	EDFIVI					1

Number		Priority/Task Title	Status	Multi_Year	Legal/Regula- tory Requirement ?	Source
75	EBFM	Conduct information and educational workshops on EBFM, focusing on potential application to Georges Bank eFEP	Ongoing	Y		2020 priority; expect completion early in 2023
76	EBFM	Develop and conduct a prototype management strategy evaluation to develop and test EBFM management strategies for the Georges Bank EPU, using example management objectives developed by the EBFM committee.	Ongoing	Y		Begun in 2022, expect 2023 completion.
77	EBFM	Begin development of a fully public stakeholder engaged Management Strategy Evaluation.				
78	EBFM:Staff	Support EBFM activities (WGNARS, SOE, etc.)				
	Observer Committee					
79	Observer Committee	No Action Planned				
	Risk Policy Working Group					
80	Risk Policy Working Group	Review Council Risk Policy and consider changes				
	Trawl Survey AP					
81	Trawl Survey AP	Address issues identified in AP charter	Ongoing	Υ		2015 Priorities
	Inter-organization Activities					
82	Inter-organization Activities	CCC Working Group participation (EM, Legislative, CMOD, Communications, EEJ)				
83	Inter-organization Activities	NRCC Working Group Participation	Ongoing	Υ		NRCC

Number		Priority/Task Title	Status	Multi_Year	Legal/Regula- tory Requirement ?	Source
84	Inter-organization Activities	International Fisheries Management TMGC/TRAC/Steering Committee ICCAT HMS Advisory Panel/HMS FMP NAFO Commissioner	Ongoing		Y	
85	Inter-organization Activities	Participate in NRCC Senario Planning Exercise to develop governance approach for addressing climate change issues	Ongoing	Y		
86	Inter-organization Activities	Participate in NROC Ocean Policy Committee and data portal activities	Ongoing			
87	Inter-organization Activities	SBNMS SAC				
	Other					
87	Other	Review and implement Program Review recommendations	Ongoing	Υ		
88	Other	Participate on Large Whale and Harbor Porpoise Take Reduction Teams	Ongoing	Υ		
89	Other	Dialogue meeting between Council, industry, and scientists to improve communications and cooperation				September 2018 Council Meeting
90	Other	Consider examining length and horsepower restrictions on efficiency and whether permitsplitting may also be a tool to address these efficiency concerns.				Several Committees, 2021
91	Other	Support development of NMFS' regional EEJ strategy and adv	ance EEJ in fish	eries		
92	Other:staff	Support Regional Fishery Dependent Data Initiative (FDDI)	Ongoing	Υ		NRCC
93	Other:staff	Protected Species issues, including actions as necessary to implement Biological Opinion and implement NARW recovery plan	Ongoing	Y		2021 BiOp for ten fisheries

Year	FMP	Proposed Change	Date Considered Adopte	d? Comments	Foreseeable?
2022	Groundfish	Cod stock transition plan; P/C sub-ACL white paper	Apr-22 Y	Modified one existing priority, added new one	Υ
	Monkfish	Remove VMS requirement from FW	Jun-22 Y	Arguably not a change - priority was "consider"	
	Herring	GB Bank spawning closures	Sep-22	Pends Sep 22 Council meeting	
2224					
2021	Groundfish	Added changes to default measures to annual FW	Jun-21 Y	No offset	Y
				Decision made not to pursue limited entry in April	
				2021; later had to submit A5 to change goals and	
	Skates	Stopped work on A5, initiated framework	Sep-21 Y	objectives	N
		Added redfish/pollock/haddock exemption to FW			
2020	Groundfish	61	Oct-20 Y	Rules suspended to bring directly to the Council	First year under 2/3 vote rule
2020	Groundish		000 20	naies suspended to bring directly to the council	That year ander 2/3 vote rain
		Added leasing of IFQ quota from LA to LAGC to			
2019	Scallops	amendment	Jan-19 Y	No offset	Υ
	Scallops	Added NLCA slow-growing scallops to specs	Jun-19 Y		?
	Scallops	Dropped review of scallop access area program	1-Jun Y	Offset for above	
	Groundfish	CAI Hook Gear Haddock SAP changes	Jun-19 Y	No offset	Υ
	Omnibus	eVTR for all NEFMC fisheries	Jun-19 Y		Υ
2018	Groundfish	Moved SDC issue to multi-year prioirity	Jun-18 Y	No offset	?
		Removed gear change to protect small scallops;			
	Scallops	added standard default specs measures	Jun-18 Y		Υ
2017	Scallops	Removed gear changes to protect small scallops	Apr-17 Y		
2017	Scanops	Action to change in -season adjustments to trip	7,01.17		
	Skates	limits	Apr-17 Y		Υ
	Groundfish	Modify NSE/MA WINP Ams	Jun-17 Y	No offset	Y
		, .			
		Added GB haddock sub-ACL to herring and			
2016	Herring/Groundfish	groundfish	Jun-16 Y	No offset	?
2015	Groundfish	Action to address ASM Requirements	Apr-15 Y	See below	Υ
2013	Groundish	Delete WINP white paper, rec management	Apr-15	See below	T
		measures process, coordination with ASMFC over			
	Groundfish	lobster bycatch, sector five year review	Jun-15 Y	Offset for ASM action	Υ
	Herring	Expanded A8 scope to include localized depletion	Jun-15 Y	Council did not refer to this as a change in priorities	
	пеннів	Expanded Ao scope to include localized depletion	Juli-12 I	Council and not refer to this as a change in priorities	ŗ
2014	Groundfish	Framework to revise AM s for N and S WINP	Jan-14 Y		?
-32.	Groundfish	Move spawning area priority to multi-year priority	Jan-14 Y	Offset for WINP AM framework	Y