



#2a

New England Fishery Management Council

50 WATER STREET | NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS 01950 | PHONE 978 465 0492 | FAX 978 465 3116
John F. Quinn, J.D., Ph.D., *Chairman* | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 21, 2017
TO: Council
FROM: Tom Nies
SUBJECT: 2018 Council Priorities

1. The attached documents will help the Council develop 2018 Council priorities. Enclosure (1) reflects the Executive Committee recommendations, while enclosure (2) shows the ranking by Council members (Executive Committee recommendations are highlighted in yellow).

- a. The first attachment lists possible tasks. Tasks are listed by FMP. Tasks that should be completed by the end of the year are in the first column and multi-year tasks in the second column. A checkmark marks Executive Committee recommendations. Tasks that are not recommended are also in italics. The list includes major staff tasks that are expected to occur. Recommendations assume that most multi-year tasks in progress will be completed and that all regulatory requirements will be addressed.
- b. The second attachment summarizes the prioritization of the tasks by Council members. The Executive Director recommended tasks highlighted in yellow to the Executive Committee. The prioritization and other issues are discussed below.

2. Not all Committees identified their preferred priorities for 2018. Groundfish Committee recommendations will be brought to the Council meeting.

Resource Use

3. The results of the priority exercise guide how the Council uses its resources, so it may be useful to look the previous year's expenditures. Figure 1 below summarizes our resource use from 1 October 2016 through 30 September 2017. Meeting and contract expenses were summarized by topic, Council costs were allocated to topics by the amount of actual time spent on each topic (last year's report used scheduled time), and personnel costs were assigned based on staff tasking.

Figure 1 – Summary of resource allocation from October 2016 through September 2017. Numbers in parentheses reflect last year's ranking if different from this year.

2017 Resource Allocation

Meetings	Council Time	Personnel Costs	Overall
Herring (3)	Misc.	Scallops	Scallops
Groundfish (4)	Groundfish	Groundfish	Groundfish
Scallops (1)	Herring (5)	Whiting (6)	Herring
EBFM (6)	Habitat (NR)	Herring	Whiting (6)
SSC (2)	Scallops (3)	Habitat (3)	Habitat (4)
Skates (NR)	Reports (4)	EBFM (5)	EBFM (5)

Prioritization Exercise

4. In order to help the Executive Committee allocate Council resources, each Council member was asked to rank each task as a high, medium, or low priority task. Sixteen of eighteen Council members replied, but some respondents did not rank every task. The ratings were converted to a score (high=3, medium = 2, and low = 1), summed for each task, and the tasks ranked in order. The average score (33.4) and standard deviation (SD) (6.7) across all tasks was calculated. Given the standard deviation, scores within a few points of each other do not reflect a difference in importance as evaluated by the Council. The SD for each task was also calculated. Lower SDs for a task could be interpreted as indicating more agreement on the task's ranking; higher SDs indicate less agreement on the task's importance. Perfect agreement would result in an SD of 0; an even distribution (4 high, 6 medium, 4 low) results in an SD of 0.82, and an even split (8 high, 8 low) results in an SD close to 1.

5. There are a few observations worth noting from this ranking exercise.

- a. Council members generally agree on the importance of the top twelve tasks. With a few exceptions, they also agree on the relative importance of the bottom five or ten ranked tasks.
- b. Tasks with the highest SD (over 0.8) include one that was ranked above average and some below average. This high SD indicates a divergence of opinion among Council members on the importance of these tasks. The above average task with a divergence of opinion was eVTRs for party/charter vessels. Below average tasks included completion of limited entry for the whiting fishery (Amendment 22), increasing LAGC trip limits, and the Trawl Survey AP.
- c. While Council members were asked to rank all tasks, some are not discretionary, even if ranked low.

Groundfish

6. The highest-ranked groundfish priorities are adjusting rebuilding programs as required and the ASM amendment. The Council showed little interest in pursuing party/charter limited entry, a GB cod sub-ACL for the recreational fishery (this may change given the FY 2016 catch), or the five-year sector review.

7. The MAFMC recently adopted an action that requires p/c permit holders to use eVTRs. While there is interest in an action that would require eVTRs for multispecies party/charter vessels, GARFO recently provided information that only 16 p/c multispecies permit holders do not hold a MAFMC p/c permit. It may not be worthwhile to pursue an action that would extend the eVTR requirement to only these additional vessels.

8. The issue of stock structure surfaces after almost every cod assessment. A working group is being formed and it appears that progress will be made this year. At the same time Council member interest is waning. The Executive Committee recommends this be pursued in spite of its lower ranking because this has long been of interest to the Council. In addition, the approach used for cod may be relevant for addressing other stock structure issues that have been raised.

9. New MRIP catch estimates will be released to the NEFSC on July 1. The NEFSC will update several stock assessments with the new data in fall 2018/early 2019. The new catch estimates – which are expected to show recreational catches were higher than previously reported – may lead to calls to revisit commercial/recreational allocations.

Monkfish

10. No actions are planned for this FMP.

Sea Scallops

11. There is general agreement on the importance of the top three scallop tasks: specifications and management measures for 2019, modifying the access areas because of Omnibus Habitat Amendment 2 (OHA2), and NGOM management changes. The NGOM changes are listed as a one-year task but if the action becomes more complicated it may extend over a longer period.

12. We have fallen into the practice of adjusting scallop specifications each year even though the FMP and the regulations call for a two-year cycle. This inhibits the ability of the Committee and PDT to address other scallop management issues. It also increase uncertainty for the industry as the annual adjustments cannot be determined until late fall. On the positive side this means scallop specifications are based on very recent surveys. The Council may want to return to a biennial adjustment process. One idea that may be worth considering is a two-year cycle with an annual review to see if an adjustment is warranted.

13. The Executive Committee recommended action for the NGOM as well as monitoring and catch accounting provisions. The Executive Committee suggests the Council consider doing one or the other of these two tasks, but not both, in order to streamline the workload for the Scallop Committee

14. While the Scallop Committee supports considering a change to the LAGC trip limit, this was not ranked highly by the Council as a whole. Should the Council choose to pursue this issue another task should be deleted.

Herring

15. The main task facing this committee is to complete the herring amendment that considers a new ABC control rule and localized depletion. The herring benchmark assessment will also lead to new specifications for 2019-2021. The Council should also update the RH/S white paper and consider whether any of those stocks should be added to the FMP.

16. Timing of herring actions could be problematic. Amendment 8 will need to be completed during the first half of the year. This is also when initial work will begin on the 2018 benchmark assessment, which will occupy key PDT members. The specifications package will be prepared in the second half of the year. The Council may hire a contractor to update the RH/S white paper during the first half of the year so that there is time to consider whether these stocks are in need of conservation and management.

Habitat

17. Deep-Sea Coral amendment and surfclam vessel access to habitat management areas work will continue. Both should be completed this year. There is a need for the Council to pay close attention to wind-power developments, a task assigned to the Habitat Committee.

18. NMFS final action on OHA2 may lead to additional work on habitat management areas.

Whiting/Small Mesh Multispecies

19. Completion of the whiting limited entry program and the specifications package will delay work on the southern red hake rebuilding requirements and several other small-mesh issues until roughly mid-year.

Skates

20. Last year the Council agreed to develop a limited entry program for the skate fishery. Limited progress was made on this task, but scoping hearings were held in the spring. Public comments were mixed on the issue. This year the Council shows little interest in continuing this effort. The Executive Committee recommends following this project through to a decision.

EBFM

21. Work will continue on the fishery ecosystem plan. If progress is made on this FEP, next year the Council will need to decide how to incorporate this work into management. Work on the EBFM FEP will compete for staff time with several small-mesh multispecies projects.

Trawl Survey Advisory Panel

22. This AP was ranked below average by Council members. Participation does not tax Council staff because the panel is staffed by the MAFMC with funding from the NEFSC. The Executive Committee recommends this effort continue.

SSC

23. The SSC submitted three recommendations for priorities. Two address groundfish assessments and projects, and one addresses a larger issue often associated with groundfish. The SSC suggested similar topics last year but made little progress. It is likely that any SSC effort will require some staff support or will lead to future Council actions.

24. The Council may want to discuss the role of the SSC in efforts like this. For example, one of the identified projects is “Understand and resolve poor assessment model performance.” While an important topic, is this within the scope of the SSC or is a broader research topic that should be pursued by the NEFSC? There is no question that the members represent a wealth of talent; the issue is what the appropriate role is for the SSC. Does the Council want to use the SSC as a research or technical body? My suggestion is that staff engage with the SSC to explore this issue.

25. The SSC will probably be involved in the review of revised rebuilding plans for groundfish stocks, as well as identifying status determination criteria for empirical assessments.

Grouping

26. Enclosure (1) groups most tasks into management actions. These should be viewed as initial suggestions. There could be changes made to these suggestions after the Council makes its decisions.

Other

27. Several monitoring initiatives that are being pursued with little apparent coordination. The risk is that this fractured approach will not be an effective use of our resources. While this was discussed by the NRCC a clear solution was not identified.

28. The Council ranking exercise revealed little appetite for two tasks delegated by NMFS: the five year review of the Northeast Multispecies sector program and the identification of allocation review triggers. These are important tasks that cannot be delayed indefinitely. The allocation review trigger issue may benefit from pursuing a simple approach that is applied to all FMPs, rather than an FMP by FMP approach as shown.

29. The Council staff will need to spend some time on the review of regulations early next year so this was added to the priorities list after the list was distributed for ranking by Council members.

30. One of the items listed on the ranking spreadsheet - considering whether to have the Recreational Advisory Panel (RAP) report directly to the Council rather than through the Groundfish Committee - was difficult to read due to a formatting issue. This may have contributed to its low ranking. Council members may want to clarify their position on this issue.

31. As mentioned in my September memorandum to the Council, we have a number of ongoing projects to complete (RSA program review, Council program review, FDDV project). At the same time, in recent years we have deferred action on planned activities (RH/S white paper update, sector program review, allocation review triggers). Projects like this can absorb a surprising amount of staff time. The Council should be cautious about starting additional discretionary projects before this backlog is addressed.

Enclosures: (1) 2018 Draft Priorities – Executive Committee Recommendations
(2) 2018 Priority Ranking

	UNDERLINE: REGULATORY REQUIREMENT					<i>Italics: Not Recommended by Ex Comm</i>				
11/21/2017										
FMP	Annual	Comm.	Executive Committee	Council	Rank	Multi-Year	Comm.	Executive Committee	Council	Rank
Groundfish										
	<u>Revise rebuilding plans as needed (ocean pout, GB winter flounder, witch flounder, GOM/GB windowpane flounder, SNE/MA yellowtail flounder); set ABCs/ACLs for US/CA stocks; additional guidance on sector overages</u>		✓		4/18/18	ASM action/Amendment 23		✓		4
						Staff: Cod Stock Structure Workshop		✓		67
	<i>Process for review of groundfish catch in other fisheries</i>				72	<i>Amendment to consider limited entry in the groundfish party/charter fishery</i>				75
	<u>Address SDC issue when analytic assessments fail</u>		✓		18	<i>Develop alternative strategies for setting catch advice for stability in ACLs</i>				18
	Address allocation issues if raised by new MRIP data		✓		50					
	<i>Develop amendment that considers changes to management status of windowpane flounder stocks</i>				57					
	Get input on different ways to manage recreational fishery in light of highly variable catch estimates: for example, consideration of catch error estimates under MRIP, and errors in bioeconomic model used to determine measures		✓		50					
	Staff: TRAC/TMGC		✓		13					
	Possible recreational sub-ACL for GB cod		✓		65					
	<i>Modify the GF control rule for stocks without analytical models – i.e., empirical and index-based (see SSC list below, item 9 above)</i>				35					
	<i>Adjust exemption areas as necessary due to OHA2 changes (GenCat sea scallop, whiting, etc.; may be better addressed by other Committees)</i>				47					
	Specify allocation review triggers		✓		63					

FMP	Annual	Comm.	Executive Committee	Council	Rank	Multi-Year	Comm.	Executive Committee	Council	Rank
	Consider requirement for eVTRs in the party/charter recreational fishery		✓		35					
	Staff: Sector five-year review		✓		54					
Monkfish										
	<i>Staff: Research Set Aside</i>				NR					
Sea Scallops										
	<u>Prepare a specifications package to set FY 2019 and 2020 (2021 default) specifications (i.e. setting DAS, access area trips, Northern GOM TAC, limited access general category IFQ allocations, etc.). Clarification needed on whether this is for one or two year specifications.</u>	✓	✓		1	<i>Amendment to consider harvester associations</i>				78
	Framework action to modify scallop access areas to be consistent with OA2 revised management areas	✓	✓		13					
	NGOM scallop management measure changes: such as changing opening date, consistent gear restrictions, possession limits, effort controls.	✓	✓		16					
	<i>Action to consider increasing General Category trip limits</i>	✓			57					
	Gear modifications to protect small scallops (extended link)	✓	✓		35					
	<i>Measures to address DAS and IFQ carryover</i>				67					
	Staff: Support annual scallop RSA process, including priority setting, and technical and management reviews.		✓		29					
	NMFS and PDT have new annual responsibilities related to estimating scallop, YT, windowpane catch during the year (i.e. LA AM exception, re-evaluation of YT sub-ACL based on updated information).		✓		18					

FMP	Annual	Comm.	Executive Committee	Council	Rank	Multi-Year	Comm.	Executive Committee	Council	Rank
	2018 benchmark. Integrate findings from 2018 benchmark (process TBD, but may include additional review of how surveys are combined for management advice)	✓	✓		9					
	<i>RSA program review and modifications</i>				42					
	Specify allocation review triggers		✓		73					
	Monitoring and catch accounting provisions		✓		29					
	<i>Adjustments to scallop industry funded observer program (NGOM coverage, etc.)</i>				18					
Herring										
	Specifications for 2019-2021; consider different stratification for RH/S in SA 521		✓		1	Amendment 8: MSE for ABC control rule and measures to address localized depletion		✓		9
	2018 benchmark assessment		✓		4					
	Update of RH/S white paper and reconsideration of RH/S as stocks that need conservation and management (i.e. "stocks in the fishery")		✓		29					
	Staff: Coordination with MAFMC, ASMFC on various herring issues (RH/S, etc.)		✓		43					
	<i>EM MWT Pilot Project</i>				26					
SBRM										
	<i>No Action Planned</i>									
Red Crab										
	<i>No Action Planned</i>									
Habitat	<i>(No Committee recommendations)</i>									
	Complete Omnibus Deep-Sea Coral Amendment		✓			Coordinate wind power issues with other agencies/spatial planning		✓		NR
	Framework action to address surfclam access to HMAs		✓		9					
	Staff: Update and further development of the SASI model		✓		57					
	Staff: <u>Habitat impacts of other management actions</u>		✓		47					

FMP	Annual	Comm.	Executive Committee	Council	Rank	Multi-Year	Comm.	Executive Committee	Council	Rank
	Staff: ASMFC Habitat Committee		✓		NR					
	Staff: SBNMS Advisory Council		✓		73					
	Develop habitat and fishery related comments on non-fishing activities, in consultation with other agencies, (including BOEM)		✓		29					
	<i>Develop Council policies on non-fishing activities</i>				43					
Research Steering										
	Continue to steer research to support NEFMC plans	✓	✓		26					
	Staff: Support S-K program	✓	✓		54					
	Improve RSC priority process	✓	✓		29					
SSC										
	Support Council activities such as recommending ABCs and making recommendations in the FMP development process	✓	✓		4					
	<i>Understand and resolve poor assessment model performance (primarily groundfish assessments)</i>	✓			12					
	<i>Develop consistent guidelines for application of Plan B approaches</i>	✓			18					
	<i>Consider modifications to groundfish ABC control rules (see Groundfish)</i>	✓			26					
Enforcement, Safety, VMS										
	Continue to support enforcement, safety and VMS issues.	✓	✓		47					
Whiting										
	Submit final preferred alternatives with FEIS for Amendment 22, limited entry	✓	✓		54					

FMP	Annual	Comm.	Executive Committee	Council	Rank	Multi-Year	Comm.	Executive Committee	Council	Rank
	<u>Address overfished condition/develop rebuilding plan for southern red hake; modify northern red hake AM; consider whiting exemption area adjustments</u>	✓	✓		8/35/50					
	Staff: <u>PDT receives annual monitoring report from Regional Office and advises Council whether management adjustments are needed</u>	✓	✓		61					
Skates										
	<i>Submit action to allow landing thorny skate caught by vessels fishing in the NAFO area</i>				50	Prepare an amendment to consider limited access in the skate fishery		✓		61
	Staff: Annual skate monitoring report		✓		61					
EBFM										
	Assist in development of MREP EBFM module		✓		67	Complete example Fishery Ecosystem Plan for Georges Bank and develop a Management Strategy Evaluation process to engage fishermen and other stakeholders while conducting testing and validation.		✓		57
Observer Committee										
	<i>Study issue of full retention/no discards.</i>				35	Develop a policy and strategic approach to monitor commercial fisheries to address multiple information needs		✓		29
Risk Policy Working Group										
	<i>No Action Planned</i>									
Trawl Survey AP										
	Address issues identified in AP charter		✓		61					
Other										
	NRCC Working Group Participation		✓		35	Fishery dependent data projects: FMAT to begin development of omnibus amendment		✓		43

FMP	Annual	Comm.	Executive Committee	Council	Rank	Multi-Year	Comm.	Executive Committee	Council	Rank
	International Fisheries Management TMGC/TRAC/Steering Committee ICCAT HMS Advisory Panel/HMS FMP NAFO Commissioner		✓		16	<i>Preliminary work on aquaculture FMP</i>				77
	Support for NERPB; implementation of Regional Ocean Plan; support to data portal		✓		61					
	Complete programmatic review of Council operations		✓		18					
	Complete review of RSA programs in sea scallops, monkfish, and herring FMPs (see also RSA items above under scallop FMP)		✓		13					
	Participate on Large Whale and Harbor Porpoise Take Reduction Teams		✓		35					
	<i>Staff: Protected Species issues</i>				67					
	<i>Develop measures necessary to encourage use of fuel-efficient fishing vessels</i>				81					
	<i>Develop Forage Fish Amendment, possibly in partnership with ASMFC</i>				65					
	<i>Consider creating a Seal Oversight Committee</i>				75					
	<i>Review structure of Recreational Advisory Panel and whether it should be a stand-alone committee that reports directly to the Council</i>				79					
	<i>Consider creating a Sand Eel Oversight Committee</i>				79					

Original Number		Priority/Task Title	High	Medium	Low	Score	Rank	Row SD
20	Sea Scallops	<u>Prepare a specifications package to set FY 2019 and 2020 (2021 default) specifications (i.e. setting DAS, access area trips, Northern GOM TAC, limited access general category IFQ allocations, etc.).</u> Clarification needed on whether this is for one or two year specifications.	15			45	1	0.000
32	Herring	Specifications for 2019-2021; consider different stratification for RH/S in SA 521	15			45	1	0.000
39	Habitat	Complete Omnibus Deep-Sea Coral Amendment	14	1	1	45	1	0.544
3	Groundfish	ASM action/Amendment 23	14	1	0	44	4	0.258
35	Herring:Staff	2018 benchmark assessment	14	1		44	4	0.258
49	SSC	Support Council activities such as <u>recommending ABCs</u> and making recommendations in the FMP development process	14	1		44	4	0.258
13	Groundfish	<u>Revise rebuilding plans as needed (ocean pout, GB winter flounder, witch flounder, GOM/GB windowpane flounder, SNE/MA yellowtail flounder)</u>	12	4	0	44	4	0.447
56	Whiting	<u>Address overfished condition/develop rebuilding plan for southern red hake</u>	13	2		43	8	0.352
30	Sea Scallops:Staff	Integrate findings from 2018 benchmark (process TBD, but may include additional review of how surveys are combined for management advice)	12	3	0	42	9	0.414
31	Herring	Amendment 8: MSE for ABC control rule and measures to address localized depletion	13	1	1	42	9	0.561
40	Habitat	Framework action to address surfclam access to HMAs	11	4	1	42	9	0.619
50	SSC	Understand and resolve poor assessment model performance (primarily groundfish assessments)	10	5	1	41	12	0.629
21	Sea Scallops	Framework action to modify scallop access areas to be consistent with OA2 revised management areas	12	2		40	13	0.363
18	Groundfish:Staff	TRAC/TMGC	9	6	1	40	13	0.632
76	Other: (Interspecies)	Complete review of RSA programs in sea scallops, monkfish, and herring FMPs (see also RSA items above under scallop FMP)	8	8		40	13	0.516
22	Sea Scallops	NGOM scallop management measure changes: such as changing opening date, consistent gear restrictions, possession limits, effort controls.	11	3		39	16	0.426
71	Other: (Interspecies)	International Fisheries Management TMGC/TRAC/Steering Committee ICCAT HMS Advisory Panel/HMS FMP NAFO Commissioner	10	4	1	39	16	0.632
1	Groundfish	<u>Set ABCs/ACLs for US/CA stocks</u>	12	1		38	18	0.277
10	Groundfish	<u>Address SDC issue when analytic assessments fail</u>	10	4	0	38	18	0.469
27	Sea Scallops:Staff	NMFS and PDT have new annual responsibilities related to estimating scallop, YT, windowpane catch during the year (i.e. LA AM exception, re-evaluation of YT sub-ACL based on updated information).	10	4	0	38	18	0.469
2	Groundfish	Develop alternative strategies for setting catch advice for stability in ACLs	9	5	1	38	18	0.640
24	Sea Scallops	Adjustments to scallop industry funded observer program (NGOM coverage, etc.)	9	5	1	38	18	0.640
12	Groundfish	Additional guidance on adjustments/penalites as a result of sector overages	7	8	1	38	18	0.619
51	SSC	Develop consistent guidelines for application of Plan B approaches	6	10		38	18	0.500
75	Other: (Interspecies)	<u>Complete programmatic review of Council operations</u>	7	8	1	38	18	0.619
34	Herring:Staff	EM MWT Pilot Project	7	8		37	26	0.516
46	RSC	Continue to steer research to support NEFMC plans	7	8		37	26	0.516

2018 Council Priorities Ranking
(Executive Committee recommendations highlighted in yellow)

Original Number		Priority/Task Title	High	Medium	Low	Score	Rank	Row SD
52	SSC	Consider modifications to groundfish ABC control rules (see Groundfish)	7	8		37	26	0.516
29	Sea Scallops:Staff	Support annual scallop RSA process, including priority setting, and technical and management reviews.	8	6	0	36	29	0.514
47	RSC	Improve RSC priority process	7	7	1	36	29	0.632
65	Observer Committee	Develop a policy and strategic approach to monitor commercial fisheries to address multiple information needs	7	7	1	36	29	0.632
28	Sea Scallops	Monitoring and catch accounting provisions	5	10	1	36	29	0.577
33	Herring	Update of RH/S white paper and reconsideration of RH/S as stocks that need conservation and management (i.e. "stocks in the fishery")	7	6	3	36	29	0.775
45	Habitat:Staff	Develop habitat and fishery related comments on non-fishing activities, in consultation with other agencies, (including BOEM)	7	6	3	36	29	0.775
70	Other: (Interspecies)	NRCC Working Group Participation	7	7		35	35	0.519
25	Sea Scallops	Gear modifications to protect small scallops (extended link)	7	6	2	35	35	0.724
77	Other:Staff	Participate on Large Whale and Harbor Porpoise Take Reduction Teams	5	10		35	35	0.488
14	Groundfish	Modify the GF control rule for stocks without analytical models – i.e., empirical and index-based (see SSC list below, item 10 above)	5	9	2	35	35	0.655
15	Groundfish	Consider requirement for eVTRs in the party/charter recreational fishery	7	5	4	35	35	0.834
58	Whiting	Consider whiting exemption area adjustments (see item 7 under groundfish)	4	11	1	35	35	0.544
66	Observer Committee	Study issue of full retention/no discards.	6	7	3	35	35	0.750
25	Sea Scallops	RSA program review and modifications	6	7	2	34	42	0.704
36	Herring:Staff	Coordination with MAFMC, ASMFC on various herring issues (RH/S, etc.)	6	7	1	33	43	0.633
62	Skates:Staff	Skate monitoring report	5	9		33	43	0.497
69	Other: (Interspecies)	Fishery dependent data projects: FMAT to begin development of omnibus amendment	5	8	2	33	43	0.676
42	Habitat	Develop Council policies on non-fishing activities	5	7	4	33	43	0.772
43	Habitat:Staff	Habitat impacts of other management actions	6	6	2	32	47	0.726
53	Enforcement, Safety	Continue to support enforcement, safety and VMS issues.	5	8	1	32	47	0.611
7	Groundfish	Adjust exemption areas as necessary (GenCat sea scallop, whiting, etc.; may be better addressed by other Committees)	4	8	4	32	47	0.730
57	Whiting	Modify northern red hake AM	5	7	2	31	50	0.699
16	Groundfish	Get input on different ways to manage recreational fishery in light of highly variable catch estimates: for example, consideration of catc herror estimates under MRIP, and errors in bioeconomic model used to determine measures	4	8	3	31	50	0.704
11	Groundfish	Address allocation issues if raised by new MRIP data	4	7	5	31	50	0.772
61	Skates	Submit action to allow landing thorny skate caught by vessels fishing in the NAFO area	2	11	3	31	50	0.574
48	RSC:Staff	Support S-K program	5	7	1	30	54	0.630
55	Whiting	Submit final preferred alternatives with FEIS for Amendment 22, limited entry	7	3	3	30	54	0.855
17	Groundfish:Staff	Sector five-year review	3	8	5	30	54	0.719
41	Habitat:Staff	Update and further development of the SASI model	4	8	1	29	57	0.599

2018 Council Priorities Ranking
(Executive Committee recommendations highlighted in yellow)

Original Number		Priority/Task Title	High	Medium	Low	Score	Rank	Row SD
	Groundfish	Develop amendment that considers changes to management status of windowpane flounder stocks	3	9	2	29	57	0.616
26	Sea Scallops	Action to consider increasing General Category trip limits	5	4	6	29	57	0.884
63	EBFM	Complete example Fishery Ecosystem Plan for Georges Bank and develop a Management Strategy Evaluation process to engage fishermen and other stakeholders while conducting testing and validation.	3	8	4	29	57	0.704
59	Whiting:Staff	PDT receives annual monitoring report from Regional Office and advise Council whether management adjustments are needed	3	9	1	28	61	0.555
68	Trawl Survey AP	Address issues identified in AP charter	5	5	3	28	61	0.801
60	Skates	Prepare an amendment to consider limited access in the skate fishery	4	6	4	28	61	0.784
73	Other:Staff	Support for NERP; implementation of Regional Ocean Plan; support to data portal	2	10	2	28	61	0.555
9	Groundfish	Possible recreational sub-ACL for GB cod	1	9	6	27	65	0.602
80	Other: (Interspecies)	Develop Forage Fish Amendment, possibly in partnership with ASMFC	2	7	7	27	65	0.704
72	Other:Staff	Protected Species issues	4	6	2	26	67	0.718
5	Groundfish	Cod Stock Structure Working Group	3	6	5	26	67	0.770
64	Staff	Assist in development of MREP EBFM module	2	8	4	26	67	0.663
24	Sea Scallops	Measures to address DAS and IFQ carryover	1	9	5	26	67	0.594
26	Sea Scallops	Specify allocation review triggers		11	4	26	67	0.458
4	Groundfish	Process for review of groundfish catch in other fisheries		10	5	25	72	0.488
44	Habitat:Staff	SBNMS advisory panel	1	8	5	24	73	0.611
6	Groundfish	Specify allocation review triggers	1	6	9	24	73	0.632
8	Groundfish	Develop limited access program for the party/charter fishery	1	5	10	23	75	0.629
81	Other: (Interspecies)	Consider creating a Seal Oversight Committee	2	3	11	23	75	0.727
74	Other: (Interspecies)	Preliminary work on Aquaculture FMP		6	10	22	77	0.500
23	Sea Scallops	Amendment to consider harvester associations	1	5	8	21	78	0.650
79	Other: (Interspecies)	Review structure of Recreational Advisory Panel and whether it should be a stand-alone committee that reports directly to the Council	2	2	10	20	79	0.756
82	Other: (Interspecies)	Consider creating a Sand Eel Oversight Committee	1	2	13	20	79	0.577
78	Other: (Interspecies)	Develop measures necessary to encourage use of fuel-efficient fishing vessels		1	15	17	81	0.250