



New England Fishery Management Council

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John F. Quinn, J.D., Ph.D., *Chairman* | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 30, 2017
TO: Council
FROM: Tom Nies, Executive Director
SUBJECT: **2018 Management Priorities**

1. The September Council meeting will include our first discussion of Council priorities for 2018. The goal of this first step is to identify the possible tasks for 2018. The actual selection of priorities will occur at the December meeting.

2. I've attached a first draft of the possible tasks for 2018. The Committee may want to add possible tasks to the attached list. This list may also be expanded at the September Council meeting.

3. There are a few issues worth highlighting that will need further discussion in December.

- a. We have a backlog of projects that need to be completed. These include the Council Program Review, the RSA Program Review, the need to identify triggers that will lead to a review of allocations, update of a river herring/shad white paper and reconsideration of whether those species should be identified as stocks in the fishery, and an aquaculture FMP. These projects can require a large amount of staff and Council member time to complete. We should be careful about adding to this list before the existing projects are completed.
- b. There are a number of projects related to catch monitoring with little obvious coordination between them. This fractured approach does not seem the best use of our resources. Here is a list of known projects being pursued by the Council, NMFS, and others:
 - i. The IFM Amendment has not been formally submitted and may require additional work.
 - ii. Groundfish Amendment 23 addresses groundfish monitoring.
 - iii. The Fishery Dependent Data Visioning Project is expected to form an FMAT that will begin work on an Omnibus Amendment. The scope of that amendment is unknown.
 - iv. SBRM three-year review should be completed fall 2017 but may require follow-up activities.

- v. Several EM projects for the groundfish fishery are either on the water or are being developed.
- vi. An EM project for MWT vessels is on the water.
- vii. The Observer Committee will recommend that the Council develop a policy and strategic approach to monitor commercial fisheries to address multiple information needs
- viii. The Scallop Committee may recommend refinements to the sea scallop industry funded observer program
- ix. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation recently solicited applications for a grant to "...identify a plan to assess current efforts; identify priority opportunities to achieve integrated and multi-purposed data collection, management and use; and recommend priority actions to accelerate needed improvements in data collection and management. This roadmap will be based on interests and perspectives of diverse fisheries interests and articulate recommended actions and timelines for key implementation actions over the next three to five years."

	Post September Council Meeting					
8/23/2017						
Number		Priority/Task Title	Status	Multi_Year	Legal/Regulatory Requirement?	Source
	Groundfish					
1		<u>Set ABCs/ACLs for US/CA stocks</u>			Y	Requirement
2		Develop alternative strategies for setting catch advice for stability in ACLs	Ongoing	Y		2014-2017 priorities
3		ASM action/Amendment 23	Ongoing	Y		Added mid-year 2015
4		Process for review of groundfish catch in other fisheries		Y		2015 Priorities
5		Cod Stock Structure Working Group	Ongoing	Y		Jan 2012 SSC report; 2015-2017 priorities
6		Specify allocation review triggers				NMFS allocation review policy
7		Adjust exemption areas as necessary (GenCat sea scallop, whiting, etc.; may be better addressed by other Committees)				Triggered by OHA2
8		Develop limited access program for the party/charter fishery		Y		2016 priorities; not adopted 2017
9		Possible recreational sub-ACL for GB cod				
10		Address SDC issue when analytic assessments fail				FW 56 approval letter
11		Address allocation issues if raised by new MRIP data				
12		Electronic reporting for party/charter vessels				
13		Additional guidance on adjustments/penalties as a result of sector overages				Groundfish AP May 2017
14		Revise rebuilding plans as needed			Y	
15		Modify the GF control rule for stocks without analytical models – i.e., empirical and index-based (see SSC list below)				SSC meeting August 2017
16	Staff	Sector five-year review				NMFS catch share policy
17	Staff	TRAC/TMGC				
	Monkfish					
18	Staff	No action planned				
	Sea Scallops					
19		<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.			Y	Requirement
20		Framework action to modify scallop access areas to be consistent with OA2 revised areas				Triggered by OHA2
21		NGOM scallop management measure changes: such as changing opening date, consistent gear restrictions, possession limits, effort controls.				April 2017 for consideration
22		Amendment to create harvester associations				ECSHA letter
23		Measures to address DAS and IFQ carryover				
24		Gear modifications to protect small scallops (extended link)				
25		Specify allocation review triggers				NMFS allocation review policy
23		Adjustments to scallop industry funded observer program (NGOM coverage, etc.)				NEFSC letter August 2017
24		RSA program review and modifications				
25	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).	Ongoing		Y	

26		Monitoring and catch accounting provisions				
27	Staff	Support annual scallop RSA process, including priority setting, and technical and management reviews.	Ongoing			
28	Staff	Integrate findings from 2018 benchmark (process TBD, but may include additional review of how surveys are combined for management advice)				
	Herring					
29		Amendment 8: MSE for ABC control rule and measures to address localized depletion	Ongoing	Y		2015 Priorities
30		Specifications for 2019-2021			Y	
31		Update of RH/S white paper and reconsideration of RH/S as stocks that need conservation and management (i.e. "stocks in the fishery")				Council motion January 2015
32	Staff	EM Pilot Project	Ongoing			
33	Staff	2018 benchmark assessment				
34	Staff	Coordination with MAFMC, ASMFC on various herring issues (RH/S, etc.)	Ongoing			
	SBRM					
35		No action planned				
	Red Crab					
36		No action planned				
	Habitat					
37		Complete Omnibus Deep-Sea Coral Amendment	Ongoing	Y		2015 Priorities
38		Framework action to address surfclam access to HMAs	Ongoing	Y		Triggered by OHA2
39	Staff	Update and further development of the SASI model	Ongoing	Y		
40		Develop Council policies on non-fishing activities	Ongoing	Y		
41	Staff	Habitat impacts of other management actions	Ongoing	Y		
42	Staff	SBNMS advisory panel	Ongoing			
43	Staff	Develop habitat and fishery related comments on non-fishing activities, in consultation with other agencies, (including BOEM)	Ongoing			
	RSC					
43		Continue to steer research to support NEFMC plans	Ongoing			
		Improve RSC priority process				RSC meeting July 2017
44	Staff	Support S-K program	Ongoing			
	SSC					
45		Support Council activities such as recommending ABCs and making recommendations in the FMP development process	Ongoing		Y	
46		Understand and resolve poor assessment model performance (primarily groundfish assessments)				
47		Develop consistent guidelines for application of Plan B approaches				
48		Consider modifications to groundfish ABC control rules (see Groundfish)				August 2017 SSC meeting
	Enforcement, Safety, VMS					
48		Continue to support enforcement, safety and VMS issues.	Ongoing			
49						Council, June 2016
	Whiting					
50		Submit final preferred alternatives with FEIS for Amendment 22, limited entry	Ongoing	Y		2014 and 2015 Priorities
51		Address overfished condition for southern red hake				Requirement

52	Staff	PDT receives annual monitoring report from Regional Office and advise Council whether management adjustments are needed	Ongoing		Y	
	Skates					
53		Prepare an amendment to consider limited access in the skate fishery	Ongoing	Y		2016 Priorities
54	Staff	Skate monitoring report			Y	
	EBFM					
55		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.	Ongoing	Y		2014 Priorities
56	Staff	Assist in development of MREP EBFM module				
	Observer Committee					
57		Develop a policy and strategic approach to monitor commercial fisheries to address multiple information needs	Ongoing	Y		Jan 2015 Council motion
	Risk Policy Working Group					
58		No action planned	Ongoing			Anticipate 2016 completion
	Trawl Survey AP					
59		Address issues identified in AP charter	Ongoing			2015 Priorities
	Other: (Interspecies Type Actions)					
60		Fishery dependent data projects: FMAT to begin development of omnibus amendment	Ongoing	Y		NRCC
61		NRCC Working Group Participation	Ongoing	Y		NRCC
62		International Fisheries Management TMGC/TRAC/Steering Committee ICCAT HMS Advisory Panel/HMS FMP NAFO Commissioner	Ongoing		Y	
63	Staff	Protected Species issues	Ongoing			
64	Staff	Support for NERPB; implementation of Regional Ocean Plan; support to data portal	Ongoing			
65		Preliminary work on Aquaculture FMP				GARFO/NRCC initiative
66		Complete programmatic review of Council operations		Y		2017 Priorities
67		Complete review of RSA programs in sea scallops, monkfish, and herring FMPs (see also RSA items above under scallop FMP)		Y		2018 Priorities