June 12, 2026

Global Weightings Exercise for Voting Council Members:

The New England Fishery Management Council's Risk Policy utilizes data and Council member input to characterize the Council's risk tolerance for its managed resources.

As a voting Council member, you will be assigning *weights* to each factors. Unlike the scoring of factors, which is conducted by the PDT and based on objective data, weightings are a policy choice. Weightings signify the level of importance of a factor in the Council's assessment of risk. For example, for the factor "Climate Vulnerability", the weighting process is not asking whether a species is vulnerable to climate change impacts; this is the purpose of scoring. Instead, the weighting process is asking how important the topic of 'climate change impacts' is to the Council's risk tolerance for that species or stock.

The table below lists the factors you will weight. It also outlines the goal of each factor, and differences between what is evaluated during the objective PDT scoring process and what you should consider as a Council member when weighting each factor, which is a policy choice.

Factor / Goal	**Scoring – Objective** *Completed by the PDT*	**Weighting – Policy Choice** *Completed by Voting Council Members*
Biomass/Stock Status: acceptable level of risk based on the current biomass (or abundance) of a stock	Considers SSB relative to SSB targets, and recent stock size when stock status is unknown.	Consider how important the level of spawning stock biomass (SSB) and stock abundance are to your risk tolerance for a managed resource.
Recruitment: the risk to the population associated with uncertainty in future recruitment-related productivity	Considers recruitment over the last five years.	Consider how important recent recruitment is to your risk tolerance for a managed resource.
Climate Vulnerability: to assess the risk associated with climate change	Considers climate vulnerability of the stock/species and expected directional effect of climate change from Hare et al (2016).	Consider how important climate change impacts are to your risk tolerance for a managed resource.
Recreational Fishery Characterization: to assess the socioeconomic health of the recreational fishery	Considers sub-ACL utilization, recreational fleet diversity from SOE report, trends in angler trips, level of percent standard error (PSE) in total catch estimates, and AP input.	Consider how important recreational fishing considerations are to your risk tolerance for a managed resource.
Commercial Fishery Characterization: to assess the socioeconomic health of the commercial fishery	Considers catch target utilization, fishing communities, revenue trends, operational constraints, and AP input	Consider how important commercial fishing considerations are to your risk tolerance for a managed resource.

When assessing weights for the factors, it may be helpful for you to think about the relative importance of the factors compared to one another. Some questions to help you think about weighting are:

- Is there a factor that you feel should have the most influence on the Council's decision making? Is there a factor that you feel is least important?
- When you have made past decisions at the Council, what has been the primary driver of whether you were willing to accept an option of higher or lower risk? And what had little influence on your decision?

Following the weighting exercise, the average of the Council members' weightings for each factor are combined with each factor's score. This is a global weighting exercise, meaning that the Council will use one set of weights for its Risk Policy. Scores and weights from all factors as used to calculate a Z-score to determine a level of risk tolerance.

Weighting Exercise – Global

Complete the grid below by assigning a weight to each factor using a whole number between 0 and 4. A weighting of 0 indicates the factor holds the lowest relative importance in determining the Council's risk tolerance for that managed resource, while a 4 indicates it is critically important. You may only designate a maximum of two factors as "Critically Important (4)."

Factor	***Least Important*** **0**	***Slightly Important*** **1**	***Important*** **2**	***Highly Important*** **3**	***Critically Important*** **4**
Biomass/Stock					
Recruitment					
Climate Vulnerability					
Recreational Fishery Characterization					
Commercial Fishery Characterization					