



New England Fishery Management Council

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

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 8, 2019
TO: Executive Committee
FROM: Tom Nies
SUBJECT: 2020 Council Priorities – ED Recommendations

1. The attached documents are to help the Executive Committee develop recommendations for 2019 Council priorities. I will update enclosure (2) for the Council meeting to reflect the Executive Committee recommendations.


- a. The first attachment is a draft change to the Operations Handbook that documents the Council process for setting our annual priorities. This is intentionally vague on some details so that it is easier to adapt future changes. There are two polices worth highlighting. The first is that once the priorities are adopted any changes must be reviewed by the appropriate oversight committee before being brought to the Council. The second is that any mid-year change must be approved by a 2/3 vote of the Council members present.
- b. The second attachment lists possible tasks. Tasks are listed by FMP or major topic, with tasks that should be completed by the end of the year in the first column and multi-year tasks in the second column. My advice for Executive Committee recommendations are highlighted in yellow. The list includes major staff tasks that are expected to occur. My recommendations assume that most multi-year tasks in progress will continue until completed, and that all regulatory requirements will be addressed. While in some cases tasks are grouped into packages, these are tentative and can be changed once priorities are established. This list includes an estimate of staff time for each item; this is further explained below.
- c. The third attachment summarizes the prioritization of the tasks by Council members. My recommendations are highlighted in yellow. The prioritization and other issues are discussed below.

2. Not all Committees have had an opportunity to identify their preferred priorities for 2019.

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 2017 through 30 September 2018. Meeting and contract expenses were summarized by topic, Council costs were allocated to topics by the amount of actual time spent on each topic, and personnel costs were assigned based on staff tasking.

Figure 1 – Summary of resource allocation from October 2018 through September 2019. Numbers in parentheses reflect last year's ranking if it differs from this year.



2019 Resource Allocation

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

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Prioritization Exercise

4. In an effort 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. All 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 (40.8) and standard deviation (SD) (7.8) 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 (6 high, 6 medium, 6 low) results in an SD of 0.84, and an even split (9 high, 9 low) results in an SD close to 1.

5. There are a few observations worth noting from this ranking exercise.
- a. There is general agreement among Council members on the importance of the top twenty tasks. There is a greater divergence of opinion on the bottom tasks.
 - b. Tasks with the highest SD (over 0.8) include some that were ranked average or below.

- c. The above average task with the greatest divergence of opinion was the required skate monitoring report. Support for the FDDI initiative and rec/commercial re-allocation were also ranked above average but showed divergent opinions.
- d. Several tasks with a below average score had high SD, indicating a strong divergence of opinion on their importance.
- e. While Council members were asked to rank all tasks, some are not discretionary, even if ranked low.
- f. Many Council members did not rank the 2021-2023 Atlantic herring specifications task, giving this required action a low score.

Staff Resources

6. In the past the Council was not provided information on the resources needed to complete tasks. This made it difficult to match the recommended priorities to staff resources. This year, attachment (2) includes an estimate of the technical staff-months needed to address a task (it does not include ED, Deputy, PAO, admin staff, or contractor time). These should be viewed as approximations and are not precise. How much time a task takes can turn out to be very different than what was expected if the Council expands the scope of an action.

7. In general, after considering holidays, vacation time, sick time, professional development, and miscellaneous tasks, each technical staff member is available for ten months of work time. The time available for each FMP or topic is based on current (2019) staff assignments. For the tasks I recommend, the time is added and compared to the time available.

8. There is an overall deficit of about 15 staff months. Some possible ways to address this deficit are explained below.

Groundfish

9. The highest-ranked groundfish priorities are the ASM amendment and annual specifications. There is little interest on the Council in pursuing party/charter limited entry, a GB cod sub-ACL for the recreational fishery, or the five-year sector review.

10. After every cod assessment, the issue of stock structure surfaces. The Atlantic Cod Stock Structure Working Group is expected to issue its report this year, but Council member interest in the topic is waning. Once the report is delivered, the Council will need to determine what, if any, actions to take to implement it. My suggestion is to limit this discussion and take it up under consideration for FY 2021 priorities.

11. We have struggled to find the time to resolve several control rule and SDC issues. It may be possible to address these through a combination of SSC and contractor support.

Monkfish

12. While it was not ranked high overall, I suggest the only task to undertake is the evaluation of discards that the Council voted on in September. This could lead to an action to change the monkfish specifications.

Sea Scallops

13. While there is general agreement on the importance of the top scallop task (specifications and management measures for 2020) there is more divergence of opinion on the other tasks. There was little Council support for a pilot project on leasing.

14. The Scallop Committee identified a new task at its October meetings: “Investigate options to maximize yield in dense aggregations.” This was not ranked by Council members and has not been added to the list. The Committee chair will introduce this task at the December Council meeting.

15. Because of time constraints, I do not recommend devoting much time to the survey and RSA program changes.

16. This year’s list of scallop tasks illustrates the opportunity cost of the annual specifications. The time devoted to this effort leaves little time available to explore a number of management issues that the industry would like to address. Perhaps one way to mitigate this problem is to ask the industry to develop a strategic plan for what issues should be addressed over the next four-five years.

Herring

17. There appears to be some confusion about the FY 2021 herring specifications because most Council members failed to rank them. These may be necessary as a result of the management rack assessment that will be completed in the late spring.

Habitat

18. Revisiting the Habitat Management Areas on the Northern Edge of Georges Bank drew divergent opinions from Council members.

19. Addressing offshore energy issues and policy development place steadily increasing demands on the staff.

Whiting/Small Mesh Multispecies/EBFM

20. Based on 2019 staff assignments, the most problematic staffing issue relates to whiting management and the development of EBFM. Required whiting actions are competing for time with discretionary EBFM development. As a result, I did not recommend some minor activities under both categories. Nevertheless, I will need to re-assign staff in order to make progress on both. This will impact the staff available for other items on this list.

Skates

21. Much like last year, the Council shows little interest in developing a limited entry program for the skate fishery. The Executive Committee may want to discuss whether to continue this project. The Council has initiated a flurry of skate frameworks in recent years to address management concerns that arguably are related to the lack of a limited entry system.

Trawl Survey Advisory Panel

22. Because the panel is staffed by the MAFMC with funding from the NEFSC, participation does not tax Council staff.

SSC

23. The SSC will continue to advise the Council on OFLs/ABCs.

24. The SSC identified the need for a new GB YTF and other empirical stocks control rules. Perhaps this task can be expanded to address issues identified under groundfish. If contractor support can be identified, then it may lessen the workload on Council staff and the PDT.

Other

25. Many of the “other” tasks fall on the ED or Deputy and do not incur significant time by tech staff. One caution should be noted. It is possible the updated NARW Biological Opinion could result in the need for actions in several management plans.

Grouping

26. Grouping suggestions in this document should not be considered binding. Changes are sometimes made over the course of the year.

Enclosures: (1) Draft priority setting guidance
(2) 2019 Draft Priorities – Executive Director Recommendations
(3) 2019 Priority Ranking

Council Priorities Process

In order to allocate Council and staff resources in an organized manner, each fall the Council will identify its planned activities for the following year. This process will take place over two consecutive Council meetings. The objective is to identify priorities in time for the start of the Council's fiscal year but deviations from this schedule may occur. The following steps are intended to provide general guidance to promote transparency.

Initial Task List

Working with staff, the Executive Director will prepare an initial list of tasks that the Council will consider for the following year. The identified tasks should be those that require a Council activity or action, or that require extensive staff involvement (e.g. stock assessments, extensive working groups, monitoring reports, etc.). The goal is to create as comprehensive a list as possible of actions the Council may want to consider, without considering resource limitations. Suggestions from Committees or the public will be included. Tasks that are legal or regulatory requirements will be identified, as will tasks that are ongoing or expected to take more than one year. This list does not imply a particular organization to tasks that are ultimately adopted. Items on this list will not be prioritized, and inclusion on the list does not mean any particular task is adopted. It will be reviewed by the Executive Committee for thoroughness and presented to the Council at a meeting in early fall. The Council will modify and approve the list for further review.

Task Selection

After this initial list is completed, individual Council members will be provided an opportunity to rate the importance of each task. Committees will also be provided an opportunity to prioritize the tasks for their Committee. Using this information, the Executive Committee will prepare a recommendation for the tasks that will be addressed in the following year. The Executive Committee will consult with the Executive Director to match the recommendations to the available resources. It will also develop a preliminary "bundling" of tasks – that is, which tasks might be included in the same action.

The Council will consider the Executive Committee recommendations, normally at a meeting in late fall. Changes to the Executive Committee recommendation should address whether they can be accommodated with the available resources. The Council will approve the final list,

which will be used to guide Council activities in the following year. “Bundling” identified at this meeting will normally be followed, but deviations are allowed without Council concurrence.

Modifications

New issues might be identified at any time during the year and may necessitate a change to the Council’s planned activities. Any subsequent changes to the approved priorities list must first be discussed by the appropriate Committee – preferably at a meeting, but through correspondence if a meeting is not planned. The Committee will bring the proposed change forward at a subsequent Council meeting, along with a recommendation on whether it should be adopted or not. The Committee should also address how the suggested change will be reconciled with any resource constraints. Adoption of the proposed change requires a 2/3 vote of the members present at a Council meeting.

UNDERLINE: REGULATORY REQUIREMENT		Yellow: ED recommendation									
-15.25 Time Balance		Total 123									
FMP/Time	Annual	Comm.	Executive Committee	Council	Rank	Multi-Year	Comm.	Executive Committee	Council	Rank	2019 Staff Time Distribution
Groundfish						<i>Time</i>					30
10	<u>Set ABCs/ACLs for half of groundfish stocks for FY2021-2023 and US/CA stocks for FY 2021; address commercial/recreational allocation issues if raised by new MRIP data ; investigate ways to increase GB haddock utilization, including modification of gear requirements</u>			x	1; 27; 58	9	Complete Amendment 23/Groundfish Monitoring action			x	1
2	Possible recreational sub-ACL for GB cod				83	6	Amendment to adopt limited access for the party/charter fishery				
1	Address SDC issue when analytic assessments fail			x	41	2	Cod Stock Structure Working Group: review results and develop management approach			x	57
3	Modify the GF control rule for stocks without analytical models – i.e., empirical and index-based (see SSC list below)				45						
4	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			x	41						
2	Consider sub-ACL of haddock for the small-mesh multispecies fishery				71						
4	Explore alternative ways to manage yellowtail flounder for the groundfish and scallop fisheries				41						
3	US/CA trading provisions				76						
1	Action to adopt electronic reporting for party/charter vessels			x	45						
1	White paper on splitting multispecies permits from other limited access permits				71						
1	Investigate mid-year movement of permits between sectors				76						
4	Consider programs to facilitate access to the groundfish fishery for new entrants/young fishermen				82						

	<i>Explore Atlantic halibut industry-based resource survey and potentially RSA</i>				76								
3													
2	Complete sector five-year review			x	67								
1	Groundfish operational assessments			x	4								
1	TRAC/TMGC			x	9								
-1	<i>Time Balance</i>					11							
Monkfish													4
	Conduct an analysis of alternative methods for estimating discards of monkfish to apply to future specifications, and consider available information on discard mortality. If warranted, consider adjusting specifications for FY 2021-2022	✓		x	79								
2													
4	<i>Revisit use of RSA DAS and ability to flip a directed DAS to an RSA DAS while at sea</i>	✓			58								
6	<i>Consider permit latency</i>	✓			71								
2	<i>Time Balance</i>					0							
Sea Scallops													30
13	<u>Prepare a specifications package to set FY 2021 (2022 default) specifications (i.e. setting DAS, access area trips, Northern GOM TAC, limited access general category IFQ allocations, etc.).</u>			x	1	15		Complete Amendment 21: NGOM management, LAGC trip limits, state waters fishing by LAGC vessels	1		x		9
3	Staff: Support annual scallop RSA process, including priority setting, and technical and management reviews.			x	14	3		<i>Develop limited access vessel DAS and access area trip leasing pilot project suggested by East Coast Scallop Harvester's Association</i>	6				85
6	<i>Evaluate rotational management program</i>	5			24								
2	<i>Review and implement recommendations from 2015 scallop survey review panel</i>	7			62								
1	NMFS and PDT have annual responsibilities related to estimating scallop, yellowtail, and windowpane catch during the year (i.e. LA AM exception, re-evaluation of YT sub-ACL based on updated information).			x	9								
3	<i>Support action for access to Northern Edge HMA (see Habitat)</i>	2			71								
6	<i>Evaluate options for harvesting slow growing scallops in Nantucket Light Ship-South Deep.</i>	3			70								
2	<i>Modify RSA program as recommended by RSA Program Review (see below)</i>	4			54								
5	<i>Performance report for the LA component</i>	9			54								

	<i>Adjustments to scallop industry funded observer program (IFO coverage vs. required SBRM coverage, etc.)</i>	8		80						
	<i>-2 Time Balance</i>				15					
Herring										8
5	Specifications for 2021-2023; action to adjust measures in the herring plan that potentially inhibit optimizing yield in the mackerel fishery (i.e. increase in herring incidental possession limit in the range of 2,000-40,000 pounds, modify seasonal closure of Area 1B)	✓	x	84; 45						
0.5	Staff: Coordination with MAFMC, ASMFC on various herring issues (RH/S, etc.)	✓	x	32	4	Action to consider GB spawning closures	1	x	19	
0.75	Coordinated action with the MAFMC in RH/S fisheries (prepare discussion paper)	✓		45						
0.75	Atlantic herring management track stock assessment	✓	x	14						
1.75	<i>Time Balance</i>				0					
Spiny Dogfish										
SBRM	<i>No Action Planned</i>									
Red Crab	<i>No Action Planned</i>									
Habitat										10
						Initiate action to revise Habitat Management Areas on Northern Edge of Georges Bank			58	
0.75	Participate in RODA and ROSA activities		x	24						
3	Develop habitat and fishery related comments on non-fishing activities, particularly wind power, in consultation with other agencies, (including NMFS, BOEM, and MAFMC). This includes addressing offshore energy development issues.		x	7						
3	Develop Council policies on additional non-fishing activities (offshore energy policies adopted 2018)		x	23						
2	Staff: Co-chair Northeast Regional Habitat Assessment Inshore Work Team		x	37						

	1	<u>Staff: Habitat impacts of other management actions</u>	x	35								
	0.75	Staff: SBNMS advisory panel and ASMFC habitat committee	x	45								
	-0.5	<i>Time Balance</i>				0						
Research												2
	4	Consider implementation of RSA Program review recommendations for the sea scallop, monkfish, and herring FMPs: 1) Form a group to address recommendations 2 and 3; 2) Form a group to design an overall strategic approach to scallop surveys and implementation and funding of the design; 3) Council, GARFO, and NEFSC evaluate and document RSA program administrative capacity.	x	27								
	2	Complete annual update to research priorities	x	67								
	1	Support S-K program	x	32								
	-5	<i>Time Balance</i>				0						
SSC												2
	1	<u>Support Council activities such as recommending ABCs and making recommendations in the FMP development process</u>	x	6								
	2	<i>Understand and resolve poor assessment model performance (primarily groundfish assessments)</i>		14								
	1	<i>Develop consistent guidelines for application of Plan B approaches</i>		35								
	2	Develop ABC control rule for GB yellowtail flounder and other empirical approach stocks	x	19								
	-1	<i>Time Balance</i>										
Enforcement, Safety, VMS												1
	1	Continue to support enforcement, safety and VMS issues.	x	19								
	0	<i>Time Balance</i>										
Whiting												6
	5	<u>Set OFLs/ABCs/ACLs for 2021-2023; make adjustments to possession limits, seasons, transfer at sea limit, northern red hake AM or other measures</u>	x	19; 62								

4	Complete action that addresses overfished condition/develop rebuilding plan for southern red hake		x	4							
4	Action to address bycatch issues in the fishery			37							
0.5	Red hake research track assessment		x	27							
2	Staff: PDT receives annual monitoring report from Regional Office and advises Council whether management adjustments are needed		x	27							
-5.5	Time Balance				0						
Skates											16
1	Staff: Annual skate monitoring report	✓	x	37	14	Prepare an amendment to consider limited access in the skate fishery	✓		x		67
1	Time Balance				14						
EBFM											4
6	Conduct information and educational workshops on EBFM, focusing on potential application to Georges Bank eFEP	✓	x	52							
6	Conduct initial stakeholder-engaged management strategy evaluation workshops and work with the NEFSC (or others) to develop operating models to evaluate management procedures and strategies for potential application to a Georges Bank Ecosystem Production Unit.	✓	x	54							
2	Support EBFM activities (WGNARS, SOE, etc.)	✓		54							
-8	Time Balance				0						
Observer Committee											0
	Study issue of full retention/no discards.			45		Develop a policy and strategic approach to monitor commercial fisheries to address multiple information needs					41
	Policy and procedures for NEFOP "no sail" list			52							
	Appropriate observer protocols			62							
0	Time Balance				0						
Risk Policy Working Group											2

	<i>Review implementation of Council Risk Policy</i>			62							
2	<i>Time Balance</i>				0						
Trawl Survey AP											0
0	Address issues identified in AP charter		x	37							
Inter-Organizational											2
	CCC Working Group participation (EM, Legislative, CMOD)		x	27							
1	NRCC Working Group Participation		x	9							
	International Fisheries Management TMGC/TRAC/Steering Committee ICCAT HMS Advisory Panel/HMS FMP NAFO Commissioner		x	14							
1	<i>Time Balance</i>				0						
Other											6
1	Review and implement Program Review recommendations		x	32							
2	Review document preparation and approval procedures with GARFO, NEFSC (i.e. update 2014 Tiger Team report)			45							
1	Support Regional Fishery Dependent Data Initiative (FDDI)		x	24							
1	Protected Species issues, including actions as necessary to review Biological Opinion and implement NARW recovery plan		x	14							
0	Participate on Large Whale and Harbor Porpoise Take Reduction Teams		x	9							
4	Adopt additional measures for fisheries if required by Northern Right Whale Biological Opinion		x	7							
1	Preliminary work on Aquaculture FMP			80							
0	Dialogue meeting between Council, industry, and scientists to improve communications and cooperation			62							
	Consider whether fleet/vessel design should be an element of fisheries management			86							
-1	<i>Time Balance</i>				0						

							Mean Score: 40.8	StDev 7.85257458			
							Median Score: 41				
Original Number	Subject	Priority/Task Title	High	Medium	Low	Score	Rank	Rank in Plan			
25	Sea Scallops	<u>Prepare a specifications package to set FY 2021 (2022 default) specifications (i.e. setting DAS, access area trips, Northern GOM TAC, limited access general category IFQ allocations, etc.).</u>	18			54	1	1			
1	Groundfish	<u>Set ABCs/ACLs for half of groundfish stocks for FY2021-2023 and US/CA stocks for FY 2021</u>	18			54	1	1			
2	Groundfish	Complete Amendment 23/Groundfish Monitoring action	18			54	1	1			
60	Whiting	<u>Complete action that addresses overfished condition/develop rebuilding plan for southern red hake</u>	17	1		53	4	1			
20	Groundfish:Staff	Groundfish operational assessments	17	1		53	4	3			
54	SSC	Support Council activities such as recommending ABCs and making recommendations in the FMP development process	16	2		52	6	1			
84	Other	Adopt additional measures for fisheries if required by Northern Right Whale Biological Opinion	16	1	1	51	7	1			
50	Habitat:Staff	Develop habitat and fishery related comments on non-fishing activities, particularly wind power, in consultation with other agencies, (including NMFS, BOEM, and MAFMC). This includes addressing offshore energy development issues.	15	2	2	51	7	1			
35	Sea Scallops:Staff	<u>NMFS and PDT have annual responsibilities related to estimating scallop, yellowtail, and windowpane catch during the year (i.e. LA AM exception, re-evaluation of YT sub-ACL based on updated information).</u>	14	4		50	9	2			
26	Sea Scallops	Complete Amendment 21: NGOM management, LAGC trip limits, state waters fishing by LAGC vessels	15	2	1	50	9	2			
83	Other	Participate on Large Whale and Harbor Porpoise Take Reduction Teams	14	4		50	9	2			
77	Inter-organization Activities	NRCC Working Group Participation	14	4		50	9	1			
21	Groundfish:Staff	TRAC/TMGC	14	4	0	50	9	4			
55	SSC	Understand and resolve poor assessment model performance (primarily groundfish assessments)	15	1	2	49	14	2			
36	Sea Scallops:Staff	Support annual scallop RSA process, including priority setting, and technical and management reviews.	13	5	0	49	14	4			
82	Other:staff	Protected Species issues, including actions as necessary to review Biological Opinion and implement NARW recovery plan	13	5		49	14	3			
78	Inter-organization Activities	International Fisheries Management TMGC/TRAC/Steering Committee ICCAT HMS Advisory Panel/HMS FMP NAFO Commissioner	13	5		49	14	2			
42	Herring:Staff	Atlantic herring management track stock assessment	14	3	1	49	14	1			
59	Whiting	<u>Set OFLs/ABCs/ACLs for 2021-2023</u>	16			48	19	2			

57 SSC	Develop ABC control rule for GB yellowtail flounder and other empirical approach stocks	12	6		48	19	3
39 Herring	Action to consider GB spawning closures	14	3		48	19	2
58 Enforcement, Safety, VMS	Continue to support enforcement, safety and VMS issues.	12	6		48	19	1
47 Habitat	Develop Council policies on additional non-fishing activities (offshore energy policies adopted 2018)	12	5	1	47	23	2
31 Sea Scallops	Evaluate rotational management program	11	6	1	46	24	5
81 Other:staff	Support Regional Fishery Dependent Data Initiative (FDDI)	12	4	2	46	24	4
46 Habitat	Participate in RODA and ROSA activities	11	6	1	46	24	3
64 Whiting:Staff	<u>PDT receives annual monitoring report from Regional Office and advise Council whether management adjustments are needed</u>	10	7	1	45	27	3
63 Whiting	Red hake research track assessment	10	7	1	45	27	3
51 Research	Consider implementation of RSA Program review recommendations for the sea scallop, monkfish, and herring FMPs: 1) Form a group to address recommendations 2 and 3; 2) Form a group to design an overall strategic approach to scallop surveys and implementation and funding of the design; 3) Council, GARFO, and NEFSC evaluate and document RSA program administrative capacity.	10	7	1	45	27	1
76 Inter-organization Activities	CCC Working Group participation (EM, Legislative, CMOD)	11	6		45	27	3
7 Groundfish	Address commercial/recreational allocation issues if raised by new MRIP data	11	5	2	45	27	5
53 Research:Staff	Support S-K program	9	8	1	44	32	2
79 Other	Review and implement Program Review recommendations	8	10	0	44	32	5
41 Herring:Staff	Coordination with MAFMC, ASMFC on various herring issues (RH/S, etc.)	10	6	2	44	32	3
56 SSC	Develop consistent guidelines for application of Plan B approaches	10	6	1	43	35	4
48 Habitat:Staff	<u>Habitat impacts of other management actions</u>	8	9	1	43	35	4
62 Whiting	Action to address bycatch issues in the fishery	8	9	0	42	37	5
75 Trawl Survey AP	Address issues identified in AP charter	8	9		42	37	1
66 Skates:Staff	<u>Skate monitoring report</u>	10	5	2	42	37	1
51 Habitat:Staff	Co-chair Northeast Regional Habitat Assessment Inshore Work Team	8	8	2	42	37	5
70 Observer Committee	Develop a policy and strategic approach to monitor commercial fisheries to address multiple information needs	9	5	4	41	41	1
6 Groundfish	Address SDC issue when analytic assessments fail	7	9	2	41	41	6
9 Groundfish	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	9	5	4	41	41	6
11 Groundfish	Explore alternative ways to manage yellowtail flounder for the groundfish and scallop fisheries	7	9	2	41	41	6
80 Other:staff	Review document preparation and approval procedures with GARFO, NEFSC (i.e. update 2014 Tiger Team report)	8	7	2	40	45	6
73 Observer Committee	Study issue of full retention/no discards.	0	8	3	40	45	2

38 Herring	Action to adjust measures in the herring plan that potentially inhibit optimizing yield in the mackerel fishery (i.e. increase in herring incidental possession limit in the range of 2,000-40,000 pounds, modify seasonal closure of Area 1B)	8	6	4	40	45	4
40 Herring	Coordinated action with the MAFMC on RH/S catch caps in the herring and mackerel fisheries.	7	8	3	40	45	4
49 Habitat:Staff	SBNMS advisory panel and ASMFC habitat committee	5	12	1	40	45	6
8 Groundfish	Modify the GF control rule for stocks without analytical models – i.e., empirical and index-based (see SSC list below, item 7 above)	4	14		40	45	9
13 Groundfish	Action to adopt electronic reporting for party/charter vessels	10	3	4	40	45	9
71 Observer Committee	Recommend to NMFS policy and procedures for NEFOP "no sail" list	7	7	4	39	52	3
67 EBFM	Conduct information and educational workshops on EBFM, focusing on potential application to Georges Bank eFEP	7	7	4	39	52	1
29 Sea Scallops	Modify RSA program as recommended by RSA Program Review (see below)	3	14	1	38	54	6
30 Sea Scallops	Performance report for the LA component	5	10	3	38	54	6
69 EBFM:Staff	Support EBFM activities (WGNARS, SOE, etc.)	6	8	4	38	54	2
68 EBFM	Conduct initial stakeholder-engaged management strategy evaluation workshops and work with the NEFSC (or others) to develop operating models to evaluate management procedures and strategies for potential application to a Georges Bank Ecosystem Production Unit.	7	6	5	38	54	2
23 Monkfish	Revisit use of RSA DAS and ability to flip a directed DAS to an RSA DAS while at sea	6.00	7.00	5.00	37	58	1
45 Habitat	Initiate action to revise Habitat Management Areas on Northern Edge of Georges Bank	6	7	5	37	58	7
3 Groundfish	Cod Stock Structure Working Group: review results and develop management approach	5	9	4	37	58	11
16 Groundfish	Investigate ways to increase GB haddock utilization, including modification of gear requirements	8	4	5	37	58	11
61 Whiting	Action to make adjustments to possession limits, seasons, transfer at sea limit, northern red hake AM or other measures	3	12	3	36	62	6
28 Sea Scallops	Review and implement recommendations from 2015 scallop survey review panel	3	12	3	36	62	8
74 Risk Policy Working Group	Review implementation of Council Risk Policy	6	8	2	36	62	1
86 Other	Dialogue meeting between Council, industry, and scientists to improve communications and cooperation	5	10	1	36	62	7
72 Observer Committee	Appropriate observer protocols	5	8	5	36	62	4
65 Skates	Prepare an amendment to consider limited access in the skate fishery	5	7	6	35	67	2
52 Research	Complete annual update to research priorities	8	5	1	35	67	3
19 Groundfish:Staff	Complete sector five-year review	6	6	5	35	67	13
32 Sea Scallops	Evaluate options for harvesting slow growing scallops in Nantucket Light Ship-South Deep	4	8	6	34	70	9
27 Sea Scallops	Support action for access to Northern Edge HMA (see Habitat)	4	7	6	32	71	10
24 Monkfish	Consider permit latency	3.00	8.00	7.00	32	71	2
4 Groundfish	Amendment to adopt limited access for the party/charter fishery	4	7	6	32	71	14
10 Groundfish	Consider sub-ACL of haddock for the small-mesh multispecies fishery	5	4	9	32	71	14

14	Groundfish	White paper on splitting multispecies permits from other limited access permits	2	10	6	32	71	14
12	Groundfish	US/CA trading provisions	2	9	7	31	76	17
15	Groundfish	Investigate mid-year movement of permits between sectors	3	7	8	31	76	17
18	Groundfish	Explore Atlantic halibut industry-based resource survey and potentially RSA	4	6	7	31	76	17
22	Monkfish	Conduct an analysis of alternative methods for estimating discards of monkfish to apply to future specifications, and consider available information on discard mortality. If warranted, consider adjusting specifications for FY 2021-2022	6.00	4.00	3.00	29	79	3
34	Sea Scallops	Adjustments to scallop industry funded observer program (IFO coverage vs. required SBRM coverage, etc.)		11	6	28	80	11
85	Other	Preliminary work on Aquaculture FMP	4	2	12	28	80	8
17	Groundfish	Consider programs to facilitate access to the groundfish fishery for new entrants/young fishermen	1	7	10	27	82	20
5	Groundfish	Possible recreational sub-ACL for GB cod	0	8	10	26	83	21
37	Herring	<u>Specifications for 2021-2023</u>	8			24	84	6
33	Sea Scallops	Develop limited access vessel DAS and access area trip leasing pilot project suggested by East Coast Scallop Harvester's Association	1	3	14	23	85	12
87	Other	Consider whether fleet/vessel design should be an element of fisheries management	2		16	22	86	9