

NEW ENGLAND FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL  
50 WATER STREET, MILL 2  
NEWBURYPORT, MA 01950



# OPERATIONS HANDBOOK

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PRACTICES AND POLICIES  
REVISED OCTOBER 2018

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# 2016 OPERATIONS HANDBOOK

## PRACTICES AND POLICIES

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### INTRODUCTION

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February 9, 2016

Dear Council Members:

This document is divided into sections containing policies that address fishery management plan development, the Council structure and its operations, as well as administrative and stand-alone issues. The intent is to provide a useful reference for Council members and the public when policy questions arise or to clarify procedural matters.

The Operations Handbook was substantially revised at Council meetings held in November 2007 and February 2008. Several policies were eliminated because they were no longer consistent with accepted Council practices. Others were modified and several new policies also were added.

In 2012 and 2013, four policies were modified or recommended at the request of the Executive Committee, approved by the full Council and incorporated into this handbook. These included a refinement to the policy that addresses the *Authority of the Chairman*; a change to the *Public Testimony* policy that deleted a section calling for detailed information from the public when providing formal comments to the Council; and clarification concerning the *Advisory Panel* policy about when and how an Advisory Panel (AP) Chair is speaking as an individual, for his or her organization, or for the AP at different types of Council meetings. Criteria for membership on the Council's PDTs were also added to the *Plan Development Team Policy*.

Other changes were approved in 2014. At its June meeting, the Council approved an additional rationale for the removal of an advisory panel member and added a new policy that outlines the details of the NEFMC's scallop research set-aside program; and in November, a *Risk Policy Statement* was approved. In December 2015, the Council revised its Advisory Panel policy to allow, on rare occasions, a Vice Chair to stand in for an AP Chair and preside over an Advisory Panel meeting. In early 2016, the Council established guidelines for conferring its annual Janice Plante award on a deserving individual.

Once revisions or new policies are approved by the Council, the staff will provide a revised copy to members. An updated handbook also will be posted on the Council's website – [www.nefmc.org](http://www.nefmc.org).

Sincerely,  
Tom Nies  
Executive Director

**Additional Changes to Practices and Policies**  
**2017 to Present**

June 14, 2018	Council Adopted Offshore Energy Development Policies
September 24, 2018	Council Accepted Voting Seat on ASMFC Atlantic Herring Management Board, Added ASMFC Voting Seat on NEFMC Atlantic Herring Committee

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## **FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLANS**

## Research Steering Committee

The purpose of the Research Steering Committee (RSC) is to assist the Council in identifying and prioritizing regional research needs. It is intended that the committee will provide a mechanism to better integrate management information needs with research efforts and to foster the participation of fishermen in collaborative fisheries science.

By appointing Council members, fishermen, scientists and individuals from environmental and academic organizations, and by including National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) representatives, the Council seeks to improve fisheries management in New England through the development and dissemination of research priorities and strategies that incorporate stakeholders and fulfill the informational needs of decision-makers.

To the extent possible, the committee will strive to improve relationships among the fishing industry, scientific and management groups and the environmental community. Additionally, the committee also will strive to improve understanding and trust of the science-based inputs to the Council decision-making process.

The RSC will:

- Provide recommendations to the Council regarding overarching research priorities which will be reviewed by the committee at least on an annual basis;
- Advise the Council on research related issues that may be of interest or concern as they relate to fishery management plan development or other resource management concerns;
- Imbedded in the above effort are the following concepts: there is a need to improve the quality and quantity of information on which to base decisions; there is a need for applied research projects that incorporate the collaboration of fishermen, scientists and other stakeholders in fisheries science and to frame the questions that must be answered to guide decision-making;
- Given that cooperative research has become an integral part of fisheries management, the committee will attempt to identify funding sources or mechanisms to address the Council's research priorities and recommend ways to put them into practice; with input from the committee, the Council will communicate its priorities to other organizations in the region, as well as coordinate with other research initiatives;

- ~~When funding is available for collaborative research-related projects through NMFS, provide recommendations to the Regional Administrator (RA) concerning the contents of the agency's Requests for Proposals (RFPs);~~
- ~~Serve on NMFS's evaluation teams and review concept papers and final research proposals submitted in response to NMFS RFPs concerning collaborative research; forward recommendations to the agency concerning the approval of final proposals;~~
- ~~As requested, review both preliminary and final reports on completed projects and provide comments, further guidance and/or recommendations on follow-up activities for agency consideration;~~
- ~~Establish a peer, or alternative review process when appropriate, for the various types of information and reports generated from collaborative or other research projects that are relevant to Council decision-making; this may involve the Council's Plan Development Teams and Scientific and Statistical Committee; independent experts or the Stock Assessment Workshop process. Procedures should clarify the point at which such reports are available for use by the Council; and~~
- ~~Perform other appropriate tasks as may be required by the Council.~~

**Organization** ~~The Executive Director will announce committee vacancies through the news media, the mail and in other ways as appropriate. Interested persons will be required to submit their resumes and other information requested by the Executive Director. The Executive Director will prepare a list of nominees. The Council Chairman will appoint RSC members on the basis of their experience and expertise concerning fishing, fisheries science and research, and/or fisheries policy.~~

~~The RSC will be comprised of no less than twelve members and may call upon additional expertise with the approval of the Executive Director. When the RSC serves as an evaluation team for NMFS for the purpose of reviewing of concept papers and/or research proposals, the agency, in consultation with the Executive Director and the RSC Chairman, also may temporarily augment committee membership for this purpose.~~

~~RSC members will be selected in the following manner: four RSC members will be selected from the current body of voting Council members. Others will be selected as follows and serve for renewable two-year terms: one Northeast Fisheries Science Center staff representative, one NMFS Regional Office representative, two fishery scientists and four fishermen. Two additional committee positions will be reserved for a representative of the conservation community and from academia.~~

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~~Non-Council members will serve without compensation but will be paid for expenses for travel, meals and lodging in accordance with Council travel policy. The Executive Director will provide staff and other support as necessary.~~

~~**Procedures** The Committee will meet as a whole or in part at the direction of Executive Director or the Council Chair. The Committee will meet as often as necessary to fulfill its responsibilities subject to time and budget constraints. The RSC will meet at least once annually to identify and prioritize regional research needs and will forward their recommendations to the full Council for approval.~~

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## **ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES**

## Travel Authorization and Reimbursement

All voting and non-voting members of the Council, members of the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC), Council staff, experts and consultants retained by the Council, and members of the Council's Advisory Panels (APs) and Plan Development Teams (PDTs) are eligible to be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred while engaged in authorized Council business. Employees of the federal government are not eligible for travel reimbursement.

**Authorization** Prior authorization is necessary to establish eligibility for reimbursement. Either the Council Chairman or the Executive Director may authorize travel and reimbursement for expenses incurred. A numbered *Travel Authorization* (TA) form will be prepared by the Council staff and mailed to all authorized individuals prior to each Council meeting, oversight committee meeting, SSC, PDT or Advisory Panel meeting or other approved activity. The authorization will indicate those persons entitled to receive reimbursement. TA's will be routinely issued for the various types of meetings indicated below:

- **Council Meetings:** Voting and non-voting members designated Council staff. SSC and PDT members and the Chairman of an Advisory Panel will be authorized as needed.
- **Oversight or Other Regular Committee Meetings:** The Council Chairman, committee members, designated Council staff, and the advisory panel chairman. PDT members may be authorized to receive reimbursement for travel expenses for a specific committee meeting, as needed.
- **Mid-Atlantic Council Meetings:** The designated liaison to the Mid-Atlantic Council or other Council members designated by the Council Chairman.
- **Advisory Panel Meetings:** Advisory Panel members, designated Council staff and the oversight committee chairman, if necessary.
- **SSC Meetings:** SSC members, Council members and Council Chairman, and Council staff.
- **Plan Development Team Meetings:** PDT members, the oversight committee chairman and Council staff will be authorized to attend PDT meetings.
- **Additional persons may be authorized reimbursement for expenses.**
- ~~Members of the Council's Research Steering Committee shall be compensated in the same manner as members of the Council's Advisory Panels. The same caveats about availability of funds that apply to Advisory Panel members will apply to reimbursement of these individuals.~~

## Research Priority Setting Policy

Consistent with section 302(h) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Council develops, in conjunction with its Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC), research priorities that are necessary for management purposes. These priorities are established for five-year periods, updated as needed, and submitted to the Secretary of Commerce and the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) for their consideration in developing research priorities and budgets. The Council's research priorities include a wide range of science-based needs that would support or improve the Council's ability to steward the marine resources in its jurisdiction and maintain sustainable fishing communities.

**Process** The Council will approve research priorities annually, typically at its spring meeting, to keep the list more current. The oversight committees, in consultation with plan development teams, may review existing research priorities and recommend revisions. Committee approval ideally occurs at an in-person meeting, but electronic mail is acceptable if a committee meeting is not otherwise planned. The SSC then reviews committee recommendations and makes its own recommendations to the Council. Upon Council approval, the updated priorities are provided to the Secretary of Commerce and the NEFSC and may be distributed to other research and funding entities (e.g., Sea Grant programs).

**Documentation** Council research priorities will be listed on a spreadsheet. The spreadsheet can be queried and filtered by priority category (urgent, important, strategic), status (e.g., not begun, underway), relevant FMPs and species, broad categories (e.g., bycatch, habitat), and cross-listings with the priority lists of other entities (e.g., RSA, assessment), and other categories that may be added in the future. The priority categories help identify when the data or project results would be needed to inform the management process:

- **URGENT** (essential): Research that is essential for compliance with federal requirements, including the National Standards, or that has been identified by management as necessary to aid decision-making. It is expected that a one- or two-year project would meet the information need. Postponement would have a significant impact on management.
- **IMPORTANT** (near term): Obtaining a new set of data or research result that is likely to aid in the evaluation of a near term or ongoing management goal. The research might involve a time-limited program or work that could continue indefinitely. Postponement will not have an immediate impact on fishery management; however, the information generated will likely inform near term (e.g., <5 year) Council actions.
- **STRATEGIC** (future needs): Research that is valuable but is not associated with an immediate need or near-term (e.g., <5years) Council action.

**Comment [RF1]: MSA mandate (exact text):**  
"Section 302 (h) Each Council shall develop, in conjunction with the scientific and statistical committee, multi-year research priorities for fisheries, fishery interactions, habitats, and other areas of research that are necessary for management purposes that shall –  
A. establish priorities for 5-year periods;  
B. be updated as necessary; and  
C. be submitted to the Secretary and the regional science centers of the National Marine Fisheries Service for their consideration in developing research priorities and budgets for the region of the Council."

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## Research Review Policy

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Consistent with National Standard 2, Council EMPs are based upon the best scientific information available. Thus, the scientific information that is used by the Council in decision-making should be technically reviewed, as appropriate and consistent with the National Standard 2 guidelines. The normal entry point for data or analyses that will be considered by the Council is through the appropriate PDT, FMAT, or other technical team (such as a Stock Assessment Working Group). If information has not had a technical review, or a PDT determines the technical review is not sufficiently rigorous, the PDT may recommend that a technical review take place. A PDT may advise that information is not appropriate for use in a management context based on the summary of technical reviews, comments by PDT members, or other rationale related to the efficacy or appropriateness of the information.

Care should be taken before using analyses and data received (oral or written) directly by the Council, that has not been reviewed by the PDT. Generally, if the information has not been subjected to one of the forms of technical review enumerated below, it should not be used as the sole basis for a decision until the PDT has had an opportunity to review it.

~~The Research Steering Committee (RSC), at the request of the New England Fishery Management Council's Executive Committee, developed a policy for the review and incorporation of new research results into the management arena. The Executive Committee's request was based on concerns that various cooperative research programs have funded a large number of projects that have relevance to management. Additionally, other types of external reports may also lack sufficient technical review prior to use in the management process. If results are to be used by managers in decision-making, the Executive Committee determined there should be some mechanism to evaluate the efficacy of the results and direct final reports to appropriate end users.~~

### ~~Technical Review Criteria (Approved by the NEFMC, September 2004)~~

~~**General** The following points were developed by the Council's Research Steering Committee for use as guidance during in the technical review of cooperative and other research results that are to be considered in management decision-making. Based on a discussion at the September 14-16, 2004 Council meeting, those considerations have been subsequently appended to the Council's Research Review Policy.~~

### Technical reviews include:

Following are examples of appropriate technical reviews. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive.

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~~Levels of technical review that could be deemed sufficient for Council decision-making purposes:~~

- Publication in a peer-review journal
- Publication in a Federal/State Agency or academic technical report series in which papers are subject to internal peer review
- Review by a peer-review forum such as a SARC, TRAC, ~~SEDAR (Southeast Data, Assessment and Review – SEFSC stock assessment review process)~~, or the SSC ~~or NRCC, etc.~~
- Expedited review by NMFS and/or other appropriately qualified scientists
- Review of the research paper by two or more independent experts, unaffiliated with the PIs (with proof that any review comments provided by the reviewers were subsequently addressed by the PIs); this might pertain to the Center reviews of final reports of state/federal grants and contracts, or to reviews specifically solicited by the PIs themselves from independent scientists.
- Academic dissertations and theses (presuming that the research in these reports have been reviewed for technical sufficiency and rigor by faculty members)
- A peer-review forum (perhaps a workshop) developed specifically to review/vet draft research reports (~~e.g., this might be something that could be convened by under the auspices of the Cooperative Partners Research Branch Initiative or other research funded by the Northeast Consortium~~)
- Review by ~~scientists familiar with the research topic area (this is the PDT model in which PDT members to~~ assess the technical merits of unvetted research results); the PDT may also recommend an outside review by additional scientists.

~~Technical reviews – Some approaches that would NOT qualify as sufficient to consider a research document as having had a valid technical review would include:~~

- Oral presentation of the research results at a scientific meeting (~~e.g., AFS, ICES, etc~~) and publication of an abstract
- Preparation/submission of a Working Paper/Research Document to a Meeting/Working Group at which peer review is not the main objective of the Group (e.g., ICES Working Papers; NAFO Research Documents, ICES ASC Documents; ~~etc.~~) or in which the review is likely to be perfunctory

~~**Additional Comments** There are still gray areas concerning whether analyses generated at PDT meetings or reviews undertaken by those groups receive adequate vetting. Pending experience with this process and further discussion, the committee may modify this document.~~

~~**Management Review Checklist** The RSC policy concerning the committee's review of final reports for applicability to the management process states that it will develop comments and/or recommendations on whether a technical review is adequate, project results are applicable to management, whether further work needs to be undertaken to validate results and the likely end user(s). Comments could include recommendations for immediate or future use by the Council and its committees, PDTs, or SSC, suggestions for further investigations, broader field testing in the form of an experimental fishery, or other course of action.~~

~~The RSC may advise that the information contained in a given final report is not appropriate for use in a management context based on the summary of technical reviews, comments by RSC members, or other rationale related to the efficacy or appropriateness of the project. The committee also could elect to forgo the development of comments if it does not feel they are warranted or because of time constraints.~~

~~If a project does not have a technical review, or the RSC determines the technical review is not sufficiently rigorous, the RSC will recommend that a technical review take place or channel the completed report to its SSC or other technical group for the review. The RSC will consider projects that have received technical reviews completed by other groups and subsequently undertake its own review. The RSC review may include a presentation by the principal investigators.~~

~~Following the RSC review, a package (including the summary of technical reviews, the RSC comments and a final report) will be prepared by the Council staff and forwarded to the Council and its appropriate oversight committees for use in the management process. The Council and its oversight committees will coordinate any further use of project information. This would include, but is not limited to forwarding a report to the Advisory Panels, Plan Development Teams or other groups.~~

#### **Suggestions for Specific Comments**

- ~~1) Has there been a sufficient technical review of the project results and, if so, is that information available to the Research Steering Committee?~~
- ~~2) Did the project accomplish all of its stated goals and objectives?~~
- ~~3) Are project deliverables available and formatted for use by the Council and its technical committees?~~

**Comment [RF2]:** NS2 Guidelines:

"If formal peer review is not practicable due to time or resource constraints, the development and analysis of scientific information used in or in support of fishery management actions should be as transparent as possible..."

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- ~~4) Does the project address an immediate management need or contribute to a long-term strategy to rebuild and sustain stocks?~~
  - ~~5) Does the project support past work and/or provide new information?~~
  - ~~6) Does it point to a management action not in place now, or offer an innovative solution to a problem?~~
  - ~~7) Did the project elucidate other information not specifically stated in the goals and objectives?~~
  - ~~8) Is there a need for further work or follow-on research such as wider field testing?~~
  - ~~9) Who is the appropriate end user and are there recommendations/caveats about how this information should be used?~~
  - ~~10) Overall rating based on the above criteria: excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor.~~
  - ~~11) Additional comments:~~

## Use of New Gears in the B-Regular DAS Program and the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP

In response to a Council request in June 2007, NMFS issued a final rule (72 FR 72965) on December 26, 2007 to amend the procedures and requirements for approval of additional gear types for use in the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock Special Access Program (SAP) or additional trawl gear in the Northeast multispecies Regular B DAS (Days-at-Sea) Program.

The regulations allow the Council or its Executive Committee to request the Regional Administrator to authorize additional gear for use in both programs through a notice action if the proposed gear meets one of two standards in the regulations.

The standards require that new gear either reduce the catch of each regulated stock of species of concern or other non-groundfish stocks that are overfished or subject to overfishing, by at least 50% (by weight on a trip-by-trip basis); or that its catch of each regulated stock of species of concern, or other non-groundfish stocks that are overfished or subject to overfishing, be less than 5% of the total catch of regulated groundfish (also by weight on a trip-by-trip basis). The approval process is as follows:

- 1) Before the Council considers recommending a new gear for either program, the proposed gear must have been the subject of a completed experiment and results reviewed by the appropriate Plan Development Team~~Council's Research Steering Committee (RSC)~~ in accordance with the ~~cat committee~~Council's research review policy. ~~(This step is specified in the final rule cited above).~~ The ~~RSC-PDT~~ report to the Council will contain a recommendation concerning the sufficiency of the experimental results for management decision-making.
- 2) The ~~Research Steering Committee~~PDT will normally forward its findings to the relevant oversight Committee for consideration. If time constraints are an issue, the PDT will forward its findings directly to the full Council or the Council's Executive Committee, ~~if time constraints are an issue,~~ for development of a recommendation to the Regional Administrator.
- 3) If approved, a formal request will be forwarded to the National Marine Fisheries Service Regional Administrator recommending that the new gear type be added to the allowed gears that may be used in the B Regular DAS program or the Haddock SAP.

## Scallop Research Set-Aside Program Policy

The Scallop Committee, at the request of the New England Fishery Management Council's Executive Director, developed a policy for how the Council is involved in the review of scallop research set-aside proposals.

The Scallop Research Set-Aside (RSA) Program is a process coordinated by the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) and the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC). Four unique RSA programs were established by the Mid-Atlantic and New England Fishery Management Councils. The programs for scallops, monkfish, and Atlantic herring currently are active. No Federal funds are provided for the RSA programs. Instead, funding for research is provided by the sale of set-aside allocations in quota-managed or days-at-sea-managed fisheries, which are awarded through a competitive grant process.

The Scallop RSA Program was formally included in the Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Management Plan in 1999. The program has evolved over time. Currently, 1.25 million pounds of total annual allocated landings are set aside to fund research projects that support scallop management. At least biennially, the Council recommends specific research priorities that should be used for the scallop RSA funding announcement.

The Scallop Plan Development Team (PDT) and Scallop Advisory Panel provide input about needed research priorities through the NEFMC Scallop Committee, and the Committee's recommendations are then considered and approved by the full Council. The Council's decision forms the basis for the Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) announcement that is written by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

NMFS's Office of Communications announces the FFO through a wide-reaching email notice, which also is distributed by the New England and Mid-Atlantic Councils. Additionally, the notice is posted on the NOAA Northeast Cooperative Research website and the New England and Mid-Atlantic Council websites.

The official Federal Funding Opportunity document, which contains application information, submission deadlines, and the list of research priorities, is posted on the federal Grants.gov portal. The portal collects and then funnels submissions to the Commerce Department's Grants Online system, where all activities related to the competitive grants process, post-award functions, final reports, and grant close-outs are managed. The Council and Council staff are not involved in this stage of the program.

Each scallop RSA proposal is subject to a thorough review. The process now includes input from both technical reviewers and fishery managers. Proposals are evaluated by subject matter experts who score the technical merits of the proposals. A panel of experts may be convened to

evaluate proposals. Details about the evaluation process will be described annually by NMFS.

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Reviewers consider several aspects of each proposal, including importance and/or relevance and applicability of the proposed project, technical/scientific merit, overall qualifications of the project, project costs, and outreach and education. Each technical reviewer provides a final numerical score based on a possible 100 total points. The NEFSC is responsible for assigning the technical reviewers, which include staff from multiple departments within both NEFSC and the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, as well as other relevant experts from academia, Council staff, state agencies, and various research institutions. For each competition, Council staff provides at least one highly qualified technical reviewer for each proposal. These reviewers are required to sign a conflict of interest form before participating in the review and must submit written comments and final scores directly through NOAA Grants Online.

Council staff also identifies individuals to participate in the management review process of all proposals, and the NEFSC provides additional participants, if necessary, to make sure a diverse group of reviewers is represented. Potential management reviewers are contacted by the NEFSC. Roughly a dozen individuals are selected to discuss the management relevance of each proposed project. The group of reviewers includes individuals from the NEFMC Scallop Committee, Scallop Advisory Panel, and Scallop PDT, commercial and recreational fishermen, appropriate NEFSC staff, and other scallop fishery and management experts. Individuals on the RSA management review panel must also sign a conflict of interest form and are required to examine all proposals prior to the meeting. The management reviewers do not operate by consensus or make recommendations as a group. Following the meeting, each management reviewer is required to submit written comments. The management reviewer comments and recommendations are used by the NEFSC in the selection process to determine management relevance and applicability of a project.

On occasion, after the management panel meeting, Council staff is consulted to clarify how projects relate to the FMP. However, the NEFSC staff ultimately is responsible for compiling the information provided from both technical and management reviewers. The Northeast Fisheries Science Center Director then makes final recommendations, which are reviewed by NOAA's Federal Assistance Law Division to ensure that the selections are in accordance with the program policies. The agency is responsible for the final decision because this is a legal requirement of the grants process used to distribute RSA funds. After final projects are selected, NMFS also administers the grant process, carries out regulatory consultations, issues necessary permits, and conducts report reviews. After final reports are available, the results are forwarded to the New

~~England Council's Research Steering Committee for review or directly to~~ the Scallop PDT if project results already have been reviewed.

## Risk Policy Statement

Recognizing that all fishery management is based on uncertain information and that all implementation is imperfect, it is the policy of the New England Fishery Management Council (Council) to weigh the risk of overfishing relative to the greatest expected overall net benefits to the Nation.

### **The purpose of the New England Fishery Management Council's risk policy is to:**

1. Provide guidance to the Council and its subordinate bodies on taking account of risk and uncertainty in Fishery Management Plans and specification-setting;
2. Communicate the priorities and preferences of the Council regarding risk and uncertainty to NOAA Fisheries; and
3. Make fishery management more transparent, understandable, and predictable while better achieving FMP objectives in the face of uncertain information and imperfect implementation.

### **This risk policy will be supported by the following strategic approaches:**

1. The Council's risk policy will take account of both the probability of an undesirable outcome and the negative impact of the outcome. The probability of outcomes that have a long-term negative impact on ecosystem function should be low.
2. The cumulative effects of addressing risk at all levels of the fishery management process (e.g., estimation of OFL, ABC, ACL, ACT, and setting accountability measures) will be taken into account.
3. Harvest control rules and management procedures will consider stability in the face of uncertain information and inherent variability in ecosystems.
4. Implementation of the policy will be analysis-based, using methods commensurate with the importance of tradeoffs between conservation, ecosystem roles, and fishery benefits, as well as the tradeoffs between short-term and long-term benefits. The goal should be harvest control rules and management procedures that are formally evaluated with a view towards extracting signal from noise so that management and fisheries are less sensitive to uncertainty. This goal should allow for a dynamic

process of implementation and review, and modification when warranted.

## Janice Plante Award for Excellence

### Guidelines for the Award

The *Janice Plante Award for Excellence*, first awarded to Janice herself in April 2015, was established by the New England Council (NEFMC) to annually honor an individual who has produced exceptional work “to further the effectiveness of the fishery management process in New England.” In particular, the Council seeks to pay special tribute to those who have displayed outstanding commitment and contributions of time and energy in service to the Council fishery management system.

The Council will use the following process for the award:

1. Nominations for the Janice Plante Award will be made by voting Council members and the Executive Director, prior to March 1 each year, and provided to the NEFMC’s Executive Committee for consideration.
2. The Executive Committee will, either by consensus or a majority vote of its members, select the awardee based on the criteria described in the above two paragraphs.
3. Nominees will be individuals. Current Council members are not eligible for the award, nor will it be awarded to past Council members as recognition of their Council service. NEFMC staff and NOAA employees are not eligible.
4. Nominators should justify, in writing, the long-term distinguished service of the nominee, relative to the criteria in this document. No nominations will carry over.
5. The Executive Committee should view the Janice Plante Award as a special honor and therefore make and review nominations with care.
6. The recipient’s identity will remain confidential until announced during the award presentation.
7. Recipients may be reimbursed for travel expenses to receive the award.

