

# Chair's perspective on the fork in the road for RSA

Findings	Stay the course	New Approach
<b>1. RSA successful – don't screw it up</b>	Rec 1. Little risk of screw up	Rec 1. Engage stakeholders to prevent screwed up
<b>2. Ten concerns to address several aspects of program</b>	Rec 2. Implement ideas to address concerns	Many concerns disappear
<b>3. Role of RSA unspecified</b>	Address in each FMP	Rec. 3 and 6. Mission statem., Omnibus FMP
<b>4. Scallop surveys lack overall design</b>	Rec 4, Options 1 – 2 (what's new?)	Rec 4, Options 3 – 5 for rigorous design
<b>5. Substantial admin. workload</b>	Rec 5 , study it, but will there be more staff?	Rec 4, Option 5, to reduce workload
<b>6. Maybe a different mix of RSA Species appropriate</b>	Address in each FMPs, slow response time	Rec. 6 Omnibus FMP, potentially responsive
	Already prerogative of NMFS, NEFMC staff. Requires minimal Council action.	Requires Council actions and full stakeholder engagement.

# Next Steps

## **Stay the Course**

- **Leave it to NMFS and NEFMC staff to follow-up on report suggestions to address findings and concerns**

## **New Approach:**

**Longer term cooperative agreement(s), Omnibus FMP**

- **Through RSA priority setting process**
- **Address as 2020 Council Priority**

# Through RSA priority setting process

## Alternative priority on Wind Energy Development- **Food for thought only**

Prepare an authoritative peer reviewed scientific plan on the impact of offshore wind energy development on the Atlantic sea scallop fishery, and related fishery resource species and marine ecosystems. The plan should identify:

- **Threats: Articulation of the nature of the threats including the underlying mechanisms that determine impacts.** The relative importance of the threats should be addressed in terms of the likelihood of occurrence and the severity of negative impacts.
- **Aspects of development that influence impacts:** Describe how the size, spacing, and any other aspect of the way development occurs will potentially lessen or exacerbate the threats (number 1).
- **Existing information that is relevant to the threats:** Give the current location of the information (who has it), its importance (why it should be obtained) relative to each of the threats (number 1), and the type of data processing and analyses that should be conducted.
- **Needs for addition information:** Describe monitoring and research that should be conducted to address each of the threats (number 1) to supplement existing information (number 3). The magnitude of the monitoring or research task should be indicated in terms of cost, duration, and complexity (e.g., are methods well known, or do they need to be “invented”).
- **Potential information providers:** Who should address the information needs taking account legal obligations, roles and responsibilities (or mission) of Agencies and Organizations, and capabilities relative to the magnitude of tasks (number 4)? **The potential future role of RSA support** should be addressed.
- **Advisory Process:** Describe options for assembling information to advise on future decisions about (a) monitoring and research and (b) aspects of development (e.g., as considered in number 2), that are credible, responsive, transparent and open to diverse views.

These tasks should be considered indicative, but they may be modified based on the professional judgment of the participants in the cooperative agreement. The project is intended to focus on wind energy impacts on sea scallops and the sea scallop fishery, but there should be the flexibility to address impacts on other fisheries and ecosystem components if deemed important in terms of siting decisions that impact sea scallops and the scallop fishery.

# Rational for priority on wind energy

**The NEFMC, Scallop Committee and Scallop Advisors are concerned about the potential impact of offshore wind energy development and the adequacy of the scientific information available as the basis for development decisions. However, the information needs and options for obtaining and applying the information are diverse and complex. One potential mechanism for obtaining some of the information is RSA support, but the appropriate role for RSA is unclear. This priority is intended to demonstrate the NEFMC's high degree of concern about fishery impacts of offshore wind energy development, the Council's desire to make a constructive contribution to informed decision making about offshore wind energy, and to determine if there is an appropriate way to use RSA support to contribute in the future.**

# Through RSA priority setting process

## Addition Sea Scallop Survey Priority – **Food for thought only**

Establish a cooperative agreement on sea scallop resource surveys. Cooperators will be to **prepare scientifically rigorous survey design for RSA and NMFS supported sea scallop surveys** aimed at informing implementation of the NEFMC Sea Scallop FMP. The topics identified in the 2019 Review of RSA, Finding 4, should be considered indicative of the scope of the design project. The design should be flexible enough to address unforeseen events.

The Cooperative Agreement should include:

- A **governance structure** that reflects the interests and responsibilities of the entity hosting the Agreement, NMFS, NEFMC, and stakeholders.
- **Options for future (after 2020) implementation** of surveys according to the design, subject to availability of RSA support and merit (i.e., performance and capability considerations).
- Provisions for **supporting entities not affiliated** with the Cooperative Agreement and to allow non-government agreement partners to accept non-RSA support from either government and non-government sources.

It is understood that the NMFS's implementation of this priority will be in accordance with applicable legal constraints on grants and cooperative agreements. The NMFS should consult with the Council as appropriate with a view toward implementing this priority in the spirit intended by the Council, to the extent practicable.

# Rational for priority Survey Design

**The 2019 review of NEFMC RSA found that sea scallop surveys lack an overall design to effectively and efficiently fulfill management needs. It identified 6 design factors that should be considered. During the sea scallop RSA share day (21 May 2019), there were several statements indicating agreement with this finding. Recommendation 4 of the review report identifies 5 options for improving sea scallop surveys. This priority is offered in the spirit of implementing option 4.**

# 2020 Council Priority

## Options

- **Executive Committee takes responsibility for preparing an action plan for responding to RSA Review**
- **Establish an ad hoc group to develop an action plan for responding to RSA Review**
- **Initiate an Omnibus FMP to address RSA Review**