

EAST COAST CLIMATE CHANGE SCENARIO PLANNING INITIATIVE

Update following:

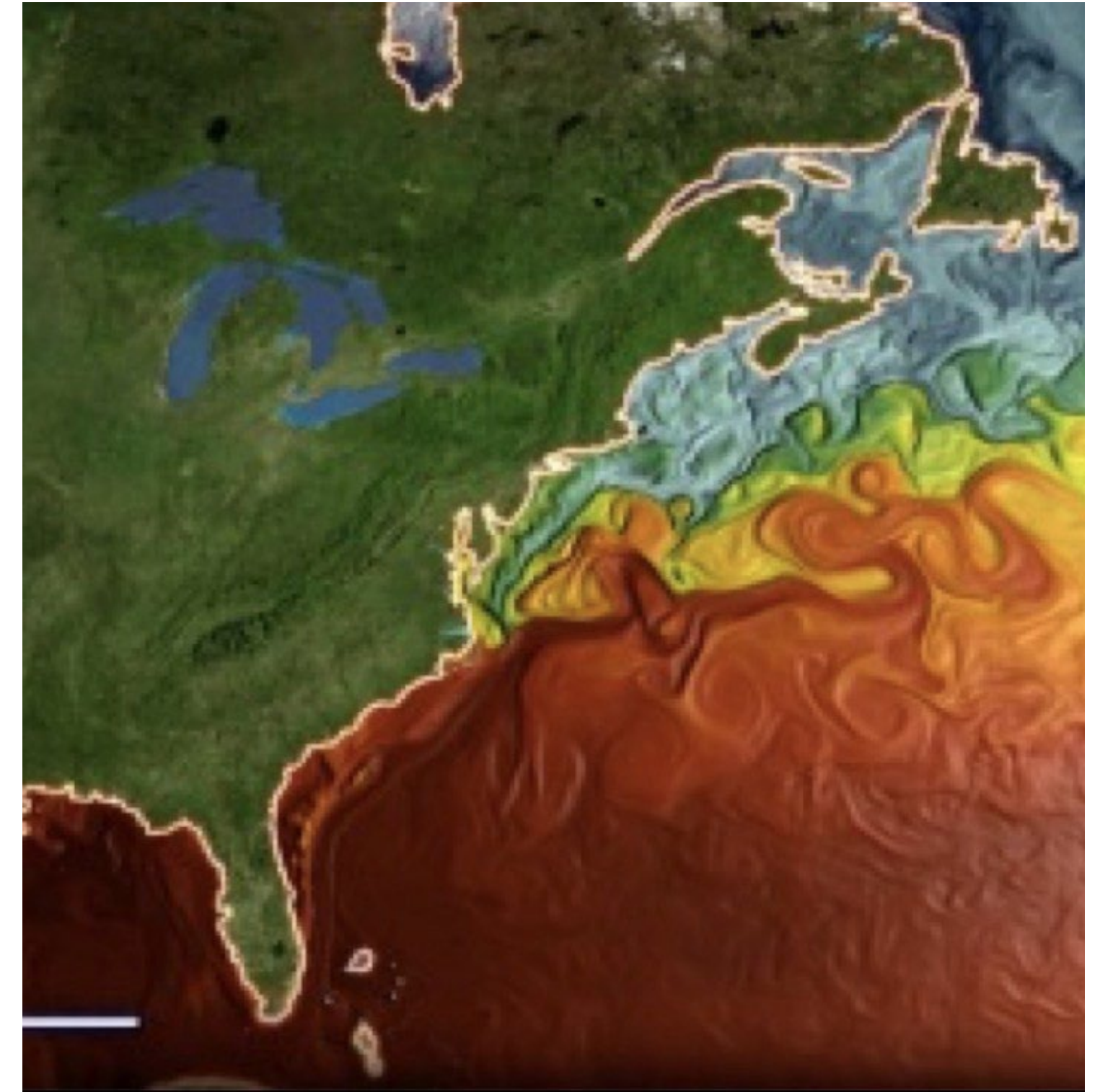
February 2023 Climate Change Scenario Planning Summit Meeting,
May 2023 NRCC Meeting

ISFMP Policy Board, August 2023



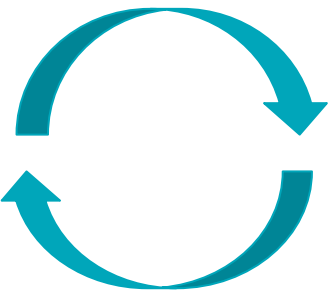
Initiative Objectives

1. Explore how **East Coast fishery governance and management issues** will be affected by climate driven change in fisheries, particularly changing stock availability and distributions.
1. **Advance a set of tools and processes** that provide flexible and robust fishery management strategies, which continue to promote fishery conservation and resilient fishing communities, and address uncertainty in an era of climate change.



East Coast Scenario Planning Initiative Timeline

Steps in this Multi-Year Initiative



Resulting Scenarios: East Coast Fisheries in 2040

Ocean Pioneers:

A 'wild west' of new ocean users, risk-taking fishery operators taking advantage of confusing, unpredictable but ultimately positive conditions.

Unpredictable changes & conditions, low ability to assess

Compound Stress Fractures:

A world with multiple sources of stress face operators and managers, where the industry fractures between some who play it smart, and others who lose out.

Mostly maintained

Stock productivity & replacement

Mostly declining

Checks & Balance:

Where strong science combines with collaborative management to help mitigate and adapt to climate-driven changes in the ocean.

Predictable changes & conditions, high ability to assess

Sweet and Sour Seafood:

A world where the science is good, but the news is bad. Success comes from anticipating lower stocks and preparing for new catch limits.

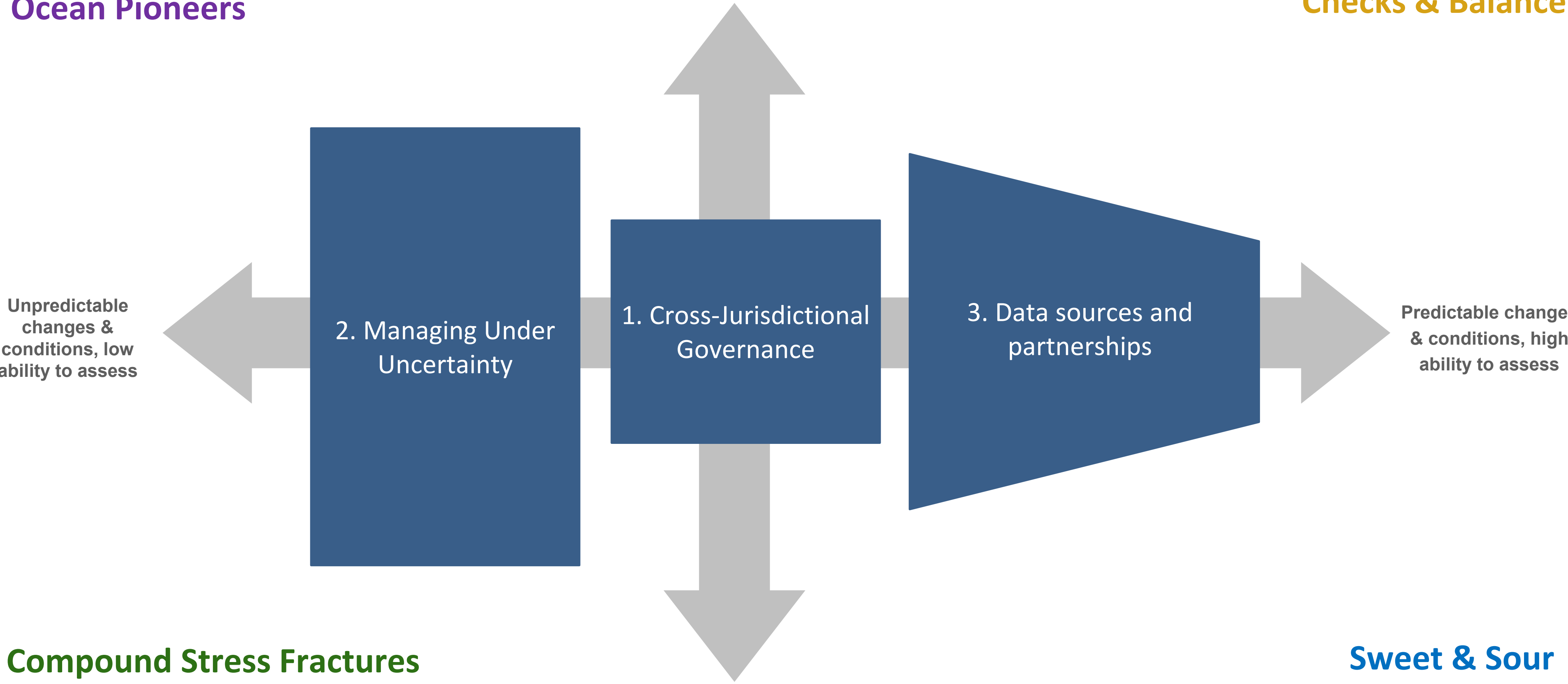
Predictability of conditions /

ability of science to assess by 2040

Key Topics identified by Councils/Commissions

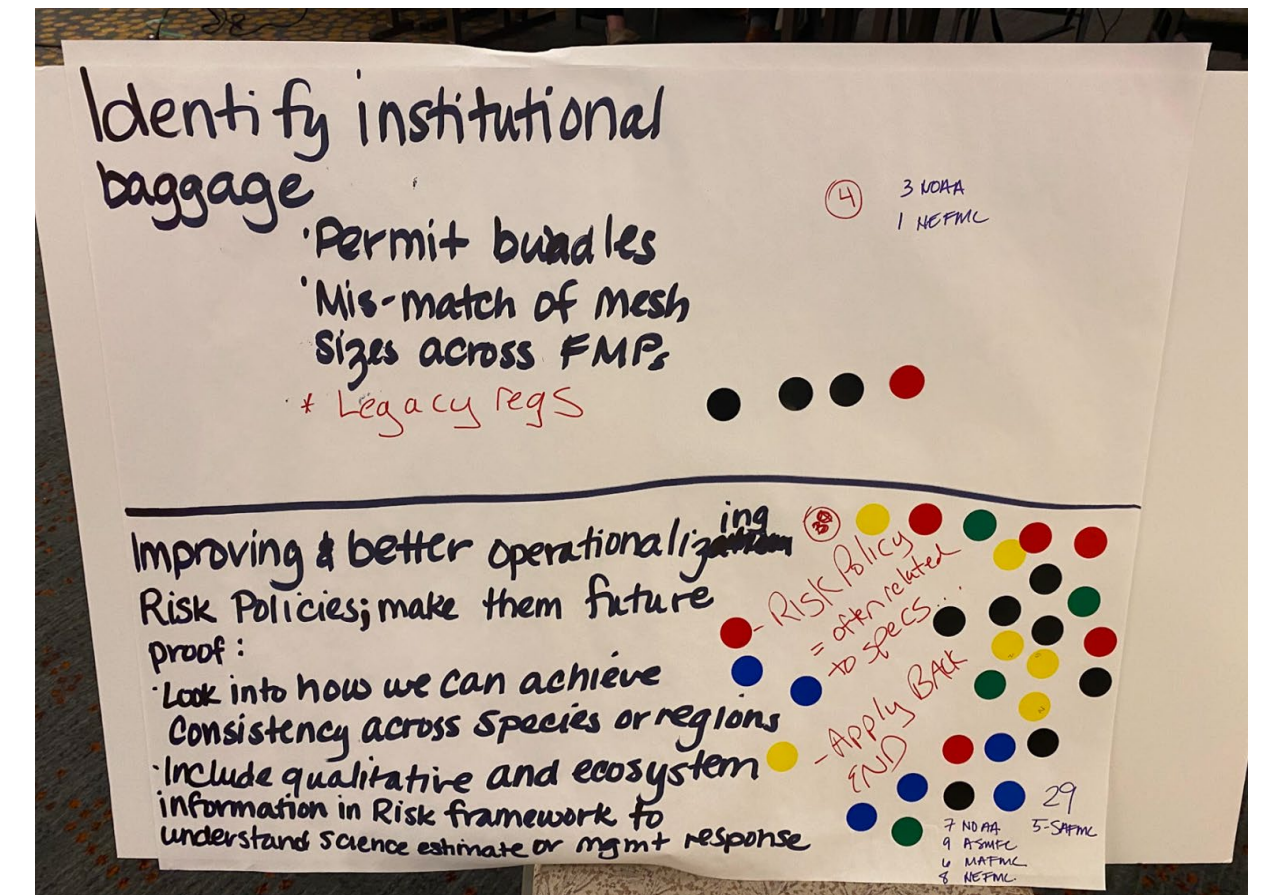
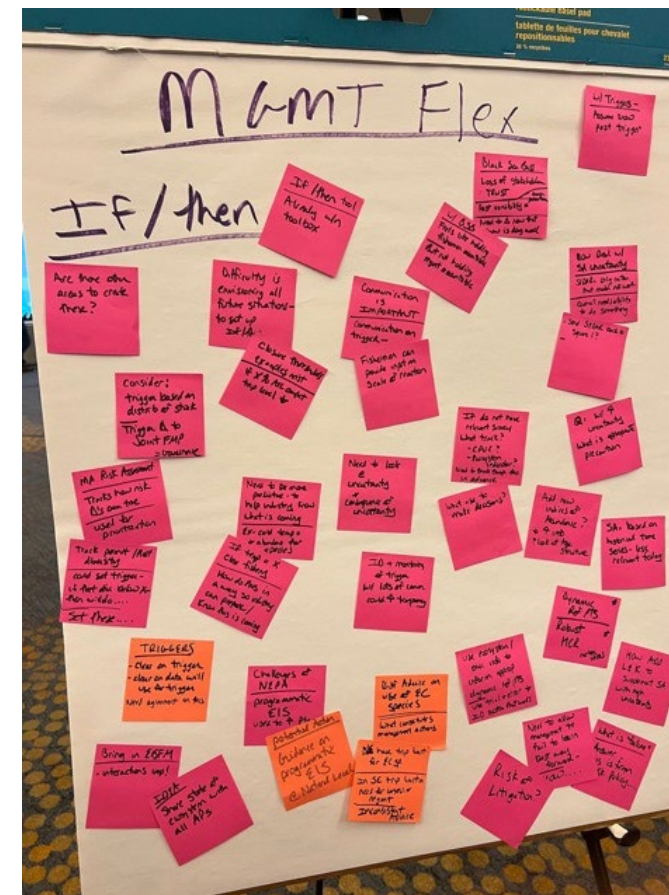
Ocean Pioneers

Checks & Balance



Summit Meeting - February 2023

- **Goal:** develop set of potential governance & management actions resulting from scenario-based exploration of the future
- Capstone meeting of East Coast Scenario Planning Process
- Attended by over 50 fishery managers representing 3 East Coast Councils, ASMFC, and NOAA Fisheries
- Discussions focused on 3 main themes, with breakout conversations, prioritization of potential actions, discussions regarding next steps
- Materials: [East Coast Climate Change Scenario Planning Summit — Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council \(mafmc.org\)](https://www.mafmc.org)



Summit Report

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

2. Overarching Themes

3. Summit Design & Agenda

4. Theme Details:

- Summary of Breakout Group Conversations
- Summary of Suggested Potential Actions
- Plenary Discussion on Next Steps

1. Reflections & Concluding Thoughts

2. Appendices:

- Summit Participants
- Breakout Groups: Details Notes by Theme
- Results of Prioritization Exercise

Cross-Jurisdictional Governance Potential Actions	
Coastwide Council with varying voting representation by FMP	
Committee-Based decision making where committees have final vote	
Committee-Based decision making with final Council approval	
Clarify and potentially expand the roles of liaisons between Council	
Change state representation on councils	
Consider allowing proxies for Council members	

Re-evaluate and potential revise Advisory Panel	Identify and establish best practices for if/then trigger management
Evaluate mechanisms for cross pollination of S managed species	Look into streamlining NEPA compliance and documentation
Move to more consistent use of committees a committee representation for each committee	Include spatial considerations in management
Improve coordination across NOAA Fisheries and General Counsel	Improve the use of risk policies to better account for current and future climate impacts on species (both negative and positive impacts)
Review joint management plans along coast t efficiency	Consider risk assessments to identify fisheries at risk of not meeting management goals
Develop more explicit agreements for joint m	Move toward robust management options rather than trying to account for all kinds of uncertainty within stock assessment models.
	Use qualitative information to improve management, including our

Data Sources and Partnerships Potential Actions	
Modernize data management to facilitate better sharing of data and prepare for an influx of new data streams (e.g. offshore wind data)	
Focus on AI/tech development to <u>more rapidly get data</u> into assessments	
Develop a process between management and science organization to prioritize data needs for climate-ready management (e.g., human dimensions data)	
Prioritize recreational data collection to reduce uncertainty including developing incentives for better reporting	
Hire staff dedicated to fostering partnerships and coordinating data collection/sharing between other ocean users, management bodies, and within Federal agencies	
Expand study fleet, include recreational fisheries, and ensure data are used, include shovel-ready data projects	
Use survey mitigation around offshore wind to transition to industry-based surveys or other survey platforms	
Standardize data collection to breakdown geographic barriers along the East Coast (both state and federal)	

ation of local ecological management is needed.
certainty when making policy/
its
assessments in management

Introduction to Action Menu

Purpose of Action Menu

- Expand on ideas discussed at summit, particularly next steps for potential actions that did not receive plenary discussion
- Group actions by theme, and after NRCC meeting, by priority
- Identify next steps and who might work on each one
- Use as **planning tool to guide work on collective and individual priorities**
- Intent that this becomes **living document** that is regularly revisited

Structure of Action Menu

- Introduction
- High priority potential actions
- Medium priority potential actions (Watch List)
- Leadership and staff roles
- Details of Parking Lot actions
- List of all actions, by priority

East Coast Climate Change Scenario Planning
Potential Action Menu
June 2023

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. East Coast Fishery Management Councils (Councils, New England, Mid-Atlantic, and South Atlantic), the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission), and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) conducted an East Coast Scenario Planning Initiative to explore jurisdictional, governance, and management issues related to climate change and fishery stock distributions. Representatives from these fishery management organizations have worked collaboratively and engaged diverse stakeholders to explore how climate change will affect fishery management. This exploration was based on a multi-stage scenario planning process, where stakeholders generated several different possibilities for how climate change might affect east coast fisheries.

East Coast Scenario Planning Summit

The capstone to this initiative was the East Coast Scenario Planning Summit, held on February 15-16, 2023. It was attended by representatives from each of the organizations identified above. The goal of the Summit was to develop a set of potential governance and management actions resulting from a scenario-based exploration of the future. It was not possible for the Summit to cover all the issues raised throughout the scenario process. Instead, focus was placed on three overarching themes: Cross-Jurisdictional Governance, Managing Under Increased Uncertainty, and Data Sources and Partnerships. A report of the Summit meeting proceedings is available at: https://www.mafmc.org/s/ECSP-Summit-Report_April-2023.pdf.

As described in the Summit report, participants discussed ideas already generated throughout the process, reflected on them, and added new ideas for potential actions. The core team then grouped comments and ideas raised by participants into potential areas for action. After a prioritization exercise, Summit participants identified potential practical next steps for a limited number of ideas under each of the three themes. There was not time to develop practical next steps for all potential actions that generated some level of support.

Role and Structure of Potential Action Menu

This potential action menu reviews the actions identified at the Summit and suggests possible next steps beyond what could be considered at that meeting. In some cases, the core team has taken the list of potential actions from the Summit and consolidated those with similar themes and would have similar next steps. Thus, the list of potential actions in this document does not always align completely with those in the Summit report. Each potential action includes multiple next steps items.

The Northeast Region Coordinating Council plus the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council leadership reviewed all the potential actions and prioritized them into three levels (high priority, medium priority, and parking lot). Details for parking lot actions are provided in Appendix 1. A full list of potential actions by priority level can be found in Appendix 2.

High priority potential actions are those that could be quick wins and/or that the NRCC working with SAFMC leadership viewed as important issues to address in the near term. Some of these actions

ECSP Potential Action Menu - 1

NRCC + SAFMC Review of Action Menu - May 2023

- **Provided input on**

- Are the descriptions adequate and clear for common understanding of each action?
- Whether each action is a high, medium, or low priority
- Revisions to specific next steps
- Where additional groundwork is needed before considering certain issues

- **Formed two groups to continue this work**

- East Coast Climate Coordination Group - leadership level. This group will:
 - Oversee the implementation of actions
 - Ensure actions are prioritized, jointly or by individual management organizations, estimate resources needed, and executed in a coordinated fashion
- Climate Innovation Group - staff level. Possible activities:
 - Identify ideas worthy of consideration by the Climate Coordination Group
 - Review changes to the factors shaping East Coast fishery management
 - Highlight potential actions from the broader list of Summit suggestions
 - Generate any new potential actions
 - Present an update of changes and revised potential actions to the Climate Coordination Group

Example high priority action - Managing Under Increased Uncertainty theme

Identify ecosystem-level contextual information that can help incorporate climate into decisions

● Description

- It will be important to consider ecosystem-level information when making management decisions

● Potential actions

- Consider findings of ecosystem risk assessment tech memo
- Consider adding state-only fisheries to these assessments
- Identify other ways to use info to identify and avoid risks
- Share what we learn

● Group

- Various - NMFS staff, Councils/Commission, Climate Innovation Group, NRCC / Climate Coordination Group

● Barriers and Considerations

- Management bodies and FMPs will each have individual information needs

M1. Identify ecosystem-level contextual information that can be considered within the management process to help incorporate climate information into decisions

Description: Changing climate and ocean conditions can impact fish stocks, fish habitats, and interactions between species and fisheries, sometimes in surprising ways. It is important to proactively consider ecosystem level impacts when making management decisions. This can be via quantitative or qualitative information, including the use of ecological risk assessments¹, such as the risk assessment MAFMC uses as part of its ecosystem approach to fisheries management framework, which results in a more holistic consideration of issues. NMFS has written a [technical memo](#) that provides examples of how ecosystem risk assessments have been used in fisheries management.

Practical Next Steps:

Potential Action	Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● NMFS offers to present findings of newly released Tech Memo looking at example ecosystem risk assessments to Councils and Commission	NMFS staff coordinating with Councils/Commission
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Consider adding major state-only-managed fisheries to these ecosystem risk assessments for a more complete perspective	NMFS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Identify opportunities to use specific types of quantitative and qualitative ecosystem information to identify and avoid risks	Climate Innovations Group, individual Councils and Commission
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Share lessons learned	NRCC or other

Potential Barriers and Considerations:

- No forcing mechanism
- Need here is likely to be Council/Commission and FMP [specific](#)

Long-Term Objectives:

- Create a fishery management system aware of and able to respond to significant ecosystem changes.

Next Steps

- **Communication**
 - Share summit report and potential action menu
 - Press release
- **Finalize scenario planning toolkit**
 - Designed to be used by any East Coast fishery stakeholder
 - Summarizes the ECSP scenario work and offers suggestions for how other groups can use the material to have valuable conversations about the challenges of climate change
 - Includes presentations, draft agendas, scenario creation worksheets, and guidelines for use
- **Review summit outcomes and action menu with other organizations**
 - August and September ASMFC, MAFMC, SAFMC meetings
- **Initial East Coast Climate Coordination Group and Climate Innovation Group meetings**
 - Core Team will continue to coordinate pending establishment of Climate Innovation Group
- **Councils and Commission consider incorporating these actions into work plans**
 - Timing / mechanisms to be discussed