

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Strategic Planning Workshop

October 23, 2018

8 - 10:15 a.m.

New York, New York

Purpose: Thorough discussion by Commissioners, proxies, and federal partners regarding the Commission's 2019-2023 Strategic Plan and annual action planning process

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| 1. Overview of Workshop Format and Goals (<i>J. Gilmore</i>) | 8:00 a.m. |
| 2. Public Comment | 8:10 a.m. |
| 3. Review Content and Format of 2014-2018 Strategic Plan (<i>R. Beal</i>) | 8:20 a.m. |
| 4. Summary of Strategic Planning Workgroup Meeting (<i>R. Beal</i>) | 8:25 a.m. |
| 5. Commissioner Discussion on Driving Forces (<i>J. Gilmore</i>) | 8:35 a.m. |
| • Workgroup Recommendations (<i>R. Beal</i>) | |
| • Commissioner Input | |
| 6. Commissioner Discussion on Priority Planning (<i>J. Gilmore</i>) | 8:55 a.m. |
| • Workgroup Recommendations (<i>R. Beal</i>) | |
| • Commissioner Input | |
| 7. Commissioner Discussion on Strategic Planning and Action Planning | 9:15 a.m. |
| • Workgroup Recommendations (<i>R. Beal</i>) | |
| • Commissioner Input | |
| 8. Commissioner Discussion on New Commissioner Orientation | 9:30 a.m. |
| • Workgroup Recommendations (<i>R. Beal</i>) | |
| • Commissioner Input | |
| 9. Commissioner Discussion on Use of Proxies (<i>R. Beal</i>) | 9:45 a.m. |
| 10. Commissioner Discussion on Public Input to Commission Decisions | 9:55 a.m. |
| 11. Develop Timeline for 2019-2023 Strategic Plan Approval | 10:05 a.m. |
| 12. Adjourn | 10:15 a.m. |

The meeting will be held at the Roosevelt Hotel, 45 East 45th Street & Madison Avenue, New York, NY; 212.661.9600

Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

Strategic Planning Workgroup Meeting

July 25-26, 2018
Burnt Island, Maine

Workgroup Members:

Jim Gilmore
Pat Keliher
Doug Grout
Robert Boyles
David Borden
Robert Beal

At the Commission's Spring Meeting, the Executive Committee appointed the Strategic Planning Workgroup to develop initial ideas on how to address the Commission's expiring Strategic Plan as well as ideas on improving cooperation and collaboration between the states.

Underlying Premise

The Workgroup based its conversation principle that "The states are better off working together than individually".

Driving Forces of Change

As we enter the next stanza of interstate fisheries management, the Workgroup identified four driving forces that will shape the future strategic direction of interstate management.

- Changing Ocean Conditions – Changes in ocean temperature, currents, and acidity are forcing changes to nearly every facet of fisheries management at the state, interstate, and federal levels. The distribution and productivity of fishery stocks are often changing at a rate faster than fisheries science and management can keep pace with.
- Reallocation – Many of the Commission FMPs make allocations to states, regions, seasons, and gear types. The changing distribution of many species has brought about discussions on modifying existing allocation schemes included in the interstate FMPs.
- State Cooperation – There is a growing sentiment that state cooperation needs to be improved within the Commission process.
- Secretarial Involvement – There is considerable uncertainty on how the Secretary will react to non-compliance recommendation forwarded by the Commission.

These driving forces are not acting independently. Changing Ocean Conditions drive interest in reallocation. Reallocation requires greater state cooperation. Diminished state cooperation may require additional Secretarial involvement. There is also a concern that some "control" over fisheries status and decisions has been diminished due to political intervention and changing ocean conditions.

Priority Planning

The Commission has many competing demands for its limited resources (i.e. Commissioner time, staff time, and funding). Resources do not allow the Commission to address all issues in the short-term. Tasks must be prioritized to reflect Commissioner and stakeholder preferences. The Workgroup suggested the Commission should focus more on high priority issues and address lower priority issues only as resources allow. The Workgroup suggested the following actions:

- The 2019 Annual Action Plan should focus on addressing priority issues and identify lower priority issues that will receive less attention.
- Prioritization should occur at three levels: Near-term (1-2 years), Mid-term (2-3 Years), and Long-term (5-10 years).
- Staff will develop a prioritized list of species that will benefit from near-term, significant management changes and those that should utilize multi-year measures (receive less staff and board attention).
- States and stakeholders often request increased stability/predictability in fisheries management. One approach would be to establish a minimum threshold for management changes (e.g. Changes need to result in greater than 5% harvest change).
- To improve working relationships with the Councils, a meeting should be scheduled with leadership of the three Councils to discuss efficiency, species allocation, division of responsibilities, etc. (possibly through the NRCC).
- Two additional observations made by the Workgroup: Focusing only on short-term gains creates long-term problems; and without improved state cooperation there is the potential for Magnuson National Standards to be applied to the Atlantic Coastal Act.

Strategic Planning and Action Planning

The Commission maintains a Five-year Strategic Plan and Annual Action Plans to describe the overall vision of the Commission and the specific annual tasks to achieve the vision. The documents contain important detailed information, however the Workgroup feels they are seldom referenced by Commissioners or stakeholders. The Annual Action Plans are lengthy (~35 pages) and contain many tasks that are recurring, which makes it hard to determine the Commission's priorities.

The Workgroup agreed:

- The Annual Action Plan should be shortened to focus on the new, priority tasks rather than recurring activities. It will also highlight tasks that will extend into future years.
- The next Five-year Strategic Plan (2019-2023) will be similar to previous Plans but shortened to make it more user friendly. It will also likely not be approved until early 2019.
- The new Five-year Strategic Plan can consider a new Commission Vision: "Cooperatively Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries".
- A Strategic Planning Workshop will be planned for the Commission's Annual Meeting.
- New allocation concept: "Fish for you – fish for me"

Orientation of New Commissioners

The Atlantic Coastal Act was passed 25 years ago and since that time, a complex management process and suite of management measures have evolved. The Commission has also been experiencing a higher rate of turnover on Commissioners in recent years. Getting these new Commissioners up to speed is important to foster improved collaboration and cooperation. The Workgroup suggested the following steps:

- Commission leadership (Chair, Vice-Chair, and Executive Director) will take time to meet with new Commissioners during each quarterly meeting. This meeting will preferably happen over dinner or lunch.
- Staff will meet with new Commissioners to explain the Commission logistics (e.g. travel planning, reimbursement, board structure, etc.)
- New Commission orientation will focus on Commission culture, peer to peer mentoring, fostering interstate relationships, and understanding staff roles.