



**NOAA
FISHERIES**

Office of
Science and
Technology

Marine Recreational Information Program UPDATE

Gordon Colvin
October 2012

Agenda

- What is MRIP
- Recent accomplishments
- Series of improvements
- Regional implementation

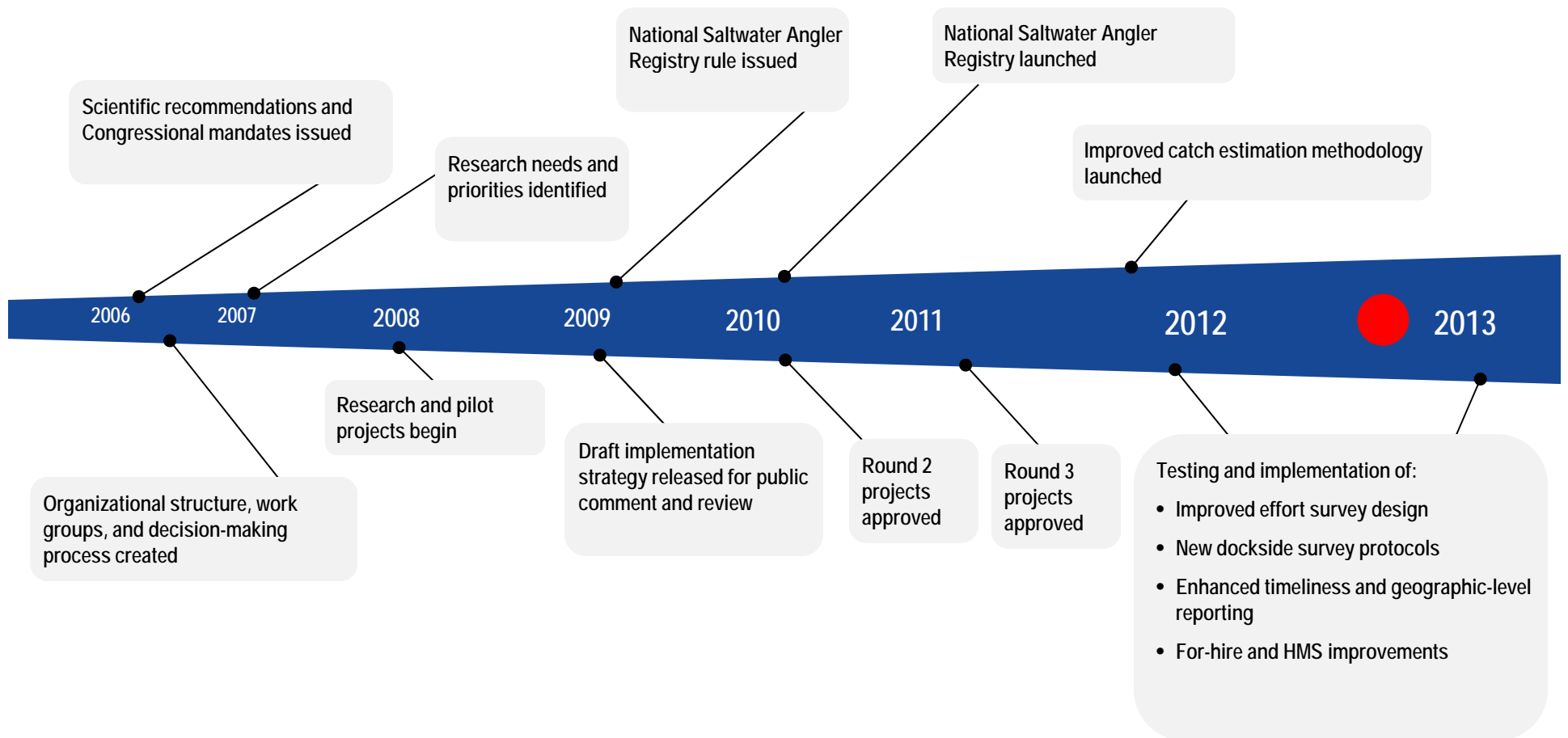
Marine Recreational Information Program

The new way we're collecting and reporting recreational fishing catch and effort data.



MRIP plays a critical role in sustainably managing our ocean resources by providing estimates of fishing activity that are both **accurate and trusted**.

MRIP Timeline



Recent Accomplishments

New method for estimating catch.

- Removes potential bias
- Increases accuracy
- Foundation for all other survey improvements

Greater access, transparency, and context.

- Online project inventory and updates
- Advanced queries and graphing features
- User-friendly website: <http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/recreational-fisheries/index>
- Atlantic Coast "road show"

Recent Accomplishments

Collecting data from the for-hire sector.

- Completed for-hire logbook reporting pilot in Gulf of Mexico
- Testing electronic reporting and validation for headboats in Southeast
- Peer review of findings

Assessing Community Monitoring Programs.

- Hosted workshop with Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
- Managing expectations

Series of Improvements

Beginning in 2013, MRIP expects to implement these data quality improvements:

- An **enhanced angler dockside survey** to complement the improved catch estimation methodology.
- An **improved effort survey** utilizing the National Saltwater Angler Registry to gather better angler trip data.
- **Increased sampling** to improve timeliness and precision.

Regional Implementation

The Vision:

National Quality & Regional Control

Series of regionally-based data collection programs, adhering to a rigorous set of national standards.

MRIP uses a toolbox approach to implementing improvements.

Creating the Toolbox

Creating the Tools

- MRIP Pilot Study
- Peer Review
- MRIP Review and Approval
- NOAA Fisheries Certification

Honing the Tools

- Evaluate regional data needs
- Model tradeoffs
- Determine resource baselines

Putting the tools to use

- Establish funding needs
- Identify externalities
- Convene decision makers
- Ensure QA/QC throughout

1. Development of improved data collection and estimation methods.
2. Modeling cost and performance tradeoffs.
3. Establishing data collection requirements while ensuring data quality.

Atlantic Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program

- New estimation method adopted
- Shoreside intercept survey reflected in standards
- For-hire trip reporting decisions pending
- Coverage and timeliness reflected in standards
- Precision workshop planned
- Evaluation of tradeoffs developing model
- Effort survey design expected 2013
- Choices for coverage, precision, timeliness and partner resource commitments

Gulf Gulf Recreational Fisheries Information System

- New estimation method adopted
- Shoreside intercept and headboat survey being implemented
- For-hire trip reporting decisions pending
- Evaluation of tradeoffs developing model
- Effort survey design expected 2013
- Goals for coverage, precision, timeliness and partner resource commitments

Thank you.

Please visit us at:

www.CountMyFish.noaa.gov

Contact me at:

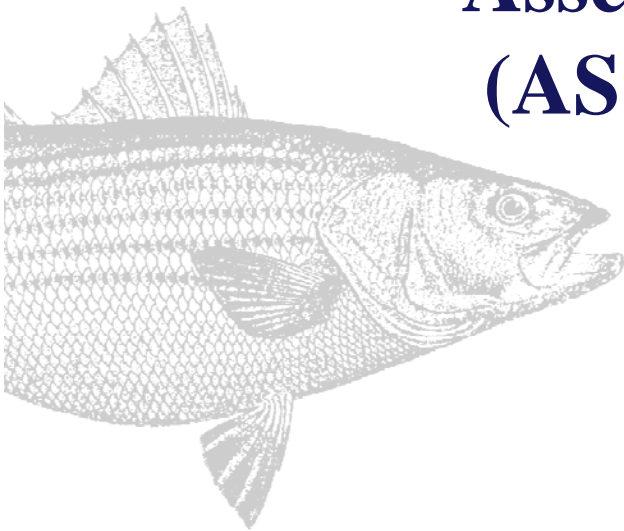
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*Working towards healthy, self-sustaining populations
for all Atlantic coast fish species or successful
restoration well in progress by 2015*

Assessment Science Committee (ASC) Report to Policy Board

October 24, 2012





Task from Policy Board to ASC

Develop alternative scheduling options that would allow Atlantic menhaden and sturgeon benchmark assessments to be conducted as soon as possible.





Changes for menhaden and sturgeon reviewed 2014

- Atlantic sturgeon – State directors would need to make sturgeon a high priority and commit their staff resources
- Atlantic menhaden
 - ▣▣▣▣ For NMFS support – Atl. Menhaden must be added to the SEDAR schedule for 2014
 - ▣▣▣▣ For ASMFC staff support – lobster review would need to be delayed to 2016





Changes for menhaden and sturgeon reviewed 2014

- Weakfish – delayed one year to 2015 to allow ASMFC staff to contribute to sturgeon, tautog
- ERPs – ecological reference points using multispecies models for Atl. Menhaden delayed 2016 or later
- Black drum – delay to 2015 free up peer review funds





Alternative options

Option 1

- ASMFC staff lead menhaden
- Lobster 2016

Option 2

- NMFS-Beaufort lead menhaden
- Lobster 2014

Option 3

- States or hired consultant lead menhaden
- Lobster 2014



**Option 1,
ASMFC staff lead menhaden**

2013 Benchmarks

Striped Bass
Summer Flounder
Northern Shrimp
Coastal Sharks

2014 Benchmarks

Sturgeon
Tautog
Bluefish
Black Sea Bass
Atlantic menhaden

2015 Benchmarks

Red Drum
Croaker
Weakfish
Black Drum

2016 Benchmarks

Lobster

**Option 2,
NMFS-Beaufort lead menhaden**

2013 Benchmarks

Striped Bass
Summer Flounder
Northern Shrimp
Coastal Sharks

2014 Benchmarks

Lobster
Sturgeon
Tautog
Bluefish
Black Sea Bass
Atlantic menhaden

2015 Benchmarks

Red Drum
Croaker
Weakfish
Black Drum

2016 Benchmarks

**Option 3,
consultant lead menhaden**

2013 Benchmarks

Striped Bass
Summer Flounder
Northern Shrimp
Coastal Sharks

2014 Benchmarks

Lobster
Sturgeon
Tautog
Bluefish
Black Sea Bass
Atlantic menhaden

2015 Benchmarks

Red Drum
Croaker
Weakfish
Black Drum

2016 Benchmarks



External consultants for stock assessments

- ASC strongly advises caution in hiring external consultants to conduct assessments
- Pros: outside expertise helps alleviate workload, brings new ideas
- Cons:
 - ▣ inability to reproduce methods in future assessments
 - ▣ open-endedness of consultants' obligation (and expense)
 - ▣ still requires significant time from state scientists
- Consultants should be fully integrated to the TC/SASC process; the use of consultants should be rare
- This will NOT be cheap





Working towards healthy, self-sustaining populations for all Atlantic coast fish species or successful restoration well in progress by 2015

Habitat Program Review

by

Megan Caldwell, Habitat Coordinator

Bob Van Dolah, Chair, Habitat Committee



Habitat Program Review: How it was initiated

- **Request for Habitat Coordinator**
- **ED asked HC Chair to review 5 Year Strategic Plan**
- **Review of HP mandates & activities to ensure meeting ASMFC's needs**
- **December 2011: Executive Director responded with Contract to HP**



Habitat Program Review: Questions Asked

- 1. Habitat Strategic Plan & Action Plan objectives & tasks align with broader objectives?**
- 2. Completion of tasks realistic?**
- 3. Clear value add to ISFMP or States**
- 4. Ways to strengthen linkage between Policy Board & HP**



Habitat Program Review: The Directives

- 5. HC capacity limited?**
- 6. ACFHP change HP vision, objectives, & tasks?**
- 7. Appropriate relationship between ACFHP & HP?**
- 8. Ways to engage local & regional partners?**



Habitat Program Review: The Proposal

- **ACFMCA**
- **ISFMP Charter**
- **ASMFC 2009-2012 Strategic Plan**
- **HP Operational Procedures Manual**
- **HP 2009-2013 Strategic Plan**
- **Recent HC meeting notes & products**
- **Conversations with Commission staff**



Habitat Committee Response: Background

- **HC & CESS – appointed & report to Commission Chair**
 - **Cross cutting all ASMFC species**
 - **Designed to address foundation for these species (i.e. habitat)**



Habitat Committee Response: Recommendations 1 & 2

Merge HP Strategic Plan & Operational Procedures Manual & Revise

HC endorses these recommendations

- Minimizes duplication of effort
- Revisions have begun
- Will prepare one governing document
- Modifications require PB approval



Habitat Committee Response: Recommendation 3

Assign Habitat Committee Coordinator

HC Strongly Endorses Recommendation

- Requesting coordinator for several yrs
- Integral to effectiveness & task completion
- Currently, part-time coordinator - day/wk
 - Not addressing all HP tasks -Artificial Reefs
 - 2013 Habitat Action Plan requests at least 2 day/wk



Habitat Committee Response: Recommendation 4

HC Should Develop Annual Work Plan

HC Endorses this Recommendation

- More clearly define HC responsibilities
- HC will provide appropriate input with Coordinator's input
- Will outline tasks, responsibilities, & timeline for completion of tasks



Habitat Committee Response: Recommendation 5

HC Should Develop Member Descriptions

- Expected to represent agency expertise, not policy/regulatory views
- Limited expertise, No authority to assign staff, increased workloads – some expectations unrealistic
 - Need assistance from Coordinator
 - Funds to contract out for some tasks
 - HC's role: identify authors, review work



Habitat Committee Response: Recommendation 6

Clarify HC's Relationship with ACFHP

HC Endorses & Already Implements
this Recommendation

- Ensure Clear delineation of efforts
 - Many HC members sit on ACFHP
- Fluid dissemination of information
- Updates at each HC meeting



Habitat Committee Response: Improve Communication

- **Pressing issues & full agendas – little feedback from Policy Board**
- **Increase communication with Commissioners prior to meeting week**
- **Provide Abbreviated HC Meeting Summaries to Commissioners to solicit Feedback**



Habitat Committee Response: Improve Communication

- **Challenging for HC to be keyed into other Committee activities**
 - **Habitat Coordinator's role to facilitate communication between committees**



Habitat Committee Response: New Direction

Requested to consider Habitat Bottlenecks for Commission Species

- **Developed text for draft red drum habitat section**
- **Intend to include similar discussions in future habitat sections**
- **Also considering broader effort**
- **Not all species have habitat bottlenecks**



Habitat Committee

2012 Accomplishments

- Updated Habitat Sections:
 - Atlantic Sturgeon
 - Red Drum
- Completed Offshore Wind Document
- Initiated Harbor Deepening Document
- Annual Habitat Hotline Issue
- Considering Habitat Bottlenecks



Habitat Committee

2012 Accomplishments

- **Reviewed Habitat Program Proposal**
- **Annual Review of the 2012 Action Plan**
- **Finalized 2013 Habitat Action Plan**
- **New Chair Kent Smith**
- **Vice Chair Jake Kritzer**



Habitat Committee

Planned 2013 Activities

- **Proposing update Lobster & Black Drum Habitat Section; including potential bottlenecks**
- **Modify Operational Procedures Manual; including FMP Outline**
- **Preparing Next Installment of Habitat Management Series**
 - **Potential list of topics in HC Summary**

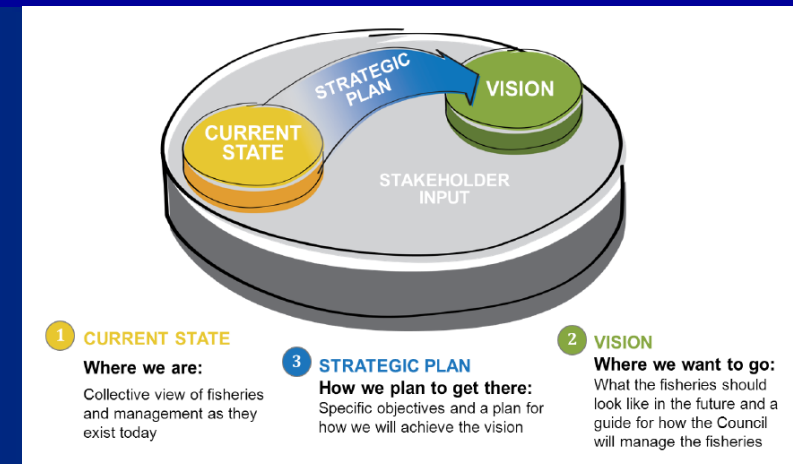


Visioning and Strategic Planning Update

October 24, 2012

Visioning and Strategic Planning

Develop a comprehensive, stakeholder-informed vision for Mid-Atlantic fisheries that will be used to inform the Council's strategic plan



Progress Update:

- March 2012: Completed data gathering phase
- July 2012: Published results in Stakeholder Input Report
- August 2012: Formed Visioning and Strategic Planning Working Group
 - August 13: Meeting 1- Vision
 - September 21: Meeting 2- Mission
 - October 15-16: Meeting 3- Public Engagement, Economics, Governance, Regulatory Processes

Rationale for MAFMC Strategic Planning Process

- Opportunities
 - Rebuilt stocks
- Risks
 - Stakeholder disengagement
 - Environmental and economic uncertainty
- Organizational structure
 - Changing membership
 - Limited meeting time
 - Need for clear communication
- Long-term goals
 - i.e. Ecosystem-based management

Data Collection Methods

Surveys

General

1,253
responses

Fishery-specific

1,048
responses

Roundtable Sessions



Position Letters

12
Letters

Theme & Recommendation Categories

Information and
Data

Management
Strategies

Economic
Challenges

Communication
and
Participation

Governance

Ecosystems

55 themes across
3 stakeholder groups

123 stakeholder
recommendations

Common Stakeholder Themes

Lack of confidence in the data used to inform management decisions

Insufficient stakeholder involvement in management

Confusion about jurisdictions, regulations, and authority of fishery management organizations

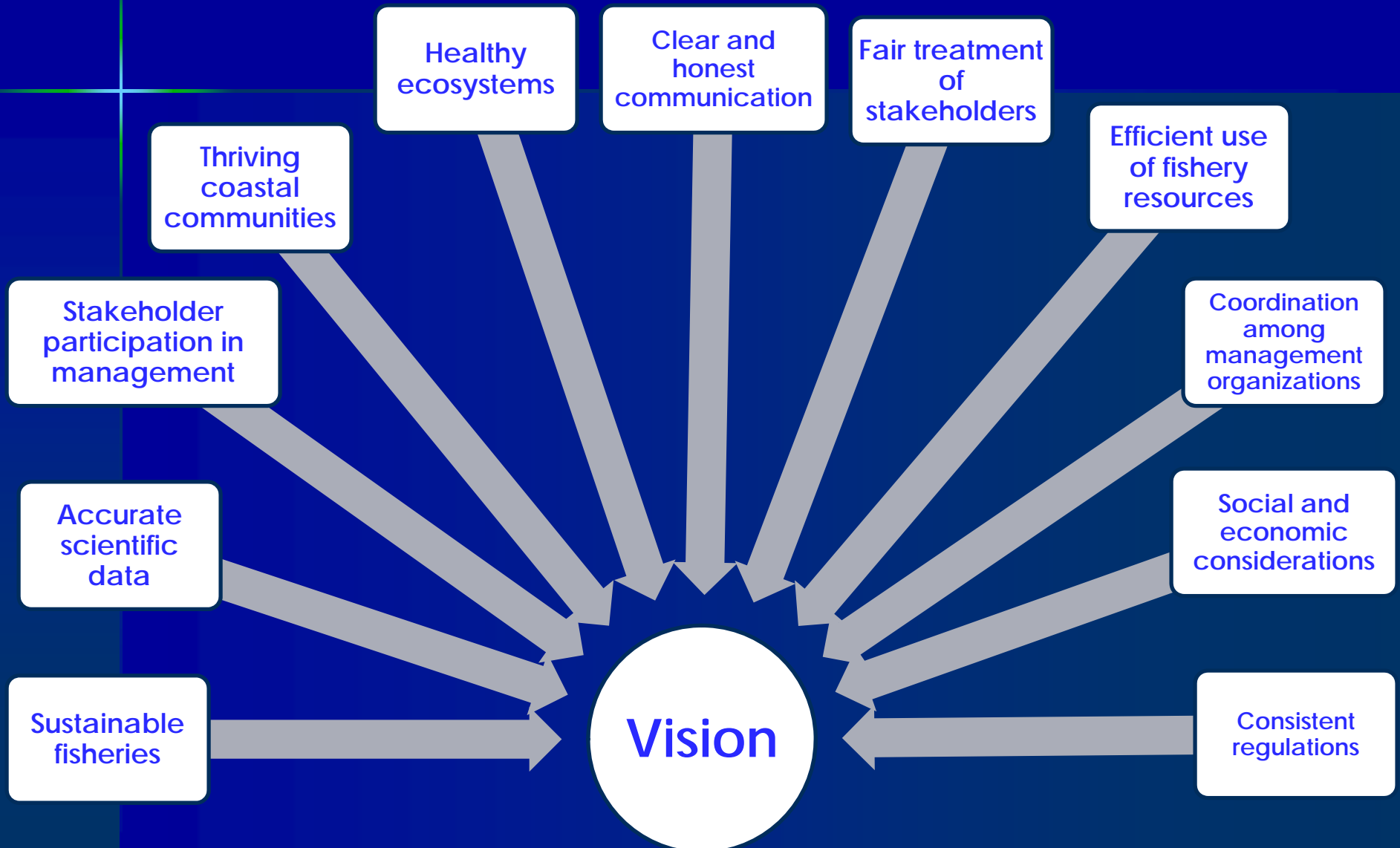
Need better communication and greater transparency in the decision-making process

Ecosystem and trophic interactions should be given more consideration

The Council is not set up to truly represent stakeholder interests

Pollution is degrading health of fisheries

Stakeholder Visions



Strategic Planning Participants

- Visioning and Strategic Planning Working Group
 - Visioning Committee
 - Stakeholders
 - Key leaders
- Strategic Plan Review
 - Public comment period
 - Full-Council review
- Staff Involvement and Guidance

Strategic Planning Approach

Environmental
(situational)
Assessment
*Stakeholder
Input Report*

Define
Mission
& Ideal
State
(Vision)

Articulate
Goals
and
Objectives

Develop a
Path/
Strategy

Establish
Metrics &
Timelines

FAQ

- How will this relate to what the Council does?
- How will the strategic plan provide guidance in a way that the MSA doesn't already?
- What role will the Stakeholder Input Report have in the planning process?
- Will the strategic plan address issues that are outside of the Council's purview (i.e. stock assessments, monitoring & reporting, fisheries managed by other organizations)?