

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Work Group Meeting Standard Operating Practices and Procedures



Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

August 2019

In recent years, Commission management boards have established Work Groups (WG) to efficiently further explore complex management issues. The process and procedures in which individual WG and boards follow have varied by issue and/or board. As the practice to use WG to address issues by boards becomes more frequent, it is important standard policies and procedures are established so there is consistency and transparency in the process

Establishment

- WGs can be established by a Species Management Board or the ISFMP Policy Board.
- Membership should be a limited subset of Board members approved by the Chair of the Board or the Board itself. Ideally, members will represent diverse perspectives on the issue at hand. WGs can request non-Board members to provide information to the WG but will not be members of the WG itself.
- Each WG should have a designated Chair, to the extent possible Commission staff should not be the Chair of the WG. Chairs of the WG do not have to be the Board Chairs. The Board Chair will appoint the chair of the WG.
- The WG Chair will facilitate and lead all WG meetings and conference calls.
- The Board should fully describe the task or issue the work group is to address. There should be a clear directive of deliverables and established timeline to bring issues back for Board for review.
- Membership of a WG should be limited to ensure efficiency.

Purpose

- WGs are established when the Board needs extra time outside of quarterly meetings to work through an issue.
- WGs are not deliberative nor decision-making bodies of the Board. They are intended to explore and present a range of strategies that have the potential to address an issue the Board is trying to address.
- WGs are intended to deliver strategies to address issues for Board deliberation. Approaches the full Board believes have merit would then be fleshed out and analyzed by a technical committee or plan development team for further consideration.

Function

- At the start of each WG meeting the Chair should remind the WG of the task assigned by the Board.
- WG meetings and calls will be posted on the Commission web page at least 48 hours before each call. All meetings and calls are open to the public unless addressing confidential data.
- WG should be used to present ideas and engage in constructive discussion.

- WG members should reach out to other Board members for ideas, and the Board should reach out to WG members if they have ideas or are interested in an update on the progress of the WG.
- WG progress reports will be given to the Board at the mid-point between quarterly meetings when possible (via email) and at quarterly meetings by the WG Chair or Commission staff.
- All ideas from the WG should be presented to the Board, as well as key considerations for the Board to take into account.