



NOAA
FISHERIES

Habitat Considerations

in ecosystem approaches to fisheries management

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Topics covered today:



- ✓ Habitat themes from MONF3 and the East Coast Forum
- ✓ National efforts to connect habitat conservation activities to sustainable fishery outcomes

Key habitat themes from MONF3, ECF



- NMFS should invest in habitat research that connects habitat quality and quantity to stock productivity.
- Councils are interested in increasing their engagement on non-fishing impacts to habitat
- NMFS and Councils should set clear objectives and establish metrics
- NMFS should provide guidance to implement EBFM

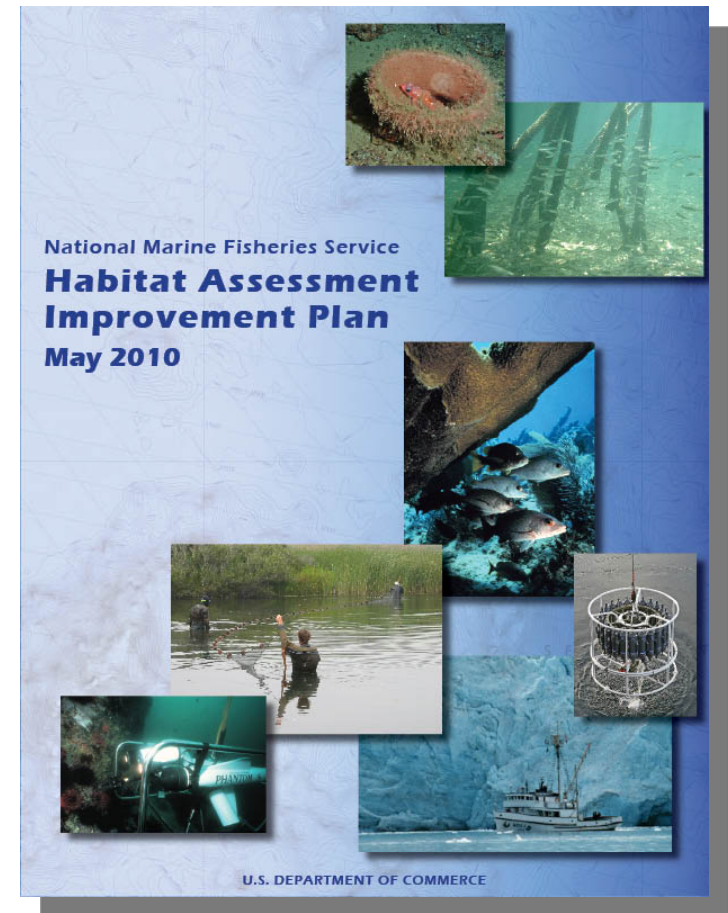
National efforts to integrate habitat conservation with sustainable fisheries outcomes



- Fill gaps in habitat science
- Implement a more strategic approach to habitat conservation
- Integrate habitat conservation into fishery management decisions
- Share habitat and ecosystem strategies across fishery management councils

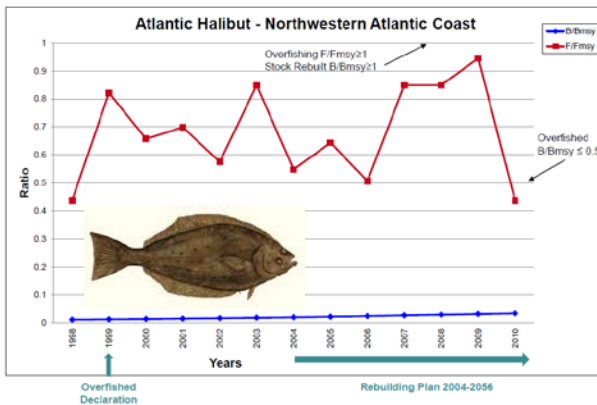
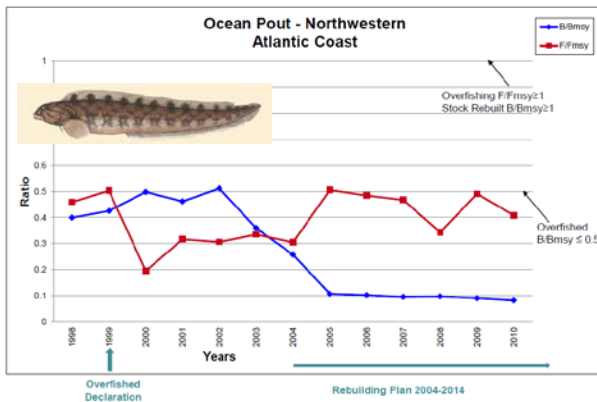
Fill gaps in habitat science

- Implement HAIP
- Prioritize fish stocks for habitat assessments



Implement strategic approach to habitat conservation

- Identify habitat-dependent stocks
- Work with interested Councils to establish clear goals and objectives
- Target habitat conservation activities towards achieving those goals



Strategic approach to habitat conservation

(cont...)

- Habitat objectives don't exist in many FMPs.
- Where they do, relatively weak or procedural:



- “Contribute to the protection of biodiversity and ecosystem structure”. (Mid-Atlantic Bluefish)



- “To provide adequate protection for spawning herring and prevent damage to herring egg beds”. (New-England Herring FMP)

Integrate habitat conservation into fishery management decisions

- Use habitat tools to aid the rebuilding of depleted stocks
- Consider changes to MSA to:
 - Prioritize habitat activities
 - Move towards EBFM

Share habitat strategies across Councils



- Currently few opportunities to coordinate on habitat issues
- No collective national story on council efforts to conserve habitat
- Upcoming opportunities:
 - February '14 CCC meeting
 - National SSC workshops?

Thanks!

