

Nation's Fishery Management Councils 2-2-2-2-2

The CCC moved to create a CCC subcommittee to make recommendations to NMFS in developing guidance on the new NEPA rule announced by CEQ on July 15, 2020. Such guidance could include determining and implementing the functional equivalency provision of the new rule, which would address current duplication in MSA and NEPA requirements. Signed into law in 1970, NEPA requires Federal agencies to consider the environmental effects of proposed major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

The CCC requested that NMFS circulate draft reports of its National Standard 1 Technical Working Groups through the Councils with sufficient time for the Councils to consult with their Scientific and Statistical Committees and develop a response through their full Councils. The MSA contains 10 National Standards. Standard 1 says conservation and management measures must prevent overfishing while achieving, on a continuing basis, optimum yield from each fishery for the U.S. fishing industry. The issues addressed by the Working Groups were estimating fish population reference points, quota carry-over and phased-in catch limits, and alternative management approaches due to data limitations.

The CCC also requested that the NMFS Office of Sustainable Fisheries form a working group comprised of NMFS and Council staff members to determine alternative approaches to the use of annual catch limits (ACLs) to manage data limited stocks. The 2006 reauthorization of the MSA mandated that overfishing be addressed through enforceable ACLs that cannot exceed scientific recommendations. Alternative approaches identified in the CCC recommendation include those that are based on fishing mortality rates, fish lengths and fishing trip limits, among others.

For more information on the CCC meeting, go to <http://www.fisherycouncils.org/ccc-meetings/september-2020-ccc-meeting>.

Regional Fishery Management Council Participants

- ♣ New England Council: Chair Dr. John Quinn, Vice Chair Eric Reid, Executive Director Tom Nies.
- ♣ Mid-Atlantic Council: Chair Mike Luisi, Vice Chair Wes Townsend, Executive Director Chris Moore.
- ♣ South Atlantic Council: Chair Mel Bell, Vice Chair Steve Poland, Executive Director John Carmichael.
- ♣ Gulf Council: Chair Dr. Thomas Frazer, Vice Chair Dale Diaz, Executive Director Carrie Simmons.
- ♣ Caribbean Council: Chair Marcos Hanke, Vice Chair Tony Blanchard, Executive Director Miguel A. Rolón.
- ♣ Pacific Council: Chair Marc Gorelnik, Vice Chair Brad Pettinger, Executive Director Chuck Tracy.
- ♣ North Pacific Council: Chair Simon Kinneen, Vice Chair Bill Tweit, Executive Director David Witherell.
- ♣ Western Pacific Council: Chair Archie Soliai, Vice Chair (CNMI) John Gourley, Vice Chair (Hawai'i) Ed Watamura, Vice Chair (American Samoa) Howard Dunham, Executive Director Kitty M. Simonds

NOAA Fisheries Participants

- ♣ Chris Oliver, NOAA Assistant Administration for Fisheries
- ♣ Samuel D. Rauch III, NMFS Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs
- ♣ Francisco Werner, NMFS Scientific Programs Director and Chief Science Advisor
- ♣ Paul Doremus, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Operations
- ♣ Kelly Denit, Director, NOAA Office of Sustainable Fisheries
- ♣ Stephanie Hunt, Branch Chief for Policy and Guidance, Office of Sustainable Fisheries
- ♣ Adam Issenberg, Section Chief, General Counsel Fisheries and Protected Species



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