

NEFMC Response to the Touchstone Consulting Group Report:

- Maximize Collaboration
- Simplify Communications

**Council Meeting, Danvers, MA
September 26, 2011**



New England
Fishery Management Council

Specific Recommendations from the Report

- Examine measures other Council's have taken to improve communication and collaboration with stakeholders
- Redesign meetings to be more collaborative and welcoming so as to encourage stakeholder participation

Actions to Address Improving Collaborations

- **Hold one “super meeting” annually with all advisors and SSC.**
- **Hold staff and Council member listening sessions the evening before each Council meeting.**
- **Invite sector managers to informally report to the Council if there is interest in discussing what is or is not working; commit to a dialogue during these sessions.**
- **Hold collaborative working sessions at the committee level to tackle problematic issues.**

More Recommendations -

- **Organize a social hour on one evening during all/most Council meetings; individuals responsible for their own refreshments.**
- **Serve coffee during two set 30' breaks at every Council meeting to facilitate informal conversations with stakeholders.**
- **Post short Council member bios on the NEFMC website.**
- **Provide name tags for all Council members and staff during meetings so they are easily identifiable to the public.**
- **Convene public communications/meeting management training sessions for all Council members.**
- **Create a “Navigating the Council Process” document to ensure that the purpose and function of NEFMC meetings is clear to all stakeholders.**

Actions to Address Simplified Communications

- **Establish an ad hoc committee to determine where improvements should be made. Share results with NMFS communications staff or convene committee jointly. Questions include “what are we missing and what could we do differently to address communications issues.”**
- **The NEFMC office already communicates across formats and the staff consistently responds quickly to queries via telephone and email, but any suggested improvements should be adopted where possible.**
- **Allow opportunities in FMP timelines to develop easy-to-understand public hearing documents.**

More Recommendations -

- **Fully support the National Marine Service's "Plain Language Initiative."**
- **Formalize and implement a Council communications plan.**
- **Create a better sense of the Council's timelines to inform stakeholder business decisions and the expectations of the broader public.**

Now It's Your Turn!