



New England Fishery Management Council

News Release

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NE Fishery Council Addresses Management Review, Commits to Improvements

PORTLAND, ME The New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) today announced its response to a report that critiqued the coordination of three key organizations that have input to and oversee most fishing activities in federal waters from Maine to North Carolina.

The *Review of the New England Fishery Management Process*, requested by Council Chairman John Pappalardo and commissioned by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service Director, Eric Schwaab, was released last April. It detailed needed improvements to New England Council operations, as well those of NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) regional office in Gloucester, MA and Northeast Fisheries Science Center in Woods Hole, MA as well as the interactions between them.

The report included a number of overarching recommendations: eliminating redundancies across the entire system that constitutes fisheries management in New England; promoting a shared sense of accountability among the three organizations; defining clear and objective criteria for determining the success of management decisions; and the development of a shared vision and strategy to guide the process.

Acting on his promise that the Council would take ownership of the report's findings, Chairman Pappalardo encouraged wide-ranging comments from both Council members and the public on the now ongoing efforts to improve the management process. Presentations by Council Executive Director Paul Howard, NMFS Regional Administrator Pat Kurkul and Frank Almeida, the Acting Director of the Science Center made clear that a fully coordinated and committed action plan is underway.

While many areas and issues detailed in the report will be tackled jointly by the Regional Office, Science Center and Council, those that the Council will take the lead on include:

- Improving communication and collaboration with stakeholders
- Redesigning Council and other meetings to facilitate this outcome
- Creating a regional vision and strategic plan that will incorporate collaboration with all stakeholders and set a future direction for the fishery, and
- Designing a cost-effective performance management system to track the progress of decisions, captures lessons learned and incorporate best practices

The Council and public will receive a comprehensive plan concerning the recommendations in management process report at its September 27-29, 2011 meeting in Danvers, MA.

The New England Fishery Management Council, one of eight regional Councils established by federal legislation in 1976. It is charged with conserving and managing fishery resources from three to 200 miles off the coasts of ME, NH, MA, RI and CT.

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