



Regional Fishery Management Council Website Updates and Improvements

<https://www.fisherycouncils.org/>

May 2023 CCC Meeting

Council Communications Group: Website Improvement Recommendations

- Streamline text and add photos throughout
- Add Council meeting calendar widget to home page
- Revise navigation to improve usability and reduce redundancy among pages
- Add a **Council Coordination Committee** tab with sub-pages for Meetings, Letters, CMOD, SCS, and Subcommittees/Working Groups
- Add an **Issues** tab and create new pages to highlight issues of particular importance to the CCC and collective work products
- Remove **Resources** tab and move content to other pages

Website Discovery



- Executive Directors and a selection of Council staff were asked to complete a survey and report how many clicks it took to locate specific resources/information on the website
- The majority of participants could complete most tasks in 1-3 clicks
- Areas identified for improvement:
 - Search function not working well and not visible enough on the footer
 - Difficulty finding CCC letters
 - New Council meeting calendar could be more visible/accessible
 - Older CCC meetings may be difficult to locate
 - Many Council FMP links broken

Revised Home Page



CONSERVING AND MANAGING THE FISHERIES OF THE UNITED STATES

Home | The Councils | Magnuson-Stevens Act | Meetings | Calendar | Resources | Contacts



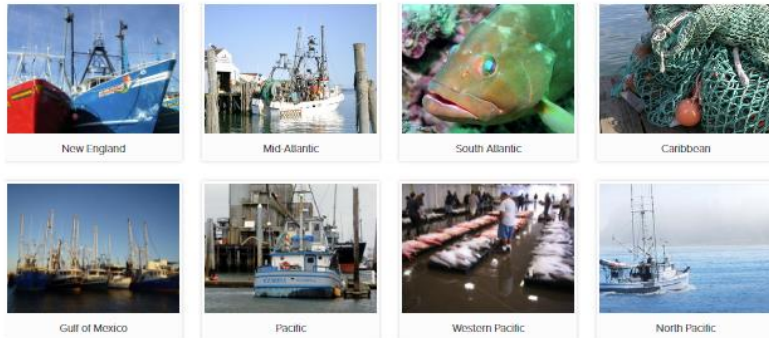
The eight U.S. Regional Fishery Management Councils were established in 1976 under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) to manage fishery resources in federal waters of the United States.

[LEARN MORE →](#)

[Click map to enlarge](#)

Fishery Management Councils

Each Council is responsible for developing fishery management plans for the fisheries in their region that require conservation and management. These management plans are designed to prevent overfishing, rebuild fish stocks, and protect, restore, and promote the long-term health and stability of U.S. fisheries. While each Council is unique, they all make management decisions through a transparent, collaborative, and science-based process.



Council Meeting Calendar

< Prev Next > today May 2023 month week day

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
		GMFMC May 2023 SSC Meeting			NEFMC May 2023 SSC Meeting	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
		MAFMC May 2023 SSC Meeting				
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
		CCC May 2023 Meeting				
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
				NEFMC June 2023 SSC EBFM Subpanel		
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	GMFMC June 2023 Council Meeting			NPFMC June Council Meeting		
	NPFMC June SSC Meeting		MAFMC June 2023 Council Meeting			

Council Coordination Committee

The Coordination Committee (CCC) consists of the chairs, vice chairs, and executive directors from each of the eight Councils. The general purpose of the CCC is to discuss issues of relevance to all Councils. The CCC usually meets twice each year.

NEXT MEETING

May 2023 CCC Meeting
May 23, 2023 – May 25, 2023 -
Marriott Beachside Hotel, Flagler
Ballroom

PREVIOUS MEETING

October 2022 CCC Meeting
Oct 18, 2022 – Oct 20, 2022 -
Holiday Inn Capitol Hill

[ABOUT THE CCC →](#)

Revised Footer

- New, more visible search bar with enhanced functionality (Google programmable search)
- Streamlined content



New: About the Councils Page

<https://www.fisherycouncils.org/about-the-councils>

- Located on the main navigation under “The Councils”
- Includes Council publications and MONF proceedings

About the Councils

The **Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA)** is the primary law that governs marine fisheries management in U.S. federal waters. First passed in 1976, the MSA established a 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and created eight regional fishery management councils to manage fishery resources in federal waters.

The main function of each Council is to prepare fishery management plans (FMPs) and associated regulations for fisheries requiring conservation and management within their region. These FMPs are designed to prevent overfishing, rebuild depleted fish stocks, and ensure sustainable fishing practices. The Councils must follow the guidelines outlined through the MSA, including 10 National Standards. Once approved by the Council, FMPs and other management measures are submitted to the National Marine Fisheries Service for review and implementation.

The Councils make management decisions through a transparent, collaborative process that includes extensive public input, scientific research, and consideration of economic and social impacts. They work closely with federal and state agencies to coordinate efforts and ensure consistency in fisheries management across the nation.

Each Council is composed of a diverse group of stakeholders, including commercial and recreational fishermen, seafood processors, conservationists, scientists, and other experts. This unique management system gives fishery managers the flexibility to use local level input to develop management strategies appropriate for each region’s unique fisheries, challenges, and opportunities. Learn more about each Council on the pages linked below.



New England



Mid-Atlantic



South Atlantic



Caribbean



Gulf of Mexico



Pacific



Western Pacific



North Pacific

CALENDAR

COUNCIL COORDINATION COMMITTEE

CONTACTS

Revised: Council Pages

- Photos added to each page
- “Upcoming Meetings” section added (meeting info pulled from joint calendar)
- FMP links checked and updated

New England Fishery Management Council

The **New England Fishery Management Council** is charged with conserving and managing fishery resources from three to 200 miles off the coasts of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut.



**New England
Fishery Management
Council**

The management authority of the Council extends to the Gulf of Maine, Georges Bank, and southern New England, and overlaps with the Mid-Atlantic Council for some species in that region. Major ports include Portland, ME, Gloucester and New Bedford, MA, and Point Judith, RI.

The Council consists of 18 voting members and four non-voting members to include:

- The Regional Administrator of the Greater Atlantic Region/NOAA Fisheries (or a designee);
- The five principal state officials with marine fishery management responsibility (or a designee) for Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut;
- Twelve members nominated by the governors of the New England coastal states and appointed by the Secretary of Commerce for three-year terms (they may serve a maximum of three consecutive terms); and
- One representative each from the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of State, and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission as non-voting members.

Managed Fisheries

The NEFMC, which proposes rules for fishermen operating in federal waters in the New England region, manages 28 marine and one anadromous species under nine separate fishery management plans (FMPs). The Council also addresses habitat and deep-sea coral issues across multiple plans.

New England Fishery Management Plans:

- [Northeast Multispecies \(Groundfish\)](#)
- [Atlantic Sea Scallop](#)
- [Monkfish](#) (jointly managed with the Mid-Atlantic Council)
- [Atlantic Herring](#)
- [Skates](#)
- [Small Mesh Multispecies \(Whiting/Hake\)](#)
- [Deep-Sea Red Crab](#)
- [Spiny Dogfish](#) (jointly managed with the Mid-Atlantic Council)
- [Atlantic Salmon](#)



Upcoming Meetings

Showing 1-10 of 10

10 per page ▾

Meeting Name	Dates ↕	Location	Details
NEFMC June 2023 SSC EBFM Subpanel	06/01/2023		Meeting Page
NEFMC June 2023 Council Meeting	06/27/2023 to 06/29/2023	Freeport, ME	Meeting Page
NEFMC August 2023 SSC Meeting	08/10/2023		Meeting Page
NEFMC September 2023 Council Meeting	09/26/2023 to 09/28/2023	Plymouth, MA	Meeting Page
NEFMC December 2023 Meeting	12/05/2023 to 12/07/2023	Newport, RI	Meeting Page
NEFMC January 2024 Council Meeting	01/30/2024 to 02/01/2024	Portsmouth, NH	Meeting Page
NEFMC April 2024 Council Meeting	04/16/2024 to 04/18/2024	Mystic, CT	Meeting Page
NEFMC June 2024 Council Meeting	06/25/2024 to 06/27/2024	Freeport, ME	Meeting Page

New: CCC Landing Page

<https://www.fisherycouncils.org/ccc>

- Landing page for all CCC content: meetings, letters, sub-groups, Terms of Reference, Meeting History
- CCC host Council schedule

Council Coordination Committee

The Coordination Committee (CCC) consists of the chairs, vice chairs, and executive directors from each of the eight regional fishery management councils. The general purpose of the CCC is to address issues of relevance to all Councils, including issues related to the implementation of the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

The CCC typically meets twice per year. The primary, annual CCC meeting is hosted, on a revolving basis, by one of the Councils, normally in late spring or early summer. Generally, an interim meeting is held to discuss budgets and other pressing matters and is hosted by NMFS in Washington, D.C.

Responsibility for chairing the CCC and hosting the annual meeting rotates annually among the eight councils.

Year ↓	Host Council
2023	Gulf of Mexico
2024	Caribbean
2025	New England
2026	North Pacific
2027	South Atlantic
2028	Western Pacific
2029	Pacific
2030	Mid-Atlantic

- CCC Terms of Reference (PDF) | Word Version (revised November 2019)
- CCC Meeting History, 1977-2022 (PDF) | Word Version



New: CCC Subcommittees and Work Groups Page

<https://www.fisherycouncils.org/ccc-subcommittees>

Subcommittees and Work Groups of the Council Coordination Committee

The Council Coordination Committee (CCC) has established a number of subcommittees and work groups to address issues relevant to all Councils. Membership of these groups may include CCC members, other Council members, Council staff, members of Council-established advisory bodies and NMFS staff with relevant expertise. Subcommittee and work group recommendations or reports must be reviewed and approved by the CCC before being authorized as a CCC perspective.

Permanent CCC Subcommittees and Work Groups

- Scientific Coordination Subcommittee +
- Legislative Work Group +
- Council Communications Group +
- Habitat Work Group +
- Equity and Environmental Justice Work Group +

Other Subcommittees and Work Groups

- Area-Based Management Subcommittee +
- Working Group to Address ESA Policy Directive 01-117 +
- CMOD Steering Committee +

Revised: CCC Meeting Page

<https://www.fisherycouncils.org/ccc-meetings>

- Moved terms of reference and meeting history to CCC landing page
- New: “Find a Meeting” dropdown for easier navigation to older meetings

Council Coordination Committee Meetings

The **Council Coordination Committee (CCC)** consists of the chairs, vice chairs, and executive directors from each of the eight regional fishery management councils. The CCC typically meets twice each year to discuss issues of relevance to all councils. Note: CCC Terms of Reference and Meeting History Documents are now available on the main [CCC Page](#).

Find a Meeting ▼

Upcoming Meetings

May 2023 CCC Meeting

Tue, May 23, 2023 – Thu, May 25, 2023

Marriott Beachside Hotel, Flagler Ballroom ([map](#))

Host: Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

- [Agenda and Briefing Materials](#)

October 2023 CCC Meeting

Wed, Oct 11, 2023 – Fri, Oct 13, 2023

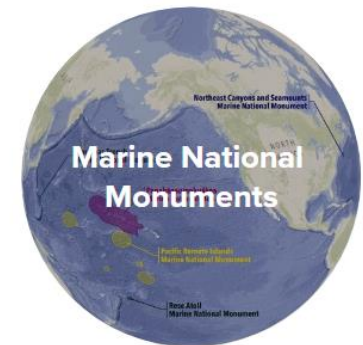
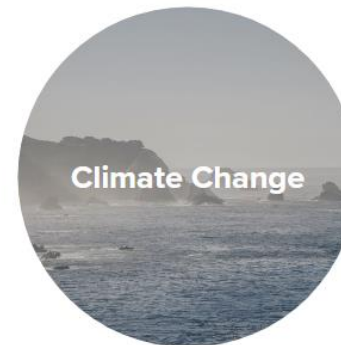
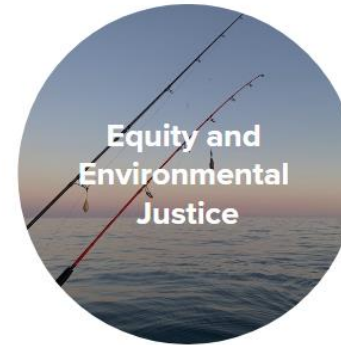
Washington, D.C. ([map](#))

New: Issues Pages

<https://www.fisherycouncils.org/issues>

- Goal: Communicate CCC positions and highlight collaborative efforts
- Pages are labeled as Draft for CCC review and discussion
- Types of content to include:
 - CCC Consensus Statements
 - CCC Comment Letters
 - Subcommittee/work group reports and other work products
 - Relevant Council links/resources (e.g., fact sheets)

Issues



New: Area-Based Management Page

<https://www.fisherycouncils.org/area-based-management>

- Repository for Area-Based Management Subcommittee work products

Area-Based Management

On January 27, 2021, President Biden signed Executive Order 14008: Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad. Section 216(a) of Executive Order 14008 established the first-ever national conservation goal, calling for the conservation of “at least 30 percent of U.S. lands and waters by 2030.” In accordance with Executive Order 14008, the U.S. Departments of the Interior, Agriculture and Commerce, and the White House Council on Environmental Quality released the *Conserving and Restoring America the Beautiful* report on May 6, 2021. The report calls for the development of an Atlas to measure the progress of conservation, stewardship, and restoration efforts across the United States.

In May 2021, the Council Coordination Committee formed an Area-Based Management Subcommittee to assist with tracking and reacting to the 30 by 30 initiative and associated America the Beautiful (ATB) efforts.

Conservation Areas in the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)

The ABM Subcommittee was tasked with developing a report that includes a comprehensive evaluation of all existing conservation areas in the U.S. EEZ, with the goal of recommending conservation areas for inclusion into the American Conservation and Stewardship Atlas (Atlas). The Subcommittee’s final report is linked below.

[REPORT: AN EVALUATION OF CONSERVATION AREAS IN THE U.S. EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE \(MAY 2023\)](#)

Appendix B: Conservation Worksheet and Effectiveness Checklist by Region

Conservation Area Definition

For the purposes of this effort, the CCC ABM Subcommittee defined a conservation area as: 1) an established, geographically defined area, with 2) planned management or regulation of environmental adverse fishing activities, that 3) provides for the maintenance of biologically productivity and biodiversity, ecosystem function and services (including providing recreational opportunities and healthy, sustainable seafood to a diverse range of consumers).

Key Findings

Using the above definition, the CCC ABM Subcommittee reviewed the sites using a standard methodology across the U.S. and recommended three different categories based on the objectives for developing the conservation areas and whether the areas are implemented year-round or seasonally.

In total, the report identifies **648 conservation areas** which cover greater than **72 percent of the total U.S. EEZ**. Nearly **a third of the U.S. EEZ includes prohibitions on all mobile bottom tending gears**, with **prohibitions on bottom trawling in about half of the EEZ**. There are also additional areas conserved under differing levels of prohibitions and restrictions on fishing activity and other management measures. This means a large portion of the U.S. EEZ is conserved relative to environmentally adverse fishing activities.



New: Equity and Environmental Justice Page

<https://www.fisherycouncils.org/equity-and-environmental-justice>

- Repository for EEJ work group products and related information

Environmental Justice in Fisheries Management

Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

A number of recent federal directives have highlighted **equity** and **environmental justice** (EEJ) as priorities within the federal government. In October 2021, the Council Coordination Committee (CCC) agreed to form a working group to evaluate, respond to, and inform EEJ efforts in the context of federal fisheries management. The working group provides a forum for information sharing and discussion of actions the Councils can take (individually or collectively) to reduce barriers to effective engagement, provide diverse representation in decision making, and address other EEJ objectives.

At the May 2022 CCC meeting, the EEJ Working Group presented its report on **Equity and Environmental Justice in Fisheries Management**. The report provides an overview of EEJ issues in fisheries management from a national and regional perspective and describes potential Council actions to address these problems.

After reviewing the WG's report, the CCC tasked the group with developing terms of reference and exploring possible next steps (including a possible workshop and/or peer reviewed article). The WG presented its **Recommendations to Address the May 2022 CCC Motion Regarding EEJ** at the October 2022 CCC meeting. The CCC endorsed formation of a permanent EEJ WG and approved the draft **terms of reference** as presented.

Key Documents

- **EEJ Working Group Report #1: Equity and Environmental Justice in Fisheries Management - Brief Overview** (May 2022)
 - Presentation
- **EEJ Working Group Report #2: Recommendations to Address the May 2022 CCC Motion Regarding EEJ** (October 2022)
 - Presentation
- **NOAA Fisheries Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy (Final)**
 - Council comment letters on draft EEJ strategy
- **EEJ WG Terms of Reference**

Council Efforts across themes



& Challenges across the themes



Examples of Council efforts and challenges across themes, as detailed in the May 2022 EEJ WG report.

New: Forage Fish Page

<https://www.fisherycouncils.org/forage-fish>

- CCC Consensus Position on Forage Fish
- Council Fact Sheets

Forage Fish

Forage fish play an important role in sustaining the structure and productivity of marine ecosystems. While there is no universal definition of “forage fish,” they tend to be small, short-lived fish and invertebrate species that are subject to predation throughout their lifespan. Forage fish facilitate the transfer of energy to higher trophic levels by consuming very small prey and then being eaten by larger fish, marine mammals, and seabirds. Due to their short lifespans and sensitivity to environmental conditions, many forage species experience substantial fluctuations in recruitment and abundance. These factors pose challenges for traditional management approaches.



The required and discretionary provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Act provide the Councils with broad authority to address forage concerns while allowing Councils the flexibility to develop regionally-appropriate management approaches. Details about Council-specific approaches may be found in the links at the bottom of the page.

CCC Consensus Position

In May 2022, the Council Coordination Committee (CCC) adopted the following consensus position on behalf of the eight regional fishery management Councils:

“The CCC recognizes that forage species play an important role in the structure and function of marine ecosystems. Under existing MSA provisions, some Councils have incorporated protection for forage species into FMPs where appropriate. The CCC believes the MSA already provides the Councils with adequate authority to address forage concerns. Current management efforts could be complicated by new requirements for forage fish management as it is not clear how these efforts would interface with the existing National Standards, which are the foundation of the MSA.

The CCC believes that forage fish cannot be defined with a one-size-fits-all description or criteria. Species identified as forage fish by the Councils tend to be small species with short lifespans and may have an important role in the marine ecosystem of the region. Some of these species may exhibit schooling behavior, highly variable stock sizes due to their short life spans, and sensitivity to environmental conditions. Some forage species may consume plankton, and some may be an important food source for marine mammals and seabirds.

The CCC is concerned that any legislative definition of forage fish based on broad criteria—such as all low trophic level fish (plankton consumers) that contribute to the diets of upper trophic levels—may not include other important types of forage species (e.g., squid) or unintentionally include important target fish species (e.g., pollock, shrimp, sockeye salmon, and whiting). Such broad definitions could allow for variable interpretations by different interested parties and thus invite litigation. The term “forage fish” appears to imply a special importance of the species as prey; however, nearly all fish species are prey to larger predators and thus all fish species provide energy transfer up the food chain. Further, the prey consumed by upper trophic predators are part of the natural mortality assumption in stock assessments.

The CCC believes that Councils should retain the authority to determine which species require conservation and management through FMPs. Any legislation that directs the Secretary to prepare or amend fishery management plans (e.g., recent legislation to add shad and river herring as managed species) creates conflicts with current management under other existing authorities. This can lead to confusion and additional litigation risk. Further, in order for a Council to add a forage fish to its FMP, there would need to be quantitative data to support federal management of that forage fish species.

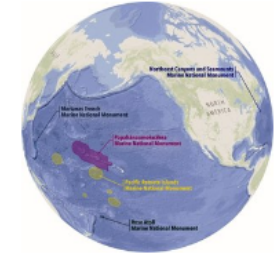
New: Marine National Monuments Page

- <https://www.fisherycouncils.org/area-based-management>
- CCC Comment Letters
- CCC Resolution on Marine Monuments
- CCC Consensus on Other Federal Statutes

Marine National Monuments

The Antiquities Act of 1906 gives the President of the United States the authority to, by presidential proclamation, create national monuments from federal lands to protect significant natural, cultural, or scientific features. Since 2006, this authority has been used to create five Marine National Monuments in U.S. Waters, including four in the Pacific Ocean (Papahānaumokuākea, Marianas Trench, Pacific Remote Islands, and Rose Atoll Marine National Monuments) and one in the Atlantic Ocean (Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument).

The Council Coordination Committee (CCC) has expressed concerns about use of the Antiquities Act to prohibit fishing in marine national monuments.



Map of U.S. Marine National Monuments (Source: USFWS)

CCC Comment Letters

- CCC Letter to Acting Secretary De la Vega (Interior) regarding Northeast monuments (2/26/21)
- CCC letter to Secretary Wilbur Ross (Commerce) regarding marine monuments (5/29/20)
- CCC letter to Secretary Zinke (Interior) and Secretary Ross regarding marine national monuments (5/16/17)
- CCC letter to President Trump regarding marine national monuments (3/1/17)
- CCC letter to President Obama regarding marine national monuments (6/26/16)

CCC Resolution on Marine National Monuments

The following resolution was adopted by the CCC in May 2016:

The Council Coordination Committee (CCC) notes the successes of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act in managing fishery resources of the United States as well as the marine ecosystems of the United States Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the CCC recognizes that there have been a number of proposals regarding the designation of new, or the expansion of existing, Marine National Monuments within the U.S. EEZ.

Whereas, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) was originally passed by Congress in 1976 for the specific purpose of sustainably managing the nation's fishery resources to provide a food source, recreational opportunities and livelihoods for the people of the United States;

Whereas Congress, in passing the Magnuson-Stevens Act, found that "Commercial and recreational fishing constitutes a major source of employment and contributes significantly to the economy of the Nation."

Whereas, the Magnuson-Stevens Act created eight Regional Fishery Management Councils that are charged with managing, conserving, and utilizing fishery resources as well as protecting essential fisheries habitat, minimizing bycatch, and protecting listed species within the United States Exclusive Economic Zone;

Whereas, through the implementation of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and through the actions of the Regional Fishery Management Councils, the United States has become a global leader in the successful management of its fishery resources and associated ecosystems in a proactive sustainable manner;

Whereas, the Regional Fishery Management Councils and the National Marine Fisheries Service have made great strides in managing

New: Climate Change Page

<https://www.fisherycouncils.org/climate-change>

- CCC Consensus Position on Climate Change and Regional Action Plans
- CCC Consensus Position on Council Jurisdictions
- SCS5 and SCS7 Workshop pages
- Council fact sheets

Climate Change

Marine fisheries and fishing communities are at high risk from climate-driven changes to ocean ecosystems, such as ocean warming and acidification. Climate-driven impacts to fisheries could include changes in productivity and/or distribution of some fish stocks. Climate change is also impacting the timing and magnitude of seasonal biological events, such as plankton blooms, which can alter the food web structure. These changes are posing new and ongoing challenges for fisheries management across the nation.

The regional fishery management councils are leading and participating in a wide range of initiatives designed to prepare for, and respond to, climate-driven changes and fishery management challenges. Some of these initiatives are described in the individual Council resources linked at the bottom of the page.



CCC Consensus Positions

In November 2021, the Council Coordination Committee (CCC) adopted the following consensus positions on behalf of the eight regional fishery management Councils:

Climate Change & Regional Action Plans For Climate Science

"The CCC believes that climate change demands a response that is commensurate with the magnitude of the threat. The sustainability and performance of our fisheries are at stake, and while fishery managers are unable to address the underlying causes of climate change, they are nonetheless tasked with meeting our conservation and management mandates in a changing environment. Climate change will impact entire marine ecosystems, and a single-species management approach will likely not be sufficient to understand and account for these changes. Addressing climate change will require establishing the support to enable fishery managers to develop creative solutions to new challenges.

Fishery managers will also need a strong scientific foundation to support climate-ready fisheries management. Managing climate-ready fisheries is a long-term endeavor that will require investing in the information needed to support informed decision-making, along with a commensurate shift in resources and attention. Successful management already depends on the availability of timely and accurate information at all points in the decision-making process, and in a changing environment, this will become even more critical.

The ability of Councils to successfully manage fisheries in the face of climate change will require the ability to adapt to changing species distributions and productivity. However, many regions currently lack the robust baseline of fish and habitat surveys necessary to understand and quantify changes in abundance, distribution, diversity, and status clearly attributable to climate change, which will also make it more difficult to account for the impacts of climate change in analyses. It will also make it more difficult to comply with new legislative requirements, such as determining the impacts of climate change on future conditions of stocks and fishery participants. It will also be more difficult to account for the impacts of climate change in analyses. As the Councils continue to balance increasing competition for the ocean space – whether from protected areas, offshore energy development, or other users – these conflicts will inhibit the ability of fishermen and the Councils to be flexible."

Next Steps

- Finalize “Issues” pages and develop any additional pages requested by the CCC
- Council Communications Group will continue to review and update site as needed
- CCC comments and suggestions are welcome or at any time – send to Mary Sabo (msabo@mafmc.org) or Emily Muehlstein (Emily.Muehlstein@gulfcouncil.org)