

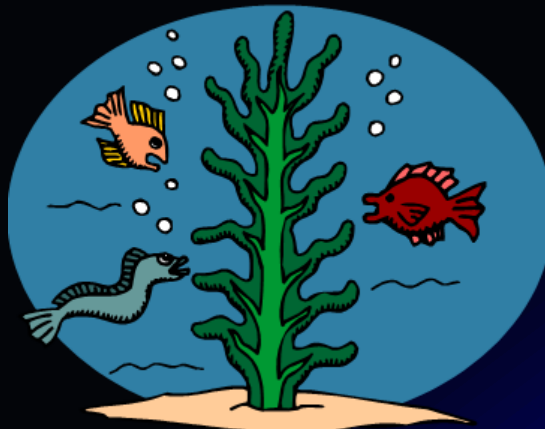
CCC Habitat Workgroup: Update and Next Steps

Washington, DC
February 2015



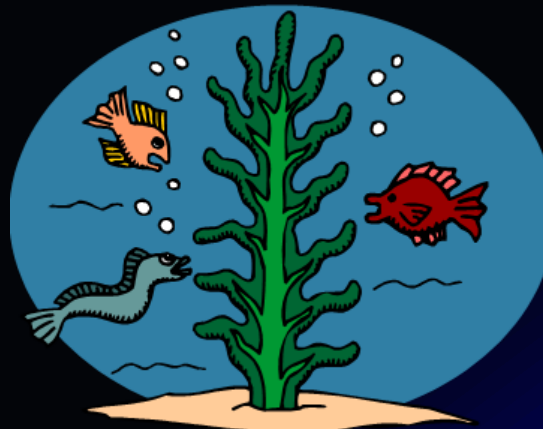
Today

- Update on CCC Habitat Workgroup
- Next steps identified by the Workgroup
- Workgroup questions for the CCC



May 2014 CCC

- Form informal habitat workgroup
- To engage Council staff and NOAA Fisheries staff to:
 - Enable enhanced coordination on Fed. habitat initiatives
 - Discuss habitat requirements and their implementation
 - Allow sharing of tacit knowledge, experiences, and approaches





Formed (July 2014)

Council Staff

- New-England
- Mid-Atlantic
- South Atlantic
- Caribbean
- Gulf of Mexico
- North Pacific
- Western Pacific

NOAA Fisheries

- Greater Atlantic Region
- Southeast Region
- West Coast Region
- Pacific Islands Region
- Alaska Region
- Habitat Conservation
- Science and Technology

Logistics

- Addressed in first Webinar (September 2014)
- Chairmanship: rotational consistent with CCC
- MAFMC staff chaired in 2014; GMFMC in 2015
- Habitat Conservation Div. staff as coordinator
- Identified list of discussion topics
- Met in October and November to get started

October 2014 Call

- Discussed HAPCs:
 - Process of identification
 - Use as a conservation prioritization tool
 - How their use be improved
- How Council's interact with HQ and Regions; flow of formal and informal consultations
- Product: Fisheries Leadership and Sustainability Forum listened in on call for MAFMC report



Habitat Practices Report Under Development

- Provide info on current methods and objectives used in the identification of HAPCs and critical fish habitat areas in the U.S. and abroad
- Synthesize regional experiences with effective use of the HAPC provision



Habitat Practices Report Under Development

- How various Council's and other management entities:
 - 1) communicate habitat conservation priorities to consulting agencies,
 - 2) link habitat protection with fishery management objectives and/or ecosystem resilience,
 - 3) focus and communicate research priorities, and,
 - 4) reduce adverse impacts from anthropogenic activities.



November 2014 Call



- Discussed 5-year reviews:
 - How Council's are meeting requirements
 - Aspects included in the review
 - What's worked well for regions
 - How can process be improved

November 2014 Call

- Successful approaches and lessons-learned (discussed pros and cons)
- Separating EFH technical review from the amendment process
- Benefits to conducting an Omnibus review, including considering adverse effects analysis
- Plan-by-plan or Omnibus updates to EFH designations
- Developing EFH Source Documents

Next Steps

- 1) Continue Quarterly Calls/Webinars
- 2) Develop materials to assist Councils in meeting habitat requirements
- 3) Discuss way to increase the impact of the workgroup
- 4) In-person Habitat Summit (2016)



So we're not just spinning our wheels!

Next Steps #1

- Habitat science needs and approaches:
 - Relationship between stock size and climate/habitat perturbations
 - GIS-analysis and modeling approaches
 - Practicability analysis
 - Research and information needs (baseline data, etc.)
 - Council and Science Center coordination on habitat research



Next Steps #1

- Habitat management:
 - MSA reauthorization and proposed habitat provisions
 - Regional deep sea coral protection approaches
 - Issues beyond fishing gears (e.g., anchoring, etc.)
 - Approaches to identify habitat limited species
 - Targeting of habitat conservation objectives



Next Steps #1

- Council engagement with habitat issues:
 - Interactions with partners
 - Engagement in Federal initiatives such as Habitat Blueprint Habitat Partnerships
 - How habitat advisory panels are used to engage



Next Steps #2 and 3

- Develop materials which capture the approaches, practices, and lessons learned, and needs identified by the workgroup
- Increase impact of working group across all Councils by discussing ways to promote and communicate:
 - The value of EFH
 - The links between habitat and fisheries, protected resources, and coastal/ecosystem management



Next Step #4

- Habitat Summit (maybe 2016?)
- In some room, somewhere
- May look something like this....



Next Step #4

- Summit discussion topics:
 - Current data gaps to address habitat and EFH for federally managed fisheries. Prioritizing data collection needed to meet Council fish habitat goals.
 - Modeling and geospatial approaches being used regionally to address gaps/limits in data and better characterize EFH for our federally managed species.
 - Effectiveness of EFH in meeting its originally stated/intended MSA goals. How to improve the effectiveness of the current EFH processes.

Questions for the CCC?

- Do you support the proposed path forward?
- Do you support a Habitat Summit? Would you support investing Council and NMFS resources to participate?
- Do you have other requests for workgroup? Topics, activities, products?
- Ideas to improve effectiveness?

