

# Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

## Business Session

*October 28, 2014  
1:30 – 2:45 p.m.  
Mystic, Connecticut*

## Draft Agenda

The times listed are approximate; the order in which these items will be taken is subject to change; other items may be added as necessary.

1. Welcome/Introductions (*L. Daniel*) 1:30 p.m.
2. Board Consent 1:35 p.m.
  - Approval of Agenda
  - Approval of Proceedings from August 2014
3. Public Comment 1:40 p.m.
4. Election of Commission Chair and Vice Chair **Action** 1:45 p.m.
5. Review 2014 Action Plan Update 2:00 p.m.
6. Review and Consider Approval of the 2015 ASMFC Action Plan **Action** 2:15 p.m.
7. Other Business/Adjourn 2:45 p.m.

The meeting will be held at:  
The Mystic Hilton, 20 Coogan Boulevard, Mystic, Connecticut (860) 572.0731

*Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries*

# Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

## Business Session

*October 30, 2014  
4:00 – 4:15 p.m.  
Mystic, Connecticut*

## Draft Agenda

The times listed are approximate; the order in which these items will be taken is subject to change; other items may be added as necessary.

1. Welcome/Introductions (*L. Daniel*) 4:00 p.m.
2. Board Consent 4:00 p.m.
  - Approval of Agenda
3. Public Comment 4:05 p.m.
4. Report from ASMFC Resolution Committee 4:05 p.m.
5. Other Business/Adjourn 4:15 p.m.

The meeting will be held at:  
The Mystic Hilton, 20 Coogan Boulevard, Mystic, Connecticut (860) 572.0731

*Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries*

# **ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION**

## **Draft 2015 Action Plan**



**Presented to the Business Session for Review and Approval**

**October 28, 2014**

## **Goal 1 - Rebuild, maintain and fairly allocate Atlantic coastal fisheries**

Goal 1 focuses on the responsibility of the states to conserve and manage Atlantic coastal fishery resources for sustainable use. Commission members will advocate decisions to achieve the long-term benefits of conservation, while balancing the socio-economic interests of coastal communities. Inherent in this is the recognition that healthy and vibrant resources mean more jobs and more opportunity for those that live along the coast. The states are committed to proactive management, with a focus on integrating ecosystem services, socio-economic impacts, habitat issues, bycatch and discard reduction measures, and protected species interactions into well-defined fishery management plans. Fishery management plans will also address fair (equitable) allocation of fishery resources among the states. Understanding global climate change and its impact on fishery productivity and distribution is an elevated priority. Improving cooperation and coordination with federal partners and stakeholders can streamline efficiency, transparency, and, ultimately, success. In the next five years, the Commission is committed to making significant progress on rebuilding overfished or depleted Atlantic fish stocks.

### *Strategies to Achieve Goal*

- 1.1 Manage interstate resources that provide for productive, sustainable fisheries using sound science.

#### **American Eel**

Task 1.1.1 – Monitor and Implement Addendum III and IV (changes to the glass, silver and yellow eel fisheries).

Task 1.1.2 – Continue to work with Law Enforcement Committee (LEC) on monitoring poaching and illegal sale of glass eels (see Task 3.3.1).

Task 1.1.3 – Develop Memorandum of Understanding on management and scientific collaboration with Great Lakes Fishery Commission, U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and Canada Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Task 1.1.4 – Monitor action by USFWS on the petition to list American eel under the Endangered Species Act. Monitor classification of eel under the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES) and on the International Union of Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List.

Task 1.1.5 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

Task 1.1.6 – Initiate collaboration with Canada Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) on next stock assessment, based on the recommendations of the 2012 peer review panel to conduct a more inclusive range wide assessment.

**Task 1.1.7 – Work with the Technical Committee to review and develop strategy to incorporate pertinent findings from AFS 2014 into future assessments and management decisions. Update the young of the year surveys with 2014 data.**

### **American Lobster**

Task 1.1.8 – Monitor implementation of Addenda VII, VIII and XIX - XXII to establish measures to rebuild the Southern New England (SNE) stock. Develop an addendum to adjust the fishery effort to the size of the resource in Lobster Conservation Management Areas 4, 5, and 6.

- **Task 1.1.9 – Complete and implement Cancer Crab FMP, as directed, to ensure the long-term sustainability of the fishery.**

Task 1.1.10 – Monitor the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) actions on habitat area closures for impacts to the lobster fishery, respond if necessary.

**Task 1.1.11 – Complete the 2015 benchmark stock assessment and consider management response to the assessment findings.**

Task 1.1.12 – Explore long-term funding options for fishery-independent and dependent data collection.

Task 1.1.13 – Continue the development of the lobster trap database to track trap tag transfers.

Task 1.1.14 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance. Continue to work with the federal government to ensure consistency between regulations in state and federal waters.

Task 1.1.15 – Update the ACCSP Data Warehouse with landings information and monitor landings patterns in both the trap and non-trap fisheries.

Task 1.1.16 – Continue to monitor progress towards implementing more complete catch reporting as recommended by the 2009 Stock Assessment Peer Review Panel.

Task 1.1.17 – Monitor trap tag production and distribution.

### **Atlantic Herring**

**Task 1.1.18 – Review 2015 specifications to determine if any changes are necessary. Review operational assessment results and consider management response to the assessment findings. Set specifications for 2016-2018.**

Task 1.1.19 – Monitor activities of the NEFMC and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) with regards to complementary FMP actions, including but not limited to management area boundaries, Amendment 5 issues and,

river herring bycatch avoidance program. Consider complementary action where necessary.

**Task 1.1.20 – Hold meetings as necessary to establish state effort control (days-out) programs for Areas 1A and 1B.**

**Task 1.1.21 – Finalize and implement measures included in Amendment 3, which proposes management options for spawning area efficacy, fixed gear rollover provision, and empty fish hold provision.**

Task 1.1.22 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

Task 1.1.23 – Continue working with NEFSC to identify opportunities for offshore spawning sampling and analysis with particular interest in Nantucket Shoals.

### **Atlantic Menhaden**

Task 1.1.24 – Review state compliance with implementation of Amendment 2. Review effectiveness of Amendment 2 including, bycatch provision, total allowable catch, and episodic event provisions. Complete 3 year review of total allowable catch and allocations for Amendment 2. Monitor landings for the 2015 fishing year.

**Task 1.1.25 – Review results of 2014 benchmark stock assessment and consider management response to the assessment findings.**

**Task 1.1.26 – Continue to work with Technical Committee and Biological Ecological Reference Points (BERP) Working Group to present options for board consideration on ecosystem-based reference points that account for predation effects (See Task 2.4.1).**

### **Atlantic Striped Bass**

Task 1.1.27 – Implement and monitor Addendum IV, including conservation equivalency plans.

**Task 1.1.28 – Continue the development of Chesapeake Bay reference points or an updated stock assessment, update data needs, and consider management response to findings.**

Task 1.1.29 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

### **Atlantic Sturgeon**

**Task 1.1.30 – Continue development of the 2017 benchmark stock assessment. Collaborate with federal agencies to analyze bycatch data and prioritize/process genetic samples for use in the assessment.**

Task 1.1.31 – Monitor state and federal activities in response to Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing of Atlantic sturgeon

Task 1.1.32 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

### **Bluefish**

Task 1.1.33 – Work in collaboration with NMFS Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) to complete 2015 benchmark stock assessment. Consider management response to the assessment findings in conjunction with MAFMC.

Task 1.1.34 – Establish specifications for 2016-2018 in cooperation with the MAFMC.

Task 1.1.35 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

### **Coastal Sharks**

Task 1.1.36 – Establish specifications for 2016 and later.

Task 1.1.37 – Monitor and engage in the development of Amendment 6 (catch shares) by the NMFS Division of Highly Migratory Species (HMS). Determine appropriate Commission management response to HMS Amendments.

Task 1.1.38 – Monitor legislative initiatives on shark finning and respond if necessary.

Task 1.1.39 – Review and consider smoothhound benchmark stock assessment for management and consider management response to the assessment findings.

Task 1.1.40 – Monitor activities of NOAA and HMS with regards to coastal shark management actions for consistency.

Task 1.1.41 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

### **Horseshoe Crab**

**Task 1.1.42 – Review all possible data sources for the Adaptive Resource Management (ARM) Framework and determine if an alternate data source can be used in place of the Horseshoe Crab Benthic Trawl Survey data.**

**Task 1.1.43 – Complete and review artificial bait studies and consider management implications.**

Task 1.1.44 – Establish the 2016 specifications using the ARM Framework and quota allocation methodology.

Task 1.1.45 – Engage federal stakeholders, the biomedical community, and shorebird interest groups to secure long-term funding to support data collection for use in the ARM Framework, including the Horseshoe Crab Benthic Trawl Survey.

Task 1.1.46 – Engage the biomedical community toward finding a solution regarding confidential data use in order to enhance stock assessments and scientific advice for management.

Task 1.1.47 – Monitor red knot listing under the ESA and consider management response.

Task 1.1.48 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance for both the bait and biomedical industries.

### **Northern Shrimp**

Task 1.1.49 – Continue development of new assessment approaches in response to 2014 benchmark assessment results.

**Task 1.1.50 – Finalize and implement measures included in Amendment 3 which proposes limited entry in the northern shrimp fishery.**

Task 1.1.51 – Establish specifications for the 2015/2016 season.

Task 1.1.52 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

### **Shad and River Herring**

Task 1.1.53 – Monitor activities of the NEFMC and the MAFMC management actions including but not limited to shad and river herring bycatch avoidance programs.

Task 1.1.54 – Work with management partners to coordinate coastwide river herring monitoring and habitat restoration workshops (River Herring Technical Expert Working Group, MAFMC Working Group, Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership Working Group).

**Task 1.1.55 – Review products of the River Herring Technical Expert Working Group and consider for management use.**

Task 1.1.56 – Work with states in the implementation of sustainable fisheries plans or habitat plans as required by Amendment 3, if necessary.

Task 1.1.57 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.



## **South Atlantic Species**

### *Atlantic Croaker*

**Task 1.1.58 – Initiate the development of the 2016 benchmark stock assessment.**

**Task 1.1.59 – Complete annual update of the traffic light to determine if management changes are needed.**

Task 1.1.60 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

### *Black Drum*

**Task 1.1.61 – Review the 2014 benchmark stock assessment and consider management response to the assessment findings.**

Task 1.1.62 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

### *Red Drum*

**Task 1.1.63 – Complete the 2015 benchmark stock assessment and consider management response to the assessment findings.**

Task 1.1.64 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

### *Spanish Mackerel*

**Task 1.1.65 – Evaluate results of the pilot program for seasonal exemptions in the commercial pound net fishery. Consider changes to the management program.**

Task 1.1.66 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

### *Spot*

**Task 1.1.67 – Initiate the development of the 2016 benchmark stock assessment.**

**Task 1.1.68 – Complete annual update of the traffic light to determine if management changes are needed.**

Task 1.1.69 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

### *Spotted Seatrout*

Task 1.1.70 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

## **Spiny Dogfish**

Task 1.1.71 – Establish multi-year specifications beginning in 2016/2017.

Task 1.1.72 – Participate in annual stock status update, as needed.

Task 1.1.73 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

## **Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass**

### *Summer Flounder*

**Task 1.1.74 – Continue development of the comprehensive summer flounder amendment, considering changes to both commercial and recreational management in coordination with MAFMC. Complete management response to summer flounder recreational working group.**

**Subtask 1.1.74.1 – Consider technical committee recommendations on climate change impacts on species distribution and allocation.**

Task 1.1.75 – Finalize regulations for 2015 recreational fishery.

Task 1.1.76 – Establish 2016-2018 specifications in collaboration with the MAFMC.

Task 1.1.77 – Work in collaboration with NMFS NEFSC to complete a stock status update.

Task 1.1.78 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

### *Scup*

Task 1.1.79 – Collaborate with MAFMC to initiate an amendment to address recreational/commercial allocation as well as commercial winter/summer allocation in the scup fishery considering the results of the completed economic study.

**Task 1.1.80 – Work in collaboration with NMFS NEFSC to complete the 2015 benchmark stock assessment. Consider management response to the assessment findings.**

Task 1.1.81 – Finalize regulations for 2015 recreational fishery.

Task 1.1.82 – Establish 2016-2018 specifications in collaboration with the MAFMC.

Task 1.1.83 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

### *Black Sea Bass*

**Task 1.1.84 – Finalize regulations for 2015 recreational fishery. Consider initiation of addendum for recreational management measures for 2016 and later.**

Task 1.1.85 – Establish 2016-2018 specifications in collaboration with the MAFMC.

**Task 1.1.86 – In collaboration with the MAFMC and the NEFSC continue the 2016 benchmark stock assessment. Consider stock assessment update in 2015 if data become available.**

Task 1.1.87 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

### **Tautog**

**Task 1.1.88 – Review results of 2014 benchmark stock assessment and consider management response to the assessment findings.**

Task 1.1.89 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

### **Weakfish**

**Task 1.1.90 – Complete the 2015 benchmark stock assessment and update 2015 stock status indicators to evaluate changes in the population.**

Task 1.1.91 – Review trends in landings and conduct annual review of conservation equivalency programs, if necessary.

Task 1.1.92 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

### **Winter Flounder**

**Task 1.1.93 – Monitor NEFSC stock assessment activities for inshore winter flounder stocks and set specifications for 2016-2018.**

Task 1.1.94 – Continue to monitor federal water common pool landings and regulations. Review state water landings and make changes to fishery specifications if necessary.

Task 1.1.95 – Monitor fishery for consistency with management program and state compliance.

1.2 Strengthen state and federal partnerships to improve comprehensive management of shared fishery resources.

Task 1.2.1 – Participate as a non-voting member and liaison between the Regional Fishery Management Councils and the Commission on matters of mutual interest.

Task 1.2.2 – Participate on the Northeast Regional Coordinating Council and SouthEast Data, Assessment and Review (SEDAR) Steering Committee to set state/federal management and assessment priorities

Task 1.2.3 – Work with the Regional Fishery Management Councils and NMFS to improve alignment between state and federal fishery management programs.

**Task 1.2.4 – Work with NOAA Headquarters and regional leadership to improve alignment of state/federal budget priorities.**

Task 1.2.5 – Continue to work with NEFMC and MAFMC on evaluating and mitigating shad and river herring bycatch (See Task 1.1.53).

1.3 Adapt management to address emerging issues.

Task 1.3.1 – Continue to monitor developments related to climate change, stock distributions, ocean planning, and potential fisheries reallocations.

Task 1.3.3 – Identify common resource issues – protected species interactions, bycatch/discards, shifting population distributions, ecosystem services – that are cross-cutting among the Commission’s interstate fishery management plans.

1.4 Practice efficient, transparent, and accountable management processes.

Task 1.4.1 – Continue to track status of stocks relative to biological reference points to evaluate and drive improvement and results in the Commission’s fisheries management process.

Task 1.4.2 – Continue the use of decision documents and working groups to structure Board discussion on complex management decisions and increase transparency of pending board action.

Task 1.4.3 – Continue to focus Board attention on developing clear problem statements prior to initiating management changes.

Task 1.4.4 – Continue to use roll call voting procedures for Commission final actions.

1.5 Evaluate progress towards rebuilding fisheries.

Task 1.5.1 – Conduct annual Commissioner assessment of progress towards achieving the Commission’s mission, vision and goals using an on-line survey.

Task 1.5.2 – Continue the use of the annual performance of the stock to evaluate species rebuilding progress.

1.6 Strengthen interactions and input among stakeholders, technical, advisory, and management groups.

Task 1.6.1 – Engage American lobster, summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, tautog, menhaden and northern shrimp advisory panels (APs) in the development of FMPs and Amendments. Solicit state membership of current active APs and appoint new membership where necessary.

**Subtask 1.6.1.1 – Finalize reconfiguration of combined AP for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass and improve AP input process with MAFMC.**

Task 1.6.2 – Continue communication with non-active advisory panels (species in the maintenance mode).

Task 1.6.3 – Integrate non-traditional constituents into all Advisory Panels (See Task 5.2.3).

**Goal 2 – Provide the scientific foundation for and conduct stock assessments to support informed management actions**

Sustainable management of fisheries relies on accurate and timely scientific advice. The Commission strives to produce sound, actionable science through a technically rigorous, independently peer-reviewed stock assessment process. Assessments are developed using a broad suite of fishery-independent surveys and fishery-dependent monitoring, as well as research products developed by a vast network of fisheries scientists at state, federal, and academic institutions along the coast. The goal encompasses the development of new, innovative scientific research and methodology, and the enhancement of the states' stock assessment capabilities. It provides for the administration, coordination, and expansion of collaborative research and data collection programs. Achieving the goal will ensure sound science is available to serve as the foundation for the Commission's evaluation of stock status and adaptive management actions.

*Strategies to Achieve Goal*

2.1 Conduct stock assessments based on comprehensive data sources and rigorous technical analysis.

Task 2.1.1 – Address data priorities for stocks of unknown status. Continue development of the Atlantic sturgeon benchmark stock assessment and **initiate the spot benchmark stock assessment**.

Task 2.1.2 – Address data priorities for species with limited data. Collect more comprehensive information for data poor species in order to move from problematic to more accurate assessment models. Focal areas include sciaenid bycatch data, **black sea bass fishery-dependent data**, menhaden fishery-independent data, river herring at-sea and in-river monitoring, improved tautog indices, black drum biological sampling and fishery-independent monitoring of mature fish, and American eel surveys covering all life stages.

**Task 2.1.3 – Complete benchmark stock assessments for American lobster, weakfish, scup, red drum, and bluefish; complete operational assessment for Atlantic herring.**

Task 2.1.4 – Facilitate independent peer reviews of the American lobster and weakfish assessments to provide sound, actionable scientific advice to managers. Complete SEDAR assessment review for red drum, and SARC reviews of scup and bluefish.

Task 2.1.5 – Through the Assessment Science Committee (ASC) and Management and Science Committee (MSC), develop the long-term stock assessment and peer review schedule to prioritize stocks by management need; **present tradeoffs to the Policy Board when assessment scheduling changes are requested.**

Task 2.1.6 – Track assessment scientists’ workloads in order to complete 2015-2016 stock assessments; using the guidance of the ASC, develop new policies and approaches to better match assessment demand with assessment workload.

Task 2.1.7 – Following benchmark stock assessments, create species-specific digital archives (including CDs) to facilitate efficient assessment updates in the future.

Task 2.1.8 – Serve as members of the American Lobster, Weakfish, Atlantic Sturgeon, Multispecies, Scup, Black Sea Bass, Red Drum, Spot, Atlantic Croaker, and Bluefish Technical Committees and Stock Assessment Subcommittees to assist in completion of benchmark assessments and annual assessment updates. Utilize the Assessment Science Committee for guidance with assessment methods as necessary.

Task 2.1.9 – Continue to work with state and federal stock assessment scientists and staff of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) to increase use of ACCSP data in the Commission’s technical work.

Task 2.1.10 – Through the MSC, and using ASC guidance, develop a Commission policy regarding risk and uncertainty, in consideration of Council approaches, and provide to the ISFMP Policy Board consideration.

## 2.2 Proactively address research priorities through cooperative state and regional data collection programs and collaborative research projects

Task 2.2.1 – Maintain the master list of ASMFC Research Priorities by species as benchmark assessments are completed and new priorities emerge.

Task 2.2.2 – Participate in proposal reviews for MARFIN, MARMAP, NMFS Cooperative Research Programs, Saltonstall-Kennedy and ACCSP, when requested, to evaluate projects and monitor regional research activities to promote member state needs.

Subtask 2.2.2.1 – Develop and communicate research priorities for review and approval by species management boards, and provide to funding programs.

Subtask 2.2.2.2 – Work closely with federal partners to ensure completed funded projects are reviewed and transmitted to appropriate technical committees and boards.

Task 2.2.3 – Communicate with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to review research priorities and funding opportunities (e.g., fish passage, catch shares).

**Subtask 2.2.3.1 – Participate in NFWF proposal reviews for the Fisheries Innovation and River Herring Initiatives**

Task 2.2.4 – Participate on the ACCSP’s Coordinating Council, Operations Committee, Bycatch Prioritization Committee, Biological Review Panel, Recreational and Commercial Technical Committees, Outreach Committee and the Computer Technical Committee.

Subtask 2.2.4.1 – Submit ASMFC changes to existing priorities for at-sea observer coverage for inclusion in the ACCSP Bycatch Prioritization Listing. Consult Fishing Gear Technology Work Group regarding ASMFC input to Bycatch Prioritization.

Task 2.2.5 – Coordinate and implement the Northeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (NEAMAP).

**Subtask 2.2.5.1 – Administer funding to conduct 2015 NEAMAP Nearshore Trawl Surveys.**

Subtask 2.2.5.2 – Support continuation of the NEAMAP Nearshore Trawl Surveys through coordination with survey leads and all NEAMAP committees: NEAMAP Board, Operations, Data Management, Analytical, and Trawl Technical Committees.

Subtask 2.2.5.3 – Develop the 2016 NEAMAP Operations Plan.

**Subtask 2.2.5.4 – Conduct the collaborative NEAMAP/SEAMAP Catch Processing and Trawl Technology Workshops to compare methods and seek consistencies among all state and NEAMAP/SEAMAP surveys.**

Subtask 2.2.5.5 – Provide NEAMAP data to coastwide stock assessments; track and demonstrate data use, and report to the ISFMP Policy Board; maintain the NEAMAP website as a tool for distributing program information and requesting data.

**Subtask 2.2.5.6 – Seek opportunities and resources for NEAMAP sampling to supplement horseshoe crab data collection for the Delaware Bay population.**

Task 2.2.6 – Coordinate the South Atlantic component of the Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (SEAMAP).

Subtask 2.2.6.1 – Coordinate all research components of SEAMAP-South Atlantic: Coastal Trawl Survey, Red Drum Longline Surveys, Bottom Mapping, Fish Habitat Characterization and Assessment, Pamlico Sound Survey, Reef Fish Survey,

Southeast Regional Taxonomic Center, Cooperative Winter Tagging Cruise, and the Data Management and Crustacean Work Groups.

**Subtask 2.2.6.2 – Coordinate the development of the next 5-year SEAMAP Management Plan (2016-2020);** maintain the SEAMAP website hosted by ASMFC.

Subtask 2.2.6.3 – Participate in the expansion of SEAMAP-South Atlantic fishery-independent data coordination and mapping, as resources allow.

Subtask 2.2.6.4 – Coordinate South Atlantic activities with the Gulf and Caribbean components of SEAMAP.

Task 2.2.7 – Continue the Tagging Certification Program and support the use of tagging data in ASMFC stock assessments. Develop tagging registration programs, update and maintain the tagging resource website, link acoustic tagging information to the Atlantic Coastal Tagging (ACT) network website, and develop instructional tagging videos to improve the efficiency and quality of tagging efforts along the coast.

**Task 2.2.8 – Develop long-term strategy for collecting striped bass tagging data, including funding, administration, and at-sea support.**

Task 2.2.9 – Continue to participate in the development and implementation of the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP), with ASMFC staff serving on Executive Steering Committee, Operations Team, Transition Team, and Angler Registry Team. Report progress to the ISFMP Policy Board, and scientific oversight committees (MSC, ASC).

Task 2.2.10 – Coordinate the fish ageing activities among Atlantic coast states and university laboratories in order to provide consistent, accurate age data to stock assessments.

**Subtask 2.2.10.1 – Conduct age sample exchanges and an ageing workshop for Atlantic menhaden to prepare ageing laboratories for providing new age data consistent with historical age data.**

**Subtask 2.2.10.2 – Conduct an annual ageing quality control workshop using age sample reference collections for multiple species to maintain consistency among state and university ageing technicians.**

Subtask 2.2.10.3 – Continue cooperative angler programs with the states to collect age samples toward improving age data for assessments.

**Subtask 2.2.10.4 – Collaborate with the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission to develop an ageing manual with fish ageing protocols for Atlantic coast and Gulf coast species.**

Task 2.2.11 – Continue coordination of the ASMFC Observer Program for Mid-Atlantic small-mesh otter trawl fisheries through the Northeast Fishery Observer Program. Pursue



funding with other partners; expand the program to address other ASMFC research priorities, based upon the ACCSP FY2015 Bycatch Prioritization Listing. Evaluate existing funding mechanisms that use industry support.

Task 2.2.12 – Continue to support monitoring and other data collection to improve information available for assessments of spot, kingfish (whiting) and black drum. Support improved monitoring of blue catfish in collaboration with NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office.

Task 2.2.13 – Coordinate the activities of the Committee on Economics and Social Sciences (CESS).

Subtask 2.2.13.1 – Develop socioeconomic analyses and advice in conjunction with stock assessments to provide more comprehensive information for managers when making harvest and allocation decisions; **develop socioeconomic analysis for Atlantic menhaden in 2015.**

Subtask 2.2.13.2 – Report to ISFMP Policy Board on current socioeconomic data collection and analyses used by other Commissions and Councils, including associated costs.

Subtask 2.2.13.3 – Track progress of NEFSC’s development of fishery performance measures to evaluate fishing community success.

Subtask 2.2.13.4 – Cooperate with ACCSP staff on issues requiring socioeconomic data. Provide recommendations on socioeconomic data collection and standards.

Task 2.2.14 – Coordinate the activities of the Fish Passage Working Group (FPWG) to carry out priority tasks as defined by the ISFMP Policy Board. Promote development of effective fish passage approaches and projects through state and federal collaboration.

Subtask 2.2.14.1 – Maintain a coastwide database of dams, dam removals, fishways, and passage efficiency studies. Collaborate with NGOs to incorporate the database in their passage prioritization tools.

**Subtask 2.2.14.2 – Implement the fish passage prioritization protocol, maintain a coastwide list of passage project priorities, and develop performance criteria to evaluate passage projects’ success.**

Subtask 2.2.14.3 – Establish coastwide fish passage targets and add to diadromous species FMPs as amendments/addenda are developed.

**Subtask 2.2.14.4 – Monitor and participate in upcoming FERC relicensing projects; develop guidance for state staff for navigating the FERC dam**

**relicensing process, in order to more effectively improve passage in relicensing prescriptions.**

Subtask 2.2.14.5 – Continue to develop an East Coast Fish Passage Plan.

Subtask 2.2.14.6 – Evaluate positive and negative consequences of providing fish passage through consultation with the diadromous technical committees.

2.3 Facilitate stakeholder involvement in research initiatives and the stock assessment process.

Task 2.3.1 – Facilitate stakeholder participation in the stock assessment and fisheries management processes. Seek stakeholder input at data workshops during development of stock assessments.

Task 2.3.2 – Promote scientifically sound tagging practices and certification of angler-based tagging programs through the Interstate Tagging Committee.

Task 2.3.3 – Develop outreach materials that highlight opportunities for public engagement in the Commission’s fisheries management and stock assessment processes (See Task 5.2.4).

2.4 Promote data collection and research to support ecosystem-based management

**Task 2.4.1 – Ecological Reference Points Working Group develop and present options for board consideration on ecosystem-based reference points that account for predation effects** (See Task 1.1.26).

Task 2.4.2 – Continue to improve multispecies modeling efforts to support single-species assessments, including development of a new multispecies statistical catch-at-age model. Examine ecosystem based reference points as an alternative to single species reference points, using Atlantic menhaden as a test species.

Task 2.4.3 – Identify opportunities to collaborate with state, federal, and university researchers to use existing data collection platforms to advance ASMFC ecosystem models (e.g. diet studies, surveys of spawning and nursery habitats).

Task 2.4.4 – Identify common resource issues - protected species interactions, bycatch/discards, shifting population distributions, ecosystem services – that are cross-cutting among the Commission’s interstate fishery management plans. Develop recommendations for ISFMP Policy Board consideration to address common issues while maintaining sustainable fisheries in state waters.

Task 2.4.5 – Convene the Fishing Gear Technology Work Group to evaluate the efficacy of Bycatch Reduction Devices in southern shrimp trawl fisheries to reduce Sciaenid bycatch.

Task 2.4.6 – Participate as members of the Chesapeake Bay Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team and Forage Fish Workgroup.

2.5 Provide stock assessment training to improve the expertise and involvement of state and staff scientists.

Task 2.5.1 – Conduct intermediate and advanced stock assessment methods training workshops. Conduct a stock assessment training workshop for Commissioners (See Task 7.3.5).

Task 2.5.2 – Support external stock assessment training opportunities for staff and state scientists.

### **Goal 3 – Promote compliance with fishery management plans to ensure sustainable use of Atlantic coast fisheries**

Fisheries managers, law enforcement personnel, and stakeholders have a shared responsibility to promote compliance with fisheries management measures. Activities under the goal seek to increase and improve compliance with fishery management plans. This requires the successful coordination of both management and enforcement activities among state and federal agencies. Commission members recognize that adequate and consistent enforcement of fisheries rules is required to keep pace with increasingly complex management activity and emerging technologies. Achieving the goal will improve the effectiveness of the Commission’s fishery management plans.

#### *Strategies to Achieve Goal*

3.1 Develop practical compliance requirements that foster stakeholder buy-in.

Task 3.1.1 – Identify and explore fishery management measures that maximize stakeholder buy-in.

3.2 Evaluate the enforceability of management measures and the effectiveness of law enforcement programs.

Task 3.2.1 – Work with Law Enforcement Committee (LEC) Coordinator to ensure the input of the LEC throughout the management process on the enforceability of management options proposed in FMPs, amendments, addenda and conservation equivalency proposals.

Task 3.2.2 – Review effectiveness of the “Guidelines for Resource Managers” to evaluate its ability to inform fishery managers and affect their decisions in the regulatory process.

Task 3.2.3 – Report on the enforceability of existing FMPs as part of the annual compliance review for each species.

Task 3.2.4 – Engage and support NMFS, USFWS Offices of Law Enforcement, and USCG to improve communication and coordination between states and federal enforcement agencies.

3.3 Promote coordination and expand existing partnerships with state and federal natural resource law enforcement agencies.

Task 3.3.1 – Provide a forum to promote interjurisdictional enforcement operations targeting specific fishery resources (e.g. Atlantic striped bass, tautog, American eel) (see Task 1.1.2).

Task 3.3.2 – Expand efforts to reach out to the law enforcement advisory committees of the regional fishery management councils and interstate commissions to seek opportunities for collaboration and ensure consistent law enforcement strategies.

Task 3.3.3 – Continue to evaluate the states’ use of vessel monitoring system (VMS) data with increased access provided to the states. Determine if current level of access is adequate for state use of VMS data. Provide training opportunities, if necessary and resources permit, for state officers to ensure timely and efficient access to VMS data.

Task 3.3.4 – Monitor the Conservation Law Enforcement Chiefs Association and Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies’ Law Enforcement Committee and exchange information as appropriate.

Task 3.3.5 – Exchange information on record keeping of violations, dispatching, and use of real time data to enhance conservation enforcement efforts.

Task 3.3.6 – Exchange information and best practices related to the enforcement of protected and endangered species regulations

Task 3.3.8 – Develop strategies to improve communications among state and federal enforcement agencies prior to regional enforcement activities.

Task 3.3.9 – Engage in annual review of NMFS enforcement priorities to ensure state enforcement needs are included. Review and provide feedback to NMFS on the federal penalty structure.

Task 3.3.10 – Provide feedback to NMFS as additional electronic monitoring technologies are considered and adopted.

Task 3.3.11 – Conduct semi-annual presentations, by state and federal agencies, of enforcement actions and facilitate discussions on joint efforts that can assist in fisheries enforcement.

Task 3.3.12 – Share enforcement techniques and law enforcement success stories and provide regional training sessions (if resources allow) to enhance law enforcement efficiency along the Atlantic coast.

Task 3.3.13 – Evaluate the merits of establishing more timely communication among state and federal law enforcement entities to facilitate more frequent information exchange.

**Task 3.3.14 – Assist MAFMC in identifying strategies to address violations and illegal harvest involved in Research Set-Aside.**

3.4 Enhance stakeholder awareness of management measures through education and outreach.

Task 3.4.1 – Continue to highlight the outcomes of law enforcement investigations (penalties and fines) through various outreach tools (website, social media, press releases, fact sheets).

3.5 Use emerging communication platforms to deliver real time information regarding regulations and the outcomes of law enforcement investigations.

Task 3.5.1 – Report on enforcement issues associated with differing federal, interstate, and state regulations using social media and timely press releases.

Task 3.5.2 – Provide forum for enforcement agencies to display successful development and use of enforcement technologies.

**Goal 4 – Protect and enhance fish habitat and ecosystem health through partnerships and education**

Goal 4 aims to conserve and improve coastal, marine, and riverine habitat to enhance the benefits of sustainable Atlantic coastal fisheries and resilient coastal communities in the face of changing ecosystems. Habitat loss and degradation have been identified as significant factors affecting the long-term sustainability and productivity of our nation’s fisheries. The Commission’s Habitat Program develops objectives, sets priorities, and produces tools to guide fisheries habitat conservation efforts directed towards ecosystem-based management.

The challenge for the Commission and its state members is maintaining fish habitat in the absence of specific regulatory authority for habitat protection or enhancement. Therefore, the Commission will work cooperatively with state, federal, and stakeholder partnerships to achieve this goal. The Commission and its Habitat Program endorses the National Fish Habitat Partnership, and will continue to work cooperatively with the program to improve aquatic habitat along the Atlantic coast. Since 2008, the Commission has invested considerable resources, as both a partner and administrative home, to the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership (ACFHP), a coastwide collaborative effort to accelerate the conservation and restoration of habitat for native Atlantic coastal, estuarine-dependent, and diadromous fishes.

*Strategies to Achieve Goal*

- 4.1 Identify critical habitat through fisheries management programs and partnerships.

**Task 4.1.1 – Finalize the sciaenid habitat source document working closely with technical committees, other species experts, and staff.**

Task 4.1.2 – Prioritize and publicize important habitat types for Commission-managed species as identified in the ACFHP Strategic Plan and Habitat Committee Guidance Document.

Task 4.1.3 – Update species habitat factsheets for publishing in early 2015.

Task 4.1.4 – Coordinate artificial reef activities among the Atlantic coast states, and between the Atlantic and Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commissions.

- 4.2 Educate Commissioners, stakeholders, and the general public about the importance of habitat to healthy fisheries and ecosystems.

Task 4.2.1 – Facilitate coordination and distribution of information for ecosystem-based management and marine protected area activities, and the potential consequences of significant anthropogenic activities on habitats of concern.

Task 4.2.2 – Participate in regional and national habitat meetings and scientific conferences to facilitate increased communication with agencies and programs that have jurisdiction over habitat.

Task 4.2.3 – Publish annual issue of *Habitat Hotline Atlantic*.

**Task 4.2.4 – Develop next installment of the Habitat Management Series: *Climate Change Impacts on Fish Habitats* for ISFMP Policy Board review and acceptance. Identify a subsequent topic (e.g. Sand mining, Power plant impingement).**

- 4.3 Engage local, state and regional governments in mutually beneficial habitat protection and enhancement programs through partnerships

Task 4.3.1 – Work with ACFHP to foster partnerships with like-minded organizations at local levels to further common habitat goals.

Task 4.3.2 – Provide stakeholders with the tools to effectively communicate, promote and accomplish habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement programs at the local level.

Task 4.3.3 – Serve as a point of contact and information conduit at the Commission for energy-related issues affecting fish habitat.

Task 4.3.4 – Continue to provide coordination support for ACFHP, under the direction of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP) Board.

Subtask 4.3.4.1 – Facilitate communication and outreach with ACFHP partners, overlapping partnerships, and new partners. Develop outreach materials and maintain the ACFHP website.

Subtask 4.3.4.2 – Coordinate the implementation of the 5-year ACFHP Conservation Strategic Plan, including development of an Implementation Plan outlining tasks by year to achieve the goals, objectives, and actions in the Strategic Plan.

**Subtask 4.3.4.3 – Support the completion of priority ACFHP Science and Data projects - acquire and analyze fish population, habitat, and human impact data; complete winter flounder GIS habitat assessment and initiate river herring habitat assessment; make results available to Partners for the purpose of strategic coastal habitat conservation.**

Subtask 4.3.4.4 – Through ACFHP, and in cooperation with other Fish Habitat Partnerships and the National Fish Habitat Board, work with partners to develop monitoring and data standards for assessment of coastal habitat condition and fishery resource status prior to and following alteration projects.

4.4 Foster partnerships with management agencies, researchers, and habitat stakeholders to leverage regulatory, political, and financial support.

Task 4.4.1 – Provide information or comment on Atlantic coast projects and permits in accordance with ASMFC project review protocol.

Task 4.4.2 – Facilitate funding and partnership opportunities to promote habitat research in the states.

Task 4.4.3 – Identify partnership opportunities and forge additional relationships with organizations – such as non-governmental organizations and the recreational fishing community – to facilitate the promotion of fish habitat through a collaboration of strengths of different stakeholder groups.

Task 4.4.5 – Maintain habitat managers network to disseminate information about important habitat areas identified in Habitat Committee products. Use social media to connect with regional and local decision makers.

4.5 Identify mechanisms to evaluate ecosystem health.

Task 4.5.1 – Review habitat program goals and evaluate accomplishments annually.

Task 4.5.2 – Work with state and federal agencies, the Councils, and non-governmental organizations to build on existing efforts to populate coastwide GIS databases of fish habitat resources, to identify important fish habitats for Commission managed species as defined in the ACFHP Species-Habitat matrix.

- 4.6 Engage in state and federal agency efforts to ensure climate change response strategies are included in habitat conservation efforts.

Task 4.6.1 – As revisions to habitat sections of FMPs are made include recommendations to mitigate climate change impacts on habitat.

Task 4.6.2 – Identify inconsistencies in state coastal regulatory planning programs and develop recommendations for improvements to the ISFMP Board.

## **Goal 5 – Strengthen stakeholder and public support for the Commission**

Stakeholder and public acceptance of Commission decisions are critical to our ultimate success. For the Commission to be effective, these groups must have a clear understanding of our mission, vision, and decision-making processes. The goal seeks to do so through expanded outreach and education efforts about Commission programs, decision-making processes, and its management successes and challenges. It aims to engage stakeholders in the process of fisheries management, and promote the activities and accomplishments of the Commission. Achieving the goal will increase stakeholder participation, understanding, and acceptance of Commission activities.

### *Strategies to Achieve Goal*

- 5.1 Increase public understanding and support of activities through expanded outreach at the local, state, and federal levels.

Task 5.1.1 – Publish bi-monthly issues of *Fisheries Focus*. Continue to reduce mailing/printing costs through greater electronic distribution.

Task 5.1.2 – Use website to promote ASMFC activities to state and federal partners and stakeholders.

Task 5.1.3 – Promote ASMFC through attendance at fisheries-related trade shows and conferences.

Task 5.1.4 – Promote Commission activities regarding recently assessed and/or high profile species, habitat and law enforcement activities, as well as emerging issues such as fishery allocations and shifting populations due to climate change, to a broader constituency through mechanisms such as targeted press releases, informational brochures, webpage highlights and conference/trade show participation.

Task 5.1.5 – Develop and distribute youth-based educational materials designed to increase awareness of fisheries science and understating of fisheries management to key venues (e.g., teacher kits, Eco-camps, charter boat operations, aquatic educators) to help promote marine stewardship and ocean literacy.



Task 5.1.6 – Collaborate with three East Coast Aquaria (MD, VA and NC) and relevant partners to promote interstate fisheries management and science activities at the aquaria.

Task 5.1.7 – Promote Commission’s mission and programs through outreach meetings with various marine policy and marine science graduate programs.

Task 5.1.8 – Participate in the Mid-Atlantic and New England Fishery Management Councils Marine Resource Education Program.

Task 5.1.10 – Conduct Fisheries Science 101 webinars to increase stakeholder and public understanding of basic fisheries science principles and concepts.

**Task 5.1.9 – Prepare benchmark stock assessment board presentations (American lobster, Atlantic menhaden, tautog and red drum) for posting on YouTube and ASMFC Fisheries Science webpage.**

5.2 Clearly define Commission processes to facilitate stakeholder participation, as well as transparency and accountability.

Task 5.2.1 – Publish and distribute 2014 Annual Report to Congress, state legislators, and stakeholders to provide overview of our activities and progress in carrying out the Commission’s mission and public trust responsibilities.

Task 5.2.2 – Prepare Stock Assessment Briefs (in layman’s terms) for major benchmark stock assessments to facilitate stakeholder understanding of the science behind our management decisions. Focal species for 2015 are American lobster, Atlantic menhaden, black drum, bluefish, weakfish, and tautog.

Task 5.2.3 – Enhance engagement in advisory panels and through solicitation of new members and increased participation of existing members (See Tasks 1.6.1 and 1.6.3).

Task 5.2.4 – Develop outreach materials that highlight opportunities for public engagement in the Commission’s fisheries management and stock assessment processes

**Task 5.2.5 – Develop a guide to fisheries management entities along the Atlantic coast.**

5.3 Strengthen national, regional, and local media relations to increase coverage of Commission actions.

Task 5.3.1 – Track media communications and coverage through ASMFC-related news clippings and media tracking sheet.

Task 5.3.2 – Continue to work with key staff members on refining interview skills, with an emphasis on live, on-the-air interviews.

Task 5.3.3 – Conduct annual meeting of Atlantic Coast Fisheries Communication Group, comprised of Public Information Officers from the Councils, states and federal agencies,

to share successful tools, identify key media contacts and work cooperatively on joint projects.

- 5.4 Use new technologies and communication platforms to more fully engage the broader public in the Commission's activities and actions.

Task 5.4.1 – Use social media tools to increase ASMFC visibility and improve stakeholder engagement.

Task 5.4.2. – Use website capabilities (e.g., video clips) to promote Fisheries Science 101 webinars, videos of fisheries surveys and state on-the-ground projects.

Task 5.4.3 – Evaluate the success of website and social media platforms in reaching broader constituency and effectively communicating ASMFC mission, programs and activities.

## **Goal 6 – Advance Commission and member states' priorities through a proactive legislative policy agenda**

Although states are positioned to achieve many of the national goals for marine fisheries through cooperative efforts, state fisheries interests are often underrepresented at the national level. This is due, in part, to the fact that policy formulation is often disconnected from the processes that provide the support, organization, and resources necessary to implement the policies. The capabilities and input of the states are an important aspect of developing national fisheries policy, and the goal seeks to increase the states' role in national policy formulation. Additionally, the goal emphasizes the importance of achieving management goals consistent with productive commercial and recreational fisheries and healthy ecosystems.

The Commission recognizes the need to work with Congress in all phases of policy formulation. Several important fishery-related laws will be reauthorized over the next couple of years (i.e., Atlantic Coastal Act, Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act, Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act, and Anadromous Fish Conservation Act). The Commission will be vigilant in advancing the states' interests to Congress as these laws are reauthorized and other fishery-related pieces of legislation are considered.

### *Strategies to Achieve Goal*

- 6.1 Increase the Commission's profile and support in the U.S. Congress by developing relationships between Members and their staff and Commissioners, the Executive Director, and Commission staff.

Task 6.1.1 – Provide opportunities for in person Commissioner interactions with Members and congressional staff at our Winter and Spring Meetings.

Task 6.1.2 – Provide opportunities for the Executive Director to meet with congressional staff on a regular basis.

Task 6.1.3 – Focus interactions on Members of Congress from Atlantic coast states that serve on committees of importance to the Commission:

- House and Senate Commerce Justice, Science Appropriations Subcommittees
- House Fisheries, Wildlife, Oceans and Insular Affairs Subcommittee of the Natural Resources Committee
- Senate Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries and Coast Guard Subcommittee of the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee

6.2 Communicate the Commission’s federal funding needs to Congress and advocate for sufficient appropriations.

Task 6.2.1 – Clearly convey our funding needs as part of our communication with congressional staff.

Task 6.2.2 – Justify the need for federal dollars by the Commission through demonstrating the social, economic, and ecological benefits of Commission activities.

Task 6.2.3 – Work with Commissioners to identify funding needs and develop a strategy to secure funding for priority programs (Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act, Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act, Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act Grants, Stock Assessments line item, Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration, and Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership).

Task 6.2.4 – Demonstrate the value of the Commission as an effective management entity and resource to Members of Congress and their staffs.

Task 6.2.5 – Provide state-specific perspectives to staff and Members in meetings, especially management successes and challenges.

Task 6.2.6 – Contact home state Commissioners before communicating with Members or Congressional staff to get a local perspective.

**Task 6.2.7 – Coordinate with the Gulf, Pacific, and Great Lakes Commissions on policy items of mutual interest including federal funding for fisheries programs. Executive Directors should continue providing unified positions on funding and legislative priorities to lawmakers and federal agencies.**

Task 6.2.8 – Coordinate with NMFS to pursue increased funding opportunities for Commission programs.

6.3 Engage Congress on fishery-related legislation affecting the Atlantic coast.

Task 6.3.1 – Monitor federal legislation affecting the Commission, including policy and annual appropriations bills and develop Commission positions on pending federal legislation (e.g., Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorization Act).

Task 6.3.2 – Update Commissioners on pending congressional actions that may affect fisheries management as appropriate.

Task 6.3.3 – Coordinate with the Legislative Committee and Government Relations firm to identify relevant policy and legislative issues.

Task 6.3.4 – Monitor congressional hearings related to fisheries issues, and testify or provide statements for the record when appropriate.

Task 6.3.5 – Engage Commissioners in the formulation of the Commission’s position on federal legislative policy.

#### 6.4 Promote member states’ collective interests at the regional and national levels

Task 6.4.1 – Communicate member states’ needs to Congress and our management partners.

Subtask 6.4.1.1 – Contact Commissioners before and after congressional meetings.

Subtask 6.4.1.2 – Facilitate opportunities for Legislators and Governors’ Appointees to communicate directly with their Legislators and staff.

Task 6.4.2 – Participate with national organizations and management partners to address issues of mutual interest.

Subtask 6.4.2.1 – Conduct interagency coordination meetings (Memorandum of Understanding) under ACFCMA to improve state-federal partnerships.

Subtask 6.4.2.2 – Continue to serve as an advisor to Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC).

Subtask 6.4.2.3 – Continue to participate as a member on the Marine Fisheries Initiative (MARFIN) panel.

#### 6.5 Promote economic benefits of the Commission’s actions (return on investment).

Task 6.5.1 – Provide state-specific economic and jobs statistics related to commercial and recreational marine fishing to lawmakers and staff.

Task 6.5.2 – Use specific examples to show successful management can be linked to economic success and increased jobs.

Task 6.5.3 – Demonstrate the differences between federal and state fishery management tools and the economic benefits of the state management approach (flexibility, closer to stakeholders, quicker response time).

## **Goal 7 – Ensure the fiscal stability & efficient administration of the Commission**

Goal 7 will ensure that the business affairs of the Commission are managed effectively and efficiently, including workload balancing through the development of annual action plans to support the Commission’s management process. It also highlights the need for the Commission to efficiently manage its resources. The goal promotes the efficient use of legal advice to proactively review policies and react to litigation as necessary. It also promotes human resource policies that attract talented and committed individuals to conduct the work of the Commission. The goal highlights the need for the Commission as an organization to continually expand its skill set through training and educational opportunities. It calls for Commissioners and Commission staff to maintain and increase the institutional knowledge of the Commission through periods of transition. Achieving this goal will build core strengths, enabling the Commission to respond to increasingly difficult and complex fisheries management issues.

### *Strategies to Achieve Goal*

7.1 Conservatively manage the Commission’s operations and budgets to ensure fiscal stability.

Task 7.1.1 – Monitor and update as necessary guidelines for cost effective meeting locations and meeting attendee travel policies.

Task 7.1.2 – Responsibly manage and review as necessary the Commission’s reserve fund according to the approved investment policy. Review investments annually with AOC.

Task 7.1.3 – Submit a Certification of Indirect Cost to the Department of Commerce.

Task 7.1.4 – Monitor expenditures on a monthly basis and project variances to ensure complete and timely use of available funds relative to grant cycles. Distribute monthly financial report to Senior Staff.

Task 7.1.5 – Prepare for and work cooperatively with CPA firm to conduct annual audit.

Task 7.1.6 – Update physical inventory.

**Task 7.1.7 – Provide administrative support to MRIP Dockside Survey APAIS, including human resources and meeting management, grant and financial monitoring and office space.**

**Task 7.1.8 – Provide administrative support to NMFS At-Sea Observer Program.**

Task 7.1.9 – Provide administrative support to the ACCSP, including human resource and meeting management, grant and financial monitoring and office space.

Task 7.1.10 – Continue to provide administrative support to the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership (ACFHP), including logistical support for committee meetings and other Partnership activities.

Subtask 7.1.10.1 – Assist in obtaining future funding to support ACFHP operations and fish habitat conservation projects.

7.2 Utilize new information technology to improve meeting and workload efficiencies, and enhance communications.

Task 7.2.1 – Attend information technology seminars/trade shows to remain abreast of current and future technologies.

Task 7.2.2 – Ensure consistency of software across the Commission and continue to cross-train administrative staff.

Task 7.2.3 – Provide targeted staff training for full use of office equipment and software.

Task 7.2.4 – Document standards for electronic record retention and develop site map of Commission electronic filing system for internal use.

Task 7.2.5 – Conduct audit of Commission databases to verify contacts and relevant information.

**Task 7.2.6 – Develop link between ASMFC contacts database and website to provide up-to-date Committee lists.**

Task 7.2.7 – Continue to document Standard Operating Practices and Procedures (SOPPs).

**Task 7.2.8 – Continue to live stream Commission meetings and seek improvements to process.**

7.3 Refine strategies to recruit professional staff, and enhance growth and learning opportunities for Commission and state personnel.

Task 7.3.1 – Promote Commission’s programs and activities and recruit new talent by conducting seminars to graduate level marine programs.

Task 7.3.2 – Provide opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to participate in internships at the Commission.

Task 7.3.3 – Review and revise position descriptions as necessary.

Task 7.3.4 – Review vacancy announcement distribution list and update as necessary.

Task 7.3.5 – Conduct stock assessment methods training workshops. (See Task 2.5.1)

Task 7.3.6 – Conduct Commissioner workshop to enhance leadership, decision making, and strategic thinking skills.

Task 7.3.7 – Conduct meeting management training for committees chairs.

Task 7.3.8 – Facilitate staff participation at national and regional conferences; provide professional training opportunities.

Task 7.3.9 – Facilitate educational opportunities targeted to specific staff based on job responsibilities.

Task 7.3.10 – Conduct annual meeting with financial advisor to review retirement program performance with staff and provide opportunities for staff to meet individually with financial advisor to match financial goals with investment choices for retirement.

7.4 Fully engage new Commissioners in the Commission process and document institutional knowledge.

Task 7.4.1 – Work with Executive Committee to determine the appropriate transition and orientation program for new Commissioners.

Task 7.4.2 – Update and distribute, as necessary, the Commissioner Manual.

Task 7.4.3 – Continue to provide orientation materials for new members of Commission supporting committees.

**Task 7.4.4 – Revise *Forging Knowledge into Change* for distribution at the Commission’s 75<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting.**

7.5 Utilize legal advice on new management strategies and policies, and respond to litigation as necessary.

Task 7.5.1 – Respond as needed to litigation regarding challenges to Commission FMPs, and assist states with fisheries litigation as appropriate.

Task 7.5.2 – Work with Commission attorney to develop a potential information request policy for consideration by full Commission (FOIA equivalent).

**Task 7.5.3 – Ensure annual submission of Financial Disclosure and Conflict of Interest forms by Legislative and Governor Appointee Commissioners and their proxies.**

## Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Proposed 2015 Action Plan Budget (Programmable Funds)

### Budget Overview

*NOTE: Detailed budgets for each task can be found following this overview.*

<b>Goal 1: Regulatory Planning</b>		<b>ACFCMA</b>	<b>IJF</b>	<b>W/B</b>	<b>SEAMAP</b>	<b>FHP</b>	<b>Total</b>
Task 1.1	Meeting Weeks	\$ 275,000	\$ 50,000				\$ 325,000
Task 1.1.1-7	American Eel	\$ 16,100					\$ 16,100
Task 1.1.8-17	American Lobster	\$ 19,325					\$ 19,325
Task 1.1.18-23	Atlantic Herring	\$ 6,000					\$ 6,000
Task 1.1.24-26	Atlantic Menhaden	\$ 16,775					\$ 16,775
Task 1.1.27-29	Atlantic Striped Bass	\$ 16,550					\$ 16,550
Task 1.1.30-32	Atlantic Sturgeon	\$ 22,575					\$ 22,575
Task 1.1.33-35	Bluefish	\$ 17,550					\$ 17,550
Task 1.1.36-41	Coastal Sharks	\$ 2,875					\$ 2,875
Task 1.1.42-48	Horseshoe Crab	\$ 7,150					\$ 7,150
Task 1.1.49-52	Northern Shrimp	\$ 11,475					\$ 11,475
Task 1.1.53-57	Shad and River Herring	\$ 5,200					\$ 5,200
Task 1.1.58-60	Atlantic Croaker	\$ 9,700					\$ 9,700
Task 1.1.61-62	Black Drum	\$ 4,275					\$ 4,275
Task 1.1.63-64	Red Drum	\$ 14,900					\$ 14,900
Task 1.1.65-66	Spanish Mackerel	\$ 550					\$ 550
Task 1.1.67-69	Spot	\$ 15,425					\$ 15,425
Task 1.1.70	Spotted Sea Trout	\$ 25					\$ 25
Task 1.1.71-73	Spiny Dogfish	\$ 750					\$ 750
Task 1.1.74-87	Summer Flounder/Scup/Black Sea Bass	\$ 51,745					\$ 51,745
Task 1.1.88-89	Tautog	\$ 5,550					\$ 5,550
Task 1.1.90-92	Weakfish	\$ 12,550					\$ 12,550
Task 1.1.93-95	Winter Flounder	\$ 675					\$ 675
Task 1.2	NRCC/SEDAR	\$ 2,000					\$ 2,000
	ISFMP staff conference registrations	\$ 5,000					\$ 5,000
<b>Goal 2: Cooperative Research</b>		<b>ACFCMA</b>	<b>IJF</b>	<b>W/B</b>	<b>SEAMAP</b>	<b>FHP</b>	<b>Total</b>
Task 2.1	Stock Assessment Support	\$ 9,170					\$ 9,170
Task 2.1.4	Stock Assessment Reviews	\$ 51,785					\$ 51,785
Task 2.2.5	NEAMAP	\$ 15,875					\$ 15,875
Task 2.2.6	SEAMAP				\$ 14,980		\$ 14,980
Task 2.2.7	Tagging Program	\$ 100					\$ 100



Task 2.2.10	Fish Ageing	\$	20,820			\$	20,820
Task 2.2.13	Fisheries Economics & Social Sciences	\$	24,375			\$	24,375
Task 2.2.14	Fish Passage Working Group	\$	9,750			\$	9,750
Task 2.4.1	Multispecies/Ecological Ref Pts	\$	11,415			\$	11,415
Task 2.4.5	Fishing Gear Technology	\$	150			\$	150
Task 2.5.1	Stock Assessment Training	\$	47,980			\$	47,980
Task 2.5.2	Scientist Training/Conferences	\$	4,300			\$	4,300

**Goal 3: Compliance**

Task 3.1-3.2	Law Enforcement Coordinator		\$20,000				\$20,000
Task 3.3.4	Monitor IAFWA and CLECA	\$	1,000			\$	1,000

**Goal 4: Habitat**

Task 4.3.4	Fish Habitat Partnership					\$	30,585	\$	30,585
Task 4.1.4	Artificial Reef Committee			\$	10,450			\$	10,450
Task 4.2	Coordinate Coastwide Habitat Activities	\$	12,000					\$	12,000
Task 4.2.3-4	Develop & Distribute Habitat Information	\$	800					\$	800

**Goal 5: Outreach**

Task 5.1	Information & Education	\$	10,000					\$	10,000
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**Goal 7: Administration and Finance**

Task 7.3.6	Commissioner Training	\$	3,000					\$	3,000
Task 7.3.7	Meeting Management Training for TC Chairs	\$	5,000					\$	5,000

<b>Budget Overview Totals:</b>	\$	<b>787,240</b>	\$	<b>50,000</b>	\$	<b>10,450</b>	\$	<b>14,980</b>	\$	<b>30,585</b>	\$	<b>893,255</b>
Executive Directorate	\$	277,000	\$	50,000							\$	327,000
ISFMP	\$	296,520	\$	-	\$	10,450					\$	306,970
Science	\$	195,720	\$	-	\$	-	\$	14,980	\$	30,585	\$	241,285
Finance & Administration	\$	18,000	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	-	\$	18,000
	\$	787,240										

## Budget Details

2015 ISFMP Budget Details		ACFCMA	IJF	W/B	SEAMAP	FHP	Total
<b>Goal 1: Regulatory Planning</b>							
<b>American Eel</b>							
<b>Task 1.1.1-7</b>	Board (3 meetings in meeting weeks)						\$ 16,100
	Technical Committee (20 members; 2-1.5 day meeting, 5 conference calls)	\$ 12,950					
	Advisory Panel (15 members; 1-1 day meeting; 1 conference call)	\$ 2,725					
	Plan Review Team (3 members; 1 conference call)	\$ 25					
	Staff travel (ESA meetings)	\$ 400					
<b>American Lobster Task</b>							
<b>1.1.8-17</b>	Board (4 meetings in meeting weeks)						\$ 19,325
	Technical Committee (14 members; 1 meetings, 4 conference calls)	\$ 8,150					
	Stock Assessment Subcommittee 10 members; 2-3 day meetings; 5 conference calls)	\$ 6,475					
	Advisory Panel (10 members; 1 conference calls)	\$ 2,400					
	Plan Review Team (5 members; 1 conference call)	\$ 25					
	Plan Development Team (5 members; 3 conference calls)	\$ 75					
	Trap Tag and database calls	\$ 100					
	LCMT and Trade Meetings (staff travel to 2 mtgs)	\$ 600					
	Public Hearings (6 hearings)	\$ 1,500					
<b>Atlantic Herring</b>							
<b>Task 1.1.18-23</b>	Section (3 meetings in meeting weeks, 1 outside)	\$ 700					\$ 6,000
	Technical Committee ( 4 conference calls)	\$ 100					
	Stock Assessment Subcommittee (5 members; 3 days)	\$ 3,000					
	Advisory Panel (12 members; 3 conference calls)	\$ 75					
	Plan Review Team (4 members; 1 conference calls)	\$ 25					
	Staff travel (coord w/ NEFMC)	\$ 800					
	"Days Out" Meetings (2 Meetings; 2 calls)	\$ 1,300					
<b>Atlantic Menhaden Task</b>							
<b>1.1.24-26</b>	Board (4 meetings in meeting weeks)						\$ 16,775

Technical Committee (14 members x 4 1 day meetings, 8 conference calls)	\$	12,800	
Advisory Panel (19 members; 1 meeting; 1 conference calls)	\$	2,725	
Plan Review Team (6 members; 2 conference calls)	\$	50	
Plan Development Team (5 members; 1 meeting; 3 conference calls)	\$	1,200	

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**Atlantic Striped Bass Task 1.1.27-29**

Board (4 meetings in meeting weeks)			\$	<b>16,550</b>
Technical Committee ( 20 members; 3 meetings, 6 conference calls)	\$	10,950		
Advisory Panel (23 members x 1 meeting, 2 conference calls)	\$	3,650		
Plan Development Team (7 members; 1 meeting; 2 conference calls)	\$	1,400		
Plan Review Team (2 conference call)	\$	50		
Task 1.1.30-32 staff travel (tagging)	\$	500		

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**Atlantic Sturgeon**

Board (2 meeting in meeting weeks)			\$	<b>22,575</b>
Technical Committee (26 members x 1 meeting, 8 conference calls)	\$	4,700		
Stock assessment subcommittee (13 members x 2-3 day meetings, 8 conference calls)	\$	17,750		
Advisory Panel (15 members 2 conference calls)	\$	100		
Plan Review Team (1 conference calls)	\$	25		

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**Bluefish Task 1.1.33-35**

Board (1 outside)	\$	1,500	\$	<b>17,550</b>
Technical Committee (16 member; 1-2 day and 1-1 day meetings)	\$	5,450		
SASC (7 members; 2-3 day meeting)	\$	9,025		
Advisory Panel (20 members x 1 meeting and 1 conference call)	\$	1,375		
Plan Review Team (1 conference call)	\$	25		
Plan Development Team (1 conference calls)	\$	25		
SSC meeting	\$	150		

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**Coastal Sharks**

<b>Task 1.1.36-41</b> Board (2 meeting in meeting weeks)				
Technical Committee (13 members; 1 1 day meeting; 2 conference calls)	\$	2,075	\$	<b>2,875</b>
HMS Advisory Panel (staff travel)	\$	50		
Plan Review Team ( 1 call)	\$	25		
Staff travel Sedar (1 3 day meeting)	\$	675		

Staff travel ICCAT	\$	50	
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**Horseshoe Crab**

<b>Task 1.1.42-48</b>	Board (2 meetings in meeting weeks)			\$	<b>7,150</b>
	HSC Technical Committee (18 members x1-1 day meetings and 2 conference calls)	\$	3,250		
	ARM Subcomm. (8 members, 4 conference call)	\$	100		
	Joint TCs (20 members x 1-1 day meetings, 2 conference calls)	\$	3,650		
	HSC Advisory Panel (15 members; 2 conference calls)	\$	50		
	Shorebird Advisory Panel (1 conference calls)	\$	25		
	Plan Review Team (1 conference call)	\$	25		
	Ad Hoc Biomedical Working Group (10 members; 2 conference calls)	\$	50		

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**Northern Shrimp**

<b>Task 1.1.49-52</b>	Section (3 meetings 1 conference calls)	\$	5,450		\$	<b>11,475</b>
	Technical Committee (6 members x 1 meetings, 5 conference calls)	\$	1,225			
	Advisory Panel (10 members x 2 meetings, 1 conference call)	\$	2,425			
	Plan Review Team (1conference call)	\$	25			
	Plan Development Team (2 conference calls)	\$	50			
	Public Hearings (6 hearings)	\$	1,500			
	Staff Travel (survey cruise and Maine Fish. Forum)	\$	800			

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**Shad and River**
**Herring Task**

<b>1.1.53-57</b>	Board (1 meetings in meeting weeks)				\$	<b>5,200</b>
	Technical Committee (20 members; 1-2 day meetings, 4 conference calls)	\$	4,125			
	Advisory Panel ( 15 members x 1 meeting, 2 conference calls)	\$	50			
	Plan Review Team (1 conference call)	\$	25			
	Staff Travel (2 Meetings)	\$	1,000			

**South Atlantic  
Species: Task  
1.1.53-70**

<b>Atlantic Croaker</b>				
	Board (3 meetings in meeting weeks)			\$ 9,700
	Technical Committee (11 members; 1 1 day meeting; 4 conference calls)	\$ 2,350		
	Stock Assessment Committee (8 members; 1 4 day meeting; 2 conference calls)	\$ 7,250		
	South Atlantic Advisory Panel (12 members 2 conference calls)	\$ 50		
	Plan Review Team (1 conference call)	\$ 50		
<b>Black Drum</b>				
	Board (budgeted under Atlantic croaker)			\$ 4,275
	Technical Committee (12 members; 1-1 day meetings, 4 conference calls)	\$ 2,575		
	Stock Assess. Subcomm. ( 2 conference calls)	\$ 100		
	Advisory Panel (budgeted under Atlantic croaker)			
	Staff Travel (SAFMC)	\$ 600		
	Public Hearings	\$ 1,000		
<b>Red Drum</b>				
	Board (budgeted under Atlantic croaker)			\$ 14,900
	Technical Committee (11 members; 1-1 day meeting ;	\$ 2,175		
	Stock Assessment Committee (6 members; 2-4 day r	\$ 12,700		
	Plan Review Team (1 conference call)	\$ 25		
	Advisory Panel (budgeted under Atlantic croaker)	\$ -		
<b>Spanish Mackerel</b>				
	Board (budgeted under Atlantic croaker)			\$ 550
	Technical Committee (8 members ; 1 conference call)	\$ 25		
	Plan Review Team (3 members x 1 conference call)	\$ 25		
	Advisory Panel (budgeted under Atlantic croaker)			
	Staff travel to SAFMC	\$ 500		
<b>Spot</b>				
	Board (budgeted under Atlantic croaker)	\$ -		\$ 15,425
	Technical Committee (8 members; 1- 4 day meeting; ;	\$ 9,050		
	Stock Assessment Committee (7 members; 1 4 day meeting; 2 conference calls)	\$ 6,350		
	Plan Review Team (1 conference call)	\$ 25		
	Advisory Panel (budgeted under Atlantic croaker)	\$ -		

<b>Spotted Seatrout</b>	Board (budgeted under Atlantic croaker)	\$	-	\$	25
	Plan Review Team (1 conference call)	\$	25		
	Advisory Panel (budgeted under Atlantic croaker)	\$	-		

**Spiny Dogfish**

<b>Task 1.1.71-73</b>	Board (2 meetings in meeting week)			\$	750
	Technical Committee (17 members x 4 conference calls)	\$	100		
	Advisory Panel (12 member 1 conference call)	\$	25		
	Plan Review Team (1 conference calls)	\$	25		
	Staff Travel to NEFMC/MAFMC/HMS AP/SSC	\$	600		

**Summer****Flounder Task**

<b>1.1.74-87</b>	Board (2 meetings in meeting week, 2 outside)	\$	2,700	\$	51,745
(Includes Black sea bass and scup)	Technical Committee (12 members x 4-1 day; meetings, 4 conference calls)	\$	9,020		
	Advisory Panel (10 members x 2 meetings, 2 conference calls)	\$	5,450		
	Plan Development Team (4 conference call)	\$	100		
	Plan Review Team (3 conference call)	\$	75		
	Staff Travel (6 meetings) (MAFMC/FMAT)	\$	1,500		
	Public Hearings (10 hearings)	\$	3,500		
	Stock Assessment Committee (5 3 day meetings; 10 calls)	\$	23,350		
	FMAT	\$	4,050		
	Public Hearings	\$	1,500		
	SSC	\$	500		

<b>Scup</b>	Budget combined with Summer Flounder	\$	-	\$	-
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<b>Black Sea Bass</b>	Budget combined with Summer Flounder	\$	-	\$	-
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**Tautog Task**

<b>1.1.88-89</b>	Board (3 meetings in meeting week)			\$	5,550
	Technical Committee (12 members; 1 meetings; 3 conference calls)	\$	2,325		
	Public Hearings	\$	1,500		
	Advisory Panel (8 members x 1 meeting, 1 conference call)	\$	1,600		
	Plan Review Team (1 conference calls)	\$	25		
	Plan Development Team (4 conference calls)	\$	100		

**Weakfish Task**

<b>1.1.90-92</b>	Board (1 meetings in meeting weeks)			<b>\$</b>	<b>12,550</b>
	Technical Committee (14 members; 1 day meeting; 3 conference calls)	\$	2,325		
	SASC (8 members; 1-4 day meeting; 2 calls)	\$	10,175		
	Advisory Panel ( 19 members; 1 conference call)	\$	25		
	Plan Review Team (1 conference call)	\$	25		

**Winter Flounder****Task 1.1.93-95**

	Board (2 meetings in meeting weeks)			<b>\$</b>	<b>675</b>
	Technical Committee (11 members; 4 conference cal	\$	100		
	Advisory Panel ( 2 conference call)	\$	50		
	Plan Review Team (1 conference call)	\$	25		
	Staff travel (NEFMC)	\$	500		

<b>Task 1.2</b>	ISFMP staff conference registrations	\$	5,000		\$ 5,000
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**Goal 3: Law Enforcement**

	Law Enforcement Coordinator	\$	20,000		<b>\$20,000</b>
	Monitor AFWA and CLECA	\$	1,000		<b>\$ 1,000</b>

**Goal 4: Habitat**

	Artificial Reef Committee (1 2 day meeting; AR conference; 2 calls)		\$ 10,450		\$ 10,450
	Coordinate Coastwide Habitat Activities (2 meetings; 5 calls; contract work)	\$	12,000		\$ 12,000
	Develop & Distribute Habitat Information	\$	800		\$ 800

<b>Subtotal:</b>		<b>\$</b>	<b>296,520</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>10,450</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>306,970</b>
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2015 Fisheries Science Budget Details		ACFCMA	IJF	W/B	SEAMAP	FHP	Total
<b>Goal 2: Fisheries Research &amp; Stock Assessment</b>							
<b>Task 2.1.4</b>	Stock Assessment Reviews						\$ 51,785
	<i>Weakfish</i>	\$ 21,425					
	<i>Lobster</i>	\$ 22,850					
	<i>SEDAR/SARC</i>	\$ 7,510					
<b>Task 2.1.5-6</b>	Assessment Science Committee	\$ 9,170					\$ 9,170
<b>Task 2.2.4</b>	Tagging Program	\$ 100					\$ 100
<b>Task 2.2.5</b>	<b>NEAMAP</b>						\$ 15,875
	<i>NEAMAP Board</i>	\$ 4,610					
	<i>Analytical Committee</i>	\$ 50					
	<i>Operations Committee</i>	\$ 50					
	<i>Catch Processing &amp; Trawl Technical Workshop</i>	\$ 11,165					
<b>Task 2.2.6</b>	<b>SEAMAP</b>						\$ 14,980
	<i>SEAMAP South Atlantic Committee</i>				\$ 5,410		
	<i>Longline Survey Workgroup</i>				\$ 50		
	<i>Data Management Workgroup</i>				\$ 300		
	<i>Bottom Mapping Workgroup</i>				\$ 4,610		
	<i>Crustacean Workgroup</i>				\$ 4,610		
<b>Task 2.2.10</b>	Fish Ageing Exchanges and Workshop	\$ 20,820					\$ 20,820
<b>Task 2.2.13</b>	Fisheries Economics & Social Sciences						\$ 24,375
	<i>Committee on Economics &amp; Social Sciences</i>	\$ 4,375					
	<i>Menhaden Bait Fishery Socioeconomic Study</i>	\$ 20,000					
<b>Task 2.2.14</b>	Fish Passage Working Group	\$ 9,750					\$ 9,750
<b>Task 2.4.1</b>	Multispecies TC / Ecological Ref Pts WG	\$ 11,415					\$ 11,415
<b>Task 2.4.5</b>	Fishing Gear Technology	\$ 150					\$ 150
<b>Task 2.5.1</b>	Stock Assessment Training	\$ 47,980					\$ 47,980
	Scientist Training/Conferences	\$ 4,300					\$ 4,300
<b>Goal 4: Habitat</b>							
<b>Task 4.1.2</b>	Fish Habitat Partnership						\$ 30,585
	<i>Steering Committee</i>					\$ 21,810	
	<i>Work Groups</i>					\$ 7,875	
	<i>National and Regional Initiatives</i>					\$ 900	
<b>Subtotals:</b>		<b>\$ 195,720</b>			<b>\$ 14,980</b>	<b>\$ 30,585</b>	<b>\$ 241,285</b>