

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission 2014 – 2018 Strategic Plan Review of Public Comments

Presented by Bob Beal, Executive Director
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Review of Public Comments

- 4,578 total comments received through January 15, 2014, the close of the comment period
- Three comments from state public input meetings
 - New Jersey (2), Rhode Island (1), New Hampshire (0)
- Six comments from stakeholder groups
 - Northumberland Association for Progressive Stewardship
 - New York Croaker Association
 - Maine Elver Fishermen Association
 - Alewife Harvesters of Maine
 - The Nature Conservancy
- Five comments from individuals
- 4,564 form emails from Pew Charitable Trust



Summary of Comments

Public Participation

- Not enough allowance for public involvement throughout ASMFC process
- Plan should place greater emphasis on showing ASMFC's commitment to the public and their managed fisheries
- Allow more time for individual comment at meetings
- Increased public participation by relevant stakeholders to improve accountability



Summary of Comments

Species Rebuilding

- Base rebuilding plans on monitoring and controlling fishing levels, rather than on pre-specified targets within a certain time frame
- Take earlier action to avoid overfishing rather than waiting until species overfished

For Diadromous Species

- Seek ways to address problems of habitat loss, and fish passage and outward migration issues. Increase collaboration with FERC.



Summary of Comments

Bycatch

- Seek ways to effectively monitor and control bycatch
- Reduce regulatory discards and make full use of what is landed

Ecosystem-based Fisheries Management

- Vast majority of comments advocate taking a precautionary approach to management, protecting forage species, and creating an interstate Fishery Ecosystem Plan covering each major ecosystem under our jurisdiction



Summary of Comments

Commercial Fishery Bias

- ASMFC favors commercial exploitation of marine resources for food instead of managing them for greatest socio-economic return
- Place greater emphasis on recreational fisheries and catch & release

Health & Abundance of Resources 1st Priority

- Plan lacks statement endorsing health and abundance of our marine resources as most important management priority



Summary of Comments

Habitat Restoration

- The importance of climate change, ecosystem function, and habitat conservation should be reflected in the Plan's vision & values
- Ocean Planning - ASMFC should increase its engagement with the 3 regional ocean partnerships on the Atlantic coast (NROC, MARCO, GSAA) to ensure proper protection of habitat and access to fishery resources



Summary of Comments

Improved Data Collection and Sharing

- ASMFC should emphasize implementation of new and emerging technologies (e.g., electronic reporting and monitoring) that will provide managers with the data they need to meet sustainability goals