

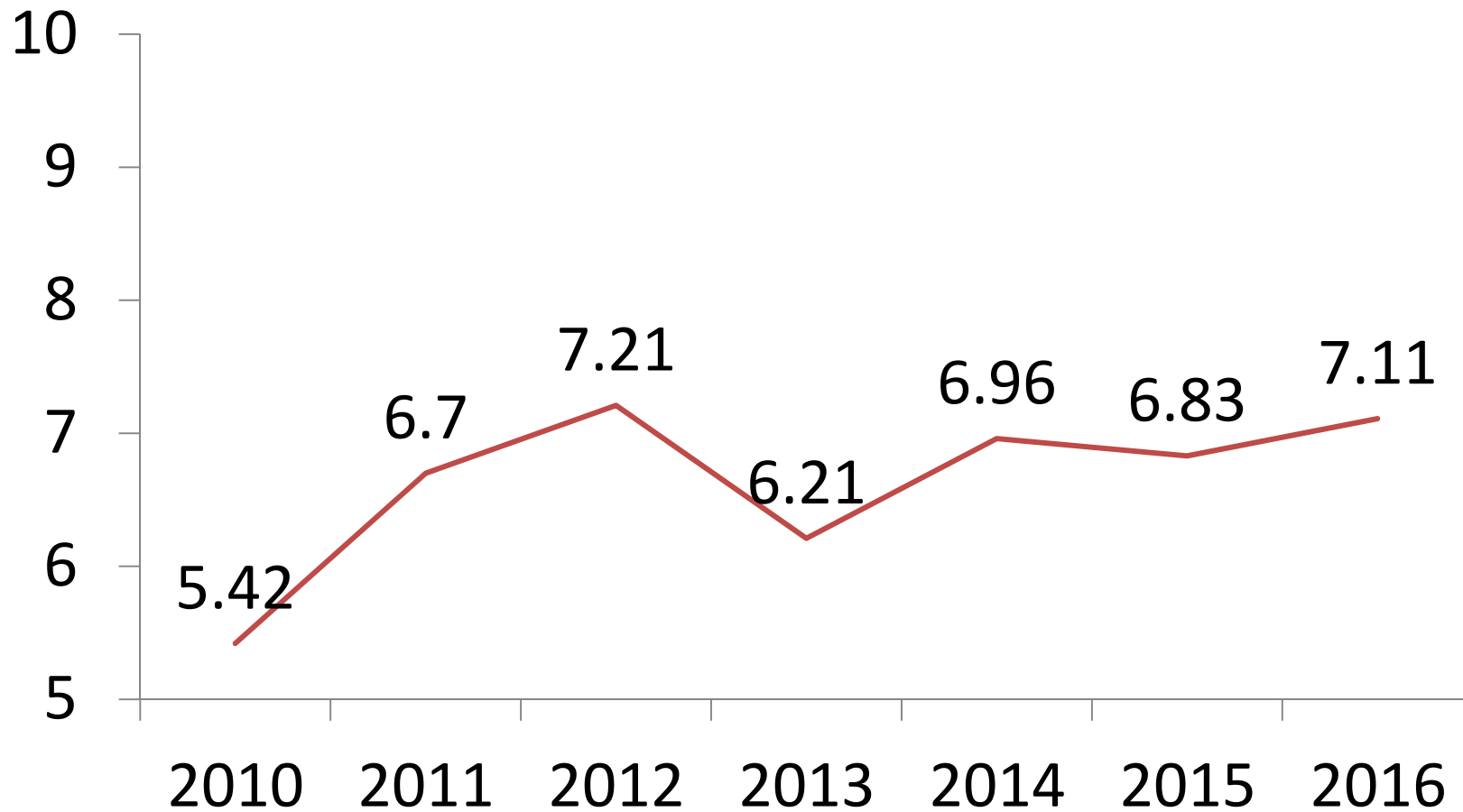


Commissioner Survey Results

ISFMP Policy Board

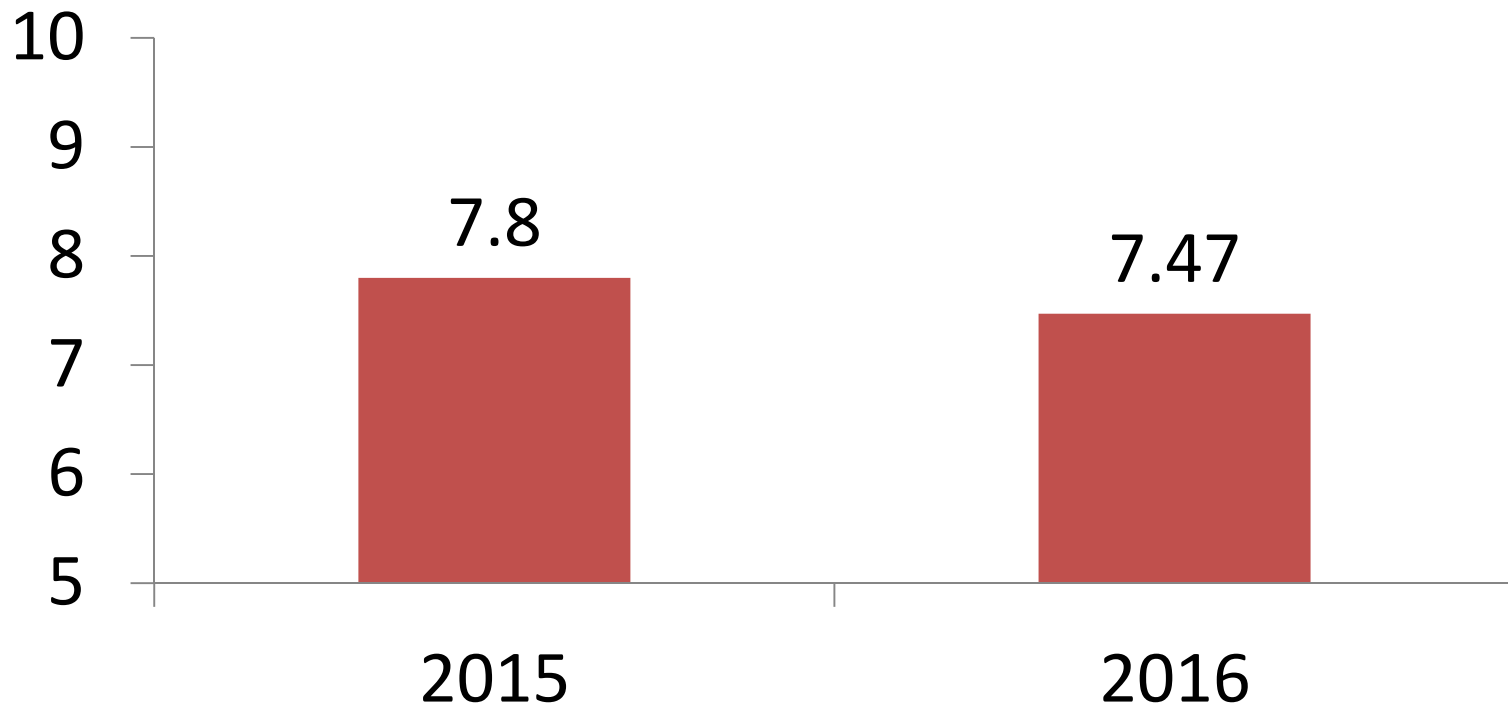
February 4, 2016

Cooperation with Federal Partners

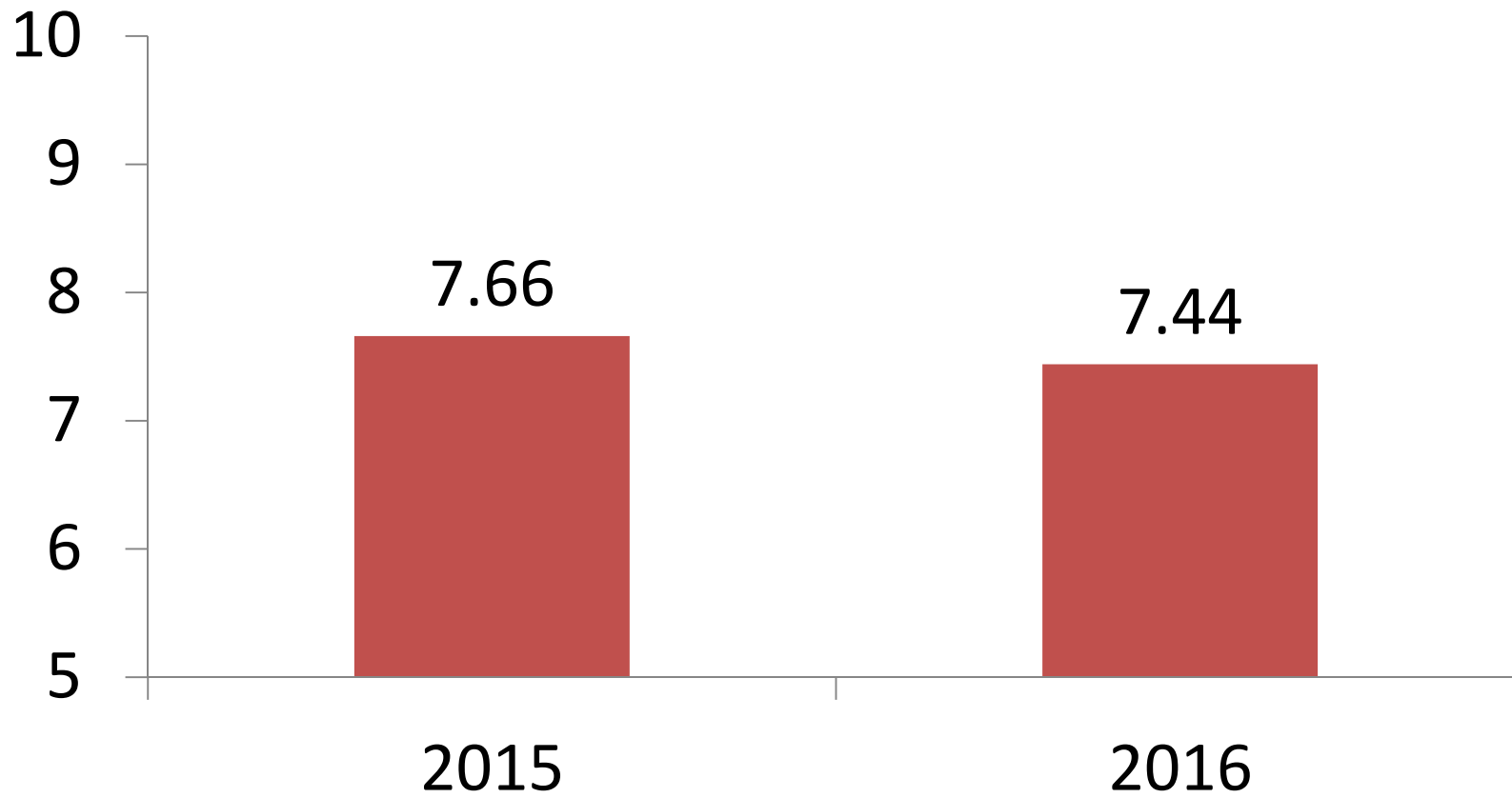




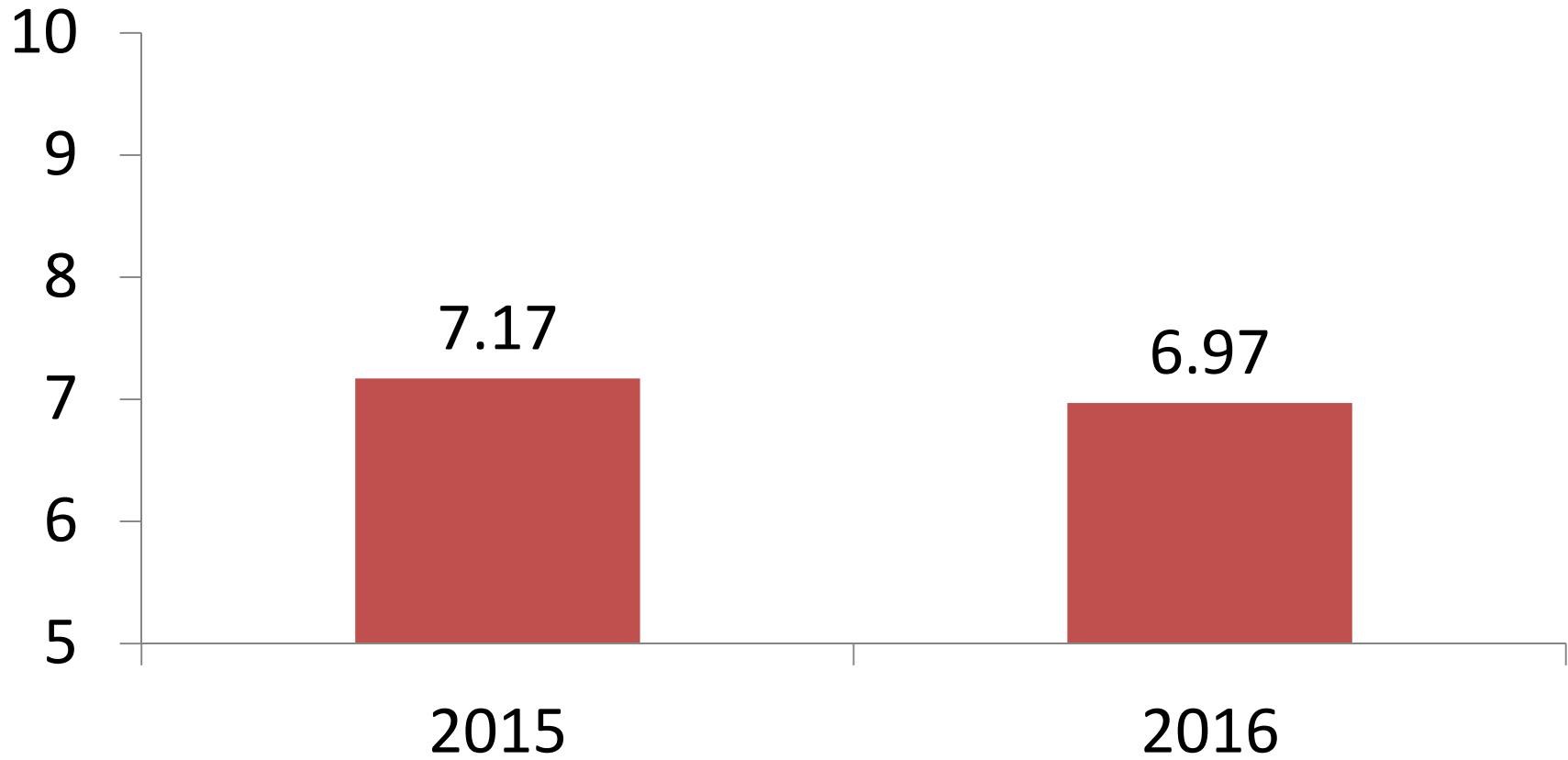
Is “the number of stocks where overfishing is no longer occurring” a clear metric to measure progress?



Progress to End Overfishing



Ability to Manage Rebuilt Stocks



Open Ended Questions Overview



- Ecosystem management
- Socioeconomics
- Climate change/non-fishing factors
- Cooperation with federal partners
- Enforcement

Obstacles to Commission Success



- Habitat loss
- Availability of resources to assess the stocks/incomplete information
- Factionalism on management boards/among Commissioners
- Confusion about the definition of rebuilt/rebuilding/depleted stocks
- Limited scope of Commission authority
- NMFS not allowing the harvest of black sea bass and summer flounder
- Gaining constituent buy in and support

Most Useful Commission Products



- Species status reports
 - Meeting summaries
 - Fact sheets
 - Stock assessments
 - Training opportunities
 - Technical presentations
 - Commissioner manual
 - Press releases/news clippings
 - Fisheries Focus/Habitat Hotline
 - Status of the Stocks
- Overview
 - Travel voucher assistance
 - Public hearing presentations
 - Accessibility to staff/inter-state contacts
 - Commission web site
 - Issue papers on habitat
 - Formal decision processes

Additional Products Requested



- Summary of annual quotas by species
- Formal risk policy to address uncertainty
- Fisheries science training
- State regulation summaries
- Reviews of stock status that include management history, including ecosystem components
- Better sound system for meetings
- Earlier release of draft agendas
- Consolidation of regulations for major FMPs into a single document

Increase Attention to... (1/2)



- Improving coordination of management time frames between the Commission and states
- Mitigating impacts on fishing communities
- Improving MRIP
- Causes for stock declines
- Promoting ourselves to lawmakers and the sporting public (to help fund our projects)
- Bringing together information about state surveys (ex. River Herring Standardization Workshop)
- Increase focus on Charter policies
- Evaluate annual reporting requirements, especially for de minimis states

Increase Attention to... (2/2)



- Ability of some states to enforce regulations
- Improving assessments for species currently managed before taking on additional species
- Prioritizing stock assessments
- Obtaining permission from Congress to manage more species such as Black Sea bass
- Reevaluate allocations
- The issue of overabundance of issues. Is there a need to address the amount of species-specific issues that are currently provided us?
- Public comments from stakeholders on actions that are being taken

Other Comments



- Support for additional resources to the Science Program
- Need to be less formulaic and more creative when managing fisheries
- Quota management on the commercial side should be replaced
- Failure to manage stocks of black sea bass and summer flounder for harvest by public is causing loss of confidence in the system and no support for the regulations



Questions?





State Declared Interest in ASMFC Species

ASMFC

February 2016

Rules and Regulations



SECTION 5. A state has an interest in a fishery if the latest data show it meets any of the following criteria:

(a) such fish are found customarily in its territorial waters;

(b) such fish are customarily or periodically in the territorial waters of such state for the purpose of spawning or in transit to and from spawning grounds; or

(c) the citizens of the state are recorded as having taken 5% or more of the total Atlantic coast catch of the species of fish in any of the five preceding years.

Requested Changes



- Delaware has requested to be removed from winter flounder.
- Winter flounder are no longer commonly found in state waters.

Requested Changes



Pennsylvania has requested to declare an interest in Atlantic Menhaden

- Menhaden have historically inhabited PA's waters of the Delaware estuary.
- Historical records indicate at one time Menhaden were abundant in these waters

Requested Changes



- While PA surveys do not target menhaden, menhaden have been documented in past sampling
 - Positive intercepts of survey catch from ranges from 1-70 with an average of 7 fish (1981-1992)
- Periodically seen in striped bass sampling efforts
- Appearance in Pennsylvania appears to be associated with low spring flows and the salt line moving upstream

Requested Changes



- Reports related to state permitting of power plants in the Delaware Estuary in Pennsylvania as well as reports from other non-PFBC studies document Menhaden are not uncommon in Pennsylvania's waters of the estuary and at times, they are relatively abundant.

Requested Changes



- Reports related to state permitting of power plants since 1985
 - 2008, NJDEP collected juvenile menhaden. Fish were caught both upstream and downstream of the Del-PA line, but in NJ, in NJ and near the Naaman Creek mouth; the mouth is in Delaware, about .8 miles downstream of the PA-Del line.
 - 2007, Caught 1 in a hoop net “from approximately Oldman’s Point to Commodore Barry Bridge”, which is in NJ, but upstream of the Del-PA line
 - 2012, electrofished 100 fish (in 2 schools) from “vicinity of Linden Ave, Dredge Harbor and Poquessing Creek”. Dredge Harbor is in NJ, while the other two sites are in PA. The same sample also includes 1000 Clupeidae which could be menhaden, river herring or shad



Overview of Executive Committee Recommendations to the ISFMP Policy Board on Changes to ASMFC Guiding Documents

ASMFC

February 2016



Issue 1: Appealing Non-Compliance Findings

The following language will be deleted in Section 7 (g) of the Charter: ~~Appeal of Compliance Findings~~ - A state which disagrees with a management board's failure to find a state out of compliance may appeal that finding to the ISFMP Policy Board pursuant to Section Three(d)(9).



Issue 2: Definition of a Final Action

- The following text of section 4 (d) 3 of the Charter and article III section 1 of the Rules and Regulations will be added:
- Final Action is: setting fishery specifications (including but not limited to, quotas, trip limits, possession limits, size limits, seasons, area closures, gear requirements), allocation, final approval of FMPs/amendments/addenda, emergency actions, conservation equivalency plans, and non-compliance recommendations.

Issue 3: Amendment and Addendum Process



The following language will be added to section 6 (9) (i) of the Charter: Upon completion of a PID and its approval by the management board/section, the Commission shall again utilize the relevant states' established public review process to elicit public comment on the PID. The Commission shall ensure that a minimum of three public hearings are held, including at least one in each state that specifically requests a hearing. A hearing schedule will be published within 60 days following approval of the PID; hearings may be held in conjunction with state agencies. The hearing document will be made available to the public for review and comment at least 30 days prior to the date of the first public hearing; availability will be announced by a press release issued by the Commission. Written comments will be accepted for 14 days following the date of the last public hearing.

Issue 3: Amendment and Addendum Process



- The following language will be added to section 6 (9) (ii) of the Charter: The Commission shall ensure that a minimum of ~~four~~ three public hearings are held, including at least one in each state that specifically requests a hearing.
- The following language will be added to section 6 (b) (3) of the Charter: Addenda to a FMP must provide for a minimum of 30 days for public comment in making adaptive management changes.

Issue 3: Amendment and Addendum Process



- The following language under Section 6 (c) (8) will be added to the Charter: Advisory Panel Participation –
The AP may provide feedback to the board/section on FMPs/Amendments as described below. The board/section may seek additional guidance outside of the below process if necessary.
- **During the development of the PID.** APs provide guidance to the PDT before the Board reviews the document for public comment.
- **During the development of the Draft FMP.** After the Board gives the PDT guidance on issues to include in the draft, APs provide feedback to the PDT on those issues.
- **During the public comment of the Draft FMP.** APs meet to give recommendations on the public comment draft of the FMP.



Issue 4: TC Decisions and ASMFC Staff Participation on Committees

- The EC recommends in addition to recording the number of votes in favor and also add the number of abstentions
 - Reflects current commission voting practices
- The majority opinion shall be presented to the board/section as the recommendation, defined as a simple majority, including a record number of votes in favor, against, and abstentions.

Issue 4: TC Decisions and ASMFC Staff Participation on Committees



1. The following language will be added to section 5.1.1 ISFMP Staff of the Technical Support Group Guidance and Benchmark Stock Assessment Process: ISFMP Staff is an ex-officio member of the TC, therefore may not vote on issues before the TC.
2. The following language will be added to section 5.1.2 Science Staff of the Technical Support Group Guidance and Benchmark Stock Assessment Process: If a consensus cannot be reached, Science staff may vote on an issue before the stock assessment subcommittee, however Science Staff may not vote on issues before the technical committee.



Issue 5: Commissioner Attendance

- Article II Section 2 of the Rules and Regulations will be changed to: The Chair shall ask the Executive Director to notify the state's Executive Committee member of the unexplained absence of any Commissioner from two consecutive meetings of the Commission. The following sentence was deleted from that same section: ~~The Chair may request that the notification include a recommendation for the replacement of the non-attending member.~~



Issue 6: Appeal Criteria

- The EC recommends the Policy Board take no action to change the current appeal criteria.



Issue 7: Definition of 2/3 Majority

- The following language will be added to section 6 (b) (2) and section 6 (c) (10) (i) of the Charter and Article II section 1 of the Rules and Regulations: a 2/3 majority will be defined by the entire voting membership, however any abstentions from the federal services would not count when determining the total number of votes.

Issue 8: AP, LEC, and TC Participation at Board Meetings



- Section 4 (d) (4) of the Charter will be updated with the following language: Advisory Panel Chairs will only be reimbursed to attend commission meetings if the AP met between board/section meetings to provide feedback on an issue.
- Section 5 (i) of the Charter will be updated with the following language: AP chairs should present reports to Boards/Sections and answer any specific questions relevant to their report. Chairs may not ask questions or present their own viewpoints during Board/Section deliberations. If the chair would like to present their own viewpoints, they must go to the public microphone during the public comment portion of the meeting.



Issue 8: AP, LEC, and TC Participation at Board Meetings

- Section 7.5 will be added to the Technical Support Group Guidance and Benchmark Stock Assessment Process: Committee Chairs should present the committee report and answer any specific questions relevant to the report at Board/Section meetings. Committee Chairs may not ask the Board questions or present their own viewpoints during Board/Section deliberations.



Issue 9: Council Participation on Management Boards

Section 4 (b) (4) of the Charter will be updated with the following sentence: If a Council has been invited as a voting member of a Board/Section that manages multiple species, the Board/Section will designate which species can be discussed and voted on by the Council representative. A council staff member or member of the council may be appointed as a proxy for the ED or Council Chair.



Issue 10: Web Based Public Hearings and Online Public Comment Surveys

- The EC recommends to the Policy Board that the Commission can hold public hearings via webinar but a webinar would not replace a state's request to hold an in-person hearing.
- No language changes necessary



Issue 11: Meeting Notice of Action Items

- Add language to Article II section 1 of the Rules and Regulations. In order for a board or section to take action there must be prior public meeting notification of the action. Action that occurs during quarterly meeting weeks must be notified 4 days prior to the first day of the meeting. Action that occurs outside of the quarterly meetings must be notified 48 hours prior to the meeting.



Report to the Atlantic States Marine
Fisheries Commission
ISFMP Policy Board
February 4th, 2016

Black Sea Bass Habitat

- Awarded \$250,000 from MAFMC to manage restoration/research project(s)
- Released RFP December 2015
- Deadline: February 1, 2015
- Received 7 projects
- Currently evaluating and ranking projects



FY2016 NFHP-USFWS Funding

- Received 9 Applications
- 8 Projects were eligible for funding
- Recommended 5 On the Ground projects to USFWS
- Can request up to \$50,000
- Criteria: meets ACFHP goals, leverage, time to completion, readiness, etc.



FY2016 NFHP-USFWS Funding Recommendations

- ACFHP Operations
- Dam Removal: Pawcatuck R., RI
- Dam Removal, Third Herring Brook, MA
- Dam Removal, Coonamessett R., MA
- Mangrove Restoration, IRL, FL
- Living Shoreline, Long Island, NY



Dam Removal: Pawcatuck River, RI

- Requested \$50,000
- Total Project Cost: \$1,187,650
- Opens 32 miles of spawning & nursery habitat
- Benefits Shad and River herring among others



Dam Removal: Third Herring Brook, MA

- Requested \$50,000
- Total Project Cost: \$413,000
- Opens 1,000 ft with potential for access to spawning pond
- Benefits Shad and River herring among others



Dam Removal: Coonamesset River, MA

- Requested \$50,000
- Total Project Cost: \$290,000
- Improves over 0.28 river miles and restores 17 acres of Lower Bog.
- Benefits Shad and River herring among others



Mangrove Restoration: Indian River Lagoon, FL

- Requested \$49,960
- Total Project Cost: \$101,175
- Will remove invasive Brazilian peppers and plant 10,000 native species
- Benefits Red drum and Spotted seatrout among others



Living Shoreline, Long Island, NY

- Requested \$49,799
- Total Project Cost: \$99,660
- Will stabilize shoreline with biologs containing natural marsh plants
- Benefits Scup, Striped Bass, Tautog, among others



Conservation Moorings in Narragansett Bay, RI

- Received \$20,000 from NOAA Atlantic Coastal Act funding
- Bungee Moorings reduce chain-sweep and improve seagrass quality
- Project completed except for sign placement and post-installation monitoring



Conservation Moorings in Narragansett Bay, RI

Protecting eelgrass fish habitat through the use of conservation moorings

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has partnered with the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership, the Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife, Town of Jamestown Conservation Commission, Clarks Boat Yard, Conanicut Marine Services Inc., Jamestown Boat Yard, and Aquidneck Mooring Company to protect fish habitat around Conanicut Island (Jamestown). Through this partnership, four traditional mooring systems were replaced with alternative conservation moorings that significantly reduce adverse impacts to important eelgrass fish habitat.

What are conservation moorings?

A conservation mooring is a mooring system designed to avoid contact with the seafloor, thereby reducing physical damage to eelgrass. The system uses an elastic connection, akin to a bungee cord, to connect the surface buoy with the anchoring device. This eliminates any chain sweep that physically damages or eliminates the eelgrass. Depending on the seafloor, helical (i.e. screw-like) anchors may be used to replace traditional concrete mooring blocks. These significantly reduce the environmental footprint within the eelgrass habitat, and allow for eelgrass growth in the previously affected area.

Monitoring to assess eelgrass habitat recovery

Prior to installing conservation moorings, the status of eelgrass habitat around each of the existing traditional moorings was documented. After installation, the level of eelgrass recovery will be monitored and documented. This monitoring effort will help researchers understand the effectiveness of this technology as a coastal resource management tool.



Photo by NOAA/NOAA Fisheries/NOAA Fisheries Service/NOAA Fisheries Service/NOAA Fisheries Service



Photo by NOAA/NOAA Fisheries/NOAA Fisheries Service/NOAA Fisheries Service/NOAA Fisheries Service



Photo by NOAA/NOAA Fisheries/NOAA Fisheries Service/NOAA Fisheries Service/NOAA Fisheries Service



Photo by NOAA/NOAA Fisheries/NOAA Fisheries Service/NOAA Fisheries Service/NOAA Fisheries Service

Importance of eelgrass habitat

Eelgrass is an extremely valuable spawning and nursery habitat for a variety of fish and invertebrate species, including winter flounder, summer flounder, and bay scallop. It is also an important species at the bottom of the food chain. Eelgrass habitat has been declining throughout the Northeast due to poor water quality, increased turbidity and physical alterations such as dredging, filling, and boating related activities.

Impacts to eelgrass habitat from moorings

Eelgrass habitat is vulnerable to a number of boating related activities, including prop damage and the use of traditional chain moorings. When placed within or adjacent to eelgrass beds, traditional chain moorings can severely damage habitat through physical removal of the eelgrass shoots, causing a "haloing" effect. Additionally, disturbance to the seafloor by mooring chains suspends sediment, increasing turbidity which reduces water clarity. This diminishes the amount of light penetration critically important to eelgrass growth and survival.



Fish Habitat Decision Support Tool

- NALCC, Downstream Strategies LLC, USFWS, TNC
- Winter flounder in Long Island Sound and Narragansett Bay
- Shad, River herring along Atlantic Coast
- Working on outreach

Fish Habitat Decision Support Tool

www.fishhabitattool.org



FISH HABITAT DECISION SUPPORT TOOL

VISUALIZATION FUTURING RANKING

ABOUT THE TOOL

This tool was created with funding from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to provide resource managers and the general public with access to the extensive spatial data and results produced from multiple fish habitat assessments.

Additional assessments performed under funding and guidance from the North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative and the Atlantic Coastal Fish

in the same



CLICK
THE MAPS
TO USE
THE TOOL

Species-Habitat Matrix

- Habitat use of >100 species along Atlantic Coast
- Egg, larval, juvenile, adult, spawning
- Prioritized habitats
- Summary report available on website
- Accepted to BioScience April '16
- Website in the works

ACFHP would like to
thank ASMFC for your
continued operational
support

Questions?