

Equity and Environmental Justice

*Council Coordinating Committee (CCC) Equity and Environmental Justice (EEJ)
Working Group (WG) Recommendations to Address the May 2022 CCC Motions
Regarding EEJ*

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September 2022 CCC Meeting, Annapolis, MD

Outline

- Background: Tasking and WG Composition
- WG Meeting Overview and Process
- Report Overview

The CCC at its May 2022 passed the following motion:

“...to establish an EEJ workgroup to share information about different approaches to meet EEJ objectives, taking into account the draft EEJ strategy. The Workgroup should consider developing a terms of reference, holding an EEJ workshop, and publishing a peer reviewed journal article on their work.”

WG Members (Repopulated)

- José Montañez (MAFMC)
- Kitty Simonds, Mark Mitsuyasu, and Zach Yamada (WPFMC)
- Jim Seger (PFMC)
- Christina Wiegand (SAFMC)
- Rachel Feeney and Angela Forristall (NEFMC)
- Ava Lasseter (GMFMC)
- Kate Haapala (NPFMC)
- Graciela García-Moliner (CFMC)

WG Co-Chairs: MAFMC and WPFMC

Process

Schedule:

- WG repopulated by 2nd wk. of July
- 1) July 28
 - 2) August 5
 - 3) September 2
 - 4) September 30

Report Development:

- Outlines actions to address components of the May 2022 CCC motion

Section 1 - Covers terms of reference for formal CCC EEJ WG

Section 2 - Provides alternative strategies for potential workshop

Section 3 - Contains examples of potential steps each Regional Fishery Management Council and the CCC could take to explore and address EEJ

Section 4 - Discusses the development of a peer-reviewed journal article

Section 5 - Presents major points for consideration from Councils' comments on the Draft NMFS EEJ Strategy

Report Overview

1 TERMS OF REFERENCE

- ToRs presented in Appendix A:
 1. Establishment, 2. Membership, 3. Organization, 4. Rules of Order, 5. Meetings, 6. Meeting Documentation, 7. Function
- Outline the group's function and work plan to better understand EEJ concerns in fisheries management
- Aims to develop an ongoing and collaborative process
- Provide an opportunity to set collective tone on EEJ
- *Key Question: Does the CCC agree with the ToRs for the EEJ WG?*

2 POTENTIAL STEPS TO EXPLORE AND ADDRESS EEJ

- Potential steps each Regional Fishery Management Council, and the CCC, could take to explore and address EEJ are presented in Appendix B
- “Next Steps” examples are drawn from the document, “Equity and Environmental Justice in Fisheries Management: Brief Overview”
- Shows how they are aligned with NOAA’s Draft Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy

2 POTENTIAL STEPS TO EXPLORE AND ADDRESS EEJ

- 21 Next Steps identified across 6 areas (Appendix B)
 - Outreach and Engagement
 - Best Scientific Information Available
 - Policy and Planning
 - Benefits
 - Inclusive Governance
 - Empowering Environment

2 POTENTIAL STEPS TO EXPLORE AND ADDRESS EEJ

Appendix B

Potential steps that the Councils could explore to address EEJ presented in the “Equity and Environmental Justice in Fisheries Management Brief Overview” report and how they relate to specific goals and objectives in NOAA’s draft EEJ strategy.

	Next Steps ^a	How it relates to Draft EEJ Strategy ^b	Considerations
	<i>Outreach and Engagement: Establish and improve communications and relationships with underserved communities to better understand their needs</i>		
1	Seek out opportunities for two-way dialogue (e.g., community visits, public hearings, listening sessions). Hosting listening or engagement sessions with underrepresented groups, Tribes, and communities to understand potential challenges to advancing EEJ in the region	Table 5, numbers 1 - 4 Table 7, numbers 1, 2, 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underserved communities need to be first identified • Promote underserved community engagement • Promote trust in the management process
2	Explore partnerships, such as Sea Grant field agent support, in meaningful community engagement. Are there ways to facilitate input from a broader constituency (e.g., “Outreach” internships where interns might visit docks to share and gather information)?	Table 4, numbers 1, 2, 4, 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underserved communities need to be first identified • Promote underserved community engagement

Note: Column 3 shows how “Next Steps” relate to the core objectives and actions described in the NMFS Draft EEJ Strategy

2 POTENTIAL STEPS TO EXPLORE AND ADDRESS EEJ

- Many of the actions in Appendix B would require a significant commitment of agency and Council staff time, financial resources, and more
- Regional needs and resources/time diverse across Councils
- CCC has an opportunity to set the collective tone on EEJ particularly through the iterative, public process created by the MSA
- WG suggests seeking stakeholder input and collaboration for how to advance EEJ in the Council process, including improvements to better connect barriers with remedies

3 EEJ WORKSHOP PLANNING

- WG considered developing a workshop to further consider and address EEJ issues at the national- and regional-levels
- It is anticipated that at least some members of the CCC would participate in this workshop
- Outcomes and comments from the workshop would be provided for the CCC to solicit feedback and additional public engagement
- WG is asking for feedback from the CCC on the development of a detailed proposal for the workshop that includes the goal, timeline, budget, location, etc.

3 EEJ WORKSHOP PLANNING

Considerations on the following points would be useful in guiding the development of a workshop. The EEJ WG is asking for advice on the following:

- What are the CCC's objectives for the EEJ workshop? Some potential objectives brainstormed by the WG include:
 - Development of Applications
 - Relationship building
 - Dialogue

3 EEJ WORKSHOP PLANNING

- Whose participation is critical to meeting the CCC's objective(s)?
- Feedback on workshop objective(s) will inform the scope of participants
 - Council members
 - Council staff
 - Fisheries Science Center staff with related social science or EEJ expertise
 - Independent researchers with related fishery and EEJ expertise

3 EEJ WORKSHOP PLANNING . . . *Conceptual Models*

Conceptual model 1: Next Steps for EEJ

Conduct an EEJ workshop with Council members and staff from each region to share information on issues, ideas, and solutions related to EEJ

At this workshop, participants could discuss and develop concrete ideas to implement “1-3 Next Steps” presented in Appendix B

This model and approach would require the CCC to prioritize next steps to be the focal point of the workshop

Conceptual model 2: NOAA and Council Collaboration

Conduct a multi-regional and national-level workshop with staff from all Councils and NOAA Fisheries to discuss the role of the Councils as partners for implementing the NOAA Fisheries EEJ Strategy

This model would require that the Councils and NOAA Fisheries staff have the same level of engagement in workshop planning and attendance

➤ *Key Question: What are the CCC’s objectives for an EEJ workshop?*

4 PEER REVIEWED JOURNAL

- WG discussed the task: *“consider ... publishing a peer reviewed journal article on their work”*
- Premature
- No merit publishing work that has been done thus far
- It may be more appropriate to develop a peer-reviewed journal article after the completion of the workshop or at some time in the future when there is more progress on advancing EEJ and lessons to be shared

➤ *Key Question: Does the CCC support the EEJ WG’s findings to hold off on writing a peer-reviewed article at this time?*

5 COUNCILS' COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT NMFS EEJ STRATEGY

- Seven comment letters (Appendix C)
- Common themes are:
 - 1) Concerns regarding funding and staffing with respect to efforts required
 - 2) A desire to collaborate with NOAA Fisheries staff in the development of regional implementation plans
 - 3) A need to identify underserved communities
- Following the public comment period, NMFS indicated that it will be developing regional implementation plans regarding EEJ. The WG hopes that Councils will be included in the development of these regional plans

Questions?