



Date: June 17, 2009

To: Council Coordination Committee (CCC) Participants

Subject: Summary of May 19-22, 2009 - CCC Meeting, Boston, MA

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**Council Coordination Committee Meeting (CCC)
May 19-22, 2009
Boston, Massachusetts
Meeting Summary**

1. A written transcription along with an audio account of the May 19-22, 2009 CCC meeting is in preparation and will be mailed to all participants by July, 2009. The theme of this year's CCC meeting was "Best Practices". The goal was to share how we conduct our regional business and how we might benefit from the experiences of our colleagues. Agenda items included five different topics: Annual Catch Limits (ACLs) and Accountability Measures (AMs); Ecosystem-Based Management; Limited Access Privilege Programs (LAPPs); Standardized Management Actions; and Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Operating Procedures. Findings for each of these agenda items are summarized below:

ACLs and AMs

Discussions centered around whether the Councils have or intend to develop one formulaic approach to setting ABCs, ACLs and AMs, or use differing approaches in each fishery management plan. It was determined that some Councils will use one standard approach, while others will use several different approaches. Fisheries are prosecuted and managed very differently throughout the eight regions, because the available data associated with each fishery differs greatly. Recognizing the unique aspects of regional fisheries, it was difficult to agree on one standard approach to setting ABCs, ACLs and AMs.

All eight Councils will use AMs to close, or at least are considering options to close their fisheries when the ACL is reached to prevent exceeding ABC.

There is concern about how state fisheries (catch from state registered vessels inside state waters), and a foreign country's catch of transboundary stocks may impact the federally mandated ACL setting process. Most Councils are wrestling with these two issues and agree that there is potential for ACL and AM requirements to disadvantage U.S. fishermen with federally permitted vessels operating in federal waters.

Ecosystem-Based Management

Most Councils do not have a formal Ecosystem Fishery Plan (EFP) with attendant regulations that are substantially different than the regulations in place before implementation of the EFP.

Only a few of the Councils are directly involved in marine spatial planning activities beyond EFH consultations in their region.

Four of the eight Councils are designated as members of formal or informal regional ecosystem-type governance structures.

The Councils agree that additional resources are needed to engage in both marine spatial planning activities and emerging ecosystem governance structures. It is essential that Councils are involved early on in these activities.

The Councils agree that a template for Agency recommendations for EFP contents would be very beneficial.

The Councils are generally concerned that absent new legislation and authority, it is difficult to proceed with ecosystem based control rules, ecosystem based alternatives to MSY and OY concepts and other ecosystem based regulations.

Limited Access Privilege Programs (LAPPs)

All eight Councils have LAPPs or catch share programs in place, under development, or under consideration.

The Councils agree that catch share programs take considerable time to develop (3 to 5 years) to allow for adequate public participation. Achieving buy-in for most proposed allocation schemes can be very difficult.

The Councils agree that it is important to identify goals upfront, often balancing environmental and social considerations against economic efficiency gains.

Discussions largely focused around catch monitoring programs. The Councils concluded that the level of at-sea observers and dockside monitoring depends on the complexity of the fishery, i.e. numbers of vessels in the fishery; number of offload ports; importance of bycatch; different gears used and finally whether the fishery is single or multi-species.

Standardized Management Actions

All of the Councils have a formal or informal process with the Regional Administrator for fishery management plan development.

All the Councils prepare one final submission document that fully integrates the NEPA and MSA processes.

The Councils differ in regard to sharing responsibility for EIS/EA preparation. In some regions, the responsibility is shared, where NMFS prepares the EIS/EA and at other times the Council is responsible. However, for two Councils the EIS/EA preparation is always the responsibility of the Council.

Some of the Councils believe we need a standard approach to management actions, i.e. formats, contents and NMFS review times for amendments, frameworks and specification packages.

All of the Councils agree that a team approach and partnership with NMFS Regions is essential if FMP actions are to be done right and delivered on time.

The Councils agree that there should be no surprises associated with the final document submission.

The Councils agree that fisheries management requires a dynamic process to address changes (fishing practices, markets, fish status). The Councils need the tools to respond quickly to changes. The Councils must continually adjust and improve their processes to ensure success.

SSC Operating Procedures

Utilizing SSCs in accordance with the MSRA is very resource intensive (time, money and people). In many cases, FMP development timelines have been extended to include the required SSC input.

Most Councils are developing ABC control rules that generally reflect data availability and time constraints in their regions.

The majority of Councils are administering the peer review process in their region. Each Council prefers the status quo and no changes are recommended.

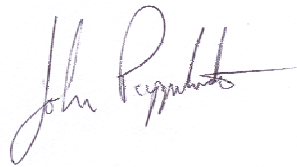
The CCC discussed “advocacy science” and how to deal with contracted scientists or advocates in the assessment and peer review processes. A joint dialogue with NMFS is needed to fully understand potential problems and the need for a standard approach to advocacy science.

2. The CCC directed the host Council (NEFMC) to prepare three different letters. Two letters were to be addressed to the NOAA Administrator dealing with the Catch Share Task Force, and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). One letter was to be addressed to the Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries requesting an extension to the National Standard 2 Guidelines proposed rule. All three letters have been mailed and are enclosed. Additionally, the CCC approved a letter drafted by the WPFMC to be sent to the NOAA Administrator dealing with “Outreach Funding”. This letter was sent separately by the WPFMC.

3. Additionally, the Executive Directors agreed to resolve by conference call two issues; coordinating the Councils 5-year (2010-2014) Grant submission, and determining the dates and location of the second National SSC Workshop. The CCC agreed that the North Pacific Fishery Management Council would host the next annual CCC meeting in Alaska.

4. Lastly, as their terms come to an end, we want to extend our thanks and sincere appreciation to Don Hansen, Chair, Pacific FMC and to Viridin Brown, Vice Chair, Caribbean FMC for their many years of outstanding Council service. These two honorable gentlemen helped conserve and manage our Nation's fisheries with professionalism and dedication that will be very difficult to match. Our best wishes to both of them for happiness and success in all their future endeavors.

Sincerely,



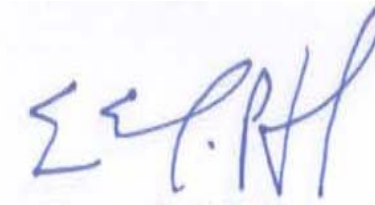
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New England FMC




Richard B. Robins, Jr., Chair
Mid-Atlantic FMC



Charles Duane Harris, Chair
South Atlantic FMC



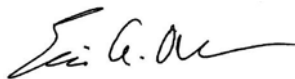
Eugenio Piñero-Soler, Chair
Caribbean FMC



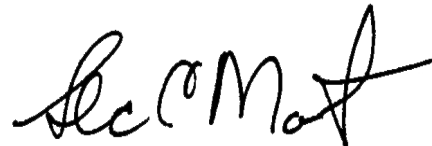
Thomas McIlwain, Chair
Gulf of Mexico FMC



Donald K. Hansen, Chair
Pacific FMC



Eric Olson, Chair
North Pacific FMC



Sean Martin, Chair
Western Pacific FMC

cc: Dr. James W. Balsiger
Samuel D. Rauch III
Council EDs