

Annotated Agenda

MAFAC Fall Meeting September 23-25, 2014 · Silver Spring, MD

- 1. Agenda Item:** Collaboration with NMFS on Recovery Planning
- 2. Presenter:** Donna Wieting, Director, Office of Protected Resources

3. Objective/Purpose (Discussion/Action): Recovery and conservation of protected resources is important to foster healthy and sustainable marine resources, habitats, and ecosystems and is one of NOAA Fisheries' primary mandates. Yet many times, recovery efforts fall short of their goals and are incomplete due to a lack of partnering with key stakeholders, tribal nations, and agencies that can influence recovery actions. The objective of this presentation is to engage with MAFAC to assess and help identify successful recovery actions and expand or build partnerships to facilitate species recovery.

4. Background and Charges to the Protected Resources Subcommittee:

Retrospective Analysis of Recovery Actions—What has worked and what can we do better.

Some recovery actions identified in our recovery plans are incomplete for multiple reasons. Without completing the necessary recovery actions, criteria for recovery are often not met and consideration of down or de-listing is delayed. Thus, to facilitate recovery, we would ask the subcommittee to work with HQ and Regions to identify a scope of analysis of our recovery actions that would get at the root cause of why some recovery actions are successfully ongoing or completed, while others languish. For example, analysis questions could include:

- a) Are the recovery actions clearly described and appropriate responsible parties notified and assigned?
- b) Are the recovery actions technically and scientifically practicable/feasible?
- c) To what degree does NMFS have authority/influence over the recovery action and how does that affect the outcome?

The output of MAFAC's retrospective analysis of recovery actions would be to provide guidance to recovery staff /teams in how to define recovery actions that can be successfully implemented.

Building Partnerships to Facilitate Recovery Actions

A subset of the overarching analysis of the recovery actions is to draw upon MAFAC member expertise and other sources to improve recovery of listed species through innovative partnerships. Many recovery actions identified in our recovery plans are incomplete due to a lack of partnering with key stakeholders, tribal nations, and agencies that can influence recovery actions. The Department of Commerce Strategic Plan recognized this shortcoming and called for

greater collaboration. MAFAC holds a unique position with its broad membership across states, industry, academia, nongovernmental organizations, and tribal nations. We would ask the subcommittee to work with us to examine recovery actions that are incomplete, prioritize the actions, and identify partners that can help facilitate implementing the recovery actions.

We would also ask the subcommittee to examine other existing processes that could serve as models (e.g., Marine Mammal Protection Act take reduction teams) to develop an effective process to address and complete recovery tasks identified in recovery plans related to fisheries concerns. Below are several examples of fisheries related recovery tasks that have not started.

Smalltooth Sawfish (*Pristis pectinata*) Recovery Plan. January 2009

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/recovery/smalltoothsawfish.pdf>.

- Recovery Task 1.1.10--Develop and implement programs, in cooperation with other interested parties to assess, minimize and mitigate the effects of lost fishing gear. (Pages IV-3 and 17)
- Recovery Task 1.1.14. Investigate fishing modifications, devices, and techniques that may work to avoid interaction with smalltooth sawfish and/or enhance the likelihood of successful release of healthy sawfish. (Pages IV-3 and 17)
- Recovery Task 1.1.18. Recommend the use of fishing devices, gear modifications and/or techniques found to be effective at reducing bycatch of smalltooth sawfish and/or mitigating the effects of capture in areas frequented by sawfish, other important sawfish habitats, and in trawl fisheries encountering significant numbers of sawfish. (Pages IV-4 and 18)

Recovery Plan for the Northwest Atlantic Population of the Atlantic Loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*). December 2008

http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/recovery/turtle_loggerhead_atlantic.pdf

- 6253. Develop gear modifications to prevent entanglement of loggerhead sea turtles in pot/trap lines. (Pages II-31, II-86, III-33)
- 6265 Investigate bycatch and mortality of loggerheads in commercial whelk dredge fisheries. (Pages 11-88 and III-34)

5. Options Listed from 1 to n: TBD

6. Preferred Recommendation: TBD

Record of Decision:

Decision, Next Step(s) and/or Action:

Assigned to:

Due Date: