



# Saltwater Recreational Fisheries POLICY



**NOAA  
FISHERIES**

# National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Policy DISCUSSION GUIDE

NOAA Fisheries is developing an Agency-wide saltwater recreational fishing policy which outlines a set of principles to guide our actions and decisions over the long term. We would like your thoughts on what should be included in the new policy.

## **POLICY PURPOSE**

A national policy, which articulates a clear statement about core operating principles, could provide:

- A platform for a common understanding of agency perspectives.
- Guidance for agency activities, interactions, and management pertaining to our nation's saltwater recreational and non-commercial fisheries.

## **POLICY SCOPE**

The term "recreational fishing" means different things to different people. These different definitions may encompass a range of activities and many segments of the fishing community such as:

- Shore and private/non-for-hire vessels.
- For-hire vessels (e.g., charter, headboats, guides, and lodges).
- Recreational fishing industries (e.g., bait and tackle manufacturers and distributors, tournaments).
- Non-commercial fishermen.
- Expense fishing.
- Subsistence fishing.

## **Discussion Questions:**

1. How do you define recreational fisheries?
2. What activities do you think constitute recreational fisheries?
3. What might be the effect of defining recreational fisheries in this way in the national policy?

## **POSSIBLE POLICY GOALS - OVERVIEW**

Below are four draft policy goals for consideration. They are informed by NOAA Fisheries' own practices and input from many in the recreational/non-commercial fishing communities. They are intended to limit neither discussion nor consideration of other potential policy goals. The four possible goals are:

1. Foster and enhance sustainable, diverse, and high quality recreational/non-commercial fisheries and public access to them.
2. Integrate saltwater recreational/non-commercial considerations throughout NOAA and the federal marine fisheries management system.
3. Encourage partnership, engagement, and innovation.
4. Enhance transparency, follow-through, and continuity of action.

## **Discussion Question:**

1. Are these goals appropriate for a national policy?
2. Are there others which should be considered?

## **POSSIBLE POLICY GOALS - IN DETAIL**

In creating the new policy, we want to both build on what has already been learned through our ongoing conversations with constituents and provide the opportunity for the exchange of new ideas. Each draft policy goal is presented below with some relevant questions to stimulate discussion.

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/management/recreational/policy/index.html>



**NOAA FISHERIES**

# AGENDA

## National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Policy

- Why do we need it and what is it?
- Who have we been talking with?
- Timeline: Where are we now?
- Scope and draft goals
- Recent input

Why do we need a

# POLICY

1. Institutionalizes our commitment.
2. Guides agency actions over the long-term.
3. Helps ensure we remain accountable to our recreational stakeholders.



# What is a POLICY

## DOES:

Influence how we carry out responsibilities under the law

## DOES NOT:

Have the force or effect of law

Create regulations



# Building the POLICY

Public  
Comment

MAFAC  
White Paper

Regional  
Roundtables

Town  
Halls

Recreational Saltwater  
Fishing Summit

Morris-Deal  
Commission  
Report

Possible goals of the

# POLICY

1. Foster and enhance sustainable, healthy, and diverse recreational/non-commercial fisheries and public access to them.
2. Integrate saltwater recreational/non-commercial considerations throughout NOAA and the federal fisheries management system.
3. Encourage partnership, engagement, and innovation.
4. Enhance transparency, follow-through, and long-term continuity of action.

# Policy Development Process & Timeline



# POLICY

## We've been talking with lots of people

- 7 of 8 Federal Fishery Management Council meetings (*North Pacific remains*)
- All three Commission meetings
- State Agency webinar
- National Public Town Hall (webinars and in-person)
- MAFAC RecFish Working Group webinar
- Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council meeting
- National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Councils

**We've presented to two dozen meetings and webinars in total.**

**Deadline for submitting online comments is *Friday, September 12.***

Scope of the

# POLICY

**How do you define “recreational fisheries”?**

**Who and what activities should be considered under the policy?**

- **Shore and private/non-for-hire vessel?**
- **For-hire vessels?**
- **Recreational fishing industries?**
- **Non-commercial fishermen ?**
- **Expense fishing?**
- **Subsistence fishing?**

Scope of the

# POLICY

## What we have heard

- Sale of fish/expense fishing conflicts with nature of recreational fishing.
- Subsistence fishing is different than recreational.
- Include non-angling activities fish watching/ecotourism.

# Possible Goals of the

# POLICY

## What we have heard

1. Include a science and data theme.
2. Consistency and stability.
3. Opportunity and access (inclusive of allocation).
4. Federal – state partnership.
5. Abundance drives recreational fisheries.
6. Singular recreational community with diverse needs.
7. Fishing culture and communities.

What are your thoughts about the

# POLICY

**We've outlined some draft goals and heard some additional suggestions. Now it's your turn...**

1. Do these goals sound reasonable?
2. What ideas are missing?
3. Any red flags?
4. Are there any potential impacts?

Possible goals of the

# POLICY

1. Foster and enhance sustainable, healthy, and diverse recreational/non-commercial fisheries and public access to them.
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# POLICY

## Recap

1. The policy is a set of high-level principles to guide Agency decisions over the long-term.
2. Policy helps ensure accountability.
3. Input and suggestions can be submitted online up until September 12.
4. A draft policy will be available for review this fall.

A row of colorful, handcrafted fish-shaped water bottles. Each bottle is decorated with streamers, googly eyes, and various patterns. The bottles are arranged in a line, and the background is a light-colored, textured surface.

Thank you for your comments.

Tell your friends and colleagues.

Submit comments and follow our  
progress online at

*[www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/management/recreational/](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/management/recreational/)*

And on Twitter @ *#ifishsaltwater*