

Ecosystem Committee Meeting
March 2, 2020
Item VIII

Proposed Outline for a Gulf of Mexico Fishery Ecosystem Plan



Ecosystem Technical Committee

Council Motion: to direct staff to develop a Fishery Ecosystem Plan using the outline presented, which shall include recommendations for how to integrate ecosystem factors into the council decision-making process.

Council Motion: to establish a Technical Ecosystem Committee to consist of no more than thirteen ecosystem scientists from the Science Center, SSCs, academia and other stakeholders to assist the Council on the development and implementation of a Fishery Ecosystem Plan



Progress so far...


Draft outline for the Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP)

Chapter 1	Definition, goals and objectives
Chapter 2	Background on ecosystem policy and science
Chapter 3	Description of Gulf of Mexico environment (physical, biological, socio-economic)
Chapter 4	Interactions of ecosystem components
Chapter 5	Cumulative effects of complex interactions
Chapter 6	Recommendations for ecosystem-informed policy decisions
Appendix	Supporting materials, special research studies

How do we get there?



Goals



What do we want this document to accomplish?

- Improve management decisions based on interactions among physical, biological, and socio-economic factors
- Document sources which affect (e.g., increase and decrease) fisheries productivity
- Inform the development of new and existing management measures
- Coordinate and consider ecosystem interactions information across FMPs
- Identify and prioritize research needs
- Real-time data into management process

How do we get there?



Scope

- Spatial extent
- Single species, complex, or indicators
- Physical
- Biological

Spatial extent:

Gulf of Mexico as a whole or divided by region?

Single species, complex, or indicators?

Physical environment:

- Habitat type
- Water quality
- Oceanography
- Climate

Biological environment:

- Density and abundance
- Diversity
- Trophic interactions
- Invasive species
- Species interactions

How do we get there?



Scope

- Social and economic components
- Administrative components

Multiple, dynamic human user groups and stakeholders

- Commercial and Recreational Sectors
- Producers, consumers, support industries, NGOs
- Multiple gear-types

Complex market conditions

- Availability of substitutes (e.g., imports vs exports)

Diverse cultural valuations (e.g., consumptive and non-consumptive uses)

Multi-level governance structures

- Federal, state, regional

Next steps

- Keep in mind goals and objectives as we move forward
- Is this the appropriate approach for the outline?
- Determine data gaps

