



NOAA
FISHERIES

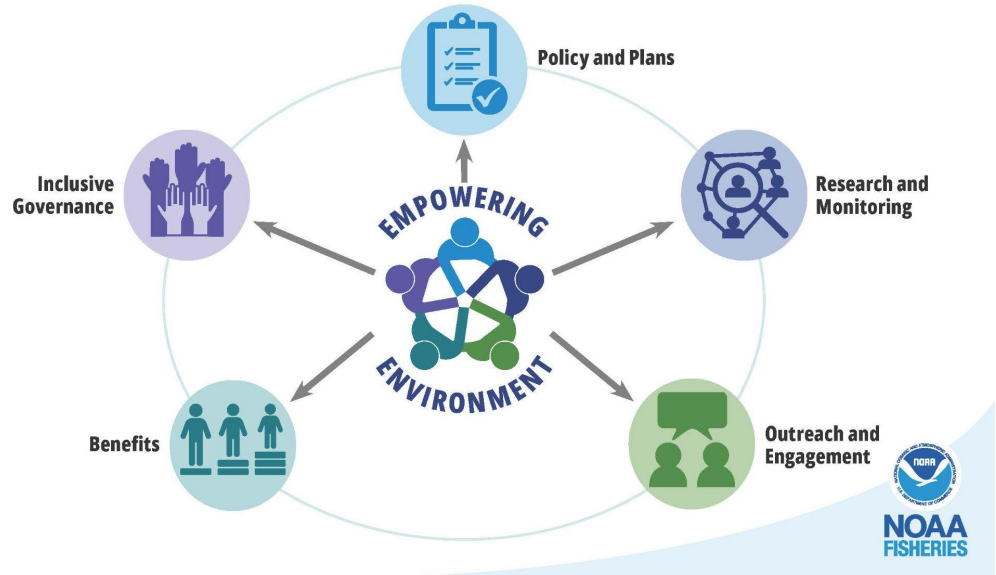
NOAA Fisheries Southeast Equity and Environmental Justice Implementation Plan

April 10, 2024

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

NOAA Fisheries' Southeast Equity and Environmental Justice Implementation Plan

- Implements National EEJ Strategy
- Review draft transmitted to HQ April 5
- Living document to be reviewed and updated on 5-year schedule



Outline

- Review council staff feedback on initial list of draft action items generated from public engagement effort
- Review refined list of action items incorporated into draft Southeast EEJ Implementation Plan
 - 47 immediate / near-term (funded) items
 - 29 longer-term (unfunded) items
- Discuss areas of collaboration

Research & Monitoring

Identify underserved communities and their needs, conduct collaborative research, and assess impacts of management decisions

- **Council Staff Feedback**

- Look for opportunities to align priorities (NOAA Fisheries, Council, NAS)
 - Social vulnerability indicators
 - Diversification
 - Allocation
- Manage expectations as many Council research and monitoring priorities have not been resourced

- **Immediate or Near-Term (Funded) Actions**

- Conduct research and analysis to identify underserved communities and understand their issues and challenges
- Partner to explore & engage on key topics
 - Tools to identify and understand underserved communities
 - Participatory research and citizen science
 - Effects of allocation decisions
 - Impacts of seafood imports

Research & Monitoring

Identify underserved communities and their needs, conduct collaborative research, and assess impacts of management decisions

- **Longer Term (Unfunded) Actions Dependent Upon Additional Resources**
 - Evaluate equity issues in fisheries, including underserved community challenges, and procedural equity in fishery decision making process
 - Analyze impacts, including social, cultural, and economic impacts of services and management decisions, and expected vs. actual impacts of fishery management actions
 - Examine the importance of diversifying operations in fisheries
 - Conduct research to illuminate specific underserved populations and issues, including consumptive or subsistence use and women in fishing
 - Identify challenges and lessons learned from disaster events

Policies & Plans

Ensure that policies promote equal opportunities for all and do not create unintended inequities or unequal burdens for underserved communities

- **Council Staff Feedback**
 - Use clear terminology, defined terms
 - Present actions at consistent scale
 - Identify meaningful metrics
 - Consider relevant authorities, roles, responsibilities
 - Develop best practices vs policy directives
- **Immediate or Near-Term (Funded) Actions**
 - Aquaculture grants-research opportunities
 - SE Climate Regional Action Plans
 - Observer program
 - Fisher surveys
 - National Seafood Strategy (shrimp +)
 - Engagement and entry barriers (procedural, IFQ, other limited access)
 - Policy guidance addressing financial assistance for underserved community engagement

Policies & Plans

Ensure that policies promote equal opportunities for all and do not create unintended inequities or unequal burdens for underserved communities

- **Longer Term (Unfunded) Actions Dependent Upon Additional Resources**
 - Simplify permit access and renewal processes and provide technical support
 - Develop policy framework to understand, gather, and incorporate local and traditional ecological knowledge

Benefits

Distribute benefits equitably by increasing access to opportunities

- **Council Staff Feedback**
 - Data collection, analyses and interpretation needed to characterize beneficiaries -- role of social vulnerability indicators
 - Manage expectations as grant funding is limited
 - Consider relevant authorities, roles, responsibilities
- **Immediate or Near-Term (Funded) Actions**
 - Track and report data
 - Identify and address barriers -- grants, vocational, capital
 - Promote or improve equitability of fishery disaster assistance allocations
 - Preserve infrastructure, working waterfronts
 - Promote monitoring and mitigation of major infrastructure impacts, natural resource injuries
 - Minimize user conflicts with wind energy projects

Benefits

Distribute benefits equitably by increasing access to opportunities

- **Longer Term (Unfunded) Actions Dependent Upon Additional Resources**
 - Advance and improve science and management in the U.S. Caribbean
 - Co-develop or support high school technical courses and vocational training in fishing and aquaculture

Outreach & Engagement

Build relationships with underserved communities to better understand engagement preferences and improve information sharing

- **Council Staff Feedback**

- Identified options, opportunities, interest in supporting support certain actions
- Highlighted information collection challenges
- Emphasized importance of not just reaching but retaining target audiences
- Supported need for additional plain language training
- Questioned role of community NGOs

- **Immediate or Near-Term (Funded) Actions**

- NOAA Sea Grant workshop
- Translation guidance, options
- Tailored, diverse outreach strategies
 - Regulatory changes
 - Opportunities
 - Disaster declarations and assistance
- Plain language strategies
- Virtual meeting hubs (exploratory)
- Survey-related outreach

Outreach & Engagement

Build relationships with underserved communities to better understand engagement preferences and improve information sharing

- **Longer Term (Unfunded) Actions Dependent Upon Additional Resources**
 - Allocate and track translation funding
 - Identify or create multilingual stakeholder liaison(s) at SERO and the SEFSC
 - Establish community liaison network of NOAA Sea Grant and other partners as appropriate
 - Employ strategies to facilitate more frequent and meaningful outreach and interaction with female stakeholders

Inclusive Governance

Enable the meaningful involvement of underserved communities in decision-making

- **Council Staff Feedback**

- Identified options, opportunities, interest in supporting support certain actions
- Highlighted information needs, collection challenges
- Recommended alternative approaches
- Noted authorities, roles, responsibilities
- Identified funding challenges, concerns

- **Immediate or Near-Term (Funded) Actions**

- Engagement strategies for public meetings and input processes; Council and other advisory bodies
- Information sharing about Council appointment opportunities, process
- Considered use of Council Committees/Advisory Panels to advise on EEJ issues, support implementation plan
- Educational materials and training programs
- Options to inform research priorities, contribute to or participate in research
- Early engagement in Endangered Species Act decision making

Inclusive Governance

Enable the meaningful involvement of underserved communities in decision-making

- **Longer Term (Unfunded) Actions Dependent Upon Additional Resources**
 - Leverage community liaisons to gather and report underserved community input
 - Develop targeted competitive grants and pilot projects
 - Fund Gulf and South Atlantic Council to support real-time professional translation or alternative services

Empowering Environment

Provide institutional support to implement EEJ

- **Council Staff Feedback**
 - Expressed support for support certain actions
 - Cautioned to manage expectations as funding is limited
- **Immediate or Near-Term (Funded) Actions**
 - Integration of EEJ commitments into organizational priorities
 - EEJ funding strategy
 - EEJ implementation teams -- NMFS and Councils
 - EEJ training -- NMFS and Councils
 - Partnerships to diversify STEM pipeline
 - Scholarship, internship, mentorship programs
 - Partnerships to leverage resources and address cross-jurisdictional challenges

Empowering Environment

Provide institutional support to implement EEJ

- **Longer Term (Unfunded) Actions Dependent Upon Additional Resources**
 - Organizational capacity -- EEJ Coordinators, FTE anthropologists or other non-economic social scientists, FTE biologists for Caribbean work
 - Training -- Plain language, facilitation, unconscious bias
 - Technical assistance with grants and other funding opportunities

Next Steps

- Final implementation plan undergoing internal review; to be rolled out to public June 2024
- 5-year review schedule; interim updates as needed

THANK YOU!