

## **National Research Priorities Overview**

### **Direction from MSA**

...Each Council shall, in accordance with the provisions of this Act—...(7) develop, in conjunction with the scientific and statistical committee, multi-year research priorities for fisheries, fisheries interactions, habitats, and other areas of research that are necessary for management purposes, that shall— (A) establish priorities for 5-year periods; (B) be updated as necessary; and (C) be submitted to the Secretary and the regional science centers of the National Marine Fisheries Service for their consideration in developing research priorities and budgets for the region of the Council; and...

### **Summary of Comments from last 5 year Research Plan:**

#### **SSC Comments (October 2014):**

- Monitoring activities were not research
  - Several states have developed a joint plan to improve monitoring, but there were no dedicated funds for long-term fishery independent monitoring.
- If monitoring needs are left in the document, the title be changed to Data and Assessment Needs.
- Prioritization of items.
  - Consider alternative ways to determine priority, such as critical gaps in knowledge or time-sensitive needs.
  - “Ecosystem Needs” section should have timeliness considered in its prioritization.
  - Socio-economic needs section did not have any priorities.
- Document was too long and appeared to be a wish list

#### **Council Comments/Questions (October 2014):**

- How were individual species’ priorities determined?
- Timeline of proposed priorities
- How are funds distributed by the SEFSC for projects?

### **Other items of significance:**

#### **Letter to NMFS from NEFMC**

- Disparity between each council’s approach
- How do the research priorities get incorporated into national and regional priorities of NMFS?

#### **CCC presentation (May 2018 by C. Werner)**

- Councils should provide science centers the opportunity to comment on research priorities
  - Coordination between priorities and activities could be fostered using existing partnerships (SSC, IPTs, etc.)

- Provide regular “check-ins”
- Potentially prioritize “top ten” items in each region

### **CCC Comments (Log Stamp 6700, dated June 5, 2018)**

- Council research priorities be fully-integrated into research planning by NMFS
- Review of applications to national-level grant programs administered by NMFS should consider whether the proposal addresses a specific Council research priority
  - Requests for proposals should encourage applicants to review a Council’s Research and development needs documents for relevant topics and objectives for research proposals
- NMFS should clarify how the Council’s five-year research priority reports are used
  - NMFS was asked to provide an update on these recommendations at the next CCC meeting

### **Response from Oliver to CCC (Log Stamp 6711, received July 11, 2018)**

- NMFS does recognize council research priorities, and they are integrated into and affect planning processes in a variety of ways:
  - NMFS staff serve on council committees
  - NMFS staff discuss and review council priorities, which increases awareness of these research priorities in NMFS
  - Part of priority-based science planning process is whether the activity/investment is a priority to the councils
  - There may be opportunity for more explicit consolidation, synthesis, and use of council research priorities at the national level to inform planning and funding decisions, including decisions regarding requests for proposals
- NMFS is currently reviewing the issue, both nationally and regionally, with an aim that Council priorities can be more formally included in annual and long-term science planning for the centers, and also inform priorities in grant funding decisions
  - Will also touch on the best methods for the science centers to respond to the documents after the councils submit them

### **Links to other Councils’ Research Priority Documents**

#### **North Pacific**

<https://research.psmfc.org/>

Query-able database with these headings:

- Title (encompasses research intent)
- Council priority (Critical Ongoing Monitoring, Urgent, Important, Strategic, Pending)
- SSC Priority (Critical Ongoing Monitoring, Urgent, Important, Strategic, Pending)
- Research status (Pending, No Action, Listed on RFPs, Partially Underway, Underway, Completed)
- Ecosystem area (Gulf of Alaska, Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands, Arctic)

- Related Council Actions

## **Pacific**

[https://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Res\\_Data\\_Needs\\_2013\\_FINAL\\_v2.pdf](https://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Res_Data_Needs_2013_FINAL_v2.pdf)

Divided into four themes with subheadings and priorities outlined.

- Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management
  - Highest priority issues
  - Emerging issues
    - Broad-scale and long-term oceanographic conditions
- Marine Protected Areas and Essential Fish Habitat
  - Priority research and data needs related to MPAs
- EFH issues
- Economics and Social Components
  - Highest priority issues
  - Ongoing issues
  - Emerging Issues
- Individual Fishery Management Plans
  - Groundfish FMP
    - Data needs
    - Stock assessment issues
    - Ecosystem issues
  - Salmon FMP
    - Research issues
    - Data issues
    - Interaction of hatchery and wild salmon
    - Emerging Issues
  - Coastal Pelagic Species FMP
    - Highest priority research and data needs
    - Continuing issues
    - Emerging Issues
    - Ecosystem Issues
  - Highly Migratory Species FMP
    - Highest priority issues
    - High priority issues
    - Other priority stocks and issues

## **Western Pacific**

[http://www.wpcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Updated-5-yr-research-priorities\\_2014-2019\\_126SSCdoc\\_June-2017.pdf](http://www.wpcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Updated-5-yr-research-priorities_2014-2019_126SSCdoc_June-2017.pdf)

Divided into four themes with each item within a theme ranked in order of importance.

- Stock Assessments
- Ecosystems
- Protected Species
- Human Communities

## **New England**

[http://s3.amazonaws.com/nefmc.org/7\\_NEFMC-Research-Priorities-and-Data-Needs\\_2017-to-2021-DRAFT2.pdf](http://s3.amazonaws.com/nefmc.org/7_NEFMC-Research-Priorities-and-Data-Needs_2017-to-2021-DRAFT2.pdf)

Eleven themes with revisions from previous research priorities included. Priority areas are included in the text of each item and not easily discernable without reading whole document.

- Fishery Surveys
- Population Dynamics
- Stock Assessments
- Fisheries Management (seem to be like MSEs)
  - Groundfish
  - Sea Scallops
  - Skates
- Fisheries Performance and Monitoring
- Bycatch
- Habitat
- FMP Specific Research
  - Groundfish
  - Sea Scallops
  - Skates
- Ecosystems
- Endangered, Threatened and Protected Species
- Socioeconomics

## **Mid-Atlantic**

[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/511cdc7fe4b00307a2628ac6/t/576ab61bf7e0abfcb30c4f1d/1466611228981/Five-Year-Research-Plan\\_2016-2020.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/511cdc7fe4b00307a2628ac6/t/576ab61bf7e0abfcb30c4f1d/1466611228981/Five-Year-Research-Plan_2016-2020.pdf)

A general header and each species are divided into four overarching themes. Specific items are highlighted as “first priority” and “1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> runners up.”

- Surveys
- Modeling/Quantitative
- Biology/Life History/Habitat
- Management & Socioeconomic

## **South Atlantic**

[http://safmc.net/download/SAFMCRsearchPlan\\_2018-2022.pdf](http://safmc.net/download/SAFMCRsearchPlan_2018-2022.pdf)

Eight themes separated into short term (with time frames), long term (with time frames), and broad categories. Priorities of each outlined item not clearly defined. Also prioritizes stock assessment schedule.

- Short term needs for stock assessments
- Short term needs for spawning special management zones
- Short term needs for MPA monitoring
- Long term needs to be developed
- Habitat research and monitoring
- Specific monitoring priorities
- Citizen science priorities
- Specific annual reporting requests

**Caribbean** – did not have an electronically available document.

## **Gulf of Mexico**

Four Themes divided into multiple issues. Each item given a priority code with a key provided at the beginning of each theme

- Priorities with broad, multi-purpose, multi-species research and monitoring programs
  - Fisheries independent sampling
  - Fisheries dependent sampling (both biological and socioeconomic)
  - Bycatch and Discards
  - Ecosystem Based Management
  - Episodic mortality events
  - Large scale tagging
- Priorities for specific species outlined
- Economic and Socio-cultural Considerations
- Ecosystem-Based Management Recommendations