



Ecosystem Technical Committee Report

Tab Q, No. 4b
June 2023

Reminder



April 2022: Council accepts LGL's framework to begin discussion and operationalize Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP), and requests:

- ETC develop goals and measurable objectives for the FEP and select up to 4 Fishery Ecosystem Issues (FEIs)
- Create criteria for prioritizing FEIs and utilize this criteria to recommend the top 4 FEIs
- O&E to develop stakeholder engagement plan

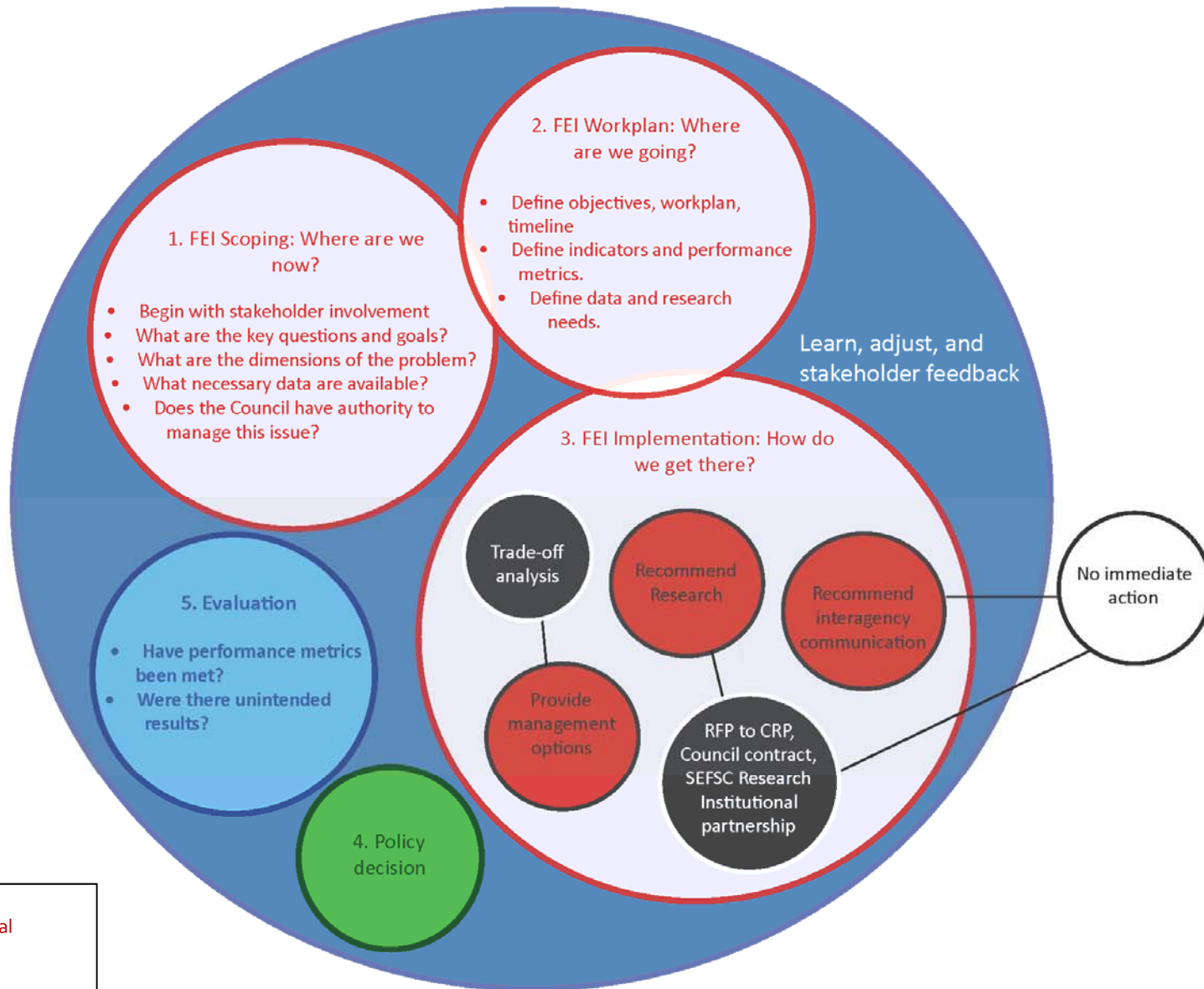


Operationalizing a Fishery Ecosystem Plan

- Fishery Ecosystem Issue example: Red Tide
 - Stakeholder engagement important
 - Differing perceptions of “success”
 - Body of research developed to inform management but has not yet been applied
- Fishery Ecosystem Plan is a framework for conceptualizing and addressing an ecosystem issue



Fisheries Ecosystem Issue (FEI) Loop



- Key Actor Roles
- IPT and O&E Technical Committee
 - Ecosystem Technical Committee
 - Gulf Council
 - SEFSC/Researchers

Modified loop based on ETC's recommendations

Fishery Ecosystem Issue Selection Exercise

System Issue (FEI) Ideas



Fishery Ecosystem Issue Selection Exercise



Potential list:

1. Reducing discards
2. Offshore wind energy
3. Red tide
4. Finfish depredation
5. Impacts of climate change on fish and communities
6. Achieving Optimum Yield (OY) for the reef fish complex

Uncertainties

- How big should the Fishery Ecosystem Issue be?
 - Large scope, e.g., climate change, water quality, habitat
 - Narrower scope, e.g., red tide, offshore wind energy



Prioritization exercise

Recommended Criteria

- Number and status of affected species/resources
- Geographic scope
- Impacts to stakeholders
- Pathway to actionability within a reasonable timeframe

Criteria Important to Determining Prioritization of FEIs



Criteria Important to Determining Prioritization of FEIs



Feedback Needed



Potential list of Fishery Ecosystem Issues

1. Reducing discards
2. Offshore wind energy
3. Red tide
4. Finfish depredation
5. Impacts of climate change on fish and communities
6. Achieving Optimum Yield (OY) for the reef fish complex.

Assignment was to select four Fishery Ecosystem Issues and rank them, so:

- a. Does this still hold true?
- b. Keep or remove anything from this working list?
- c. None of the above, not ready to make a decision yet.



Feedback Needed



Recommended Criteria

- Number and status of affected species & resources
 - Geographic scope
 - Impacts to stakeholders
 - Pathway to actionability within a reasonable timeframe
- Do you agree with these?
 - Additional considerations?
 - Are there criteria that should have higher weight?



Ecosystem Status Reports

- ETC recommended that the Ecosystem Status Reports be used to inform identification of Fishery Ecosystem Issues or progress toward goals.
- Concerns about SEFSC workload (but ongoing automation will facilitate updates)



Next Steps

- ETC webinar to discuss prioritization metrics (Aug?)
- ETC meeting to fine-tune the FEP and FEI loops (Sept?)
- O&E stakeholder engagement – soon, but not yet
- ETC suggested an annual discussion at the Council and ETC level to identify new FEIs and evaluate progress on existing



Questions?