

April 2022

Tab Q, No.5(c)

Next Steps:

Developing a Fishery Ecosystem Plan for the Gulf of Mexico

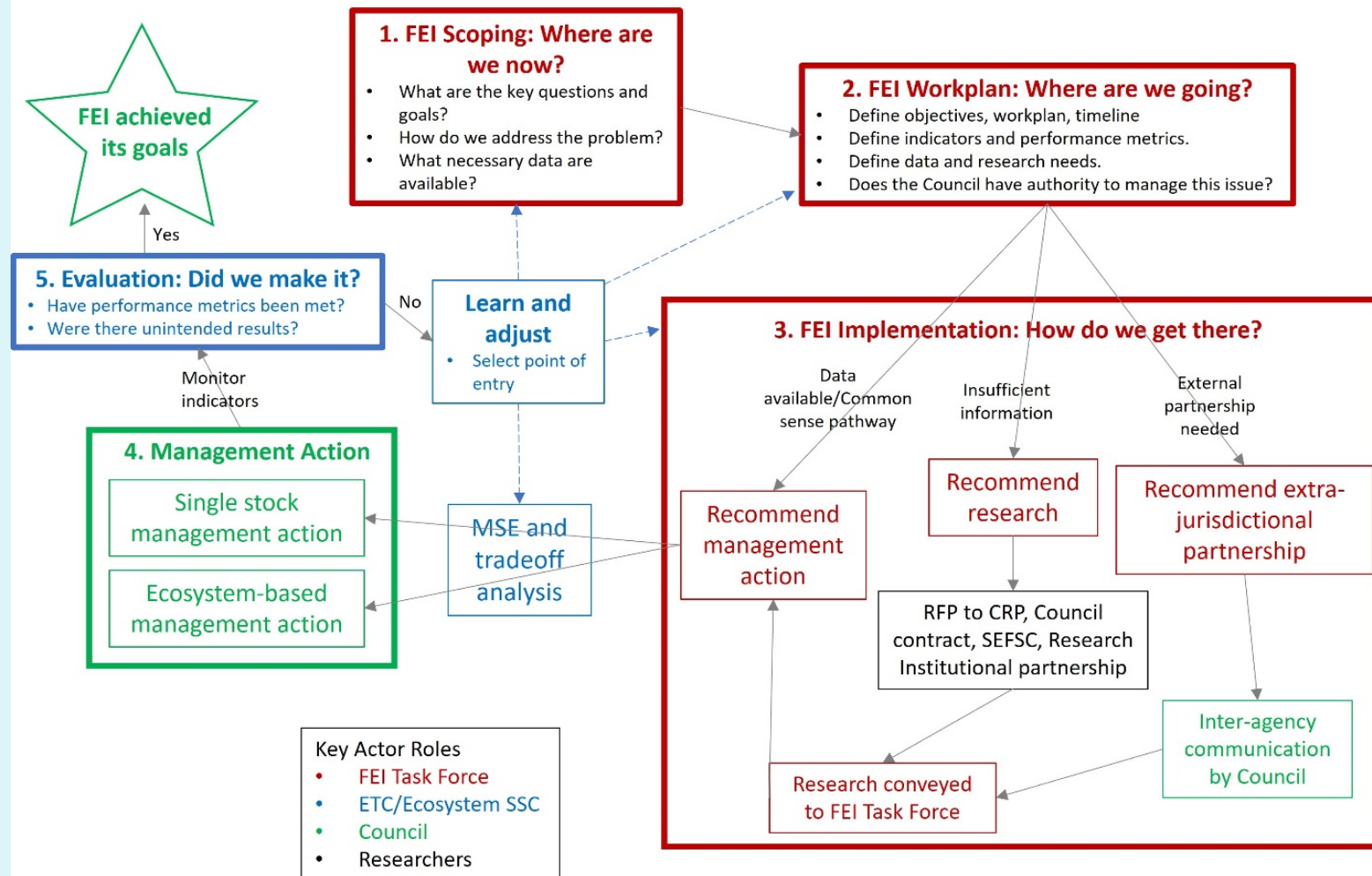
Vision for FEP vs FEI

- Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP): Lays out the framework (step-by-step)
- Fishery Ecosystem Issue (FEI): Operationalizable documents or modules that address specific management issues using the steps laid out in the FEP



FEI Loop Proposed by LGL

Fishery Ecosystem Issue (FEI) Loop



Status

- The Ecosystem Technical Committee (ETC) reviewed the draft reports from LGL and provided recommendations during its September and December 2021 meetings.
- The ETC recommend operationalizing Fishery Ecosystem Issues (FEI) as part of the Council's ecosystem-based fisheries management efforts



Status

- Does the Council agree with this approach?
- How would the Council like to see FEIs inform or drive management decisions?



FEI Example: Red Tide

- Step 1 – Identifying the FEI
 - Can be identified via Council process, fisherman feedback tool, advisory panels, and/or stakeholder input
 - Issue was prioritized by the IPT, ETC and/or SSC and the Council concurred
 - **Example:** red tide



FEI Example: Red Tide

- Step 2 – Workplan with ETC/SSC
 - Objective: Understand the effects of red tide events on a particular fish stock
 - Assess data available
 - Identify indicators and performance metrics
 - Are they quantifiable and at what level?
 - IPT and SSC: Assess how the FEI can be operationalized or utilized to inform management decisions on a potential ongoing or future Council action



FEI Example: Red Tide

- Step 3 – Implementation
 - Report out to the Council and gather feedback
 - Finalize the FEI document or module as appropriate
 - Identify data gaps and future research needs of FEI
 - Convey the processes and outcomes to Council, stakeholders, and jurisdictional partners as applicable



FEI Example: Red Tide

- Step 4 – Management action
 - IPT: Determine if FEI it should be a standalone document or if relevant portions should be included in Council FMPs and Amendments
 - Gather feedback from Council and stakeholders
 - Finalize after the appropriate level of review and input



Next Steps

- Work with IPT and ETC to continue developing the framework that will be the FEP
- Once it is finalized, request input from Council's advisory bodies to begin selection of FEIs
- Develop a process for careful consideration and prioritization of FEIs



Next Steps

- Recognize resource limitations:
 - Don't want to mislead stakeholders by spending a lot of time gathering and prioritizing FEIs that sit on a shelf
 - Cognizant of Council members and Council and NMFS staffs time so that this process is efficient and useful to managers



Questions?