



New England Fishery Management Council

News Release

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Fishery Council Takes Heed of Report on Management Process, Commits to Moving Forward

Mystic, CT The New England Fishery Management Council received an important review at its spring meeting yesterday about the effectiveness of the processes it uses to govern New England's commercial and recreational fisheries. Requested by Council Chairman John Pappalardo and commissioned by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service Director, Eric Schwaab, the report is based on interviews with 179 stakeholders that were conducted by an independent consulting group who also wrote the report.

Chairman Pappalardo, reacting to the hour-long, detailed review said, "The report has exceeded my expectations," and specifically pointed out the commitment of the Council leadership and staff to make improvements. While many positive elements of the management process were identified --- dedicated staff, a transparent process, cooperative research programs, the more effective use of science in the process, the increasing role of sector managers and a training program that helps fishermen better participate in the process --- the report clearly focuses on the challenges for each of the three regional fisheries organizations that play key roles in fisheries management.

The 19-page document addresses the functions of and coordination among the Northeast Fisheries Science Center in Woods Hole, MA and the National Marine Fisheries Service regional office in Gloucester, MA, in addition to the Council.

In discussing next steps, Mr. Pappalardo said the "Council will take ownership of the findings," referring to meetings to be held in the near future during which planning for the changes will begin. The report identified eliminating redundancies across the entire system, building a shared sense of accountability for outcomes among the three organizations, defining clear and objective criteria for determining the success of a management decision and developing a shared vision and strategy to guide the process.

The New England Fishery Management Council, one of eight regional councils established by federal legislation in 1976, is charged with conserving and managing fishery resources from three to 200 miles off the coasts of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut.

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