National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Policy

DISCUSSION GUIDE

NOAA Fisheries is developing an Agency-wide saltwater recreational fishing policy which outlines a set of principles to guide our actions and decisions over the long term. We would like your thoughts on what should be included in the new policy.

POLICY PURPOSE
A national policy, which articulates a clear statement about core operating principles, could provide:
- A platform for a common understanding of agency perspectives
- Guidance for agency activities, interactions, and management pertaining to our nation’s saltwater recreational and non-commercial fisheries.

POLICY SCOPE
The term “recreational fishing” means different things to different people. These different definitions may encompass a range of activities and many segments of the fishing community such as:
- Shore and privileges-for-hire vessels
- For-hire vessels (e.g., charter, headboats, guides, and lodges)
- Recreational fishing industries (e.g., bait and tackle manufacturers and distributors, tournaments)
- Non-commercial fishermen
- Expense fishing
- Subsistence fishing

Discussion Questions:
1. How do you define recreational fisheries?
2. What activities do you think constitute recreational fisheries?
3. What might be the effect of defining recreational fisheries in this way in the national policy?

POSSIBLE POLICY GOALS - OVERVIEW
Below are four draft policy goals for consideration. They are informed by NOAA Fisheries’ own practices and input from many in the recreational/non-commercial fishing communities. They are intended to limit neither discussion nor consideration of other potential policy goals. The four possible goals are:
1. Foster and enhance sustainable, diverse, and high quality recreational/non-commercial fisheries and public access to them.
2. Integrate saltwater recreational/non-commercial considerations throughout NOAA and the federal marine fisheries management system.
3. Encourage partnership, engagement, and innovation.
4. Enhance transparency, follow-through, and continuity of action.

Discussion Question:
1. Are these goals appropriate for a national policy?
2. Are there others which should be considered?

POSSIBLE POLICY GOALS - IN DETAIL
In creating the new policy, we want to both build on what has already been learned through our ongoing conversations with constituents and provide the opportunity for the exchange of new ideas. Each draft policy goal is presented below with some relevant questions to stimulate discussion.

AGENDA

• Timeline
  • Scope & draft goals
  • Recent Input
  • Discussion
**Policy Development Process & Timeline**

**Phase 1**
- **Input** - public listening sessions at Council / other meetings and national conference call/webinars

**Phase 2**
- **Policy Drafting**
- **Ongoing Engagement**

**Phase 3**
- **Internal Review** and **Clearance***

**Phase 4**
- **External Review** and **Comment**

**Phase 5**
- **Release Policy**

*Timeline:
- **Summer**
- **Summer-Fall**
- **Fall**
- **Late Fall**
- **Early Winter**
## Recent Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Councils</th>
<th>States</th>
<th>General Public</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Atlantic FMC</td>
<td>State Agency webinar</td>
<td>Town halls associated w/each Council meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Atlantic FMC</td>
<td>ASMFC</td>
<td>Public webinar (x2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England FMC</td>
<td>GSMFC</td>
<td>Silver Spring, MD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific FMC</td>
<td></td>
<td>MAFAC RFWG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Pacific FMC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean FMC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Upcoming Input Opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>August</th>
<th>September / October</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Pacific States Commission</td>
<td>• State Directors / NMFS meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Gulf FMC &amp; public town hall</td>
<td>• North Pacific FMC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is a POLICY

DOES:
Influence how we carry out responsibilities under the law

DOES NOT:
Have the force or effect of law
Create regulations
Why do we need a POLICY

1. Institutionalizes our commitment.
2. Guides agency actions over the long-term.
3. Platform for common understanding of agency perspective.
4. Helps ensure recreational fishing will have a seat at the table.
Building the POLICY

MAFAC RFWG White Paper

Regional Roundtables

Recreational Saltwater Fishing Summit

Morris-Deal Commission Report

Town Halls

MONF III
How do you define “recreational fisheries”?

Who and what activities should be considered under the policy?

- Shore and private/non-for-hire vessel?
- For-hire vessels?
- Recreational fishing industries?
- Non-commercial fishermen?
- Expense fishing?
- Subsistence fishing?
What we have been hearing...

Scope

• Sale of fish/expense fishing conflicts with nature of recreational fishing
• Subsistence fishing is different than recreational
• Consider non-angling activities fish watching / ecotourism
• Culture and communities
DISCUSSION STARTERS

Goal 1: Foster and enhance sustainable, healthy, and diverse recreational/non-commercial fisheries and public access to them.

- Consider socio-economics as management is being formulated.
- Manage recreational fisheries differently than commercial fisheries.
- Recognize role of forage species.
- Periodically review allocations.
- Better understand and manage for angler satisfaction.
- Find ways to empower anglers as resource stewards and incentivize conservation.
- Support enhancement efforts such as artificial reefs and stock enhancements.
DISCUSSION STARTERS

Goal 2: Integrate saltwater recreational/non-commercial considerations throughout NOAA and the federal fisheries management system.

- Adopt a national recreational policy
- Better incorporate rec. fishing in Agency planning documents
- Hire a full-time RecFish coordinator in each NOAA Fisheries region
- Support equitable balance of Council membership
DISCUSSION STARTERS

Goal 3: Encourage Partnership, Engagement, and Innovation

- Encourage cooperation among anglers and scientists on research and data analysis.
- Find ways to work together to support conservation and enhancement efforts.
- Explore new co-management options with the states.
- Work cooperatively to collect biological, catch, and socio-economic data from anglers.
- More listening and conversation.
DISCUSSION STARTERS

Goal 4: Transparency, Follow-through, and long-term Continuity of Action

- More frequent updates re: status of NOAA commitments & programs
- Better communicate the need/basis for rulemakings and simplify science
- Long-term funding for recreational programs
What we have been hearing.....

Main Themes

• Add a science & data theme
• Regulatory consistency and fishery stability
• Opportunity & access (inclusive of allocation)
• Abundance drives recreational fisheries
• Federal – state partnership
• Singular recreational community w/diverse needs
• Fishing culture and communities
Possible goals for the POLICY

1. Foster and enhance sustainable, healthy, and diverse recreational/non-commercial fisheries and public access to them.

2. Integrate saltwater recreational/non-commercial considerations throughout NOAA and the federal fisheries management system.

3. Encourage partnership, engagement, and innovation.

4. Enhance transparency, follow-through, and long-term continuity of action.
Thank you for your comments.
Tell your friends and colleagues.
Submit comments and follow our progress online at
www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/management/recreational/
And on Twitter @ #ifishsaltwater