



## **Bluefish Allocation and Rebuilding Amendment - Action Plan**

(Updated as of September 2020)

### **Amendment Goal**

The goal of this amendment is to review and possibly revise the allocation between the commercial and recreational fisheries and the commercial allocations to the states. This action is needed to rebuild the bluefish stock, avoid overages, achieve optimum yield, prevent overfishing, and reduce the need for quota transfers off the U.S. east coast.

### **Fishery Management Action Team**

The Council will form a team of technical experts, known as a Fishery Management Action Team (FMAT) to develop and analyze management alternatives for this amendment. The FMAT is led by Council staff and includes management partners from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO), the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC), the Southeast Fishery Management Council (SAFMC), and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). The FMAT will work with other experts to address specific issues, as needed.

### **FMAT Membership**

Name	Role/Expertise	Agency
Matthew Seeley	FMAT Chair	MAFMC
Danielle Palmer	Protected Resources	NMFS GARFO
David Stevenson	Habitat Conservation	NMFS GARFO
Cynthia Ferrio	Sustainable Fisheries	NMFS GARFO
Ashleigh McCord	NEPA	NMFS GARFO
Tony Wood	Population Dynamics	NEFSC
Matthew Cutler	Social Sciences	NEFSC
Samantha Werner	Economist	NEFSC
Dustin Colson Leaning	Plan Coordinator	ASMFC
Mike Celestino	Bluefish Technical Committee	NJDFW

## Applicable Laws

Magnuson-Stevens Act	Yes
National Environmental Policy Act	Yes – will require an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement
Administrative Procedure Act	Yes
Regulatory Flexibility Act	Yes
Paperwork Reduction Act	Possibly; depends on data collection needs
Coastal Zone Management Act	Possibly; depends on effects of the action on the resources of the coastal states in the management unit
Endangered Species Act	Possibly; level of consultation will depend on the actions taken
E.O. 12866 (Regulatory Planning and Review)	Yes
E.O. 12630 (Takings)	Possibly; legal review will confirm
E.O. 13123 (Federalism)	Possibly; legal review will confirm
E.O. 13771 (Reducing Regulation and Controlling)	Possibly; legal review will confirm
Essential Fish Habitat	Possibly
Social Impact Analysis	Possibly
Information Quality Act	Yes

## Expected Document

Acronym	NEPA Analysis	Requirements
EA	Environmental Assessment	<b>NEPA applies, no scoping required, public hearings required under MSA</b>
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement	NEPA applies, scoping required, public hearings required

## Draft Timeline for Amendment Development and Implementation

<b>Task Description</b>	<b>Date (subject to change)</b>
<b>Initiation and request of FMAT participants</b>	December 2017
<b>Formation of FMAT</b>	January 2018
<b>Initial FMAT discussion</b>	March 2018
<b>ASMFC meeting</b> - review scoping plan and document	May 2018
<b>Scoping hearings / scoping comment period</b>	June-July 2018
<b>Council Meeting</b> - review scoping comments and FMAT, Advisory Panel (AP), and Monitoring Committee recommendations; discuss next steps	August 2018
<b>AP Meeting</b> - review amendment goals and objectives, FMAT recommendations, develop recommendations for alternatives; any amendment issues?	July 2019
<b>FMAT Meeting</b> – review comments and develop draft alternatives	August 2019
<b>Joint Council and Board Meeting</b> – discuss incorporating rebuilding and review the issues to be covered in the Amendment	October 2019
<b>Joint Council and Board Meeting</b> – approve supplemental scoping document for additional scoping hearings	December 2019
<b>Supplemental scoping hearings / scoping comment period</b>	February-March 2020
<b>FMAT Meeting</b> – review comments and provide recommendations for the scope of the action	April 2020
<b>Joint Council &amp; Board Meeting</b> - review scoping comments and FMAT recommendations; identify potential alternatives to consider	May 2020
<b>FMAT Meeting</b> – develop draft alternatives	May 2020
<b>AP Meeting</b> – provide recommendations on draft alternatives	June 2020
<b>Joint Bluefish Committee and Board Meeting</b> - review and refine draft alternatives	June 2020
<b>FMAT Meeting</b> – refine draft alternatives for the August Joint Council Board Meeting	July 2020
<b>Joint Council &amp; Board Meeting</b> – review and refine draft alternatives	August 2020
<b>FMAT Meeting</b> – finalize draft alternatives for the October Joint Council Board Meeting	September 2020
<b>Joint Council &amp; Board Meeting</b> – review and approve alternatives for public hearing document	October 2020

<b>Development of public hearing document and hearing schedule</b>	October 2020-January 2021
<b>Joint Council &amp; Board Meeting</b> – approve public hearing document	February 2021
<b>Public hearings</b>	March/April 2021
<b>AP Meeting</b> - recommendations for final action	March/April 2021
<b>Bluefish Committee Meeting</b> - recommendations for final action	Spring 2021
<b>Joint Council &amp; Board Meeting</b> - final action	May/June 2021
<b>Submission of draft EA/EIS to GARFO</b>	Summer 2021
<b>Draft EA/EIS revisions and resubmission</b>	Summer/Fall 2021
<b>Rulemaking (proposed rule)</b>	Fall 2021
<b>Rulemaking (final rule)</b>	Winter 2021