



**Five-Year (2020 – 2024)
Research Priorities:
Tracking Progress and Future
Development**

October 6, 2020

Background

- Council approved new research priorities document in December 2019
- Align research needs with management objectives and resources in Strategic Plan and Cooperative Agreement
- Updated and new broad research priority themes; new review and prioritization approach for species-specific priorities



MID-ATLANTIC | FISHERY
MANAGEMENT
COUNCIL

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
Comprehensive Five Year (2020–2024) Research
Priorities

Approved December 2019

For Today:

- Overview of 2020 update and planned 2021 review
- Address *Objective 8* and *Strategy 8.3* in 2020-2024 Strategic Plan



Updates to the 2020-2024 Research Priorities Document

- Recommendation by the Research Steering Committee and supported by Council last year
- Link the individual priorities to the broad research theme(s)
- Ensure that priorities identified by the Council advance and address larger science goals
- All 7 broad research themes assigned a letter A – G
- Individual species tables updated to identify associated theme(s) addressed by priority
- All priorities address at least one theme, many address multiple (as many as 5)

Revised Example General/Species-Specific Tables

GENERAL OR CROSS-SPECIES	Corresponding Theme(s)
SHORT-TERM/SMALLER SCALE	
1. Investigate stock structure utilizing otolith microchemistry and other genetic analyses for different Mid-Atlantic stocks (e.g., golden and blueline tilefish, black sea bass, Atlantic mackerel, and surfclam).	A, F, G
2. Understand the objectives and performance measures for the fishery from a biological and socioeconomic perspective, to evaluate the balance of costs and benefits of ABC specifications (e.g., variable vs. average ABC).	B, C
3. Explore the utilization of local ecological knowledge to help characterize and understand fisheries habitat change over time to help identify areas of greatest need of protection.	C, F, G
4. Create a framework to improve social science information regarding crew employment, remuneration and job satisfaction for all Mid-Atlantic fisheries.	C
5. Evaluate the potential impacts of offshore wind development on habitats and productivity of Council-managed stocks.	A, F, G
6. Evaluate the relationship between changes in landings limits and the rates and magnitude of discarding in the commercial and recreational fisheries.	B, C, D, E
7. Evaluate the use of samples collected by the industry study fleet for all Mid-Atlantic stocks.	A, B, F, G

Review of 2019-2020 Council-Supported Projects

- **14** of projects covering **6** species and **all** FMPs
- Linked projects to broad priority themes and, if applicable, species-specific priorities
- All projects all support at least one research theme, many address multiple themes
 - “Stock assessment improvement” most common theme, 66% of projects
- Seven projects (50%) address 10 species-specific priorities
 - Accounts for nearly 10% of all species-specific priorities



Plan for 2021 Comprehensive Review

- Part of specs process and development of Fishery Performance Reports
- Input from AP, MC, SSC, assessment lead, and Council staff
 - Review outcomes of 2021 Management and Research Track assessments
- Revise & Update – retain/add/delete species-specific priorities list
- Present comprehensive findings to Research Steering Committee on progress made
 - Review and approval by Council in late 2021



Continued Development & Future Direction



- Current document outlines consideration for a long-term approach
 - Development of a comprehensive research priorities plan
 - Process to be successful
 - Improve effectiveness and approaches to integrate priorities across region
 - Communication and coordination; leveraging resources
 - Initial conference calls with NEFMC and ASMFC staff in early 2021 to discuss documents and commonalities
 - Benefits/drawbacks to joint effort
 - Engagement of NRCC partners

Meeting Goals

- Questions on 2020 update
- Feedback on planned 2021 comprehensive review, process, and approach

