



PRESS RELEASE

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Council Announces Extension of Visioning Initiative

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council announces an extension of the survey and comment deadline for its Visioning Initiative. The initiative is an opportunity for anyone interested in fisheries managed by the Council to weigh in on the future of fisheries management in the Mid-Atlantic. Survey responses can now be submitted until February 29, 2012.

“The Council has reached a pivotal moment in the management of our region’s fisheries. While we have effectively rebuilt most of our managed stocks, we need to develop a cohesive vision for the future of our fisheries, fishing communities, and ecosystems. With this vision we can develop a strategic plan that includes specific goals, timelines, and metrics for success,” said Council Chairman Rick Robins.

The Council is asking the public to take one or more online surveys to provide their ideas and comments on fisheries management policies and processes. This is an opportunity for stakeholders to share their varied perspectives and opinions with the Council. In addition to the main survey (<http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/629200/52fe5791a36a>), there are short species-specific surveys (<http://www.mafmc.org/vision/survey.htm>) where anyone interested in a particular species can provide detailed input on the management of that fishery. Links to all surveys are posted on the Visioning website: <http://www.mafmc.org/vision>.

Organizations also have the opportunity to submit position letters that will be included in the Visioning data package. Any organization, including non-governmental organizations, recreational fishing clubs, and commercial fishing associations, can submit a letter addressing areas of particular concern or providing recommendations to the Council. Position letter guidelines are available on the Visioning website (http://www.mafmc.org/vision/Position_letter_guidelines.pdf).

Although nearly 900 surveys have already been submitted, the Council decided to extend the deadline by a month so that everyone who wants to participate has an opportunity to do so. “We recognize that the Council’s stakeholders have a range of interests and priorities. We are really trying to make sure that the results of this project accurately represent these interests and that we get high levels of participation from all stakeholder groups,” said Executive Director Chris Moore.

The deadline for submission of surveys and position letters is **February 29, 2012**. All input received will be presented at the April Council meeting, at which point the Council will begin crafting a vision and accompanying strategic plan designed to achieve that vision. For additional details about the project, or for survey links and position letter guidelines, visit <http://www.mafmc.org/vision> or contact Mary Clark at mclark@mafmc.org or (302) 526-5261.