

Programmatic Evaluation Informational Webinar

Katie Latanich, Council Staff

March 2025



Welcome! We will start the webinar at around 12:02 pm AK



Introductions



Katie Latanich, Fishery Analyst
Presenting today; on leave in April



Sara Cleaver, Fishery Analyst
Presenting at April Council meeting



Diana Evans, Deputy Director



Today's webinar

- Orientation to Programmatic Evaluation discussion materials
- Informational only, with time for clarifying questions
- Will be recorded and linked to eAgenda
- Please plan to provide input through usual channels: submit written comment via eAgenda and/or signup to provide public testimony
- **Important: April Council meeting March 31-April 7, 2025 will be VIRTUAL ONLY**



Joining the April Council meeting (March 31 – April 7, 2025)

<https://www.npfmc.org/current-or-next-council-meeting/>

- See dropdown for detailed instructions on joining virtually
- Sign up for text alerts
- Contact npfmc.admin@noaa.gov with questions or if you need help

NPFMC will meet March 31-April 7 for a virtual-only WEBCONFERENCE.

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council will be holding a virtual Council meeting from March 31-April 7. While originally planned to be an in-person meeting, having the April meeting virtually is a prudent course of action given the potential for a government shutdown, the added costs from holding a special meeting in February, and a suite of agenda topics that complement a virtual meeting forum. If there is a federal government shutdown that affects the ability of federal staff to participate, there may need to be some changes to the agenda. The Council's June meeting is still scheduled to be held in-person, June 2-10 in Newport, Oregon.

The written public comment period for February will open on March 7, 2025, and close at noon on Friday, March 28, 2025. Signups for oral public testimony during the meeting will open once the meetings begin. You can listen to the meetings via our [YouTube channel](#), or on zoom.

COUNCIL APR 3-7

[Agenda >](#)

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This meeting is being conducted remotely with a web broadcast that provides the opportunity for remote public comment. In the event an outage occurs or technical issues arise that impact the experience of remote attendees, we will attempt to resolve them but ultimately we cannot guarantee that they will be resolved satisfactorily.



[What to expect when you are attending a virtual WEBCONFERENCE](#)

Today's webinar

- Orientation to Programmatic Evaluation Discussion Document
 - Contents
 - Potential actions
 - Providing input
- Available via eAgenda



Programmatic Evaluation Discussion Document

Draft for Council Review - 3/2/25¹



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1 Introduction

At its April 2025 meeting the Council is scheduled to discuss the Programmatic Evaluation and provide staff with additional direction to continue the development of this action. The action associated with the Programmatic Evaluation is to revise² the management policy, goals, and objectives for all federal fisheries managed under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Management and Conservation Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act or MSA) and the Northern Pacific Halibut Act (Halibut Act) under the authority of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) in the Gulf of Alaska, the Bering Sea, and Aleutian Islands. The purpose of this action is to ensure

¹ Prepared by Katie Latanich, NPFMC staff, with contributions from other NPFMC and NMFS staff.

² While the Council's [June 2023 motion](#) used the term "clarify," any changes to the management policy, goals, and objectives stated in the FMP would result in an amendment to the FMP. As such, and to avoid ambiguity, the potential Federal action is identified as "revising" the management policy and objectives throughout this discussion document.



Background on the Programmatic Evaluation and FMP Policies, Goals, and Objectives



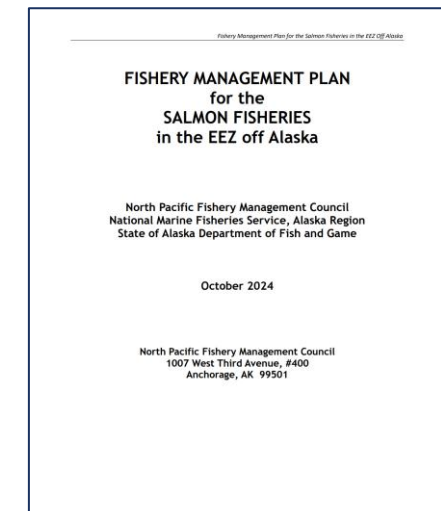
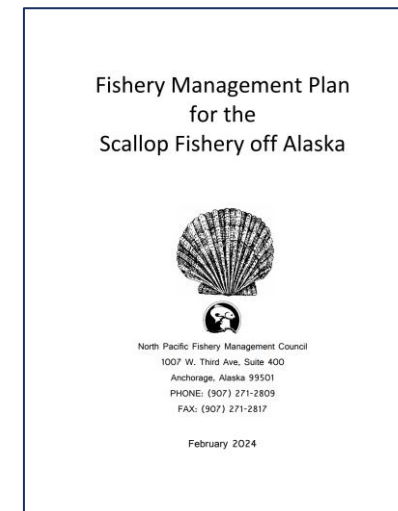
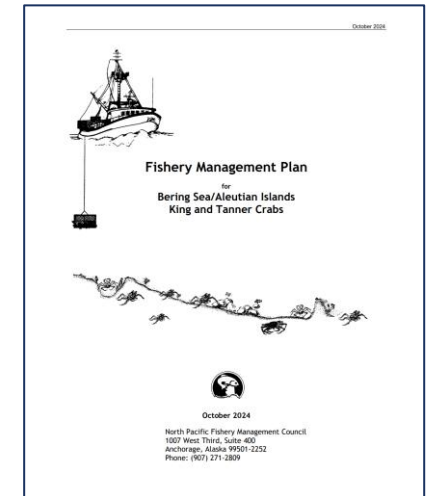
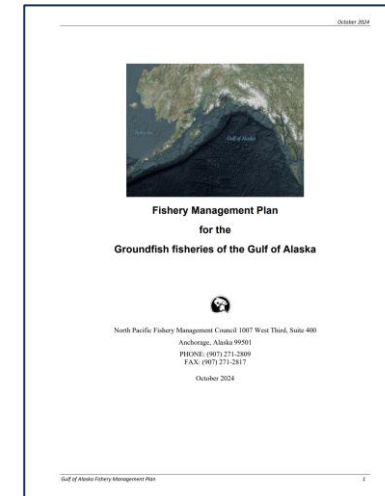
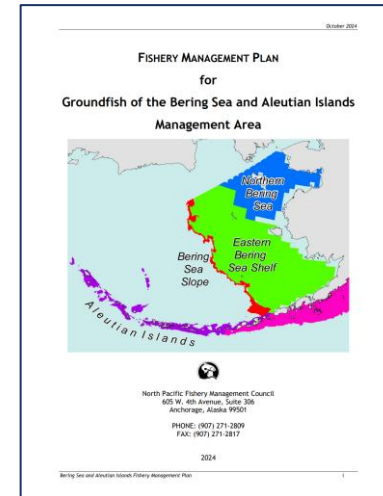
Programmatic Evaluation basics

- **What:** Ensure the Council's policy guidance is comprehensive, can meet current and forthcoming challenges, and improves the Council's ecosystem-based approach
 - Use best available science, including climate science and LKTKS
 - Recognize Alaska tribes and communities that rely on subsistence resources
- **Why:** Changing conditions, new Council efforts, and significant climate-related impacts to North Pacific fisheries
- **How:** Revise the management policy, goals, and objectives for all FMPs under the authority of the Council (excluding the Arctic)
 - Intent to analyze through NEPA process and preparation of EIS



Where do current FMP policies, goals, and objectives live?

- Each of the Council's FMPs includes a section on policies, goals, and objectives
- They are structured differently and were developed at different times in the Council's history



Other sources of Council guidance

- Other Council policies and documents provide strategic guidance (e.g. policies, goals, objectives, principles, values)
 - NPFMC Ecosystem Policy
 - Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan
 - Local Knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, and Subsistence Information Protocol



Developing consistent guidance across FMPs



Focus of
Programmatic
Evaluation



How can updated policy guidance be useful?

- **Does not result in immediate nor required changes to management measures**
- Look ahead; recognize emerging challenges
- Document practices for using best available science
- Communicate the Council's values and priorities
- Provide transparency and rationale
- Guide and inform future Council actions
- Provide a template to evaluate progress



How and when does the Council refer to FMP guidance?

Example: Groundfish workplan updates (December 2024)



Goal	Management Objective	Council actions	
		October 2024	December 2024
1. Prevent Overfishing <i>Maintain Sustainable Harvest</i>	1. Adopt conservative harvest levels for multi-species and single species fisheries and specify optimum yield.	Climate workshop report • Climate science/SCS8 paper • Groundfish harvest proposed specifications • GOA rockfish spatial mgmt	• Climate planning discussion • Groundfish harvest final specifications
	2. Continue to use the optimum yield caps for the BSAI and GOA groundfish fisheries.		
	3. Provide for adaptive management by continuing to specify optimum yield as a range.		
	4. Provide for periodic reviews of the adequacy of F40 and adopt improvements, as appropriate.		
	5. Continue to improve the management of species through species categories.		
2. Promote Sustainable Fisheries and Communities	6. Promote conservation while providing for optimum yield in terms of the greatest overall benefit to the nation with particular reference to food production, and sustainable opportunities for recreational, subsistence, and commercial fishing participants and fishing communities.	These considerations are applied in all Council management recommendations. See specific actions also under Goals 1,7 and 8. • USCG Reports	
	7. Promote management measures that, while meeting conservation objectives, are also designed to avoid significant disruption of existing social and economic structures		
	8. Promote fair and equitable allocation of identified available resources in a manner such that no particular sector, group or entity acquires an excessive share of the privileges.		
	9. Promote increased safety at sea.		

Comparing and contrasting FMP guidance

Discussion document includes:

- Appendices with current FMP policies, goals, and objectives
- Excerpts from other sources of guidance (Ecosystem Approach, Bering Sea FEP, LKTKS Protocol)
- Tables comparing **structure** and **content**



Comparing and contrasting FMP guidance

Example: Table 3: Comparison of FMP goals and objectives by theme

Theme	References National Standards?	Groundfish FMPs	Crab FMP	Scallop FMP	Salmon FMP
Groundfish goal themes					
1 - Biological sustainability	1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2 - Social and economic benefits; communities	8	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
3 - Ecosystems	NA	Yes	No	No	No
4 - Bycatch	9	Yes	No	No	Yes



Potential actions for April Programmatic Evaluation discussion



Purpose and need statement

Adopted June 2023

*Note, this is original text from the Council's [motion](#); the discussion document proposes minor wording revisions

The federal action under consideration is to clarify the management policy and objectives for all federal fisheries managed under the Magnuson-Stevens Act and the Halibut Act under the jurisdiction of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) in the Gulf of Alaska, the Bering Sea, and Aleutian Islands, including objectives for adapting to the effects of climate change. The purpose of this action is to ensure that the management framework of the Council is adequate to meet current and forthcoming challenges in the federal fisheries, and to describe and implement that framework in a **comprehensive** manner to improve the Council's **ecosystem-based** management approach. Given changing conditions in the fisheries, new Council efforts, and significant climate-related impacts on the marine ecosystem, there is a need to evaluate the management policy and objectives for federal fishery management to be adaptable and responsive in order to better meet the objectives of the Magnuson Stevens Act and Halibut Act, to ensure long-term sustainability of the stocks managed under those statutes, and to sustain participation in and benefits from the fisheries over time. **The Council intends to ensure that the management framework is structured to use the best available science, which includes climate science and local and traditional knowledge, and also recognizes Alaska tribes and communities that rely on subsistence resources.**



Alternatives

Alternative 1: Maintain current ecosystem-based management policy and objectives for Council-managed fisheries (status quo)

Alternative 2: Adopt a more adaptive ecosystem-based management policy and objectives for Council managed fisheries which would enable the Council to develop and implement climate-resiliency tools; new pathways to incorporate indigenous, local, and traditional knowledge; and new tools to assess and adapt to risk in the face of additional uncertainty in stock status and distribution due to climate driven marine ecosystem changes.



Interpreting and analyzing Alternative 2

How does the Council want to interpret and analyze Alternative 2? Objectives could look more like:

- **Approach 2a, Planned initiatives:** Objectives could reflect risk-averse and adaptive work that is planned or ongoing
- **Approach 2b, More risk averse:** Objectives could reflect a stronger, more risk-averse approach to achieving goals and outcomes such as biological sustainability, community resilience, flexible and responsive management, Tribal and community engagement, and/or other goals

The Council may wish to explore one or both approaches. The discussion document explores both of these approaches.



April 2025 - Council action necessary for continued progress

This will be an iterative process. Short term:

1. Minor revisions to Purpose and Need Statement (see document)
2. Discuss and potentially adopt a set of goals for further analysis (based on Groundfish FMP) →
3. Provide direction on objectives that could support Alternative 2 →

Policy Statement

Goals

Objectives

Tactics and strategies

As directed by the Council (December 2024), the discussion document provides **ideas** for revised, cross-FMP **goals** and **objectives** as a starting point for discussion (also referred to as “strawman” language), using Groundfish FMP goals as a starting point



Cross-FMP goals and objectives

Why consider revisions to goals and objectives?

- To support the Purpose and Need Statement and Alternative 2 (adaptive, ecosystem-based, use best available science, ...)
- To improve consistency across FMPs
- To recognize current conditions and challenges
- To reflect and clarify current Council practices and reinforce other guidance (e.g., Ecosystem Policy, Bering Sea FEP, LKTK Protocol)

Revisions are suggested for some but not all goals



Cross-FMP goals and objectives

Where do ideas for revised goals and objectives come from?

- Work and products of the Bering Sea FEP Climate Change Task Force (Climate Readiness Synthesis, Final Report)
- Climate Resilience workplan (in progress)
- Discussions and final report from Climate Scenarios Workshop
- SSC workshops
- NMFS Alaska Fisheries Science Center work, including Climate, Ecosystems, and Fisheries Initiative (CEFI)



Cross-FMP goals and objectives

Where do ideas for revised goals and objectives come from? Continued

- Consistency with the National Standards
- Opportunities for improving consistency across FMPs
- Consistency with and integration of the Council's Ecosystem Policy and Bering Sea FEP goals and objectives
- Consistency with the LKTKS Protocol
- Other ideas identified by the Council and SSC (e.g., Feb 2024 discussion document)
- Consistency with NMFS guidance



Orientation to Discussion Document Section 4.2: Examples of revised cross-FMP goals and potential objectives



Contents of Section 4.2

Table 2: Main content of discussion document

- Provides **examples** of how Groundfish FMP goals could be revised as cross-FMP goals
- Provides **examples** of objectives, based on recent Council work and discussions
 - 2a: Existing or planned initiatives – ideas provided
 - 2b: More risk averse approach – *some* ideas provided
- **This is a summary** - see Appendix 1 for additional discussion

Table 2: Revised cross-FMP goals and examples of objectives under different approaches to Alternative 2

	Alternative 1	Alternative 2		
Theme	Current Groundfish FMP Goal	Examples of revised cross-FMP Goal	Example objectives Approach 2a: Existing or planned initiatives	Example objectives Approach 2b: More risk averse
1 - Biological sustainability	Prevent overfishing	Prevent overfishing, achieve optimum yield, and maintain long-term biological sustainability of managed stocks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and review harvest policies that consider and are responsive to climate-driven uncertainty and risks• Consider climate information in rebuilding plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adopt a more precautionary approach to mitigate and buffer against climate impacts



Contents of Section 4.2

Process reminders

- Based on existing Groundfish FMP goals (9) and objectives (45) as a starting point
- This table focuses on new information – not all existing groundfish objective are carried through at this time
- Carryover of existing groundfish and other FMP goals and objectives would be addressed later

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Section 4.2: Examples of revised goals and potential objectives

Orientation to Table 2: Revised goals

Table 2: Revised cross-FMP goals and examples of objectives under different approaches to Alternative 2

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Example cross-FMP goal

Example: Goal 3 – Ecosystems

Current Groundfish FMP goal: Preserve food web

Example (revised) cross-FMP goal: Maintain healthy, productive, biodiverse, and resilient marine ecosystems that support sustainable fisheries and a range of services and users

Why consider revisions? (described in Appendix 1)

- Wording adapted from Ecosystem Policy
- Include the updated term “ecosystem” in place of “food web”
- Link healthy ecosystems with desired outcomes, including biological sustainability, resilience, and benefits to user groups



Example cross-FMP goals

Why changes are *not* suggested for some goals

- They are already broadly worded
- They could be adopted as cross-FMP goals and support Alternative 2 in their current form
- The Council and public could still suggest changes



Example cross-FMP goals

For every goal:

- A summary of revisions and potential objectives are provided in Table 2 of Section 4.2 of the discussion document
- Detailed explanation is provided in Appendix 1



Section 4.2: Examples of revised goals and potential objectives

Orientation to Table 2: Examples of revised **objectives**

Table 2: Revised cross-FMP goals and examples of objectives under different approaches to Alternative 2

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Example objectives

Goal 7 – Management measures

Current Groundfish FMP goal: Promote equitable and efficient use of fishery resources

Example (revised) cross-FMP goal: Promote flexible, responsive management measures that enable adaptation to changing conditions

What could this look like in practice?

Example objectives under **Approach 2a: Existing or planned initiatives**

- Improve capacity and procedural mechanisms to support timely response to early warnings and signals of change
- Support the adaptive capacity of people and communities by identifying barriers and solutions to enable diversification and flexibility



Example objectives

Goal 7 – Management measures

Current Groundfish FMP goal: Promote equitable and efficient use of fishery resources

Example (revised) cross-FMP goal: Promote flexible, responsive management measures that enable adaptation to changing conditions

What could this look like in practice? Another approach

Example objectives under **Approach 2b: More risk averse**

- Consider “if-then” mechanisms for automating climate-informed management responses
- Develop capacity to support flexible and responsive management tools including dynamic and in-season management



Interpreting and analyzing Alternative 2

Questions to consider:

- Does the Council want to consider an approach that looks more like Approach 2a (planned and existing initiatives), or Approach 2b (more risk averse for one or more goals)? Or both?
- What are examples of more risk-averse management objectives? (Examples are provided for some goals but not others, reflecting Council and public discussions)

The Council could choose to explore both approaches, as well as to add to or modify the two existing alternatives.



Summary, next steps, and how to provide input



Summary of next steps

April 2025: Council action necessary for continued progress on this action

1. Minor revisions to Purpose and Need Statement
2. Discuss and adopt a set of goals for further analysis
3. Provide direction on objectives for Alternative 2

Reminder: the Council has flexibility to make changes at any point prior to final action

Steps for later in the process

- Finalize wording of goals and objectives
- Develop and approve policy statement
- Further discussion of key questions e.g. defining precautionary and risk averse

Cleanup and carryover of existing FMP guidance (Groundfish, Crab, Scallop, Salmon FMPs)



Summary of next steps

Late 2025 and beyond (anticipated)

- Staff would begin develop draft analysis for initial review
- Coordinate with NMFS staff to assess appropriate level of NEPA analysis
- Next potential update would be Oct 2025 at the earliest – progress update and potentially a NEPA scoping analysis (if EIS prepared)
- First draft analysis in first half of 2026



Summary of next steps

Providing input

- Reminder: the April Council meeting (March 31-April 7, 2025) is **VIRTUAL ONLY**
- Submit written comments via eAgenda: The comment period will open on March 7, 2025, and the deadline for written comments is Friday, March 28, 2025 at 12pm AKT
 - eAgenda: <https://meetings.npfmc.org/Meeting/Details/3080>
- Sign up to provide testimony during the meeting
 - See April meeting page: <https://www.npfmc.org/current-or-next-council-meeting/>



Summary of next steps

Clarifying questions on process or discussion document?

- katie.latanich@noaa.gov
- sara.cleaver@noaa.gov
- diana.evans@noaa.gov



Additional slides



Cross-FMP Goals

Goals & themes for which revisions ARE suggested

- Goal 1 – Biological sustainability
- Goal 2 – Social and economic benefits; communities
- Goal 3 – Ecosystems
- Goal 7 – Management measures
- Goal 8 – Tribal and community access and engagement
- Goal 9 – Best available science
- Goal 10 – Council process (new addition)



Cross-FMP Goals

Goals for which no changes are suggested

- Goal 4 – Manage incidental catch and reduce bycatch and waste
- Goal 5 – Reduce and avoid impacts to seabirds and marine mammals
- Goal 6 – Reduce and avoid impacts to habitat



Cross-FMP Goals

Goal 1 – Biological sustainability

Current Groundfish FMP goal: Prevent overfishing

Example (revised) cross-FMP goal: Prevent overfishing, achieve optimum yield, and maintain long-term biological sustainability of managed stocks.

Why consider revisions?

- Include the phrase “optimum yield;” optimum involves a balance of uses and objectives, and reduces harvest from the maximum sustainable yield from a fishery to take into account other economic, social, or ecological factors, particularly in a changing environment.
- Include the phrase “long term” for consistency across FMPs, recognize to benefit stewardship and current and future generations, reflects that fishing mortality is not the only factor influencing sustainability



Cross-FMP Goals

Goal 2 – Social and economic benefits; communities

Current Groundfish FMP goal: Promote sustainable fisheries and communities

Example (revised) cross-FMP goal: Promote the sustainability of fisheries and communities that depend on resources affected by fisheries

Why consider revisions?

- Acknowledge the range of communities that are engaged in or impacted by Federally managed fisheries; consistent with Alternative 2



Cross-FMP Goals

Goal 7 – Management measures

Current Groundfish FMP goal: Promote equitable and efficient use of fishery resources

Example (revised) cross-FMP goal: Promote flexible, responsive management measures that enable adaptation to changing conditions

Why consider revisions?

- To reflect the Programmatic Purpose and Need - refers to flexibility and responsiveness
- To reflect current conditions and challenge - wording reflects the focus of groundfish management at the time (early 2000s), including managing excess capacity and overcapitalization



Cross-FMP Goals

Goal 8 – Tribal and community access and engagement

Current Groundfish FMP goal: Increase Alaska Native and community consultation

Example (revised) cross-FMP goal: Support Tribal and community access and engagement

Why consider revisions?

- Clarify the Council's responsibilities and practices with regard to Tribal consultations, and distinguish between consultations and other forms of engagement and outreach



Cross-FMP Goals

Goal 9 – Best available science

Current Groundfish FMP goal: Improve data quality, monitoring, and enforcement

Example (revised) cross-FMP goal: Use best available science that draws on the full range of available sources

Why consider revisions?

- Focus wording on best available science
- Include the “full range of available sources” to recognize a broad range of information inputs and knowledge systems, including climate science and LKTKS



Cross-FMP Goals

Goal 10 – Council process (added)

Current Groundfish FMP goal: NA

Example cross-FMP goal: Support an open, transparent, and inclusive public process

Why consider adding a Council process goal?

- Consistency across FMPs
- Recognize ideas from the Climate Scenarios Workshop
- Provide a way to identify consistent, actionable objectives and evaluate progress toward their implementation

