

New England Fishery Management Council



The NEFMC Process

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NE Fishery Management Council Staff**

What is the Council's Job?

Magnuson-Stevens Act Mandate

To conserve and manage fisheries for the greatest benefit of the Nation by relying on the best available scientific information as well as the input and participation of fishing communities and the public.

MSA - Ten National Standards for FMPs

Conservation and management measures shall:

- (1) Prevent overfishing while achieving optimum yield.**
- (2) Be based upon the best scientific information available.**
- (3) Manage individual stocks as a unit throughout their range, to the extent practicable; interrelated stocks shall be managed as a unit or in close coordination.**
- (4) Not discriminate between residents of different states; any allocation of privileges must be fair and equitable.**
- (5) Where practicable, promote efficiency, except that no such measure shall have economic allocation as its sole purpose.**
- (6) Take into account and allow for variations among and contingencies in fisheries, fishery resources, and catches.**
- (7) Minimize costs and avoid duplications, where practicable.**
- (8) Take into account the importance of fishery resources to fishing communities to provide for the sustained participation of, and minimize adverse impacts to, such communities (consistent with conservation requirements).**
- (9) Minimize bycatch or mortality from bycatch.**
- (10) Promote safety of human life at sea.**

Council Products - Types of Actions

Fishery Management Plans and Amendments

Usually address major management issues

Require an EIS

One to three+ years to develop

Framework Adjustments to FMPs

Involve relatively minor plan modifications (with exceptions)

Require at least an Environ. Assessment

A minimum of two Council mtgs before approval

Specifications Packages

Used to set harvest and other catch component limits for a specific period of time

Current Management Plans

10 Major FMPs and Corresponding Committees

- Northeast Multispecies
- Small Mesh Multispecies (Whiting, Hakes)
- Atlantic Herring
- Red Crab
- Sea Scallop
- Northeast Skate Complex
- Monkfish (Joint with MAFMC)
- Spiny Dogfish (Joint with MAFMC)
- Atlantic Salmon (single measure)
- Habitat (affects all FMPs)

When are Measures Developed?

When a Need for Action is Identified

(by Council, new science, industry, public, court)

- Council finalizes management priorities and upcoming actions for ea. calendar year (Nov)
- Develops specific action (FMP, amendment, framework, specs); work completed by appropriate species committee
- Staff develops timeline for management action
- Staff works with Committee, AP, and PDT to develop/analyze management alternatives
- Council finalizes alternatives
- NOAA Fisheries approves or disapproves action

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Council (18 voting members)**
 - Provides overall policy direction
 - May rework alternatives; provides final approval for all management actions and documents
- **Committees (Groundfish, Monkfish, Scallop, etc.)**
 - Relatively narrow focus, BUT...
 - Develop management measures using input from their Advisory Panel and Plan Development Team
 - Oversees PDT work
- **Advisory Panels (one for each FMP, up to 15 members on each)**
 - Provide input on suitability of mgt. measures, bring add'l information to process
- **Plan Development Teams (PDTs)**
 - Prepare technical documents
 - Provide technical support to Committee
 - Analyze measures and prepare FMPs

Science & Statistical Committee (SSC)

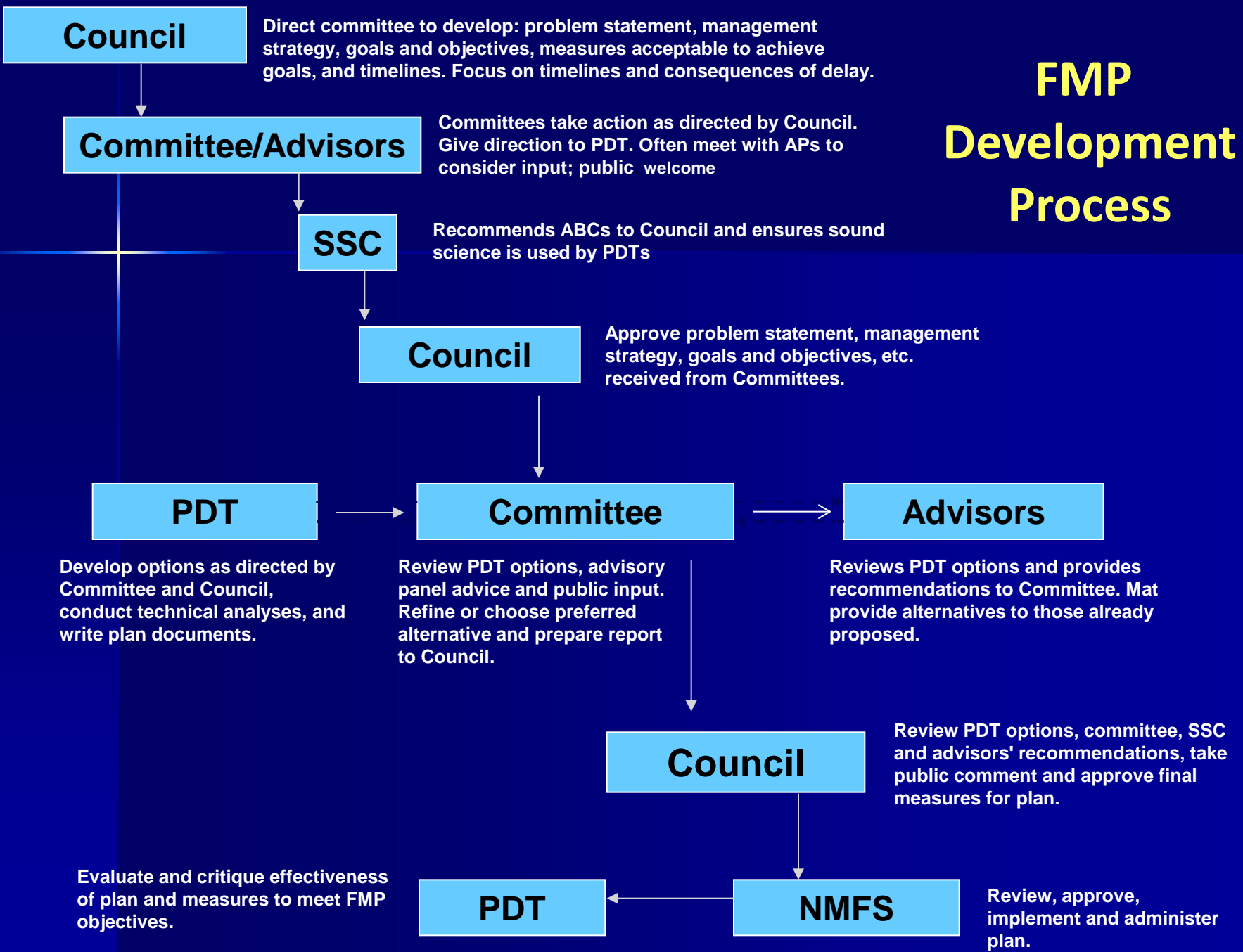
MSRA requires that each SSC provide its respective Council with ongoing scientific advice for fishery management decisions; this includes:

- **Recommending acceptable biological catches (ABCs) for each managed stock while accounting for the productivity of the resource and scientific uncertainty**
- **In completing its work, the SSC also recommends an OFL, if possible; Council may disagree with advice; SSC may reconvene to determine additional options**

More about the SSC

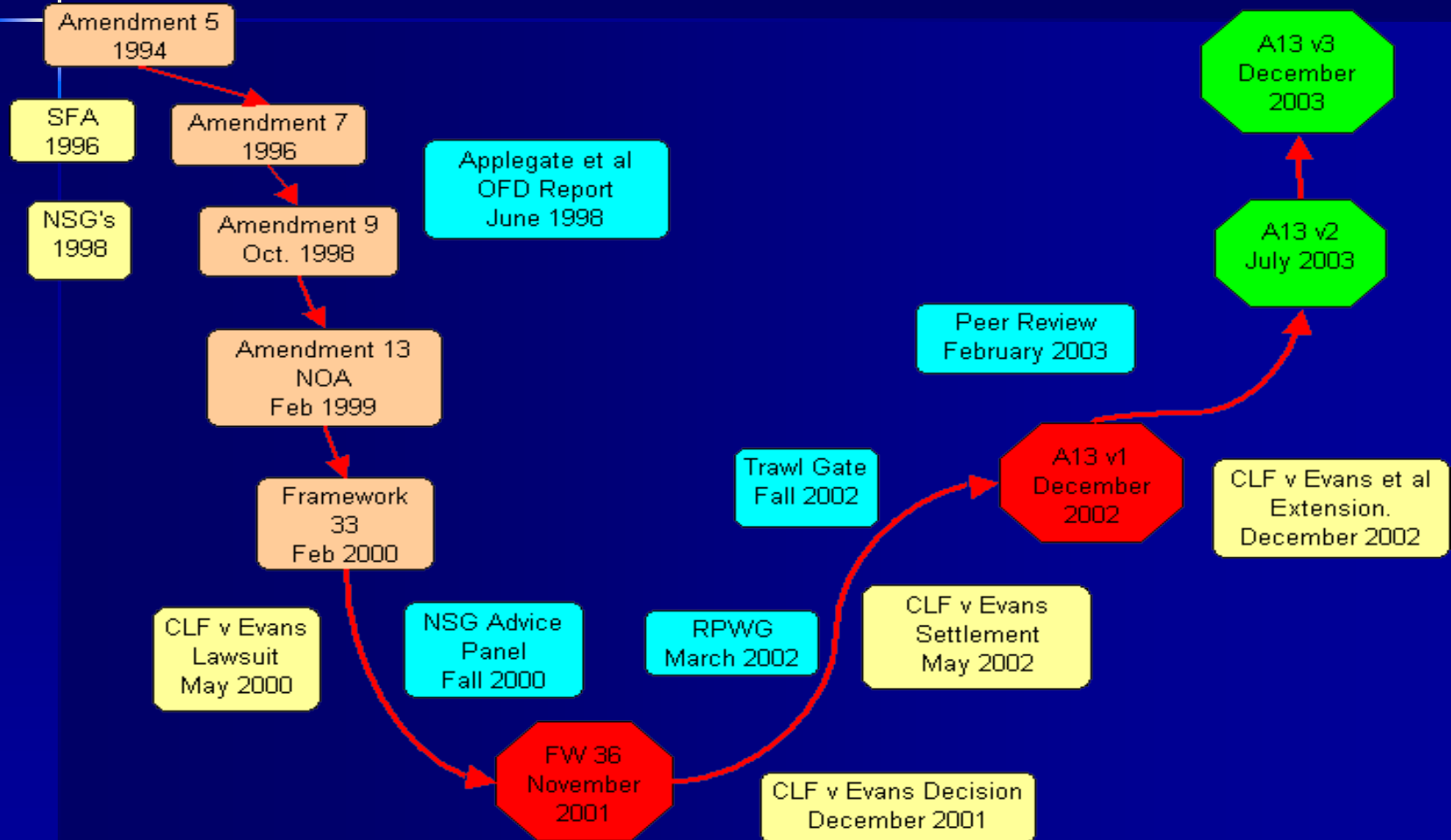
MSA provisions require each Council to develop annual catch limits for each of its managed fisheries that may not exceed the fishing level recommendations of its Scientific and Statistical Committee (or the applicable regional peer review process).

FMP Development Process



Does the process always move forward in the same way? Not Always...

Amendment 13



Council Staff Responsibilities

- **Council staffers serves as PDT Chairs**
- **Coordinate all aspects of FMP development, conduct and also receive analyses from other PDT members and staff**
- **Incorporate Habitat, PR and Other Analyses**
- **Write Cumulative Effects and Environmental Impact Analyses**
- **Present draft(s) to Committees/Council; make changes following Council approval**
- **Submit action to NMFS on behalf of Council**



New England
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The Council process is often confusing! Feel free to ask a staffer about any questions that come to mind!