Sustainable Fisheries GIT Meeting
Summary Report
Holiday Inn Solomons Conference Center and Marina
Solomons, MD
June 29-30, 2010

Background

The Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team (GIT), a product of the recent reorganization of the Chesapeake Bay Program, is focused on facilitating fisheries management that encourages sustainable Chesapeake Bay fish populations, supports viable recreational and commercial fisheries, and promotes natural ecosystem function. The Fisheries GIT provides the forum to discuss fishery management issues that cross state and other jurisdictional boundaries. The Fisheries GIT is also working to better connect science to management decisions and create a framework/mechanism for implementing ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries management. The first official meeting for the Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team was held on June 29-30, 2010.

Facilitator: Dan Farrow

List of Attendees:

Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team Members

Peyton Robertson
Tom O'Connell
Jack Travelstead
Bryan King
A.C. Carpenter
Tom Powers
Ken Smith
Ron Lukens
Suzan Bulbukaya
Patrick Campfield
Mike Fritz
Bill Goldsborough
Mark Bryer
Trent Zivkovich
Mark Mansfield
Bill Eichbaum

Fisheries Ecosystem Workgroup (FEW)

Ed Houde
Tom Miller
Troy Tuckey
Howard Townsend
Lynn Fegley
Jonathan Kramer
Shannon Green
Alesia Read

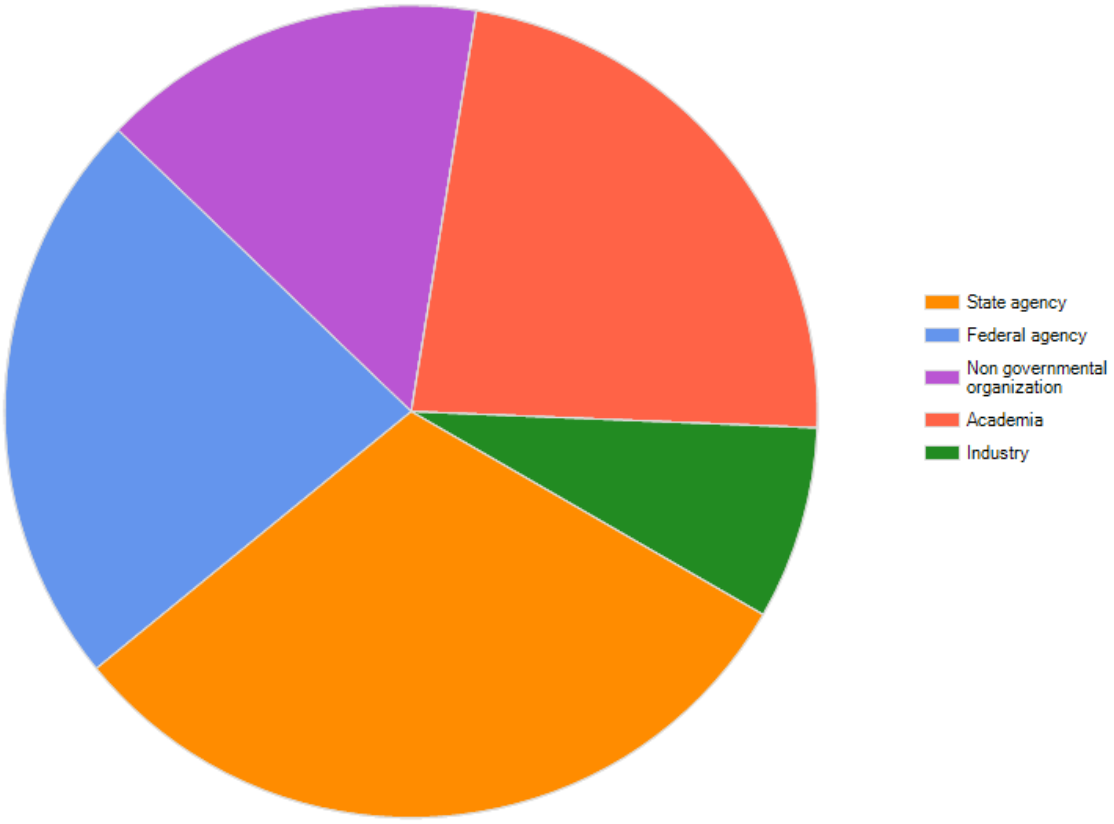
GIT Staff and Support

Bruce Vogt
Shannon Simpson
Adam Davis

Participants

Romuald Lipcius
Dave Secor
Tom Ihde
Ned Lundvall
Derek Orner

Relative Breakout of Attendees*:*



Meeting Purpose, Objectives, and Outcomes:

Objective 1. Sustainable Fisheries Goal Team Orientation – Introduced members to each other and their roles as members.

Outcomes:

- GIT members identified the broad range of expertise and disciplines with direct and indirect implications for the health of Chesapeake Bay fisheries.

Objective 2. Goals and Objectives – Reviewed draft goals, objectives, structure and function of the Sustainable Fisheries GIT.

Outcomes:

- GIT members clearly understood and agreed to the purpose, goals, and objectives of the Fisheries Goal Team.

- GIT members reviewed and established the structure and function of the Fisheries Goal Team.

- GIT members reviewed and established the operating principles of the Fisheries Goal Team.

Objective 3. Current Status and Next Steps – Envisioned how the Sustainable Fisheries Goal Team will advance fisheries management in the Chesapeake Bay

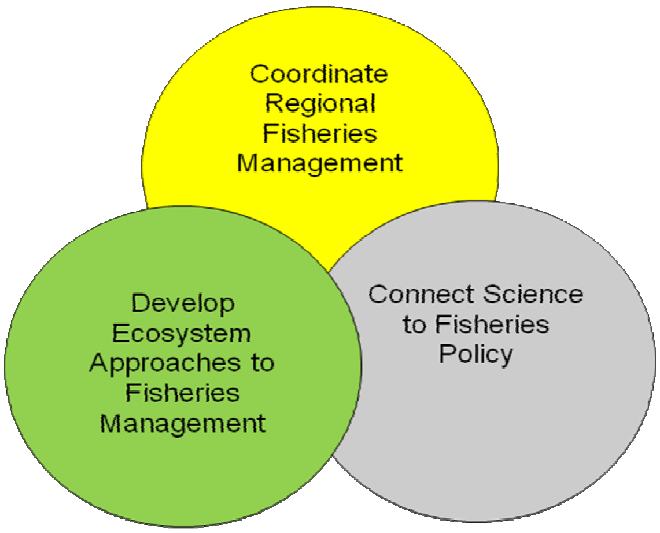
Outcomes:

- Developed a common understanding among members of the principles of ecosystem-based fisheries management.
- Began to build a blueprint of how habitat and ecosystem-based concepts can be implemented into regional fisheries management

All Objectives and outcomes were met and next steps were identified.

Fisheries GIT Meeting Themes:

The Fisheries Goal Team agreed that their role will encompass three focal areas that each have relationships to one another. Those focal areas are represented in the diagram below.



In order to ensure these focal areas are addressed and their interrelationships are strengthened, the Fisheries GIT will serve as the coordinating body to identify specific actions to advance each focal area and draw on expertise and connections outside of the Fisheries GIT when required.

Maintaining a close relationship with both the Water Quality GIT and Habitat GIT is necessary for the Fisheries GIT to promote healthy ecosystems that support beneficial Chesapeake Bay fish populations. This also requires full involvement from entire Fisheries GIT membership in framing our vision and developing an action plan for the future. To affect change the GIT must routinely foster dialogue among a diverse group of stakeholders, managers, and policymakers.

The Fisheries GIT must focus on issues that are ACTIONABLE and can affect change. Three examples were referred to throughout the meeting:

- Oysters, nature's filtration system, are a necessary organism to bringing the Chesapeake Bay back to a healthy state. The current state of oysters and the number of oysters need to restore habitat and allow for self sustaining populations in the Chesapeake Bay is mostly unknown. Increased research (i.e. stock assessments), clear and measurable restoration goals, and improved coordination to meet these goals are required to guide management efforts to effectively restore oyster populations throughout the Bay. The Fisheries GIT will serve as a coordinating body to develop and implement a baywide oyster restoration plan consistent with existing state and federal goals and objectives.
- Blue Catfish is an emerging issue which deserves attention. There are no management plans in place for blue catfish and there still remain several scientific gaps related to their habitat use, impacts on bay ecology, and population dynamics. The Fisheries GIT could demonstrate coordinated, interjurisdictional fisheries management with this species by identifying research needs to inform policy recommendations and management actions.
- Blue Crab interjurisdictional management is a success story but the work to rebuild the stock in a coordinated way has not been formally agreed to by the parties involved. Managing a recovered stock brings new challenges which the Fisheries GIT could address. Also Blue crabs are a good candidate for developing ecological reference points in the relative near term.

Meeting Summary:

Day 1

Welcome and Setting the Stage (Robertson)

- Meeting Goals and Objectives
    - Orientation
    - Established/Reviewed rationale for creating the Sustainable Fisheries Goal Team
- Overview of the Sustainable Fisheries Goal Team
    - Who are we and what are we trying to do?
        - Goals and Objectives
        - Structure and Function
        - Role of Goal Team Members
        - Draft Charter

Status of Chesapeake Bay Fisheries

- Current Status of Chesapeake Bay Fisheries (Orner – 30 min)
    - Presentation supplied background information on the five key Chesapeake Bay species (Striped Bass, Menhaden, Alosines, Blue Crab, and Oysters) the GIT will be working to promote towards sustainability. Their ecological range extends from Newfoundland to Florida, and each of these species is important for both their ecological as well as economic values. Suggestions for the GIT include: coordinating science to management, open dialogue, idea exchange, explore new approaches, CBEIIS (Ecosystem Integrated Information System)
- Emerging Issues – Chesapeake Bay Case Study - Blue Catfish (Tuckey – 15 min)
    - Described the current state of invasion in the Chesapeake Bay region by the Blue Catfish. Blue Catfish have shown salinity tolerance by expanding their populations throughout many major river systems (i.e. James, York, Rappahannock, Potomac, and the Patuxent). This species is interesting in that they live long, grow fast, *and* reach a very large size. Unfortunately, they acquire high levels of contaminants and those over 32 inches are of concern with regards to human consumption.
    - Science needs include: what roles do estuaries play in blue catfish ecology and population dynamics? Where are their critical habitats? And are abundance trends consistent among sampling domains?
    - Policy implications/questions: Blue Catfish are not currently managed. What are the management options? Should there be a coordinated bay wide management effort to promote the commercial fishery and/or eradicate the species as an invasive? What are the tradeoffs-benefit to industry/market vs. bay health and ecology?

Breaking Barriers: Moving Toward Cross-Jurisdictional Fisheries Management
(Perspectives from the Executive Committee – 5 minutes each followed by group discussion)

- What does cross-jurisdictional fisheries management mean?
- What role can the Fisheries Goal Team play?
    - Tom O'Connell (Maryland)
        - Wants to preserve the environment for future generations. Concerned with the economics behind fisheries management, and wants to get the right people involved to affect change in the Chesapeake Bay. The Fisheries GIT can be the forum to bring these people together including land use planners and other

whose decisions ultimately have an impact on fisheries health and production.

- Jack Travelstead (Virginia)
  - Chief concern is of careful, thoughtful, and strategic operation of the GIT. Glad to have this group capable of a single-dialogue with people from a variety of disciplines. Emphasis on picking the right issues to affect change (Blue Catfish is a major issue). VMRC has the opportunity for state managers to have the GIT as a resource and sounding board for communication with stakeholders.
- A.C. Carpenter (Potomac River)
  - Wants to stress that this is not the first group to try to implement interjurisdictional fisheries management in the Chesapeake Bay. Improvements in management need to be made as well as getting a say in development and land-based activities. The most important determining factor in success of EBFM is having an effective say on what goes into the water (nutrient control).
- Bryan King (District of Columbia)
  - The current single-species approaches provide a more tangible solution; however, the potential for EBFM advancements is much more significant in the long run.
- Patrick Campfield representing Bob Beal (Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission-ASMFC)
  - ASMFC foresees their role with the GIT as a two way interaction with similar issues/concerns (both deal with multiple jurisdictions and political groups). ASFMC is looking at multi-species implementation plans and to coordinate with the councils on EBFM. Wants to use the GIT as an example of how to implement EBFM in the Atlantic region as well as coastwide. Plans to use the GIT outcomes/activities where relevant in ASMFC meetings.
- Peyton Robertson (NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office)
  - The GIT needs to share ideas, listen to others, and broaden its perspective. This group has to opportunity to improve regional governance by setting new precedents in the Chesapeake Bay. Wants to stress the difference between short-term and long-term goals. The GIT can be a collective group to capitalize on everyone's expertise. As members of the GIT, think about what influence you can have on various players. Use the GIT as a tool to translate fisheries information to others. What are the

implications of the information and data, as well a policy and economic information?

Moving Toward Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management (Jonathan Kramer Moderates)

- What is Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management? (Miller)
  - EBFM takes in to account habitat considerations as well as water quality, whereas previous single-species approaches do not. This provides enormous challenges to create indices and measurable parameters to incorporate these data into statistical multi-species models.
  - Challenges:
    - What comes first, goals or stakeholders?
      - Set goals then invite stakeholders or invite stakeholders and they set goals?
    - Cannot set trade-offs between species alone
    - Need multiple indicators and they must be compatible
    - Signal to noise ratio must be high with indicators
    - Indicators must be responsive to ecosystem management and conditions
- Introduction to Maryland Sea Grant Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management Project (Kramer)
  - MD Sea Grant has started working out the science and technical aspects behind implementing EBFM in the Chesapeake Bay. Sees the GIT as playing a role of receiving information and supplying feedback supporting the development of EBFM. Major challenge will be getting to the point where there are quantitative reference points for models and management decisions. The Quantitative Ecosystem Teams (QETs) are in charge of develops reference points to inform management actions and the Fisheries Ecosystem Workgroup (FEW) pulls everything together.
  - Three species briefs are already completed
    - Striped Bass:
      - http://www.mdsg.umd.edu/images/uploads/siteimages/Striped_Bass_Species_Team_Briefs.pdf
    - Menhaden:
      - http://www.mdsg.umd.edu/images/uploads/siteimages/Menhaden_Species_Team_Briefs.pdf
    - Blue Crab:
      - http://www.mdsg.umd.edu/images/uploads/siteimages/MDSG_EBFM_Blue_Crab_Briefs.pdf
  - Foundation for EBFM:
    - Organize problems and prioritize them
    - Recognize the complexity
    - Develop a strong scientific and technical understanding
    - Engage Stakeholders

        - Identify short, medium, and long term actions
    - *Next Steps*:
        - Move into quantitative context
            - Habitat, Foodweb, Stock Assessment, Socio-Economic
        - Define vision for Chesapeake Bay fisheries
            - Line between science and management will fluctuate over time
- Developing the Index of Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management (IEBFM): From single-species to an ecosystem approach (Green)
    - Presented the Indices for EBFM (IEBFM). The IEBFM is comprised of information synthesized from the Single Species (SS) teams and QETs into a useful tool for managers. "Dashboards," a snapshot of fisheries health and management, will serve as public communication pieces and can be made public on the internet (the draft Blue Crab Dashboard was used as an example). This will be a useful tool for tracking progress towards management. Identified stressors for all species are compiled and merged into a single list (eliminating redundancy) representing the major indicators that will be used for management decisions.
    - *Next Steps*:
        - FEW will work with QETs to develop reference points
        - Complete Issue Briefs for oysters and Alosines
        - Complete Dashboards

Implementing Executive Order 13508 – Strategy for protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay (Robertson)

- The primary goal is to sustain healthy populations of fish and wildlife which contribute to a resilient ecosystem and vibrant economy. The desirable aspect is measurable environmental goals identifying specific improvements across a wide range of parameters. The Executive Order provides the Fisheries GIT with an opportunity to coordinate and weigh in on critical Bay restoration efforts within the Bay Program. It offers a way to better highlight fisheries issues and link fisheries health with water quality and habitat restoration. Specifically the Fisheries GIT will need to focus on the following outcomes and actions in the Executive Order (http://executiveorder.chesapeakebay.net/):.
    - **Restore historical fish migratory routes by opening 1,000 additional stream miles by 2025, with restoration success indicated by the presence of River herring, American shad and/or American eel.** (Current condition: Approximately 1,924 stream miles in the Chesapeake Bay watershed have been opened and are accessible for fish migration. Projects are currently being ranked and prioritized through a collaborative federal and state process designed to strategically target priority projects.) Fisheries GIT will coordinate with Habitat GIT.
    - **Restore native oyster habitat and populations in 20 tributaries out of 35 to 40 candidate tributaries by 2025.** (Current condition: 0 tributaries

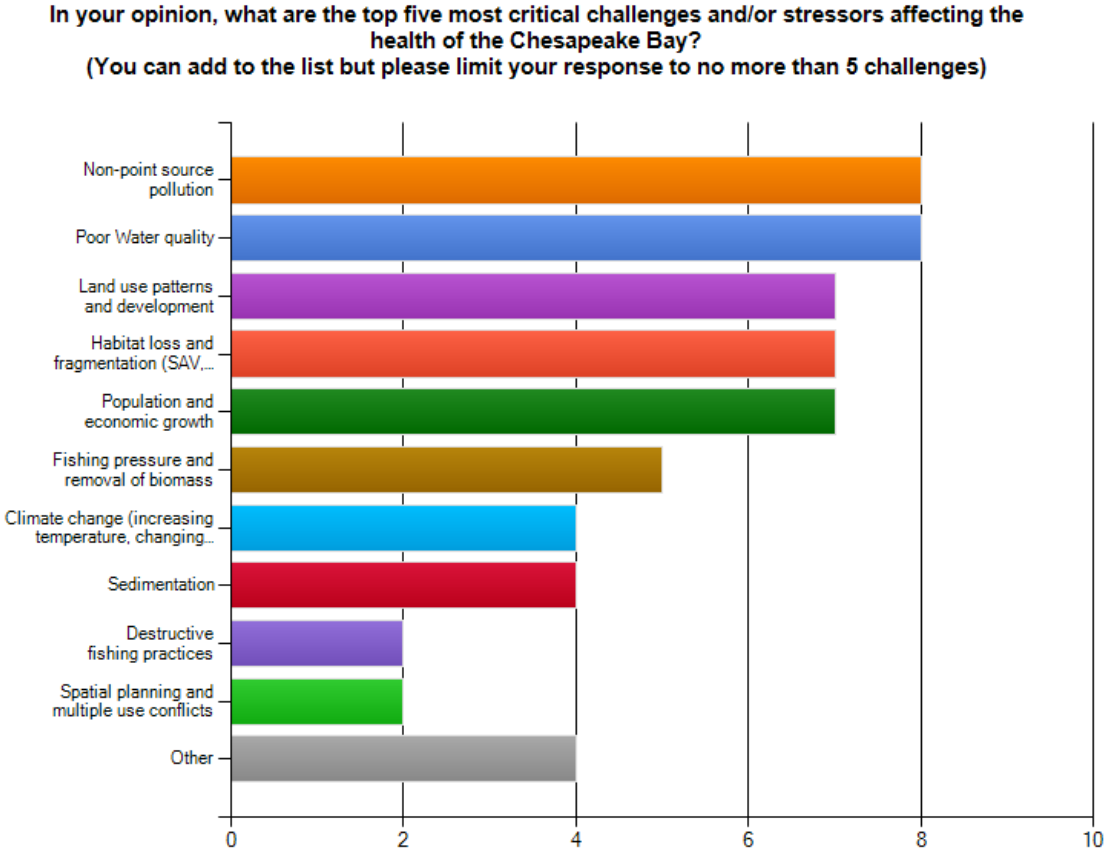
with fully restored oyster populations; several tributaries with successful living oyster reef habitat.)

- Launch a Bay-wide oyster strategy using scientific support for decision making.
- Restore priority tributaries and support enforcement.
- Expand commercial aquaculture

- **Maintain sustainable blue crab interim rebuilding target of 200 million adults (1+ years old) in 2011 and develop a new population target for 2012 through 2025.** (Current condition: 2007-2008: 131 million; 2008-2009: 223 million; 2009-2010: 315 million.)
  - Support continued interjurisdictional blue crab management.
  - Revise blue crab population rebuilding target.
- **Facilitate interjurisdictional, ecosystem based fisheries management.** In order to restore the Bay fisheries, partners need to develop management approaches and plans that incorporate the structure and function of the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem, including species interactions, habitat use and suitability, climate, water quality, land-use, and other factors. NOAA will work with FWS, other federal agencies, the states, the District of Columbia, PRFC and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to strengthen interjurisdictional fishery management strategies by energizing discussion and coordination within the current management structure, including the Chesapeake Bay Program's Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team.

Identifying Issues and Challenges Facing Fisheries

Results from the pre-meeting survey were shared with the participants (shown below).



Following survey results, participants broke into small groups to identify significant challenges facing fisheries and prioritize what issues the GIT should address in the near term. Groups came back together to report on their discussions

- What are the most significant challenges affecting the health of Chesapeake Bay Fisheries?
    - Consistent with the survey results water quality was a primary issue of concern and raised questions such as Can we affect fisheries management for water quality reasons? What about affecting water quality for fisheries reasons?
        - Need to establish a relationship with the Water Quality GIT in order to collaborate on ideas on how to achieve success with EBFM.
        - The Fisheries GIT should get involved with developing the Watershed Implementation Plans to ensure fisheries issues and challenges are part of the planning discussions.

- What are the near term issues/challenges facing the Goal Team?
    - Funding and research and monitoring
    - Identifying "Actionable" Outcomes the GIT can target
    - Developing Quantitative Reference Points for bay species
    - Developing a coordinated Baywide Plan for Oyster restoration
    - Gaining political support in developing a broader reach for fisheries management

Day 2

Collective Strength: Roles and Contributions of Goal Team Members (Perspectives from All Members)

- GIT can serve a coordinating/collaborating mechanism for stakeholder involvement by developing outreach materials. Need to focus on things that are "actionable" actions. The GIT can perform annual science synthesis and review of the state of fisheries in the Chesapeake Bay. Need to raise the profile of fisheries issues in order to affect change
- *Next Steps*:
    - Oyster Restoration → Need to develop stock assessment and baywide restoration plan
    - Blue Catfish → Define management options within one year
    - Blue Crab → Successful single-species management
        - GIT needs to ensure all three jurisdictions come to consensus on management direction
        - Develop ecological reference points for blue crab

Establishing Goal Team Goals, Objectives, Structure, Function, and Role

- Given the challenges identified on Day 1, do we have the right goals and objectives?
- Are we organized for success; can we be effective in addressing the challenges?
- Do we have the right membership?
    - Must consider a broad range of stakeholders most importantly water quality and land use experts.
    - Need to develop a network or way of communicating fisheries issues to non-fisheries decision makers.
- Do we agree on the charter?
    - Edits to the draft charter were made during the meeting via discussion with all participants. *See revised Draft Charter Attached*
    - <u>GIT Structure</u>:
        - Full GIT will include expanded stakeholder involvement
        - GIT needs to determine specific roles/membership of FEW and CBSAC

- Executive Committee
    - Fisheries managers who make decisions based on advice from the GIT
- Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)
    - Establish Liaison to GIT and possibly integrate with the FEW
- Scientific, Technical Analysis and Reporting (STAR)
    - Establish Liaison to FEW
- Fisheries Ecosystem Workgroup (FEW)
    - MDSG liaison to Executive Committee/GIT
- Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee (CBSAC)
    - Advisory adhoc research group to the GIT
- The Fisheries GIT will have close ties with the rest of the GITs
    - Especially the Water Quality, Habitat, and Watersheds GITs in order to promote healthy ecosystems capable of carrying sustainable fisheries

Envisioning How the Sustainable Fisheries Goal Team Will Advance Fisheries Management in the Chesapeake Bay

- Identify near term actions and next steps
- Begin to build a blueprint for coordinated, regional fisheries management
    - The participants agreed to develop an action plan for the Fisheries GIT. Action Items identified at the meeting will be prioritized by the GIT Executive Committee and used to draft an action plan for the next year that includes deadlines for actions, deliverables, and assigns actions to specific GIT entities or members.
    - **See Section on Action Items below**

Action Items:

Fisheries Goal Team June 2010 Meeting Action Items (Note: The ExComm will prioritize these action items at their July meeting. Results will be shared with all Fisheries GIT members)

1. Finalize Goal Team Charter by September
    - Revise goals and objectives with the ExComm and circulate to full GIT for review by August.
    - Clarify operating principles with ExComm
2. Formalize Goal Team Structure by September
    - Clarify roles and responsibilities – ExComm, full Goal Team, FEW (Single species team and QETs), CBSAC.
    - Produce a "terms of reference"
    - ExComm will revisit and establish Goal Team membership – Identify expertise of Goal Team members, reach out to those members not in attendance, ensure land use and water quality expertise in included, add academic leadership (VIMS Director, UMCES, consider STAC and STAR representation.
3. Map out routine/annual functions of Goal Team
    - State of the Fisheries report card/status – briefings to key audiences
    - Annual science review (or every 2 years?)
    - Track and report on progress of Goal Team toward established goals and objectives
    - Prepare for ASMFC meetings
4. Determine fisheries priorities for the Goal Team, issues for them to address in near (6mos-1 year) and longer term
    - ExComm will define Management Priorities
      Draft List from meeting
        - Oyster Restoration
        - Blue Catfish
        - Ecosystem Impacts for Blue Crab – managing recovered stock
        - Note the FEW volunteered to develop scoping papers on these issues but the ExComm needs to provide guidance on what they want from these papers.
    - Science Priorities (ExComm with GIT input will develop a list of priorities as to what scientific information they need in the near-term (6mos to a year)

- Set up a meeting between ExComm and FEW to discuss the priorities
- Identify research and funding (NCBO, State, Sea Grant opportunities and coordination)
- Control rules (ExComm identify priority species)
- Quantitative reference points (ExComm identify priority species)

5. Develop a one year action plan based GIT focal areas
    - Cross jurisdictional coordination
    - Science to Management (two way connection)
    - Ecosystem-based Management
6. Improve Communications
    - Establish a communication pathway between land-use managers, regulatory agencies, and fisheries managers. What are the tools they need to make these connections and to consider fisheries issues?
    - Develop communications Pathways/Network analysis
    - Determine outreach products ("state of fisheries" report)
    - Process for involving stakeholders beyond the GIT membership
    - Determine status of other Goal Teams and determine mechanism for coordination and information sharing across Goal Teams – assess benefit and feasibility of a future meeting of all 6 Goal Teams
    - Finalize website for Fisheries Goal Team
7. Conduct an assessment of what we are currently doing as a collective. What is currently being done regarding fisheries in the CB?
8. Set up next meeting of full Goal Team membership
9. Deliver Summary Report of recent meeting to members within 2-3 weeks