# DRAFT OPERATIONS CHARTER
# for the
# SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES GOAL IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

Chair: Peyton Robertson, NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office
Vice Chair: Tom O'Connell, Maryland Department of Natural Resources

**Summary**
The Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team (Fisheries Goal Team) 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 Goal Team provides the forum to discuss fishery management issues that cross state and other jurisdictional boundaries. The Fisheries Goal Team also works to better connect science to management decisions and create a framework/mechanism for implementing ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries management. The Fisheries Goal Team will foster the use of and rely upon multiple tools, including cooperative research, monitoring, modeling, assessments and management actions to restore, enhance, and protect the finfish, shellfish and other living resources in the Bay.

**Fisheries Management Authority**
The Fisheries Goal Team's function is not a regulatory body and is not intended to usurp or impinge on any existing federal or state authority. Instead, it will work closely with existing fisheries management bodies to support interjurisdictional fisheries management in the Bay. Both federal and state agencies have responsibility for managing fisheries for species that occur within the Chesapeake Bay. The regional management Councils, specifically the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council for the Chesapeake Bay region, have management authority under the Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorization Act of 2006, over fisheries within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) from 3-200 miles offshore. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) coordinates management of fisheries for species that migrate into and through Atlantic Coastal state waters, out to 3-miles offshore, under the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) participates in the ASMFC management process and has authority to close state fisheries if the ASMFC finds the state out of compliance with ASMFC management requirements. States have individual jurisdiction over fish stocks that reside solely in their state waters, including Chesapeake Bay. Chesapeake Bay fishery management plans (FMPs) are prepared under the direction or the Chesapeake Bay program and serve as a framework or guide for the Bay States in conserving certain fish stocks that occur throughout Chesapeake Bay.

**Mission:** Restore, enhance, and protect the finfish, shellfish, and other living resources, their habitats and ecological relationships to sustain all fisheries and provide for a balanced ecosystem in the watershed and Bay.

**Purpose**
The Fisheries Goal Team provides the forum through which the appropriate managers with jurisdiction and standing can work together to coordinate management actions in a regional context and efficiently prioritize and receive technical guidance to drive decision-making.

**Goals**

1. Improve interjurisdictional management of fisheries resources that move across political and administrative jurisdictions.
2. Improve the connection between science and management to ensure decision making leads to productive and sustainable fisheries.
3. To apply (implement) ecosystem approaches, improve coordination of fisheries issues with other goal teams, management and regulatory agencies (including landuse, water quality, and habitat conservation focused [agencies?]) to better address tradeoffs associated with management actions.
4. Track and report progress to achieve Goal Team mission.

   [To establish actionable and accountable priorities (add in objectives)]

**Objectives**

Ensure that objectives are actionable and accountable (be more explicit in an annual action plan, what are we doing in a given year and what will that achieve?)
Suggestion to include ecosystem-based management in each objective

- Track and report actions and progress towards implementing EBFM and status of Chesapeake Bay fisheries ecosystem management (if useful, query users, include species beyond 5 "key" species, simple format)

- Develop control rule for Chesapeake Bay fishery species

- Ensure two way communication on science to management

- Formalize (is happening currently) coordinated, interjurisdictional fisheries management in the Chesapeake Bay through an ongoing forum for regional communication and decision making, including discussion of emerging fisheries management issues, long term information needs, and possible solutions.

- Promote coalition building, information sharing, and where appropriate coordination of management decisions that can feed into broader fisheries commissions and councils (eg. Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) and the Mid Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC).

- Provide information on the structure and function of the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem and establish a structure and sustainable process for developing and implementing ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries management for the Chesapeake Bay.

- Expand existing Baywide science-based cooperative fisheries program in Chesapeake Bay to assess fishery resources, improve fishery statistics, and develop monitoring programs for key fishery resources.

- Provide adaptive management and policy recommendations regarding the Bay watershed's priority habitats for key fisheries to the Chesapeake Bay Program's Management Board and coordinate and guide fisheries activities of the Chesapeake Bay Program.

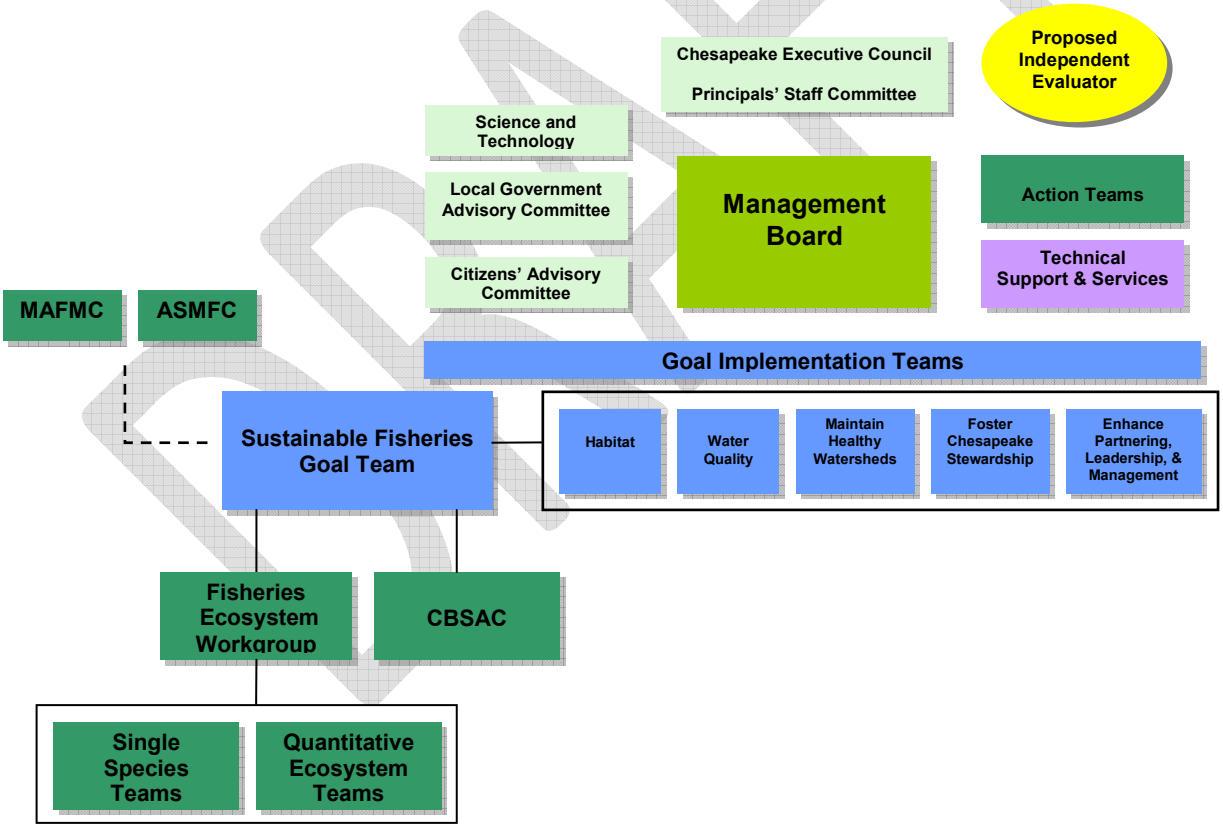
- Establish and maintain communication pathways with state and local land planners and regulatory agencies to identify priority fishery resource habitat areas and explain potential impacts of their decisions.

- Develop an annual action plan with specific steps

- Identify current cooperative programs and their activities

The Fisheries GIT will revisit and revise these objectives over time as required.

**Proposed Structure**




*NOTE: The Goal Team reserves the right to create additional workgroups as necessary.*

**Organization and**
**Key Functions and Responsibilities of GIT Personnel**

| Position | Functional description |
|---|---|
| Chair | The Chair is responsible for managing the overall strategies and performance of the Goal Team. Includes responsibilities for facilitating meetings, planning work activities, development of dashboard performance metrics, aligning partner resources with program priorities, representing the Goal Team in various forums, and continually improving performance through an adaptive management approach. Chair's serve a two year term unless circumstances require an extension. |
| Vice-chair | The Vice-Chair provides assistance to the chair and serves as chair in the chair's absence. The Vice-Chair rotates into the chair position at the end of the chair's term unless otherwise decided by the Management Board. |
| | |
| Member (Executive Committee or General Membership) | Actively participates in the operations of the Goal Team. Members are responsible for using subject matter expertise and their home-agency authority to advance the effectiveness of the group and to accelerate the accomplishment of restoration activities. |
| Coordinator | Provides direct support to the Chair and Vice-Chair with regard to planning and facilitating unit activities, tracking performance, coordinating with other Goal Teams, and other duties related to conducting the day-to-day business. |
| Staff Support | Provides direct support to the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Coordinator including program support, research and synthesis support, activity tracking, meeting organization, member coordination and communication, and other projects and administrative duties as assigned. |
| Secretariat | Includes Chair, Coordinator, Staff, and Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management Coordinator. |

**Scientific and Technical Support**

**Key Functions and Descriptions of Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management (EBFM) Personnel and Teams**

| Position | Functional description |
|---|---|
| Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management Coordinator (EBFM Coordinator) | The Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management Coordinator manages the Species Teams, Quantitative Ecosystem Teams and the Fisheries Ecosystem Workgroup by coordinating and facilitating meetings in conjunction with the Chairs of these teams. The Coordinator is responsible for facilitating the development of scientific products related to the EBFM efforts including background and issue briefs, ecosystem-based reference points, research proposals, ecosystem indicators, indices |

| | |
|---|---|
| | of EBFM, and other reports as appropriate. This individual acts as the liaison between the EBFM project and the Chesapeake Bay Program Goal Implementation Teams. The Fisheries Ecosystem Coordinator reports to the Director of Maryland Sea Grant College. |
| Graduate Research Assistant | The Assistant provides direct support to the Director of Maryland Sea Grant and the EBFM Coordinator including facilitation and coordination of EBFM teams, research and synthesis, and other projects and administrative duties as assigned by the Director and Coordinator. |
| Fisheries Ecosystem Workgroup | The Fisheries Ecosystem Workgroup (FEW) is comprised of the chairs of each of the Species Teams and Quantitative Ecosystem Teams (QETs). The FEW collaborates to prioritize and link the research activities of the QETs and communicate research activities and resulting products to the Fisheries Goal Team. |
| Single Species and Quantitative Ecosystem Teams | These teams are the scientific foundation for Maryland Sea Grant's EBFM project. The Species Teams identify and articulate the critical ecosystem issues for the key species while the QETs are charged with developing the necessary ecosystem-based reference points to address the issues identified by the Species Teams in a management context. Team members represent a wide range of expertise relevant to the EBFM effort from both within and beyond the Chesapeake Bay region. To date there are over 80 specialists working on a volunteer basis on these teams. |

**Long-term Scientific and Technical Support of Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management**

***Maryland Sea Grant's (MDSG) Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management (EBFM) project will work closely with the Goal Team to provide long-term strategic input and advice regarding specific tools needed for the development and implementation of ecosystem-based fisheries management.***

We will seek avenues to develop sustained interactions with the Goal Team's members to facilitate effective scientific and technical input that can address relevant issues. The EBFM project engages a diverse group of fisheries and non-fisheries experts from within and beyond the Chesapeake Bay region to provide the best available science. In addition to establishing the scientific infrastructure and processes for adaptive, ecosystem-based fisheries management for the Chesapeake Bay, the EBFM project facilitated by MDSG provides an entry point for the GIT to a broad network of scientists interested and involved in issues of EBFM.

***The science leadership within the EBFM project is committed to building upon the Fisheries Ecosystem Plan for Chesapeake Bay (FEP) with a specific focus on identifying the critical ecosystem issues affecting the five key species.***

Background and ecosystem issue briefs have been developed by the EBFM Species Teams and provide a foundation for ecosystem-based fisheries management in Chesapeake Bay.

***Quantitative Ecosystem Teams will be evaluating and recommending a suite of potential performance measures and ecosystem-based reference points that address the issues of habitat suitability, stock dynamics, food webs, and socioeconomic drivers.***

The teams are coordinated by MDSG and meet as appropriate to accomplish EBFM

goals. The Fisheries Ecosystem Workgroup (FEW) is essential in this regard and is designed to integrate information that cuts across species and ecosystem factors. The FEW is committed to advancing the goals of EBFM and implementing the FEP strategically and in a timely manner.

***The FEW will provide the GIT with ecosystem-based indicators and reference points.*** The FEW will develop workplans and timelines for specific goals as appropriate. They will seek the GIT's input with respect to relevance of specific projects and tool development and will prioritize efforts that can be readily applied to decision-making and the needs of fisheries managers. Because these efforts are quite new and their development is labor intensive, the FEW and EBFM team's focus will be on products that meet strategic needs. The FEW recognizes that short-term, acute needs will arise within the management community. MDSG will act as a liaison to facilitate queries to the FEW, who will determine if they are the appropriate entity to provide advice.

***Although the FEW will focus on issues with a distinct ecosystem basis, input pertaining to the management of individual species that reflects an ecosystem approach — i.e., advice based on precautionary principles and which addresses ecosystem services — may be provided as appropriate.***

The FEW will also provide recommendations regarding other specific scientific and technical experts who could be engaged by the GIT to help solve short-term or strategic needs.

**Operating Procedures**

Executive Committee Agrees to:

Meet monthly or as required during the first year and then reassess frequency to:

- Align annual work plan with priorities established by the Management Board;
- Collaborate on implementation of on-the-ground habitat activities;
- Track and report performance toward [two-year milestones identified in the Chesapeake Action Plan annual progress report] or [Executive Order 13508 Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed] depending on final implementation decisions yet to be made;
- Advise Management Board on barriers to progress and recommend policy and administration changes to overcome such barriers
- Discuss emerging issues, recent findings, and management issues currently facing fisheries managers brought forward either by the FEW or Fisheries Goal Team members and invite presentations or request research on these issues when relevant.
- Identify gaps, assistance, and capacity needs such as products, tools and other solutions for management issues and determine a lead agency for addressing these needs.

The Executive Committee will adhere to the following operating principles:

- Communications will be clear about items for decision, discussion or informational.
- An agenda and decision documents are circulated at least 14 days before each meeting.

- The Chair and Vice Chair along with the Secretariat will set the agenda for each meeting based on input from the Executive Committee, Fisheries Goal Team members, the EBFM teams, and any matters of business regarding the Chesapeake Bay Program.
- Agenda should spell out specific goals for meeting with time limits for each item.
- Chair runs the meeting, is responsible for maintaining the schedule and tables discussions that are not on the agenda.
- The Chair must make a commitment to set ground rules and take an active role in guiding the discussions.
- The end of the meeting will be spent on brainstorming items for the next meeting agenda and reviewing date, time and location for the next meeting. Tabled discussions can be discussed as possible agenda items for future meetings.
- Before adjourning, a summary of action items will be reviewed identifying who's responsible for each item.
- To ensure broad participation, the Chair will make an effort to be aware of the need for meeting processes that encourages all to express opinions and ideas.
- Minutes will be recorded and circulated to members for comment within 15 days of meetings.
- Minutes will be considered for acceptance as final at the subsequent meeting.
- Chair persons should conduct evaluations periodically to make sure meetings are productive and make a good use of participants' time.
- Each Executive Committee meeting will include 3 parts, "Housekeeping" or administrative business, discussion of timely management issues, and a science and technical discussion/presentation.
- Decisions and official statements of the Goal Team Executive Committee will be developed based on consensus of all 6 Executive Committee members. If consensus cannot be reached a decision will be reached by majority vote.
- Executive Committee meetings during the month before an ASMFC meeting will be held at least 2 weeks in advance of the ASMFC meeting.

<u>General Membership Agrees to</u>:

- Meet twice a year to discuss a minimum of the top two issues facing Chesapeake Bay Fisheries and the implementation of ecosystem-based fisheries management and to review the major policy decisions before the Executive Committee.
  - Location of meeting will alternate between north and south ends of the region.
  - Meeting will last 1-2 days depending on material to be discussed.
  - A meeting summary will be provided to members following the meeting.
- Use their positions and expertise to positively influence actions within their organization that either directly or indirectly impact Chesapeake Bay fisheries to help meet Fisheries Goal Team goals and objectives.
- Engage with the Executive Committee as requested or as necessary on important policy or management decisions throughout the year.

**Decision making process:**
The Fisheries Goal Team will operate under a consensus decision-making process led by the Chair. A consensus decision making process is a group decision making process that not only seeks the agreement of most participants, but also the resolution or mitigation of minority objections.

The Goal Team consensus decision-making will aim to be:

- **Inclusive:** As many stakeholders as possible should be involved in the consensus decision-making process.
- **Participatory:** The consensus process should actively solicit the input and participation of all decision-makers.
- **Cooperative:** Participants in an effective consensus process should strive to reach the best possible decision for the group and all of its members, rather than opt to pursue a majority opinion, potentially to the detriment of a minority.
- **Egalitarian:** All members of a consensus decision-making body should be afforded, as much as possible, equal input into the process. All members have the opportunity to present, amend and veto or "block" proposals.
- **Solution-oriented:** An effective consensus decision-making body strives to emphasize common agreement over differences and reach effective decisions using compromise and other techniques to avoid or resolve mutually-exclusive positions within the group.

# Appendix

**Membership**

The Sustainable Fisheries GIT is organized into an Executive Committee and General Membership. The Executive Committee is comprised of the lead fisheries managers responsible for the regional jurisdictions encompassing the largest populations centers around the Bay and the General Membership consists of broader representation of the Chesapeake Bay management, science, and stakeholder community.

Executive Committee: Takes the lead on developing, adopting, and implementing policy and management changes to improve the health of Chesapeake Bay Fisheries.

| Name | Organization | Title |
|---|---|---|
| Peyton Robertson, Chair | NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office | Director |
| Tom O'Connell, Vice Chair | Maryland Department of Natural Resources | Director, DNR Fisheries Services |
| Robert Beal | Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission | Director, Interstate Fisheries Management Program |
| Jack Travelstead | Virginia Marine Resources Commission | Deputy Commissioner and Chief of Fisheries Management |
| Bryan King | District of Columbia Department of Environment | Assoc. Dir. Fisheries and Wildlife |
| A.C. Carpenter | Potomac River Fisheries Commission | |

General Membership: The full Fisheries GIT will have broad, multi-disciplinary representation as appropriate to assist the Executive Committee in devising solutions and implementing changes.

| Name | Organization | Title |
|---|---|---|
| Steve Minkkinen | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Project Leader, MD Fisheries Resource Office |
| Leo Miranda | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Habitat GIT Chair |
| Steve Meyers | NOAA/NMFS/ Office of Sustainable Fisheries | Fishery Biologist; Management |
| Mark Mansfield | U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Norfolk) | Chief, Planning and Policy Branch |
| Charlie Poukish | Maryland Department of Environment | |
| Matt Fleming | Maryland Coastal Zone Management Program | Director, Chesapeake & Coastal Program |
| Ernie Bowden | Virginia Marine Resources Commission | |
| David Paylor | Virginia Department of Environmental Quality | |
| Mike Hendricks | PA Fish and Boat Commission | |
| Peter Freehafer | NY Department of | |

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|---|---|---|
| | Environmental Conservation | |
| Craig Shirey | DE Dept. of Natural Resources and Environmental Control – Div. of Fish and Wildlife | |
| Emily Green | Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission | |
| Chris Moore | Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council | Executive Director |
| Jim Gracie | Maryland Sportfish | |
| Tom Powers | Virginia Crab Management Advisory Committee | |
| Jack Brooks | Maryland Tidal Fish Advisory Committee | Chair |
| Ron Lukens | Omega Protein Corporation | |
| Suzan Bulbukaya | Chesapeake Bay Commission | |
| Lynn Fegley | MD Dept. of Natural Resources Fisheries Service | |
| Rob O'Reilly | Virginia Marine Resources Commission | |
| Mike Fritz | Healthy Watersheds GIT | Coordinator |
| Bill Goldsborough | Chesapeake Bay Foundation | |
| Bill Eichbaum | World Wildlife Fund | Vice President, Marine Portfolio |
| Mark Bryer | The Nature Conservancy | |
| Trent Zivkovich | Coastal Conservation Association | |
| Mike Slattery | USFWS | Chesapeake Bay Director |
| Stephanie Martina | MDP - Planning | |
| David Whitehurst | VADGIF | |
| Laura McKay | VA CZM | Program Manager |
| Kyle Schick | PRFC | Vice Chairman |
| William L. Rice Sr. | Potomac | Waterman |
| Ken Smith | Virginia | Waterman |
| Ann Swanson | Chesapeake Bay Commission | Executive Director |
| Patrick Campfield | ASMFC | |
| Dave Sutherland | USFWS | |
| Matt Mullen | EDF | Chesapeake Bay Director |

Fisheries GIT Secretariat: Staff support to the Fisheries Goal Implementation Team and its chairs.

| Name | Organization | GIT Role |
|---|---|---|
| Bruce Vogt | NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office | Fisheries GIT Coordinator |
| Adam Davis | Chesapeake Research Consortium | Staff Support |
| Nancy Butowski | MD Dept. of Natural Resources | Staff Support |

Maryland Sea Grant Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management Project Staff

| Name | Organization | EBFM Role |
|---|---|---|
| Shannon Lyons Green | Maryland Sea Grant College | Fisheries Ecosystem Coordinator |
| Alesia Read | Maryland Sea Grant College | Graduate Research Assistant |

**Long-term Scientific and Technical Support of Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management**
Maryland Sea Grant's Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management project will work closely with the Goal Team to meet the Goal Team's long term scientific and technical research needs. The science infrastructure of Maryland Sea Grant's Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management project, has been operational for over two years identifying the critical ecosystem issues for the five key species and developing work plans which will result in the development of ecosystem-based reference points that allow the fisheries managers on the Goal Team to address these issues in a management context. The background and ecosystem issue briefs developed by the Species Teams provide the essential foundation for the development of performance measures and ecosystem-based reference points by the Quantitative Ecosystem Teams. These briefs are in the process of being analyzed by the four Quantitative Ecosystem Teams which specialize in the areas of habitat suitability, stock assessment, foodwebs, and socioeconomics. These teams engage a diverse group of fisheries and non-fisheries experts from within and beyond the Chesapeake Bay region to unite the best available science for each specialty. In addition to establishing the structure and process for adaptive ecosystem-based fisheries management for Chesapeake Bay, the EBFM project will yield five "Indices of Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management", one for each of the key species, based upon the recommendations of the Species Teams and the resulting ecosystem-based reference points from the Quantitative Ecosystem Teams. Fishery managers on the Goal Team may use each index as a management tool for assessing the health of each species within the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem.

**Requirement Drivers**

Chesapeake Bay Executive Order 13508
Chesapeake Bay Executive Order | About the Executive Order

Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay
Chesapeake Bay Executive Order | Protection and Restoration

Chesapeake Bay Program Action Plan
Chesapeake Action Plan - Action Plan Details - Chesapeake Bay Program

Fisheries Ecosystem Planning for the Chesapeake Bay

Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act
Office of Sustainable Fisheries

Magnuson -Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act