Invasive Catfish Policy Table

Potential policy options to mitigate the impacts of blue and flatehead catfish on Chesapeake Bay resources.

Policy Option	Ecological Outcome	Risks/Implications	Feasability (resources needed, likliehood of success, etc)	Implementation Timeframe (short, intermediate, long term)	Ranking (high; low; medium priority) [to be filled in at GIT meeting]
M1: No action	• Increased abundance/biomass • Expanded range • Possible impacts on native species • Predator/prey interaction conflicts • No checks-and-balances on the fishery	• Potential economic impacts on native fisheries • Could result in uncoordinated-grassroots or individual action • Confusion by anglers across jurisdictions	• No to low cost	N/A	
M2: Eradicate and completely remove blue and flathead catfish from all Bay tributaries	• Minimizes effects on resident species	• Results in loss of an active trophy and commercial fishery • Disposal of fish may be controversial • Requires baywide policy agreement to be effective	• Costly • It is extremely difficult to eradicate a non-native fish once it has become established • High likelihood of 'collateral damage' • Impossible to prevent transplanting and reintroduction	• Long-term (decades) • Continuous	
M3: Actively remove invasive catfish from selected tributatries of interest and monitor others to control spread	• Reduces possible effects on resident species	• Assumes that some ecologically significant level (yet to be determined) of reduction can be achieved • Requires baywide policy agreement	• Costly • Dedicated long-term effort • Impossible to prevent transplanting and reintroduction	• Long-term (decades) • Continuous	
M4: Further develop and manage catfish fishery (ie take actions to increase recreational and commercial harvest; long-term sustainable removal plan)	• Minimize additional effects on resident species	• Potentially balances economic gain with ecosystem protection	• There are significant challenges to developing a market (competition by foreign and farm raised products, health concerns over contaminants)	• Intermediate	