



# Chesapeake Bay Program

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[Chesapeake Executive Council](#)

DECEMBER 8, 1998

ADOPTION STATEMENT

## Guidelines for Developing and Revising Fishery Management Plans

The ultimate, long-term goal of the [Chesapeake Bay Program](#) is the protection, restoration and maintenance of the health of the living resources of the Bay. In the [1987 Chesapeake Bay Agreement](#), the [Chesapeake Executive Council](#) agreed to "provide for the restoration and protection of living resources, their habitat, and ecological relationships." Many ecologically and commercially valuable species once inhabited the Bay in great numbers and, although it may not be practical in all cases to reach these historic levels of abundance, the success of the program must ultimately be measured by the health and abundance of the Bay's living resources.

The Bay Program has developed a number of species [specific fisheries management plans \(FMPs\)](#) over the past 10 years. The plans evaluate the biological, economic and social aspects of a particular resource, define problems and/or potential problems, and recommend strategies to address the problems. It is the policy of the Chesapeake Bay Program to advocate the protection of Bay habitat, maintenance of ecological relationships and elimination of overharvest of all [finfish](#) and [shellfish](#) which spend any or all of their life cycle in the Bay in order to assure the long-term sustainability of both the [commercial and recreational fisheries](#) for future generations.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS ADOPTION STATEMENT is to set forth the following additional guidelines for the Chesapeake Bay Program to follow when developing any new or revised Chesapeake Bay Program FMPs. These guidelines reinforce the Chesapeake Bay Program's commitment to ending species overharvest and protecting essential habitat, both in the Bay proper and in the Atlantic Ocean, where many of the Bay species spend at least a portion of their life cycle.

### **Chesapeake Bay Program FMP's should:**

1. Be risk averse (i.e., preventative of a crisis instead of reactive to one).

2. Utilize the best scientific information.
3. Establish sustainable targets for a species and:
  - define and adopt a level of harvest that will quickly attain the established target and maintain that target.
  - define, protect and restore the habitat needed to support that target.
4. Assure renewability of the stock (i.e., long term health and maintaining spawning stock biomass).
5. Identify, protect and restore critical fish and shellfish habitat for all life stages of the species and individual stocks of the species.
6. Identify, coordinate and advocate necessary management actions needed between the jurisdictions, including regulations and legislative actions.
7. Strive to manage a fishery and/or species by maintaining essential food web relationships, through multispecies management.
8. Consider the long term socio-economic health of a fishery.
9. Take a more conservative approach than Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) when all signatories of the Chesapeake Bay Program agree such action is necessary.
10. Minimize bycatch (that portion of a catch taken in addition to the targeted species because of non-selectivity of gear to either species or size differences).
11. Provide the background and justification for joint positions of Chesapeake Bay Program partners on Chesapeake Bay issues under consideration by the ASMFC and MAFMC.

BY THIS ADOPTION STATEMENT, WE AGREE that these guidelines will be used in the development and review of all new or revised Chesapeake Bay Program FMP's. We further agree to monitor the application of these guidelines so that obstacles to their implementation, when identified, are addressed.

**December 8, 1998**

FOR THE STATE OF MARYLAND, *Parris N. Glendening, Governor*

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, *James M. Seif, Secretary of PA DEP*

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA, *James S. Gilmore, III, Governor*

FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, *Marion Barry, Mayor*

FOR THE CHESAPEAKE BAY COMMISSION, *Del. John F. Wood, Jr., Chairman*

FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, *Peter D. Robertson, Deputy Administrator of EPA*

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