

OPERATIONS CHARTER for the SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES GOAL IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

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 over fisheries within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) from 3-200 miles offshore under the Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorization Act of 2006. 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 of 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 as well as their habitats and ecological relationships in order 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 and 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.

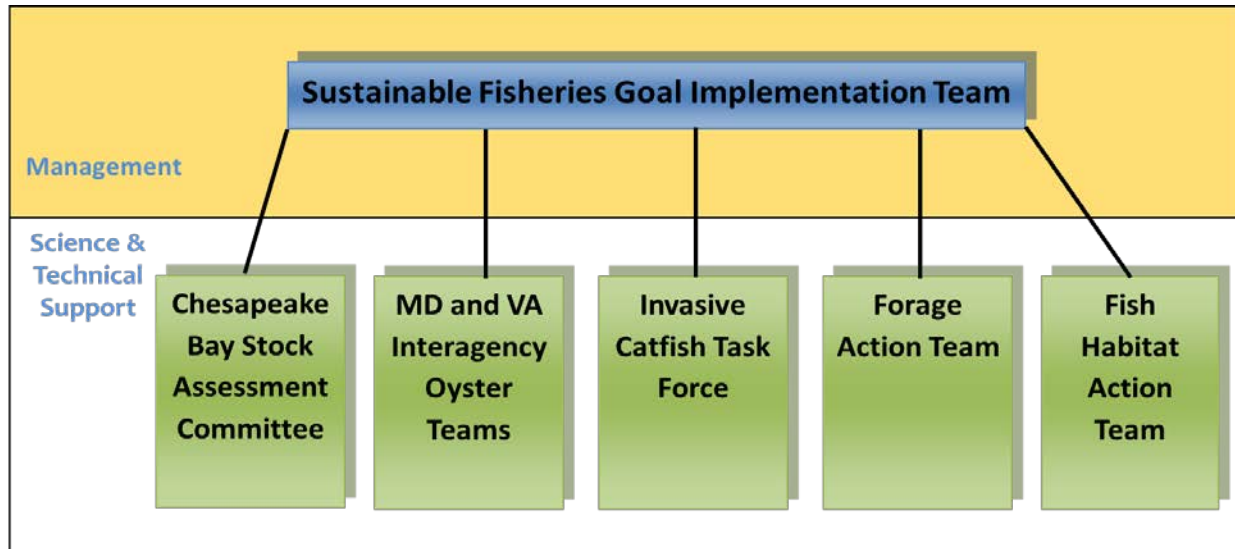
Objectives

- Track and report actions and progress towards maintaining sustainable fisheries, restoring populations and habitats, and implementing EBFM management approaches.
- 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 e.g. 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. Lead the Chesapeake Bay Program's efforts to achieve the fisheries outcomes under the Sustainable Fisheries goal of the new Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement.
- 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
- To establish actionable and accountable priorities

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

Structure



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

**Organization,
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. Chairs 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, and Staff,

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 and the new Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement;
- Collaborate on implementation of on-the-ground habitat activities;
- Track and report performance toward two-year milestones identified in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement Management Strategies, Chesapeake Action Plan annual progress report and Executive Order 13508 Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed;
- 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 Fisheries Goal Team members or workgroups/actions teams 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 information.
- 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, workgroups/action 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 and 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.

General Membership Agrees to:

- 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.

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 population 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.

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.

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

Workgroups: Focused groups of expert scientists and managers working to address priorities of the Fisheries GIT and provide scientific advice to the broader membership.

Requirement Drivers

[2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#)

Sustainable Fisheries [Goal and Outcomes](#)

Chesapeake Bay Executive Order 13508

[Chesapeake Bay Executive Order | Protection and Restoration](#)

Fisheries Ecosystem Planning for the Chesapeake Bay

Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act

[Office of Sustainable Fisheries](#)

Magnuson -Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act