

Forage Fish

- “For the purpose of maintaining suitable cumulative forage potential for the predatory species such as striped bass, bluefish, and weakfish that support valuable commercial and recreational fisheries.”
- “By 2015 develop a strategy for maintaining and restoring (ensuring) sufficient forage base for predatory species in Chesapeake Bay”
- By xxx year develop a strategy for maintaining and ensuring sufficient forage base to support important commercial and recreational species in Chesapeake Bay
- Ensure adequate knowledge and understanding to develop ecological targets to maintain a sufficient forage base including bay anchovy, menhaden, xxx species to support important commercial and recreational species in the Bay.”

Forage Fish Management Strategies and other considerations

- Outcome should recognize multiple forage species, not just menhaden
- Supporting science and research on forage species and ecological reference points could be a management strategy → already doing some of this science
- Management Strategy implementation is not the sole responsibility of the Fisheries GIT
 - The Agreement is a Bay Program initiative and multiple partners will be involved
 - the GIT develops the management strategy and identifies the relevant partners and collaboration needed for each strategy

Habitat

- Apply existing tools and authorities to increase protection of juvenile, nursery, and spawning habitat for key commercial and recreational fish species
- Continue to develop and increase the use of ecosystem-based fisheries management approaches by linking land and water habitats to the health and sustainability of keystone finfish species, including:
 - Development of ecological reference points (targets?) for one or more key finfish
 - Improving research for connecting Chesapeake Bay fish habitat (spawning, nursery, and forage areas) to coastal fisheries
- Apply ecosystem-based fisheries management strategies to support Chesapeake bay fish species:
 - Increase protection of juvenile, nursery, and spawning habitat for both resident and migratory fish species by restoring important habitats and mitigating degradation from land-based stressors
 - Develop ecological reference points (targets?) for key commercial and recreational fish species
- **(CBC Jack F)** During the period 2014-2025, continue to identify critical spawning, nursery and forage areas within the Bay and tributaries and apply this to inform efforts to restore and protect submerged aquatic vegetation, oyster reefs, tidal wetlands, and other important habitat areas in order to sustain important shellfish, predatory, and forage fish species.

Habitat Management Strategies and other considerations

- A potential management strategy could be prioritize areas in already in healthy watersheds to protect “the best of the best”
- Identify habitat areas with high potential land use and development threats
- CBC, ASMFC, and GITs 2 and 4 have provided input on draft language
- Management Strategy implementation is not the sole responsibility of the Fisheries GIT
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 - the GIT develops the management strategy and identifies the relevant partners and collaboration needed for each strategy