

Northeast Regional Planning Body Ecosystem Based Management Work Group Terms of Reference

Purpose

The purpose of the Northeast Regional Planning Body's (RPB) Ecosystem Based Management (EBM) Work Group (WG) is to support and inform a range of activities designed to incorporate additional EBM considerations into the 2016 Northeast Ocean Plan, including the identification and scoping of activities that could be described in the first ocean plan and would be implemented over a longer timeframe. The EBM WG will have an important role informing the RPB during the development of the ocean plan. A summary of their recommendations will be produced after each meeting, shared directly with RPB members, and will be made available to the public. The RPB will make all decisions about the draft and final content of the Northeast Ocean Plan.

Responsibilities

The EBM WG will have the following responsibilities, with an initial focus on the first two tasks due to near term needs:

1. Inform and review the development of maps and other information characterizing and describing benthic and pelagic habitats and related ecosystem processes.
2. Support the research, identification, evaluation and application of approaches and methods to define and characterize important ecological areas.
3. Review analyses and mapping overlays of human use and ecological data, including compatibility considerations.
4. Inform options for monitoring ocean health and evaluating the effectiveness of the ocean plan, including periodically reviewing progress towards achieving ocean planning goals and implementing EBM.
5. Assist with the identification of science and research priorities.

Membership

EBM WG membership will be geographically diverse and include a range of scientific and traditional expertise necessary to accomplish the specific tasks and responsibilities under consideration at the time. At any one time, the EBM WG will have between 8-12 active members composed of science and/or technical staff from Northeast RPB organizations and research and science organizations. The EBM WG will be closely coordinated with similar efforts in the Mid-Atlantic region, potentially including joint meetings for specific tasks of interest to both regions. The EBM WG will also coordinate with Canadian efforts, if appropriate. EBM Work Group members will be selected by the RPB co-leads and recommended to the full RPB for approval. The EBM WG will include at least one RPB member who will help report progress and evolving needs directly to the RPB. EBM WG responsibilities

and membership will be periodically reviewed by staff and the RPB co-leads to ensure relevance to current ocean planning priorities.

Members will be asked to participate in 1-2 meetings or online webinars per quarter through June 2016. Members may also be asked to participate on an as-needed basis in other ocean planning events, such as workshops and RPB meetings. Meetings will be summarized and notes will be publicly distributed within three weeks of the meeting date.

WORK GROUP MEMBERS

RPB Organizations

Mike Fogarty (NOAA NMFS)

Mary Boatman (BOEM)

Margherita Pryor (EPA)

Bruce Carlisle (NE RPB Member – Massachusetts)

Kathryn Ford (NE RPB Alternate – Massachusetts)

Jeff Herter (New York)

Chuckie Green (NE RPB Member – Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Council)

Research/Science Organizations

Bob Steneck (UMaine)

Kathy Mills (Gulf of Maine Research Institute)

Scott Kraus (New England Aquarium)

John King (URI)

Peter Auster (UCONN)