



**NOAA  
FISHERIES**

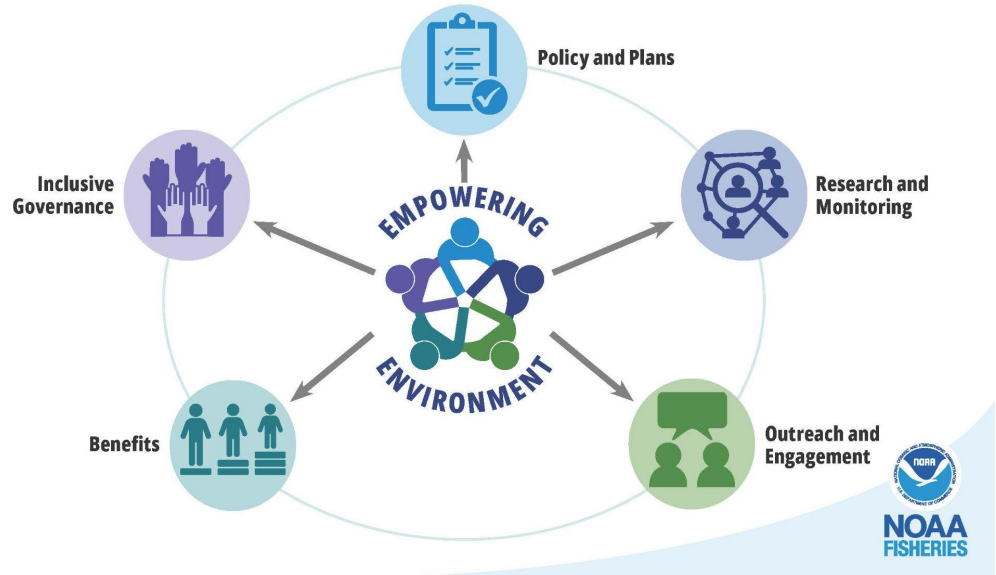
# **NOAA Fisheries Southeast Equity and Environmental Justice Implementation Plan**

April 23, 2024

Caribbean Fishery Management Council Meeting

# NOAA Fisheries' Southeast Equity and Environmental Justice (EEJ) Implementation Plan

- Implements National EEJ Strategy
- Review draft transmitted to HQ April 5
- Living document to be reviewed and updated on 5-year schedule



# Outline

- Review refined list of action items incorporated into draft Southeast EEJ Implementation Plan
  - 47 immediate / near-term (funded) items
  - 29 longer-term (unfunded) items
- Note overlap with joint District Advisory Panel priorities where applicable

# Research & Monitoring

*Identify underserved communities and their needs, conduct collaborative research, and assess impacts of management decisions*

- **District Advisory Panel Priorities**

- STT/STJ

- #2 Collect fishery-dependent and -independent data
    - #4 Get younger people involved
    - #6 Involve fishers in studies

- PR and STX

- #2 Develop programs to complement fisheries research and scientifically validate or invalidate community beliefs and concerns
    - #3 Ensure better access to collaborative project opportunities

- **Immediate or Near-Term (Funded) Actions**

- Conduct research and analysis to identify underserved communities and understand their issues and challenges
  - Partner to explore & engage on key topics
    - Tools to identify and understand underserved communities
    - Participatory research and citizen science
    - Effects of allocation decisions
    - Impacts of seafood imports

# Research & Monitoring

*Identify underserved communities and their needs, conduct collaborative research, and assess impacts of management decisions*

- **Longer Term (Unfunded) Actions Dependent Upon Additional Resources**
  - Conduct situational analysis of marine aquaculture in the U.S. Caribbean -- strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats
  - Identify challenges and lessons learned from disaster events
  - Evaluate equity issues throughout commercial and recreational fisheries
  - Examine the importance of diversifying operations in fisheries
  - Analyze impacts of management services and decisions -- social, cultural, and economic; expected vs. actual
  - Conduct research to illuminate specific underserved populations and issues, including subsistence use and women in fishing

# Policies & Plans

*Ensure that policies promote equal opportunities for all and do not create unintended inequities or unequal burdens for underserved communities*

- **District Advisory Panel Priorities**

- STT/STJ

- #2 Collect fishery-dependent and -independent data

- #6 Involve fishers in studies

- PR and STX

- #2 Develop programs to complement fisheries research and scientifically validate or invalidate community beliefs and concerns

- #3 Ensure better access to collaborative project opportunities with fair compensation

- **Immediate or Near-Term (Funded) Actions**

- Aquaculture grants and research opportunities
  - SE Climate Regional Action Plans
  - Fisher surveys
  - National Seafood Strategy (trade and market issues, Culebra Fishing Association Pilot, FAO voluntary guidelines for small-scale fisheries)
  - Safe fishing zone designation for Lang Bank
  - Engagement and entry barriers (procedural, limited access)
  - Policy guidance on financial assistance for underserved community engagement

# Policies & Plans

*Ensure that policies promote equal opportunities for all and do not create unintended inequities or unequal burdens for underserved communities*

- **Longer Term (Unfunded) Actions Dependent Upon Additional Resources**
  - Simplify permit access and renewal processes and provide technical support
  - Develop policy framework to understand, gather, and incorporate local and traditional ecological knowledge





# Benefits

*Distribute benefits equitably by increasing access to opportunities*

- **District Advisory Panel Priorities**

- STT/STJ

- #1 Educate fishers in achieving a sustainable fishery
- #2 Collect fishery-dependent and -independent data
- #4 Get younger people involved

- **Immediate or Near-Term (Funded) Actions**

- Track and report data
- Identify and address barriers -- grants, vocational, capital
- Promote or improve equitability of fishery disaster assistance allocations
- Preserve infrastructure, working waterfronts
- Promote monitoring and mitigation of major infrastructure impacts, natural resource injuries
- Minimize user conflicts with wind energy projects



# Benefits

*Distribute benefits equitably by increasing access to opportunities*



- **Longer Term (Unfunded) Actions Dependent Upon Additional Resources**
  - Advance and improve science and management in the U.S. Caribbean
  - Co-develop or support high school technical courses and vocational training in fishing and aquaculture

# Outreach & Engagement

*Build relationships with underserved communities to better understand engagement preferences and improve information sharing*

- **District Advisory Panel Priorities**

- STT/STJ

- #3 Fund the STFA to conduct outreach at ECO Fest

- #5 Increase education and outreach to recreational fishers

- PR and STX

- #1 Improve efforts to identify and address language and communication barriers

- **Immediate or Near-Term (Funded) Actions**

- NOAA Sea Grant workshop
- Translation guidance, options
- Tailored, diverse outreach strategies
  - Regulatory changes
  - Opportunities
  - Disaster declarations and assistance
  - Fisher surveys
- Plain language strategies
- Virtual meeting hubs (exploratory)

# Outreach & Engagement

*Build relationships with underserved communities to better understand engagement preferences and improve information sharing*

- **Longer Term (Unfunded) Actions Dependent Upon Additional Resources**
  - Integrate additional translation funding into annual budget and planning processes
  - Identify or create multilingual stakeholder liaison(s) at SERO and the SEFSC
  - Establish community liaison network of NOAA Sea Grant and other partners as appropriate
  - Employ strategies to facilitate more frequent and meaningful outreach and interaction with female stakeholders

# Inclusive Governance

*Enable the meaningful involvement of underserved communities in decision-making*

- **District Advisory Panel Priorities**

- STT/STJ

- #1 Educate fishers in achieving a sustainable fishery
    - #5 Increase education and outreach to recreational fishers
    - #6 Involve fishers in studies

- PR and STX

- #1 Improve efforts to identify and address language and communication barriers
    - #2 Develop programs to complement fisheries research and scientifically validate or invalidate community beliefs and concerns
    - #3 Ensure better access to collaborative project opportunities

- **Immediate or Near-Term (Funded) Actions**

- Engagement strategies for public meetings and input processes; Council and other advisory bodies
  - Information sharing about Council appointment opportunities, process
  - Considered use of Council Committees/Advisory Panels to advise on EEJ issues, support implementation plan
  - Educational materials and training programs
  - Options to inform research priorities, contribute to or participate in research
  - Early engagement in Endangered Species Act decision making

# Inclusive Governance

*Enable the meaningful involvement of underserved communities in decision-making*

- **Longer Term (Unfunded) Actions Dependent Upon Additional Resources**
  - Leverage community liaisons to gather and report rural and other underserved community input
  - Develop targeted competitive grants and pilot projects



# Empowering Environment

*Provide institutional support to implement EEJ*

- **Immediate or Near-Term (Funded) Actions**
  - Integration of EEJ commitments into organizational priorities
  - EEJ funding strategy
  - EEJ implementation teams -- NMFS and Councils
  - EEJ training -- NMFS and Councils
  - Partnerships to diversify STEM pipeline
  - Scholarship, internship, mentorship programs
  - Partnerships to leverage resources and address cross-jurisdictional challenges

# Empowering Environment

*Provide institutional support to implement EEJ*

- **Longer Term (Unfunded) Actions Dependent Upon Additional Resources**

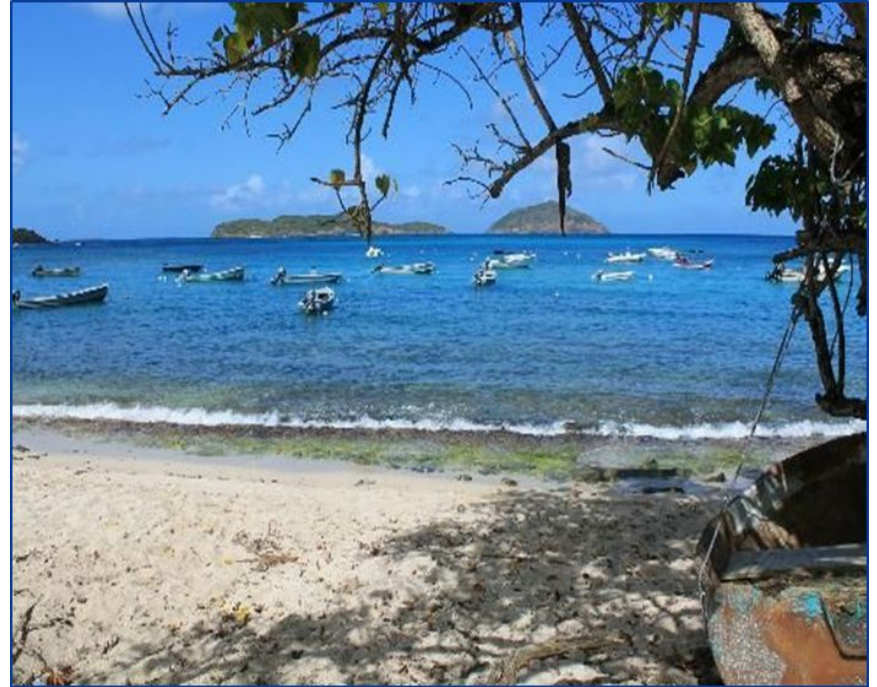


- Organizational capacity -- EEJ Coordinators, full-time anthropologists or other non-economic social scientists, full-time biologists for Caribbean work
- Training -- Plain language, facilitation, unconscious bias
- Technical assistance with grants and other funding opportunities



# Next Steps

- Final Draft implementation plan undergoing internal review
- Final plan to be rolled out to public June 2024
- Implementation planning
- 5-year review schedule; interim updates as needed



A photograph of a white freezer drawer containing several fish on ice. The fish are arranged on a bed of clear ice cubes. One fish is a vibrant blue and yellow, another is orange with dark spots, and a third is a plain greyish-brown. The word "Questions?" is overlaid in a large, teal, sans-serif font in the center of the image.

Questions?