



NOAA FISHERIES

Island-Based Fishery Management Plans Update

*Implementation of Ecosystem-based Fisheries
Management (EBFM)*

Caribbean Operations Branch
Sustainable Fisheries Division
NMFS- SERO



Island-based FMPs: St. Croix, St. Thomas/St. John, Puerto Rico

- The overarching *goal* of each IBFMP is to ensure the continued health of fishery resources occurring in the EEZ surrounding each island/island group, within the context of the unique biological, ecological, economic, and cultural characteristics of those resources and the communities that are dependent upon them.
- To achieve this goal, each FMP establishes a place-based framework designed to provide the foundation for conserving and managing the island's fishery within an integrative ecosystem-based approach.
- Each FMP includes specific goals and objectives, many with an explicit EBFM focus.
- While many of the goals and objectives are being addressed throughout each FMP, some may be addressed through future amendments to the respective plans.
- Stakeholder support: IBFMPs provide an opportunity to implement EBFM - allow for developing and relying on better data and better science and more effectively use local knowledge.

IBFMPs Goals and Objectives (Examples) with EBFM Focus	St. Croix	STT/ STJ	PR
Maintain long-term sustainable use of coral reef fishery resources while preventing adverse impacts to stocks, habitats of the fisheries resources, protected species, or the reef ecosystem as a whole.	Goal (G) 2	G2	G2
Manage the fisheries within the limits of local ecosystem production so as to not jeopardize a wide range of goods and services provided by a healthy ecosystem, including food, revenue, and recreation for humans.	G2	G4	G4
Ensure continued provision of ecosystems services derived from living marine resources, including adequate abundance of forage resources to ensure a healthy and diverse trophic web.	G3	O11	O15
Ensure the continued health of fishery resources occurring in St. Thomas/St. John EEZ waters, which will provide for the sustained participation of the islands' fishing communities as a major endeavor and minimize adverse economic impacts on such communities.		G3	G3*
Provide for long-term sustainable use of fisheries resources within the limits of local ecosystem production using a precautionary, ecosystem-based approach to management that accounts for uncertainty and relevant biological, ecological, economic and social factors in the fishery, including the benefits of food production, recreational opportunities, and protection of marine ecosystems.	O1		O1
Promote fair and equitable use of fishery resources, recognizing the importance of fishery resources to fishing communities as well as differences in local environment, culture, markets, user groups, gear types, and seafood preferences.	O5	O6	O6
Account for ecological relationships and functional roles of species in the fishery that contribute to a healthy ecosystem, such as grazers, forage fish, habitat-builders and top predators	O11		O16

Expected Benefits of EBFM in the U.S. Caribbean Region:

- Improve management of fisheries and associated living marine resources, while best anticipating climate change impacts to the ecosystem, by taking full advantage of available information to identify and monitor linkages among living marine resources.
- Improved alignment of data collection across line offices
- Improved stock assessments better reflecting data limitations and opportunities
- Greater engagement of stakeholders, local partners, NOAA line offices, and agencies
- Improved coral reef and fishing community resiliency
- Ensure that community responses to fishing impacts are better understood and more effectively managed

FMP (regulatory) and FEP (non-regulatory)

Achieving ecosystem management goals in the IBFMPs and advance EBFM:

- Use the FEP with FMPs **to achieve EBFM**
- The FEP – would provide objective-based guidance for managing U.S. Caribbean coral reef ecosystems and associated fishery resources.
- Could address issues not specifically captured in the FMPs.
- **Goals in the** FEP translates EBFM into action – by providing guidance to the FMP's strategies and approaches:
 - **U.S. Caribbean FEP would help the CFMC to prioritize issues and management goals and select what to address and when (id and address tradeoffs; look at alternative mgt decisions (e.g., important/urgent).**
- Includes stakeholders in the fisheries management process – (e.g., in the proposal of alternative policies and their evaluation)
- FEP should be focused on management action (ultimate goal), identify adaptive management strategies that respond to changes in fisheries. Include monitoring and evaluation —→ improve policies.

IBFMPs Progress to Date

Council submitted IBFMPs for Secretarial Review and Approval – Dec 2019

NMFS:

- Development of Proposed Rule and associated documents
 - Two opportunities for comment coming up:
 1. NOA (FMPs) will be published soon – 60 day comment period.
 2. Proposed Rule publication – 30 day comment period.
- SERO Protected Resources Division drafting a Biological Opinion to evaluate the effects of each of the island fisheries on ESA listed species.
- Publication of final rule. Cooling period – 30 days later, FMPs implemented
- Goal is to have the plans applicable in the 2021 fishing season
- In the meantime – Council discusses actions for potential amendments to each the IBFMPs, as needed. Continues EBFM/FEP development