



NOAA
FISHERIES

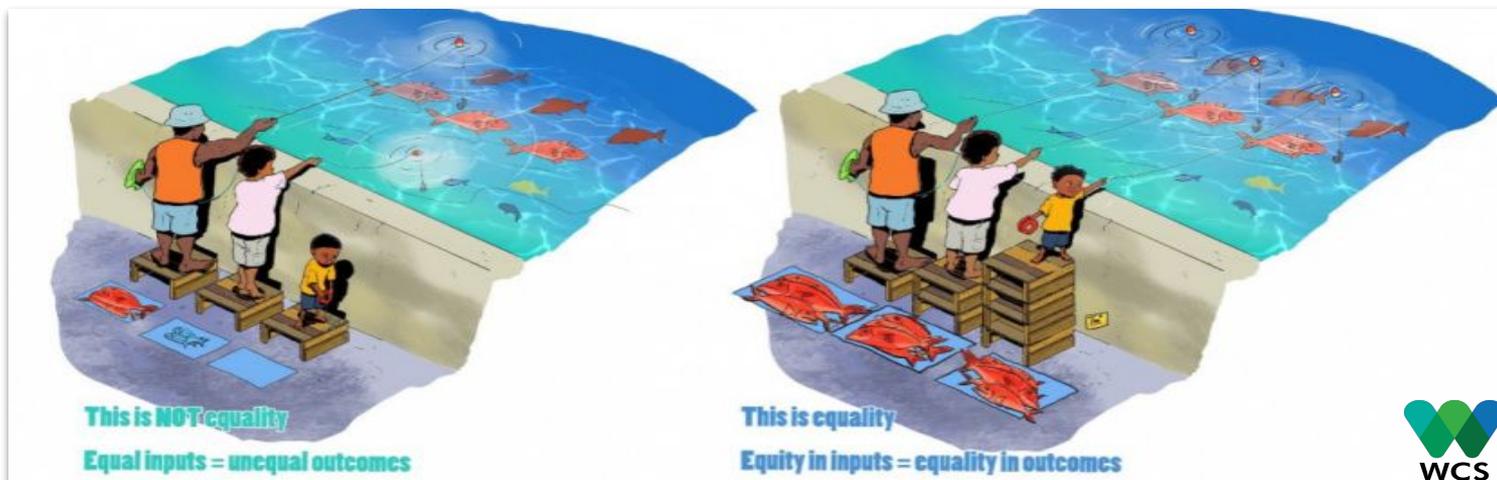
Advancing Equity and Environmental Justice in the Southeast through Conservation and Management of Living Marine Resources

July 2023

Puerto Rico District Advisory Panel
Caribbean Fishery Management Council

Key Terms: Equity

Equity means the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment.



Definition from Executive Order 13985.

Key Terms: Environmental Justice

Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, gender, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies including but not limited to:

- Equitable protection from environmental and health hazards
- Equitable access to decision-making processes
- Equitable opportunity for disadvantaged communities that have been historically marginalized



Definition from the Environmental Protection Agency.



Key Terms: Underserved Communities

Underserved communities have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life.



These include geographic communities as well as populations sharing a particular characteristic such as: women and girls; Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons*, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and other persons of color; persons facing discrimination or barriers related to gender identity; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

Definition based on Executive Order 13985



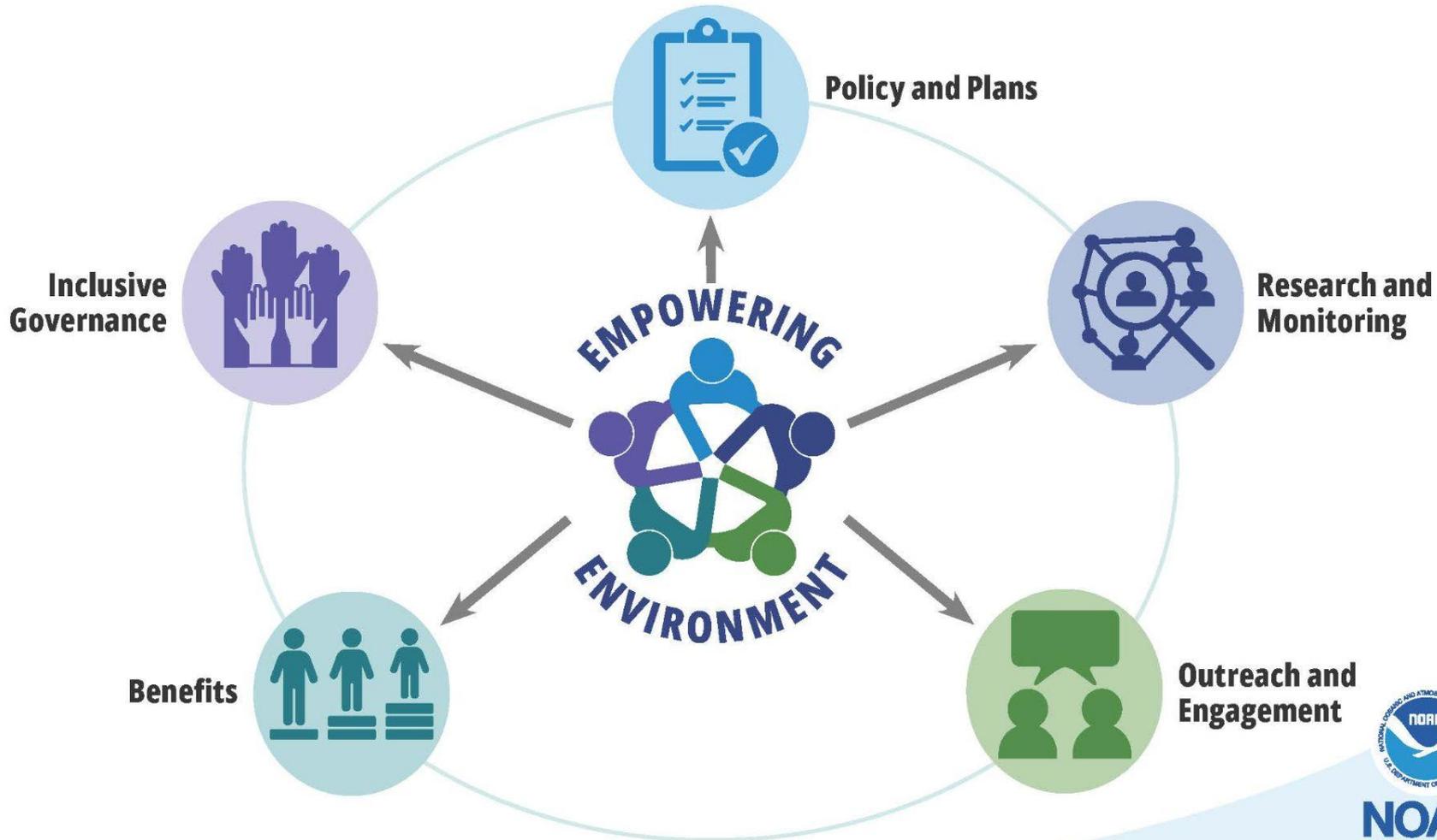
NOAA
FISHERIES

NOAA Fisheries' EEJ Goals

1. Prioritize identification, equitable treatment, and meaningful involvement of underserved communities
2. Provide equitable delivery of services
3. Prioritize equity and environmental justice in our mission work with demonstrable progress



NOAA
FISHERIES



**NOAA
FISHERIES**

Public Feedback: Key Messages

- Align NOAA Fisheries work with local needs
- Support community participation in science and management
- Engage with more diverse groups
- Characterize fishing communities and fishing benefits
- Promote equity in fisheries resource access, aquaculture, and protected resources
- Respect the autonomy of Territorial and Tribal governments
- Diversify NOAA Fisheries workforce and Fishery Management Councils
- Monitor outcomes, not inputs



NOAA
FISHERIES

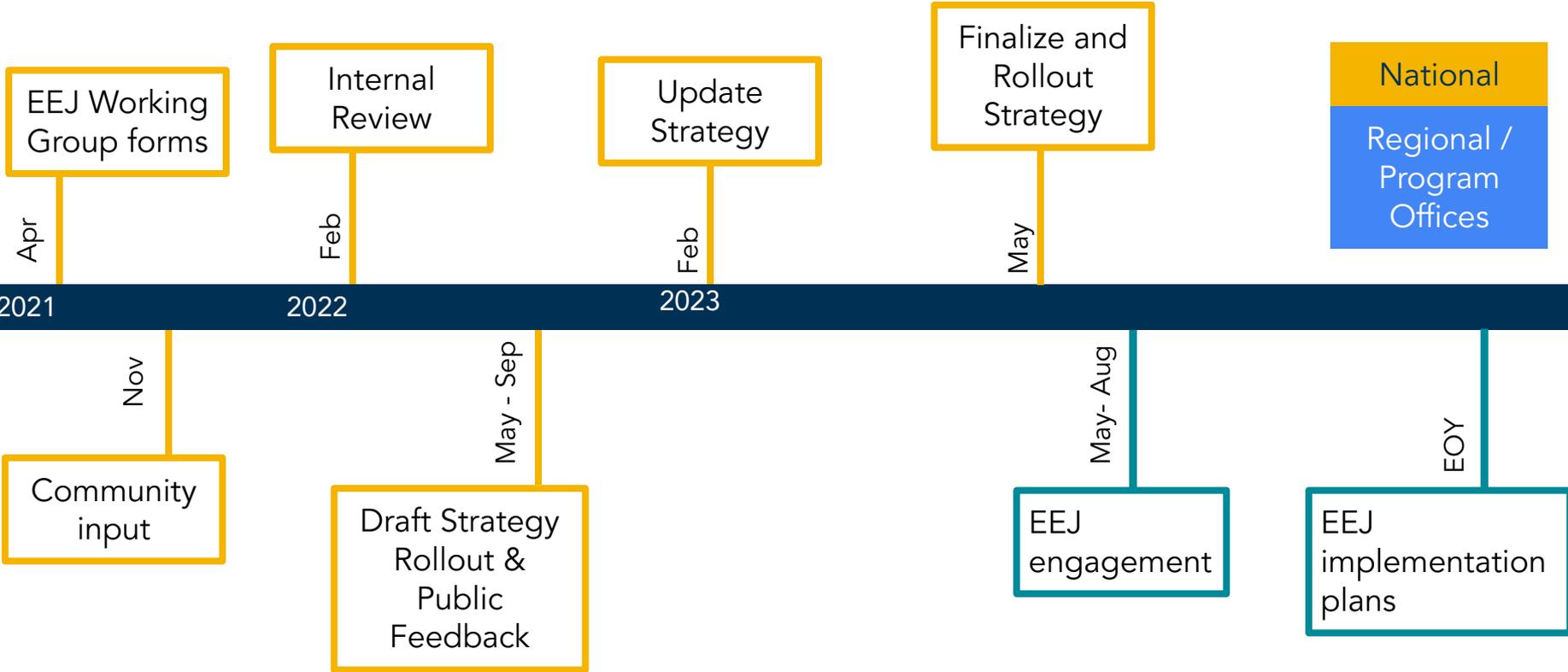
Public Feedback: Implementation

- Communicate early and often with stakeholders
- Coordinate with Fishery Management Councils, NOAA line offices and other federal agencies
- Support capacity for equity and environmental justice work:
 - Hire local, place-based staff
 - Invest in cultural and language expertise
 - Research social impacts of management decisions on people and communities



NOAA
FISHERIES

Next Steps



Southeast Engagement Strategies

- Public Request for Information through September 30, 2023
- Virtual listening session 6-8 pm ET, August 29
- Focus Group meetings with underserved communities
 - One method used to consult and collect data from local stakeholders
 - Bring together a small group of people (12-15) selected based on predefined experience or knowledge in a moderated setting to shed light on a topic of interest

Tentative Plan for Caribbean Focus Groups

Puerto Rico

- August 21-25, 2023
 - Cibuco
 - Cabo Rojo
 - Ponce
 - Ceiba

USVI

- September 11-15, 2023
 - St. Croix
 - St. Thomas / St. John



Example SE-Specific Strategies

Research and Monitoring: Expand collection of demographic data; incorporate indigenous traditional or local ecological knowledge into the data and information supporting our work

Policies and Plans: Continue reviewing EEJ impacts of management decisions using indicators; evaluate and address fairness and equity issues in catch share programs, disaster response protocols, climate action plans

Inclusive Governance: Hire multilingual staff in Permits Office; offer simultaneous interpretation services for Gulf and South Atlantic Council meetings; expand the Marine Resources Education Program

Benefits: Improve accessibility of regional grants processes (design, recruitment, review, selection processes)

Communication and Outreach: Translate permit applications and all other relevant materials to appropriate primary languages; use web and Google analytics data to increase accessibility to online materials; update or develop new communication plans and strategies based on targeted feedback from underserved communities

Empowering Environment: Address personnel needs - biologists for the Caribbean and anthropologists for all regions; organize regional workshop with federal partners to share information/lessons learned and leverage resources; support scholarship/internship opportunities for local residents; incorporate HBCU expertise into issue identification, community engagement, STEM pipeline

For More Information

- Heather Blough
(727) 304-0131
heather.blough@noaa.gov
- Brent Stoffle
(305) 951-1212
Brent.stoffle @noaa.gov

NEWS

NOAA Fisheries Releases Final Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy

May 22, 2023

Agency to incorporate equity and environmental justice into the vital services we provide to all communities.

Feature Story | National



More Information

- > Final Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy (PDF, 41 pages)
- > Final Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy—Spanish (PDF, 41 pages)

Recent News

VIDEO

Climate Change and Marine Animals: A Conservation Challenge
National



FEATURE STORY

Celebrating Seaweed by the Seashore
New England/Mid-Atlantic National



THANK YOU!

