

Evaluation of Stocks Managed Under the Puerto Rico, St. Croix, and St. Thomas/St. John Fishery Management Plans (FMP)

What Actions are Proposed?

1. Refine the list of federally-managed species to include only those that are in need of conservation and management. 16 USC 1852(h)(1)
 - Any stocks that are predominantly caught in federal waters and are overfished or subject to overfishing, or likely to become overfished or subject to overfishing, are considered to require conservation and management. 50 CFR 600.305(c)(1)
 - *Predominantly* means, with respect to fishing in a fishery, that more fishing on a stock or stocks of fish covered by the FMP occurs, or would occur in the absence of regulations, within or beyond the Exclusive Economic Zone than occurs in the aggregate within the boundaries of all states off the coasts of which the fishery is conducted. 50 CFR 600.10
 - Beyond the stocks that are predominantly caught in federal waters and are overfished or subject to overfishing, or likely to become overfished or subject to overfishing, Councils may determine that additional stocks require “conservation and management.” 50 CFR 600.305(c)(1)
 - The term “conservation and management” refers to all of the rules, regulations, conditions, methods, and other measures (A) which are required to rebuild, restore, or maintain, and which are useful in rebuilding, restoring, or maintaining, any fishery resource and the marine environment; and (B) which are designed to assure that—
 - (i) a supply of food and other products may be taken, and that recreational benefits may be obtained, on a continuing basis;
 - (ii) irreversible or long-term adverse effects on fishery resources and the marine environment are avoided; and
 - (iii) there will be a multiplicity of options available with respect to future uses of these resources. 16 USC 1802(5)
2. From the species that no longer need conservation and management, reclassify any that should be retained as ecosystem component species (ECS) because of their importance to the ecosystem and remove any remaining species from the FMP.

Why is the Council Considering these Actions?

- To improve efficiency and effectiveness of federal fisheries management in the U.S. Caribbean.
- Some federally-managed stocks are not targeted by commercial or recreational fishermen, but were included in the island-based FMPs (effective 2022) due to their importance to the ecosystem. These stocks may be better suited as ECS.

Puerto Rico Fishery Management Plan

The list of species managed under the Puerto Rico FMP includes spiny lobster, queen conch, 63 species of finfish (51 Reef Fish, 9 Pelagic Fish, and 3 Rays), and all species of corals, sea urchins, and sea cucumbers that occur in federal waters around Puerto Rico. Twenty-six (38%) of the 68 managed species or species groups are included on the current commercial catch report (CCR) used by Puerto Rico's Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER). Commercial landings are also reported [electronically](#) (e-reporting), which includes photo-based identification for 47 species. Both the paper CCR forms and the e-reporting application allow fishermen to hand write-in species and pounds landed, but write-in values are not necessarily consistent among fishermen or among fishing years.

Recreational catch and effort estimates for finfish species around Puerto Rico were collected from 2000-2016 under the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey/Marine Recreational Information Program (hereafter referred to as MRIP). MRIP did not collect information on the recreational catch of invertebrate species, such as spiny lobster or queen conch. Although the terminal year of the MRIP data was 2016, recent recreational landings observed by DNER's Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Program for 2023 show a similar list of species targeted by recreational anglers (G. Rodriguez-Ferrer (DNER), personal communication, May 27, 2026).

For this evaluation process, the total landings for each species managed under the Puerto Rico FMP were estimated by adding the average of the most recent five years of commercial landings (2020-2024¹) with the average of the available recreational landings (2000-2016²), where available³. The percentage of the total landings that were reported from federal waters was also estimated for each species. Species were categorized into Risk categories (High, Moderate, Low) using the susceptibility scores assigned to each species by the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) during the development of the Puerto Rico FMP, and into Spatial categories corresponding to how much of the landings were reported from federal waters (predominantly from Min, Low, Medium, High, Max). A preliminary de minimis threshold⁴ value of 8,500 pounds (lbs) of total landings was used to evaluate the level of landings that corresponds to directed catch (Table 1) or incidental catch (Table 2). Species with combined commercial and recreational landings of zero lbs (e.g., those with prohibited harvest) were included in Table 2 to identify the applicable risk category assigned to the species.

¹ At the time the analysis was conducted, the most recent landings available were from 2024.

² The Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) was suspended in 2017 and has not resumed to date.

³ If recreational landings were not available for a species, then the total landings equaled the commercial landings.

⁴ De minimis thresholds were estimated for the commercial and recreational landings datasets using the median landings value rounded up to the nearest 500-lb value. These two threshold values were added together to get the total landings de minimis value (1,000 lbs for commercial + 7,500 lbs for recreational = 8,500 lbs for total landings).

Table 1. Species managed under the Puerto Rico FMP with total (commercial + recreational) landings greater than 8,500 lbs grouped by Risk and Spatial categories. [Puerto Rico options](#)

Fishing Location	High Risk (2.5-3.0)	Moderate Risk (1.5-2.0)	Low Risk (1.0)
Min ($< 5\%$ from federal waters)	Southern stingray, Spotted eagle ray	Crevalle jack , Dog snapper , Lane snapper	Stoplight parrotfish, Cero mackerel
Low (5-25% from federal waters)	Queen conch, Goliath grouper, Yellowfin grouper , Rainbow parrotfish	Coney , Red hind , Spiny lobster, Mutton snapper , Vermilion snapper, Yellowtail snapper, Cubera snapper, Queen triggerfish , Hogfish	Great barracuda , Little tunny, King mackerel
Medium (25-50% from federal waters)	None	Blackfin snapper, Silk snapper , Cardinal snapper , Queen snapper	Blackfin tuna
High (50-75% from federal waters)	None	None	Dolphin , Tripletail , Wahoo
Max (75-100% from federal waters)	None	None	None

Indicator stocks in bold.

Species in red were recommended for removal during the Council's Ad Hoc Committee meeting in July 2025.

Table 2. Species managed under the Puerto Rico FMP with total (commercial + recreational) landings less than 8,500 lbs grouped by Risk and Spatial categories.

Fishing Location	High Risk (2.5-3.0)	Moderate Risk (1.5-2.0)	Low Risk (1.0)
No landings reported	Corals, Sea cucumbers, Sea urchins, Yellowmouth grouper, Giant manta ray	None	Queen angelfish
Min (< 5% from federal waters)	Black grouper, Midnight parrotfish,	White grunt, Schoolmaster	Gray angelfish, French angelfish, Pompano dolphin, Queen parrotfish, Redtail parrotfish, Redband parrotfish, Striped parrotfish, Blue tang, Ocean surgeonfish, Puddingwife
Low (5-25% from federal waters)	Nassau grouper, Blue parrotfish	Black snapper, Wenchman	Graysby, Rock hind, Rainbow runner, Princess parrotfish, Doctorfish, Gray triggerfish, Ocean triggerfish, Spanish hogfish
Medium (25-50% from federal waters)	None	Misty grouper	African pompano
High (50-75% from federal waters)	Red grouper	None	Yellowedge grouper
Max (75-100% from federal waters)	Tiger grouper	None	None

Species in red were recommended for removal during the Council's Ad Hoc Committee meeting in July 2025.

St. Croix Fishery Management Plan

The list of species managed under the St. Croix FMP includes spiny lobster, queen conch, 43 species of finfish (41 Reef Fish, 2 Pelagic Fish), and all species of corals, sea urchins, and sea cucumbers that occur in federal waters around St. Croix. Forty (83%) of the 48 managed species or species groups are included in the current CCR used by the USVI's Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR). MRIP did not collect information on the recreational catch in the USVI; thus, only commercial landings are evaluated.

For this evaluation process, the most recent five years of commercial landings (2020-2024⁵) for each species managed under the St. Croix FMP were evaluated. Species were categorized into Risk categories (High, Moderate, Low) using the susceptibility scores assigned to each species by the Council's SSC during the development of the St. Croix FMP, and into Spatial categories corresponding to how much of the landings were reported from federal waters (predominantly from Min, Low, Medium, High, Max). A preliminary de minimis threshold⁶ value of 2,500 lbs of commercial landings was used to evaluate the level of landings that corresponds to directed catch (Table 3) or incidental catch (Table 4). Species with commercial landings of zero lbs (e.g., those with prohibited harvest) were included in Table 4 to identify the applicable risk category assigned to the species.

Table 3. Species managed under the St. Croix FMP with average commercial landings from 2020-2024 greater than 2,500 lbs grouped by Risk and Spatial categories. [St. Croix options](#)

Fishing Location	High Risk (2.5-3.0)	Moderate Risk (1.5-2.0)	Low Risk (1.0)
Min (< 5% from federal waters)	None	None	None
Low (5-25% from federal waters)	Queen parrotfish	None	None
Medium (25-50% from federal waters)	Queen conch, Redfin parrotfish, Redtail parrotfish , Redband parrotfish, Queen triggerfish	Spiny lobster, Yellowtail snapper, Doctorfish	None
High (50-75% from federal waters)	Red hind, Stoplight parrotfish	White grunt	Blackfin snapper, Silk snapper , Schoolmaster
Max (75-100% from federal waters)	None	None	Dolphin, Wahoo, Queen snapper

Indicator stocks in bold.

⁵ At the time the analysis was conducted, the most recent landings available were from 2024.

⁶ The de minimis threshold was estimated for the commercial landings using the median landings value rounded up to the nearest 500-lb value.

Table 4. Species managed under the St. Croix FMP with average commercial landings from 2020-2024 less than 2,500 lbs grouped by Risk and Spatial categories.

Fishing Location	High Risk (2.5-3.0)	Moderate Risk (1.5-2.0)	Low Risk (1.0)
No landings reported	Corals, Sea cucumbers, Nassau grouper, Goliath grouper, Midnight parrotfish, Rainbow parrotfish, Striped parrotfish	None	Longspine squirrelfish
Min (< 5% from federal waters)	Blue parrotfish, Sea urchins	None	None
Low (5-25% from federal waters)	Tiger grouper	Graysby, Princess parrotfish	None
Medium (25-50% from federal waters)	Black grouper	None	Black snapper
High (50-75% from federal waters)	Red grouper , Yellowfin grouper	Coney , Bluestriped grunt, Gray snapper, Mutton snapper, Blue tang, Ocean surgeonfish	Misty grouper , Lane snapper, Vermilion snapper
Max (75-100% from federal waters)	None	Queen angelfish, Gray angelfish, French angelfish, Rock hind	None

Indicator stocks in bold.

Species in red were recommended for removal during the Council's Ad Hoc Committee meeting in July 2025.

St. Thomas/St. John Fishery Management Plan

The list of species managed under the St. Thomas/St. John FMP includes spiny lobster, queen conch, 47 species of finfish (45 Reef Fish, 2 Pelagic Fish), and all species of corals, sea urchins, and sea cucumbers that occur in federal waters around St. Thomas/St. John. Forty-five (87%) of the 52 managed species or species groups are included on the current CCR used by the USVI's DPNR. MRIP did not collect information on the recreational catch in the USVI; thus, only commercial landings are evaluated.

For this evaluation process, the most recent five years of commercial landings (2020-2024⁷) for each species managed under the St. Thomas/St. John FMP were evaluated. Species were categorized into Risk categories (High, Moderate, Low) using the susceptibility scores assigned to each species by the Council's SSC during the development of the St. Thomas/St. John FMP, and into Spatial categories corresponding to how much of the landings were reported from federal waters (predominantly from Min, Low, Medium, High, Max). A preliminary de minimis threshold⁸ value of 2,000 lbs of commercial landings was used to evaluate the level of landings that corresponds to directed catch (Table 5) or incidental catch (Table 6). Species with commercial landings of zero lbs (e.g., those with prohibited harvest) were included in Table 6 to identify the applicable risk category assigned to the species.

⁷ At the time the analysis was conducted, the most recent landings available were from 2024.

⁸ The de minimis threshold was estimated for the commercial landings using the median landings value rounded up to the nearest 500-lb value.

Table 5. Species managed under the St. Thomas/St. John FMP with average commercial landings from 2020-2024 greater than 2,000 lbs grouped by Risk and Spatial categories. [St. Thomas/St. John options](#)

Fishing Location	High Risk (2.5-3.0)	Moderate Risk (1.5-2.0)	Low Risk (1.0)
Min (< 5% from federal waters)	None	None	None
Low (5-25% from federal waters)	None	None	None
Medium (25-50% from federal waters)	None	Blue runner	Spiny lobster
High (50-75% from federal waters)	None	Bluestriped grunt, Yellowtail snapper, Blue tang	Redtail parrotfish, Stoplight parrotfish
Max (75-100% from federal waters)	None	Gray angelfish , French angelfish, Red grouper , White grunt , Margate, Doctorfish , Saucereye porgy , Hogfish, Queen triggerfish	Dolphin , Coney, Red hind , Blackfin snapper , Mutton snapper

Indicator stocks in bold.

Species in red were recommended for removal during the Council's Ad Hoc Committee meeting in July 2025.

Species in blue were recommended for removal from the current CCR form by the St. Thomas Fisherman's Association due to their rare occurrence, high potential for misidentification, or pelagic nature.

Table 6. Species managed under the St. Thomas/St. John FMP with average commercial landings from 2020-2024 less than 2,000 lbs grouped by Risk and Spatial categories.

Fishing Location	High Risk (2.5-3.0)	Moderate Risk (1.5-2.0)	Low Risk (1.0)
No landings reported	Goliath grouper, Blue parrotfish, Rainbow parrotfish, Midnight parrotfish, Striped parrotfish, Corals	None	None
Min (< 5% from federal waters)	None	None	Queen parrotfish
Low (5-25% from federal waters)	None	Sheepshead porgy	None
Medium (25-50% from federal waters)	Sea cucumbers	None	Redband parrotfish, Redfin parrotfish
High (50-75% from federal waters)	Sea urchins	Queen conch, Jolthead porgy, Sea bream	Yellowedge grouper, Princess parrotfish, Vermilion snapper
Max (75-100% from federal waters)	Nassau grouper	Queen angelfish, Black grouper, Tiger grouper, Yellowfin grouper, Ocean surgeonfish	Misty grouper, Yellowmouth grouper, Black snapper, Silk snapper, Lane snapper, Queen snapper, Wahoo

Species in red were recommended for removal during the Council's Ad Hoc Committee meeting in July 2025.

Species in blue were recommended for removal from the current CCR form by the St. Thomas Fisherman's Association due to their rare occurrence, high potential for misidentification, or pelagic nature.

Options for Retaining, Removing, or Reclassifying Stocks Currently Managed under the Island-based Fishery Management Plans

The following options are a starting point for Council discussion and can be modified or removed as needed.

A. Puerto Rico FMP - Retain species that are targeted by the fishery.

Option 1 (No Action). Retain all species currently managed under the Puerto Rico FMP.

Option 2. Retain for federal management under the FMP, species with total landings above the de minimis threshold that occur in all Risk categories (i.e., high, moderate, low) with **5% or more** of the landings from federal waters.

From [Table 1](#), the species retained would include: Queen conch, Goliath grouper, Yellowfin grouper, Rainbow parrotfish, Coney, Red hind, Spiny lobster, Mutton snapper, Vermilion snapper, Lane snapper, Yellowtail snapper, Cubera snapper, Queen triggerfish, Hogfish, Great barracuda, Little tunny, King mackerel, Blackfin snapper, Silk snapper, Cardinal snapper, Queen snapper, Blackfin tuna, Dolphin, Tripletail, and Wahoo

Option 3. Retain for federal management under the FMP, species with total landings above the de minimis threshold that occur in all Risk categories (i.e., high, moderate, low) with **25% or more** of the landings from federal waters.

From [Table 1](#), the species retained would include: Blackfin snapper, Silk snapper, Cardinal snapper, Queen snapper, Blackfin tuna, Dolphin, Tripletail, and Wahoo

Option 4. Retain for federal management under the FMP, species with total landings above the de minimis threshold that occur in all Risk categories (i.e., high, moderate, low) with **50% or more** of the landings from federal waters.

From [Table 1](#), the species retained would include: Dolphin, Tripletail, and Wahoo

Option 5. Retain for federal management under the FMP, species with total landings above the de minimis threshold that occur in the **Moderate** and **High Risk** categories with **5% or more** of the landings from federal waters.

From [Table 1](#), the species retained would include: Queen conch, Goliath grouper, Yellowfin grouper, Rainbow parrotfish, Coney, Red hind, Spiny lobster, Mutton snapper, Vermilion snapper, Yellowtail snapper, Cubera snapper, Queen triggerfish, Hogfish, Blackfin snapper, Silk snapper, Cardinal snapper, Queen snapper

B. St. Croix FMP - Retain species that are targeted by the fishery.

Option 1 (No Action). Retain all species currently managed under the St. Croix FMP.

Option 2. Retain for federal management under the FMP, species with total landings above the de minimis threshold that occur in all Risk categories (i.e., high, moderate, low) with **5% or more** of the landings from federal waters.

From [Table 3](#), the species retained would include: Queen parrotfish, Queen conch, Redfin parrotfish, Redtail parrotfish, Redband parrotfish, Queen triggerfish, Red hind, Stoplight parrotfish, Spiny lobster, Yellowtail snapper, Doctorfish, White grunt, Blackfin snapper, Silk snapper, Schoolmaster, Dolphin, Wahoo, and Queen snapper

Option 3. Retain for federal management under the FMP, species with total landings above the de minimis threshold that occur in all Risk categories (i.e., high, moderate, low) with **25% or more** of the landings from federal waters.

From [Table 3](#), the species retained would include: Queen conch, Redfin parrotfish, Redtail parrotfish, Redband parrotfish, Queen triggerfish, Red hind, Stoplight parrotfish, Spiny lobster, Yellowtail snapper, Doctorfish, White grunt, Blackfin snapper, Silk snapper, Schoolmaster, Dolphin, Wahoo, and Queen snapper

Option 4. Retain for federal management under the FMP, species with total landings above the de minimis threshold that occur in all Risk categories (i.e., high, moderate, low) with **50% or more** of the landings from federal waters.

From [Table 3](#), the species retained would include: Red hind, Stoplight parrotfish, White grunt, Blackfin snapper, Silk snapper, Schoolmaster, Dolphin, Wahoo, and Queen snapper

Option 5. Retain for federal management under the FMP, species with total landings above the de minimis threshold that occur in the **Moderate** and **High Risk** categories with **5% or more** of the landings from federal waters.

From [Table 3](#), the species retained would include: Queen parrotfish, Queen conch, Redfin parrotfish, Redtail parrotfish, Redband parrotfish, Queen triggerfish, Red hind, Stoplight parrotfish, Spiny lobster, Yellowtail snapper, Doctorfish, and White grunt

Option 6. Retain for federal management under the FMP, species with total landings above the de minimis threshold that occur in the **Moderate** and **High Risk** categories with **50% or more** of the landings from federal waters.

From [Table 3](#), the species retained would include: Red hind, Stoplight parrotfish, and White grunt

C. St. Thomas/St. John - Retain species that are targeted by the fishery.

Option 1 (No Action). Retain all species currently managed under the St. Thomas/St. John FMP.

Option 2. Retain for federal management under the FMP, species with total landings above the de minimis threshold that occur in all Risk categories (i.e., high, moderate, low) with **5% or more** of the landings from federal waters.

From [Table 5](#), the species retained would include: Blue runner, Spiny lobster, Bluestriped grunt, Yellowtail snapper, Blue tang, Redtail parrotfish, Stoplight parrotfish, Gray angelfish, French angelfish, Red grouper, White grunt, Margate, Saucereye porgy, Doctorfish, Queen triggerfish, Hogfish, Dolphin, Coney, Red hind, Blackfin snapper, Mutton snapper

Option 3. Retain for federal management under the FMP, species with total landings above the de minimis threshold that occur in all Risk categories (i.e., high, moderate, low) with **25% or more** of the landings from federal waters.

From [Table 5](#), the species retained would include: Blue runner, Spiny lobster, Bluestriped grunt, Yellowtail snapper, Blue tang, Redtail parrotfish, Stoplight parrotfish, Gray angelfish, French angelfish, Red grouper, White grunt, Margate, Saucereye porgy, Doctorfish, Queen triggerfish, Hogfish, Dolphin, Coney, Red hind, Blackfin snapper, Mutton snapper

Option 4. Retain for federal management under the FMP, species with total landings above the de minimis threshold that occur in all Risk categories (i.e., high, moderate, low) with **50% or more** of the landings from federal waters.

From [Table 5](#), the species retained would include: Bluestriped grunt, Yellowtail snapper, Blue tang, Redtail parrotfish, Stoplight parrotfish, Gray angelfish, French angelfish, Red grouper, White grunt, Margate, Saucereye porgy, Doctorfish, Queen triggerfish, Hogfish, Dolphin, Coney, Red hind, Blackfin snapper, Mutton snapper

Option 5. Retain for federal management under the FMP, species with total landings above the de minimis threshold that occur in the **Moderate** and **High Risk** categories with **5% or more** of the landings from federal waters.

From [Table 5](#), the species retained would include: Blue runner, Bluestriped grunt, Yellowtail snapper, Blue tang, Gray angelfish, French angelfish, Red grouper, White grunt, Margate, Saucereye porgy, Doctorfish, Queen triggerfish, and Hogfish

Option 6. Retain for federal management under the FMP, species with total landings above the de minimis threshold that occur in the **Moderate** and **High Risk** categories with **50% or more** of the landings from federal waters.

From [Table 5](#), the species retained would include: Bluestriped grunt, Yellowtail snapper, Blue tang, Gray angelfish, French angelfish, Red grouper, White grunt, Margate, Saucereye porgy, Doctorfish, Queen triggerfish, and Hogfish

D. Final Disposition of Species Removed under Sections A-C

In this section, each of the species potentially removed from the fishery management unit (FMU) (i.e., list of species managed with annual catch limits) under the Council's recommended options presented in Sections A-C would be run through a decision tree to determine which of those species should be (1) retained in the FMU for reasons other than the criteria considered in Sections A-C; (2) reclassified as EC species; or (3) removed from the FMPs. The preliminary decision tree steps are as follows:

1. Is the species a target species and currently benefiting from federal regulations (e.g., catch prohibitions, seasonal closures)? If yes, retain in the FMU. If no, move to the next step.
2. Can federal regulations improve or maintain stock condition (i.e., active management under an FMP), promote species recovery or advance recovery efforts for species listed under the Endangered Species Act, or address economic, social, or operational concerns? If yes, retain in the FMU. If no, move to the next step.
3. Is the stock an important component of the marine environment - such as in providing support to FMP-managed species or in achieving ecosystem management objectives? If yes, reclassify as EC species. If no, remove from the FMP.
4. For species retained in the FMU, is the species already adequately managed by Puerto Rico or U.S. Virgin Islands state agencies, state/federal programs, or another federal FMP? If yes, remove from the FMP. If no, retain in the FMU.

Species that are removed from the FMP or identified as ECS are neither assessed nor actively managed by the Council. However, for ECS, NMFS and the Council would continue monitoring the species. If the ECS were to become targeted by a federal fishery in the future, NMFS and the Council could reintegrate it into the FMP and back into active Council management following due process.

Additionally, the Council could decide to make exceptions to the ultimate disposition of the species. For example, the Council can recommend that a species proposed to be retained in the FMU is better suited as an ECS and provide rationale for that recommendation.

Additional Actions to Consider after the List of Managed Stocks is Updated

The following actions could be developed by the Caribbean Fishery Management Council (Council) with input from its advisory panels and from the Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands government agencies.

A. Ecosystem Component Species Management

The Council could evaluate whether any of the species reclassified as ecosystem component species (ECS) require regulations for the purpose of collecting data, minimizing bycatch or bycatch mortality, protecting the role in the ecosystem, and/or addressing other ecosystem issues.

B. Revise Stock Complexes and Management Reference Points

Once the stocks in need of conservation and management are determined, and the list of species managed in the fishery management unit is set, revising the current structure of the stock complexes and their associated reference points is a logical next step. This is because some species currently managed in stock complexes will either be removed from the fishery management plan (FMP) or identified as ECS, which are not managed with status determination criteria (SDC) or management reference points. The SDC (e.g., overfishing limit) and other reference points (e.g., annual catch limit [ACL]) would need to be established for each new stock complex. The Council may also choose to update the management reference points for species that will continue to be managed as an individual stock or for those stock complexes where the species composition did not change. Additionally, the Council may consider updating management reference points for stocks or stock complexes for which accountability measures have been triggered following the implementation of the island-based fishery management plans, but for which the ACL exceedances were determined to be from enhanced reporting.

C. Evaluate Current Species-Specific Management Measures (e.g., recreational bag limits, seasonal closures)

Evaluating the species-specific management measures should ensure that the current regulations are successfully achieving, or making measurable progress toward, their conservation and fishery management goals.

D. Consider Delegation of Management (To be explored)

Delegation of management is a policy decision (see § 306(a)(3)(B) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act where the stock remains in the FMP, but the Council designates aspects of federal fishery management to the states. Delegation of management could be considered for a single stock, stocks, or even fisheries. Delegation could be considered in concert with developing stock complexes defined by the Council as those in need of conservation and management. Delegation may be an especially appropriate outcome for those species whose range straddles state waters and federal waters. Delegation has been considered and implemented by other Councils, for example, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council ([PFMC 2024](#)).