

Council(s)	Priority Number	Action type (e.g. Changes to Regulations, Orders, Guidance Documents, Other Similar Agency Actions)	Relevant CFR Citation under Title 50 (if applicable)	Updated description of recommended action(s)	Rationale of how the recommended action(s) stabilize markets, improve access, enhance economic profitability, and prevent closures	Proposed plan and schedule for implementation	Responsible entities
CFMC	1	Regulation - Review species currently managed under the Puerto Rico, St. Croix, St. Thomas/St. John Fishery Management Plans to determine if any species are no longer in need of federal conservation and management.	50 CFR 622.431 and 622.440; 50 CFR 622.471 and 622.480; 50 CFR 622.506 and 622.515	Review the list of all species/stocks currently under federal management in the Puerto Rico, St. Croix, and St. Thomas/St. John FMPs to determine if (a) species are no longer in need of federal management, (b) should be moved to ecosystem component.	Reviewing managed species (SERO/SEFSC/CFMC) will identify stocks no longer needing FMP conservation, significantly improving federal fisheries management efficiency. Focusing resources on critical stocks enhances economic profitability for fishers and prevents unnecessary closures. The review, which includes revisiting selection criteria and potential annual catch limit (ACL) updates, is already underway and considers alternative management strategies (e.g., SEDAR 103) in line with NOAA's Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management (EBFM) Policy.	NMFS and the CFMC have already initiated a review of the managed species, considering available data, biological information, harvest levels, and productivity and vulnerability scores, among other factors. Given that species-specific stock assessments have proven less effective for U.S. Caribbean management, reducing the number of species requiring full assessments is expected to improve management efficiency and decrease the reporting burden on fishers. The target timeframe for this action is 2026-2027.	CFMC/NMFS/Local Governments
CFMC	2	Regulation - Review possible redundancy in regulations of seasonally closed areas, no take areas, and seasonal closures for spawning fish species, and review the effectiveness of current MPAs to determine which can be eliminated or modified. Science Data collection for monitoring MPAs	50 CFR 622.439(a)(1-2); 50 CFR 622.479(b)(3); 50 CFR 622.514(b)(1)	For the following managed areas/species: St. Thomas - Grouper Unit 4 seasonal species closure; Puerto Rico - Tourmaline and Abirir La Sierra seasonally managed areas; and St. Croix - Mutton Snapper Spawning Aggregation Area and Mutton Snapper seasonal species closure, in order of priority: (1) Remove regulations that are redundant or unnecessary to avoid duplication and burdens to fishers, and increase management efficiency. (2) Review the effectiveness of current Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and seasonal/area closures to determine if they are accomplishing their purpose (e.g., protecting species/habitat, acting as active spawning aggregation sites). (3) Modify regulations to allow fishing activities, or eliminate closures entirely, if they are ineffective. (4) Conduct evaluations using Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management (EBFM) approaches, including assessment of socioeconomic impacts of closures. (5) Enhance monitoring of managed areas through a cooperative research program, which includes planning for controlled access to closed areas through a cooperative research protocol to assess recovery.	Reviewing and removing redundant regulations and eliminating ineffective closed areas/MPAs will significantly improve fisheries management efficiency, reduce regulatory burdens on fishers, and create new fishing opportunities. This flexible, data-responsive system allows controlled access through cooperative research. Continuing the Cooperative Research Program (CRCP) beyond 2026 is vital to incorporate fishers' expertise, improve science, and foster mutual understanding.	The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the Caribbean Fishery Management Council (CFMC) are compiling a list of regulations (established 20 or more years ago) for modification, with the list to be shared at the December 2025 Council Meeting. Extending the NOAA Cooperative Research Program (CRCP) beyond 2026 is crucial to continue involving fishers in monitoring and assessing fish populations and Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). Discussions and amendment development are scheduled for 2026/2027, with amendments for MPAs extending to 2028. Specific CFMC-supported research will be used to determine if MPAs are achieving their purpose.	CFMC/NMFS/Other Federal Agencies /Local Governments

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CFMC	3	Regulation - Revision of Compatible and Non-compatible Regulations Between Federal and State Governments	50 CFR 622 Subparts S, T, U	Review list of current federal regulations and determine the feasibility of (1) Conducting a management evaluation strategy (MSE) to remove unnecessary regulations; and (2) establishing compatible regulations in federal waters as applicable. One set of regulations for commonly managed species.	The review strategy will examine the rationale for current regulations to identify those that could be revised. It aims to improve management, increase regulatory compliance, and enhance economic profitability by opening up fisheries previously regulated or prohibited. Establishing a coherent and consistent set of regulations, and removing unnecessary ones, will ultimately benefit all fishers.	Discussions on regulatory compatibility have already started at the request of commercial fishers. Additional discussions could be scheduled during the December 2025 and Spring and Summer 2026 Council meetings. A Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) review is dependent on the availability of funds and staff.	CFMC/NMFS/PRDNER/USVIDPNR; Local Governments.
CFMC	4	Regulation - Consider alternative approaches for Annual Catch Limits	50 CFR 622.440; 50 CFR 622.480; 50 CFR 622.515	(1) Consider allowing a portion of the unharvested ACL be added to the next year's catch limit for that particular stock (carry over). (2) Evaluate the use of alternative methods for setting reference points for data-limited stocks in the U.S. Caribbean fisheries (e.g., ecosystem reference point)	This action increases flexibility for managers and provides economic benefits to fishers through increased harvest opportunities and reduced community disruptions. Deregulation, particularly if overregulation is preventing the harvest of Annual Catch Limits (ACLs), would enhance profitability and allow for carry-over to decrease closures due to overages. Additionally, alternate management methods for data-limited fisheries in the U.S. Caribbean will help address challenges and result in stable markets and ecosystems.	Proposed plan: (1) As the list of federally-managed stocks are being evaluated (see regulations priority #1), start discussions at Council meeting to determine for the remaining stocks 1) if ACLs should be revised, 2) if alternate methods for data-limited stocks developed through the SEDAR 103 (scheduled for 2026-2027) are available for use, and 3) if carry-over ACLs are appropriate. Note - thru the SEDAR 103 process, the SEFSC is working with the local government staff to complete a quality assessment/quality control (QA/QC) of all U.S. Caribbean commercial and recreational data available for the managed species.	CFMC/NMFS
CFMC	5	Regulation - Revise accountability measures for managed pelagic stocks	50 CFR 622.440(b); 50 CFR 622.480(b); 50 CFR 622.515(b)	Pelagic stocks are new to management in the US Caribbean. The AM for pelagic stocks in all three FMPs need to be revised to determine corrective action(s) to take when the annual catch limit is exceeded.	The recommended action would consider the regional seasonality and availability of pelagic stocks and its influence over markets. This is expected to improve social and economic opportunities while complying with required mandates (MSA). Understanding seasonal markets and harvest regimes will enhance economic activity by preventing continuous overages.	After the evaluation of stocks action (see regulations priority #1), the Council will develop an amendment to the FMPs to modify the pelagic AMs. Target date is 2028.	NMFS/CFMC
CFMC	6	Regulation - Revise the accountability measure for the Caribbean Spiny Lobster in Puerto Rico. Science/Data collection: survey that samples individuals larger than those being caught in the fisheries to confirm there are large individuals in the population (SSC and Fishers' recommendation).	50 CFR 622.440(c)	The Puerto Rico spiny lobster AM needs to be revised in response to a series of ACL overages.	The recommended action would try to better understand how environmental and economic conditions impact landings and determine a more appropriate response (AM) to ensure sustainability of the fishery.	After the evaluation of stocks action (see regulations priority #1), the Council will develop an amendment to the Puerto Rico FMP to modify the spiny lobster AM. Target date is 2028.	NMFS/CFMC
CFMC	1	Other similar agency action - Reestablish the collection of recreational data in the US Caribbean (Science/Data collection)		Restablish recreational fishing data collection efforts in the U.S. Caribbean. The MRFSS/MRIP program was halted in 2017 and has not resumed to date.	Local state recreational fishing licenses will assist data collection efforts in the region. If these licenses and data are certified for federal use, it could be used in stock assessments and in ACL monitoring efforts, enhancing management in the US Caribbean.	Effectively implement the Marine Resource Information Program (MRIP) in the US Caribbean (PR and USVI). USVI just implemented a recreational fishing license and reporting (2025).	NMFS/Local Governments/CFMC

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CFMC	2	Other similar agency action - Assess commercial and recreational fishing data to determine fishing effort in the U.S. Caribbean. Develop methodology to determine fishing effort by gear type as needed. (Science/Data collection)		Work with local agencies to update the mechanisms (e.g., commercial catch reports) to acquire effort data from the commercial and recreational sectors. This information would improve data inputs/models used in Caribbean stock assessments and the evaluation of actions (e.g., managment measures) in FMP amendments	Enhancing the understanding of fishing effort is crucial for better management of Caribbean fisheries, as this remains a persistent data gap in stock assessments.	These efforts are underway at the SEFSC (SEDAR 91 Puerto Rico spiny lobster and SEDAR 103 Application of Alternate Assessment Methods), but there is a need for dedicated staff to improve data collection for the benefit of the industry and the scientific understanding of the U.S. Caribbean fisheries. Implementation TBD as funding becomes available.	NMFS/Local Governments/CFMC
CFMC	3	Other similar agency action - Prioritize socio-economic data needs for decision-making in the U.S. Caribbean fisheries (Science/Data Collection)		Explore the factors that currently prevent the integration or use of socio-economic data for management decisions in the region, including: (1) Insufficient frequency and resolution of socio-economic data, often with disparate timeframes; (2) Insufficient involvement of social scientists in the stock assessment, review, and management advice process; (3) Poor buy-in and lack of trust from stakeholders, which impedes the integration of Local Ecological Knowledge (LEK)	Use a systematic approach to guide the consideration of socio-economic factors in stock assessment and fisheries management. Enhance fisheries management in the US Caribbean via the incorporation of these primary indicators of the status of the markets.	Further ongoing efforts to include socie-economic data into data-limited stock assessments. SEDAR 103 U.S. Caribbean Application of Alternate Assessment Methods -October 2025-2027.	NMFS (Caribbean Strategic Planning-SEFSC)/NMFS
CFMC	4	Other similar agency action - Conduct queen conch population assessment in the U.S. Caribbean (Science/Data collection)		Evaluate the population status of the queen conch stock(s) in the U.S. Caribbean to determine if a new rebuilding plan is needed. The assessment would allow the Council to reconsider the current management regime (e.g., harvest prohibitions, area, and seasonal closures). Extend the assessment to closed areas managed by other jurisdictions/agencies, such as the monuments in St. Croix, USVI, and facilitate collaboration with these entities.	An assessment provides the scientific foundation to prevent overfishing and potentially lessen harvest restrictions, which stabilizes markets and ensures a stable supply of queen conch. Using advanced and remote technology, combined with AI and fisher training, will improve the population assessment, enhance the understanding of conch dynamics, and contribute to a database of environmental impacts. Fisher involvement can also enhance profitability and help decrease illegal markets.	NMFS SEFSC will continue queen conch research in the U.S. Caribbean. This includes encouraging fishers and academics to apply for Cooperative Research Program (CRP) grants for advanced technology surveys in the EEZ, with compensation for fishers' work. If a seasonal closure is re-enacted in the EEZ, a ban on imports during the closure could be an additional measure. The target date is dependent on funding availability.	CFMC/NMFS/Local Governments/DOI (VI Coral Reef National Monuments; Buck Island Reef National Monument)
CFMC	5	Other similar agency action - Enforce import regulations for spiny lobster and queen conch	Spiny lobster regulations - 50 CFR 622.409; 50 CFR 622.446; 50 CFR 622.486; 50 CFR 622.521; Queen conch regulations - 50 CFR 622.481(e)	Continue monitoring imports and enforcing regulations such as minimum size, meat, and tail weight regulations. Consider a ban on imports during Annual Catch Limit (ACL) overage closures.	Illegal imports are detrimental to the domestic industry, often fetching a lower price per pound. To help maintain the price of local lobster, a temporary ban on imports could be considered during domestic closures.	Enforcement action	NMFS
Other Agencies		Guidance document - Develop implementation guidelines and policies that would help domestic spiny lobster and queen conch products compete against imports.		Develop and implement policies that would help domestic spiny lobster and queen conch products compete against imports.	Illegal imports are detrimental to the domestic industry, often fetching a lower price per pound. To help maintain the price of local lobster, a temporary ban on imports could be considered during domestic closures.	Coordinate with the appropriate agencies to prohibit the sale of queen conch and other seafood during local and federal seasonal closures. Additionally, increase the advertisement of species closures and enhance the marketing of queen conch and other fish during the open seasons.	Other Agencies