

Select Finfish and Invertebrate Species for Management in the New Island-Based Fishery Management Plans (FMPs)

Draft Action 1 and Alternatives – To be customized for each FMP

Version Provided to District Advisory Panels for Consideration at their March Meetings

Action 1. Determine species to be included for management in the Puerto Rico FMP.

Alternative 1. No action. The Puerto Rico FMP is composed of all species within the fishery management units (FMUs) historically managed under the Spiny Lobster FMP, Reef Fish FMP, Queen Conch FMP, and the Corals and Reef Associated Plants and Invertebrates FMP.

Alternative 2. Identify species to be managed in Puerto Rico EEZ waters using all or some of the criteria listed below.

For those species for which landings data are available, indicating the species is in the fishery, the Council will choose a set of criteria to determine if a species should be managed under the Puerto Rico FMP. The criteria under consideration include (A) the degree to which the species occurs in state rather than federal waters and is therefore effectively managed by the state, (B) if harvest is prohibited or the species is considered overfished, (C) the extent of harvest relative to a pre-established threshold, and (D) if the species is considered by the Council to be ecologically essential within the coral reef ecosystem. The selected criteria will identify the species to be managed.

Criterion A. Species occurrence in state waters. This criterion identifies the extent to which the fishery could be or is already adequately managed by a state (Magnuson –Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) National Standard (NS) 7).

Criterion B. Status of the stock. This criterion evaluates the condition of fish and whether an FMP can improve or maintain that condition (NS 7)

Criterion C. Species as a component of the catch. This criterion evaluates the importance of the fishery to the Nation and the regional economy (NS 7)

Criterion D. Ecologically essential species. This criterion evaluates if a species has an essential ecological role in the coral reef ecosystem (i.e., herbivores, spongivores) in order to determine its inclusion in the Puerto Rico FMP.

Alternative 3. Identify species to be managed in Puerto Rico EEZ waters using an integrated attributes analysis. For example, six attributes are included in Table 1. Each attribute will be scored by a panel of experts. An average of the scores will be determined for each species, and

species that rank above a threshold value chosen by the Council will be included for management under the Puerto Rico FMP.

Table 1. *Example* of the attribute-based selection table that would be used to score all the species. Scoring will be conducted by an expert panel and the resultant average score compared against a threshold selected by the Council. Species whose average score is above that threshold will be included for federal management in Puerto Rico EEZ waters.

Species/ Species Complex	Biology	Habitat Specificity	Economic Importance	Target Species	Bycatch	Ecological Importance	Score	Result
Species 1								
Species 2								
Species 3								
Species 4								

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