

January 2003

MAFAC OPERATIONAL POLICY

Mission Statement

MAFAC is federally chartered to advise the Secretary of Commerce on issues relating to management of marine resources. Its membership represents a broad cross-section of geographic, cultural, and political views as well as a variety of expertise and experience. Advice is on matters that the Secretary brings to the Committee and on issues that are of growing concern in the view of the Committee. Finally, the Committee is available to the Secretary on an ongoing basis as a sounding board in the development of fisheries policy. MAFAC is most effective when contact persons for identified NMFS/NOAA areas work with the Committee substructure throughout the year to ensure educated input and discourse in support of their management efforts.

Officers

The non-Federal members of MAFAC will elect a *Vice Chair and a Vice Co-Chair* to serve a single term of 3 years. Elections will be held during the Fall meeting and the new officers will begin their terms at the end of that meeting.

The Vice Chair is responsible for working with the Designated Federal Officer to develop the meeting agenda and meeting logistics. The Vice Chair will preside over the meeting, appoint subcommittees and membership to standing subcommittees, and report to the Secretary of Commerce on the results of MAFAC meetings. During the time that MAFAC is not in session, the Chair will serve as the principal contact for non-federal members of MAFAC.

The Vice Co-Chair will assist the Vice Chair in carrying out required responsibilities and will assume those responsibilities if the Vice Chair is not available.

Appointment / Re-Appointment of Members

The Secretary of Commerce has the authority to appoint members to MAFAC. In developing a list of suggested appointees for the Secretary's consideration, the Assistant Administrator of Fisheries will seek the advice of the Vice Chair. Under the charter, members can serve only 2 terms. As a general policy, the Vice Chair will recommend to the Secretary that members seeking re-appointment to a second term be given priority over new appointees, except for those members who have missed 3 meetings in their first term. When seeking new members for appointment, the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries and the Vice Chair will make clear to potential members the expected time and travel commitment involved with service on MAFAC.

The Assistant Administrator for Fisheries and the Vice Chair should make every reasonable effort to ensure a diverse membership, including by geographic representation and occupational interest.

MAFAC Consultants

The Executive Directors of the Marine Fisheries Commissions chartered by Congress will serve as consultants to MAFAC. Travel and expenses at MAFAC meetings will be reimbursed in the same way as non-Federal MAFAC members. Consultants will have the same opportunity to participate in MAFAC activities as appointed members but are not entitled to vote.

Meetings

MAFAC will hold a minimum of two meetings each year, one in the Spring and one in the Fall. Generally, the Spring meeting will be held at a location outside of the Washington, D.C., area; the Fall meeting will be held in the Washington, D.C., area. The proposed time period, location, and agenda topics for the subsequent meeting will be included as an agenda item at each MAFAC meeting.

Committees will meet during the time of the Spring and Fall MAFAC meetings. Subject to the approval of the Chair and NMFS and the availability of funds, committee meetings may be held at times and in locations where MAFAC is not scheduled to meet.

The Chair and the Designated Federal Officer will make every effort to ensure that briefing materials for each meeting are provided to MAFAC members at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

In general, meetings will be scheduled as follows: a travel day, a day for committees to meet, and two days of general meeting. The second day of general meeting will include time for presenting and adopting committee reports and such other business matters as are necessary.

Subcommittees

MAFAC has 4 standing subcommittees, Aquaculture, Bycatch, Outreach, and Science, and such ad-hoc working groups as necessary. Subcommittees will each have (DELETE??no more than 5-??) members, appointed by the Vice Chair. The Vice Chair serves as ex-officio member on all subcommittees and may appoint one or more MAFAC consultants as advisors to the subcommittee. In addition, the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries will identify a contact point within NOAA Fisheries for each subcommittee. Other than the Vice Chair, no MAFAC member may serve on more than one standing subcommittee. When appointing members to working groups preference will be given to members who are not already members of other subcommittees. Subcommittee chairs will be elected by the subcommittee members.

The role of a subcommittee is to "frame the issue" and provide information to MAFAC, which will then decide collectively what kind of advice to give. If no consensus is achievable, majority /minority views will be well presented with an accompanying record of decision.

Aquaculture Subcommittee: Is responsible for framing the issues on aquaculture in order for MAFAC to provide appropriate advice on this issue to the Secretary of Commerce.

Bycatch Subcommittee: Is responsible for framing the issues on bycatch in order for MAFAC to provide appropriate advice on this issue to the Secretary of Commerce

Outreach Subcommittee: Is responsible for recommending priorities and implementation strategies and activities for NOAA Fisheries to consider in its efforts to establish an improved external relations capacity.

Science Subcommittee: Is responsible for reviewing how different scientific disciplines and information are being utilized by NMFS, make suggestions for improvement, tracking NMFS activities on fisheries research vessels, and looking at data needs.

National Standard 1 Guideline Working Group: An ad hoc working group established to frame the issue for MAFAC to develop advice on potential revision of National Standard 1 Guidelines under the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Management and Conservation Act.

Capacity Working Group: An ad hoc working group established to frame the issues for MAFAC to advice on capacity reduction in U.S. fisheries as a strategy to reduce overfishing under the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Management and Conservation Act and the international efforts administered under the United Nation's to reduce overfishing world wide.

Ecosystem Task Force: In response to a request by the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, the Ecosystem Task Force was temporarily established to review the current state of ecosystem-based management approaches and develop guidance to NOAA Fisheries on this concept and its anticipated role in legislation, science and management.

Revised and Adopted January 9, 2003
By unanimous consent
Washington, D.C.