



**NOAA FISHERIES**

**NEFSC Science and Research Director's  
Annual Guidance Memo for Fiscal Year 2020**

June 2019

**Northeast Fisheries Science Center**

**NOAA Fisheries**

# Preface

This Annual Guidance Memo gives specific guidance for activities to be conducted by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center in Fiscal Year 2020 in support of the NOAA Fisheries' vision and mission.

*"We provide vital services for the nation: productive and sustainable fisheries, safe sources of seafood, the recovery and conservation of protected resources, and healthy ecosystems—all backed by sound science and an ecosystem-based approach to management."*<sup>1</sup>

Within this broad vision, this Annual Guidance Memo identifies high priority activities that we will endeavor to support in Fiscal Year 2020 consistent with the NOAA Fisheries mission and consistent with national and regional strategic goals and priorities.

This Annual Guidance Memo builds off of the framework for the science enterprise - of which the NEFSC is part - and highlights the anticipated results we would achieve in Fiscal Year 2020 to support NOAA Fisheries' three national Strategic Goals:

1. Amplify the economic value of commercial and recreational fisheries, while ensuring their sustainability.
2. Conserve and recover protected species while supporting responsible fishing and resource development
3. Improve organizational excellence and regulatory efficiency

In addition to the three strategic goals, communication and collaboration will remain cross-cutting priorities for the Northeast Fisheries Science Center. We must demonstrate these cross-cutting priorities within the Center and with our external stakeholders and partners.

The NEFSC faces a number of challenges and is presented with a number of opportunities. These opportunities can be used to improve our science and improve our organization. These opportunities also can be used to strengthen our partnerships and collaborations, which are essential to the NEFSC mission.

Our work is important, our mission is broad, and we need to work with our stakeholders and partners to be successful.



Jon Hare  
Science and Research Director  
Northeast Fisheries Science Center

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/about-us>

## NOAA Fisheries Mission

*Stewardship of living marine resources  
through science-based conservation  
and management and the promotion of  
healthy ecosystems*

# Mission

The mission of the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) is to provide scientific advice in support of living marine resource management. More specifically, the NEFSC conducts individual species, multi-species and ecosystem monitoring and assessments of living marine resources, with a focus on the Northeast U.S. Shelf Ecosystem. These assessments and advice promote the recovery and long-term sustainability of living marine resources in the region, and generate social and economic opportunities and benefits from the use of these resources<sup>2</sup>. These assessments and advice are based on the best available science and are provided in an objective and impartial manner.

The [Northeast Fisheries Science Center Strategic Science Plan](#) (2016-2021) prioritized science activities around three themes: *Sustainable Fisheries*, *Protected Species*, and *Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management*. In addition, *Aquaculture* is a national and regional priority.

*Organizational Excellence* is also a priority for the NEFSC, which recognizes the importance of our people and infrastructure, and the need to invest in an engaged workforce.

## Challenges and Opportunities

The NEFSC faces a number of challenges. One major challenge is the availability of resources to do our job. Appropriated funding continues to be constraining, and despite efforts to identify and implement efficiencies, the NEFSC science enterprise continues to narrow. In addition, the NEFSC is increasingly reliant on highly-directed appropriated funds and directed temporary funds. These funds support specific activities but often do not support base monitoring, assessment, and research activities. The days-at-sea allocated to the NEFSC by the Office of Marine and Aviation Operations continues to decrease, limiting some of the core NEFSC monitoring and data collection programs. These funding challenges provide the NEFSC the opportunity to find efficiencies and develop new partnerships and collaborations. These challenges also create the opportunity to more effectively communicate the importance of science produced by the NEFSC.

Another major challenge in the Northeast region is trust. There is a history of mistrust among stakeholders and partners but the situation is improving. The NEFSC has the opportunity to continue to improve trust in the region through increased and effective communication and open and collaborative science.

There are multiple scientific challenges facing the region and the NEFSC. First and foremost is the complexity and array of issues related to living marine resource management: wild-captured fisheries, aquaculture, protected species, habitat, various natural and human interactions, and broader ecosystem interactions. Second is that the Northeast U.S. Shelf Ecosystem is one of the fastest changing ecosystems in the world. Third, is that the Northeast U.S. Shelf Ecosystem is home to two highly endangered marine species: North Atlantic Right Whales and Atlantic Salmon. Finally, there are a number of challenges associated with stock assessments in the region including data collection, assessment modeling, and stock identification.

These challenges create opportunities for the NEFSC including: developing Ecosystem Approaches to Fisheries Management and Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management in the region, incorporating climate change into our science and advice, conducting science that contributes to the recovery of endangered species, improving our fisheries, protected species, and ecosystem data collection systems and assessments, implementing and new stock assessment process, and strengthening our relationships with partners and stakeholders. We also have the opportunity to be on the forefront of science in support of marine aquaculture and science in support of the coexistence of wind energy development, fisheries, and protected species.

We work in challenging time, but these challenges create opportunities to conduct the best science possible, while making the NEFSC and the Northeast region the best place to work in NOAA.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/mission.html>

# Science Enterprise

Our goal is science excellence: accurate, precise, accountable, objective, efficient, timely, useful, transparent, trusted, and novel. Our science is conducted to support the management of living marine resources in the Northeast U.S. Shelf Ecosystem, which extends from North Carolina to Maine, and includes watersheds, estuaries, the continental shelf, and open ocean. The NEFSC science enterprise has five components: i) research, ii) monitoring, iii) modeling, iv) innovative technologies, and v) data, assessments, and advice. These five components are supported by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center operations and administration. These five components also depend on collaboration and cooperation with partners. These components support management, stakeholders whose actions are managed, and the services that stakeholders provide. We must work across this enterprise to be successful.

**Monitoring** is the systematic collection of data that provide information on changes in biological, physical, chemical, or human conditions. NEFSC data collection systems are designed to provide data for innovative research, support the development of assessments and other decision-support tools, and serve as the basis for scientific advice.

**Research** includes laboratory experiments, field-based experiments and process studies, retrospective analyses, and modeling studies designed to understand and predict changes to living marine resources, the ecosystems they depend upon, and the human communities within which they interact. The NEFSC strives to strengthen research efforts by engaging partners and stakeholders across the region.

**Modeling** includes activities that synthesize understanding and provide the basis for prediction, forecasting, and projection. Model outputs can be tested with additional research, monitoring and application of new technologies. Modeling and synthesis can also serve to support the provision of data, assessments, and advice in support of management. Modeling includes a range of activities from conceptual, to numerical, to visual.

**Innovative Technologies** are developed, applied, and evaluated to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of fishery-independent data collection, fishery-dependent data collection, and advance scientific understanding and to better support management. These technologies can apply to any element of the NEFSC science enterprise or connecting elements across the NEFSC science enterprise. New technologies include passive and active acoustics, imaging of water column and benthic habitats, gear engineering, electronic monitoring of fisheries, survey data collection, and genetic applications such as measurements of environmental DNA to assess ecosystem services. New technologies can also include new approaches including more involvement of industry in monitoring and research activities and improvements to assessment and advice processes. Using existing technologies in innovative ways can help maximize investments across multiple programs and activities.

**Data, Assessments, and Advice** broadly support management programs and decision-making. These activities develop a wide variety of products that support the NOAA Fisheries mission and the decisions of managers in the region. In some cases these products are a dataset; in other cases these products are formal assessments; while in other cases these products are more general advice provided by the NEFSC. The goal is to develop science-based decision tools to support the sustainability of living marine resources, to enhance coastal community resilience and society's capability to respond to changing ecosystem conditions, and to manage risk to different components of the ecosystem. Examples include data summarized in Ecosystem Status Reports, fishery and protected species stock assessments, input into management actions, and advice in support of offshore wind development and aquaculture. These data, assessments, and advice include natural and human dimensions of the Northeast U.S. Shelf Ecosystem.

**Operations and Administration** are fundamental to the science enterprise and represent the internal functions and services necessary for the NEFSC to operate. These functions and services include secure and safe facilities and IT infrastructure, highly functioning workforce management support, effective personnel management, active communication techniques and strategies; effective and compliant budget execution, budget planning, procurement, grants, and contracts; and enabling IT support at the facility- and programmatic levels.

*Collaboration and Cooperation* are essential to the NEFSC. Stewardship of living marine resources requires that components of the NEFSC work together and require that the NEFSC work with our partners and stakeholders. The NEFSC recognizes that a variety of approaches are necessary to foster collaborations internally externally and is dedicated to diversifying and strengthening these efforts going forward.

*Management* includes all organizations involved in managing living marine resources in the Northeast U.S. Shelf ecosystem. First and foremost is the NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic Regional Fishery Office (GARFO), which is responsible for management of living marine resources in the Northeast region. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, the two regional federal fishery management councils, and the NOAA Fisheries Highly Migratory Species Management Division are also important management bodies in the region. Other federal agencies are also supported, including the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, the Army Corps of Engineers, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Where resources overlap, management organizations in the southeast U.S. are also supported. These include the Southeast Regional Office and South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. There are also a number of advisory groups that review and use NEFSC science including those concerned with protected species, including whales: the Atlantic Scientific Review Group, Status Review Teams, and Take Reduction Teams. NEFSC science also supports internationally managed resources through engagement in bilateral discussions of transboundary resources with Canada, and contributions to the advisory processes in the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization, the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea, the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, and the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization. At the state level, we support management by participating on state planning bodies such as the Long Island Sound Management Committee and groups focused on oyster restoration in the Chesapeake Bay. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list, but provides examples of the wide array of managers and decision-makers who use NEFSC science.

*Partners and Stakeholders* include the individuals, communities, businesses, organizations, and agencies that rely on or have an interest in living marine resources and/or contribute to efforts to achieve the NEFSC mission. Examples are commercial and recreational fishermen and businesses; aquaculture operations; fish and shellfish dealers, processors, and sellers; the shipping, offshore energy, and pharmaceutical industries; local, state, and federal agencies; federally-recognized tribes; other nations; non-governmental organizations; and research organizations and institutions. Defined as such, the NEFSC works with a large array of individuals, groups, and governments concentrated in the northeastern U.S. and extending nationally and internationally.

*Services* include all the benefits that stakeholders obtain from living marine resources. These services can be divided into four categories<sup>3</sup>. Supporting services are necessary for the production of other services. For example, forage fish provide a supporting service to their predators. Provisioning services are products obtained from living marine resources, for example, seafood purchased by consumers. Regulating services are benefits obtained from management of living marine resources. For example, conserving Essential Fish Habitat<sup>4</sup> protects the productivity and carrying capacity of fish and shellfish populations. Cultural services are nonmaterial benefits obtained from living marine resources through spiritual enrichment, recreation, and aesthetic and educational experiences such as recreational fishing, whale watching, aquariums or waterfront festivals.

## Core Science

*Core science* is science that falls within the NEFSC Science Enterprise and directly addresses the elements of the NOAA Fisheries mission: fisheries management, protected species management, habitat and ecosystem-based management, and aquaculture science. As such, core science is broad, but there are boundaries; the connection to the NOAA Fisheries mission must be direct. *Core monitoring and modeling* includes those programs that directly contribute data, synthesis and models to the NEFSC's fisheries, aquaculture, protected species, and ecosystem assessment and advice activities. *Core data, assessment and advice* activities include fisheries, protected species, and ecosystem assessments, economic and social analyses associated with fisheries, protected species, aquaculture and ecosystems, and scientific advice provided in support of management activities. *Core research and innovative technologies* are those directed and designed to support the other elements of the NEFSC Science Enterprise and

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/ecosys/ecosystem-status-report/ecosystem-services.html>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.habitat.noaa.gov/aboutus/statutoryauthorities.html>

seek to improvement of monitoring, data, assessments, and advice for our management partners and stakeholders. *Core operations and administration* functions of the NEFSC are those fundamental to executing our work: facilities, IT, budget, procurement, grants, communication, and administration. *Core collaboration and cooperation* includes work with the fishing and aquaculture industries, work with the Greater Atlantic Regional Fishery Office, work with our management partners, and work with our academic and other research partners.

# FY20 Priorities and Anticipated Results

## National Goals and Priorities

Overall, the priority for FY20 is to support activities that achieve results that directly contribute to the three national NOAA Fisheries Strategic Goals:

- Amplify the economic value of commercial and recreational fisheries while ensuring their sustainability.
- Conserve and recover protected species while supporting responsible fishing and resource development.
- Improve organizational excellence and regulatory efficiency.

The priorities and anticipated results outlined here are consistent with overarching national strategic goals, national priorities, and shared priorities with GARFO and our management partners.

## Regional Science Priorities

Numerous reviews of NEFSC science and operations have been conducted over the past 10 years. Addressing actions identified in these reviews and plans should continue to be an important element of FY20 activities. These reviews have identified numerous opportunities for improving our science and our organization. Some of these reviews have been part of a formal NOAA Fisheries Program review process<sup>5</sup> or part of a HQ or NEFSC-specific review: [Stock Assessment Data Collection Program](#), [Stock Assessment Methods](#), [Protected Species Science](#), [Economics and Human Dimensions Program](#), [Ecosystem and Climate Science](#), [Observer Program](#), [Northeast Cooperative Research Program](#), [Scallop Survey Methods](#), [Aquaculture Science Program Review](#), Communications & Stakeholder Engagement, and Data Management Systems Program Review.

In addition to these reviews, there are agency and regional plans for improving NEFSC science that guide our work: [Habitat Assessment Improvement Plan](#), [Stock Assessment Improvement Plan](#), [Northeast Regional Action Plan](#), [Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management Roadmap](#), [NEFSC Strategic Plan](#), and [NOAA Marine Aquaculture Strategic Plan](#)

There are also fishery management council-led reviews of programs in which the NEFSC is involved: Three-year review of the standardized bycatch reporting methodology, and [Research Set-Aside Program Review](#)

The Fishery Management Councils and Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission also identify research priorities and data needs: [New England Fisheries Management Council](#), [Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council](#), [Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission](#) (research priorities are provided on species-specific webpages).

## NEFSC Priorities and Expected Results

Based on these national goals and priorities and informed by the regional science priorities, the following priorities have been developed for the NEFSC for FY20.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/science-program-review/>

## 1. Amplify the economic value of commercial and recreational fisheries while ensuring their sustainability.

NOAA Fisheries is responsible for managing U.S. fisheries in federal waters to help secure our nation's food security. U.S. fisheries are among the largest and most sustainable in the world. The U.S. science-based fishery management process is designed to provide optimum yield while preventing overfishing and taking into account the protection of marine, estuarine, and coastal riverine ecosystems. Commercial (including seafood and support industries), recreational, and subsistence fishing opportunities strengthen the economy and our coastal communities. Aquaculture is an important and growing U.S. industry with the potential to provide a significant sustainable supply of healthy seafood for national and global markets. The NEFSC provides high-quality stock assessments and ecological and socioeconomic information required for federal management of fisheries, and contributes to the science and assessment of state-managed fisheries. With our partners, NOAA Fisheries executes its science enterprise to ensure sustainable management of fisheries, promote the conservation and recovery of protected species, support and enhance aquaculture, and develops ecosystem-based fisheries management approaches in the region. These activities substantially benefit local, regional, and national economies in terms of revenue, jobs, tourism, and business diversity.

The NEFSC also provides and continues to develop ecosystem-based fisheries management, which recognizes the physical, biological, economic, and social interactions among fishery-related components of the ecosystem, including humans; and seeks to optimize benefits among a diverse set of societal goals. For most priorities, the lead NEFSC Division is bolded but this is not exclusive and the lead division should include other divisions where appropriate. For some priorities multiple divisions are bolded indicating joint lead.

- 1.1 Surveys and Data Collection - Modernize and streamline our fishery information systems and enhance data sharing and accessibly through continued implementation of the Fishery Dependent Data Initiative in partnership with the GARFO and ACCSP. **(National Priority) (FMRD)**
- 1.2 Surveys and Data Collection - Advance effective and practical electronic technologies to improve collection of fishery-dependent and fishery-independent data. **(National Priority) (FMRD)**
- 1.3 Surveys and Data Collection - Complete core survey and data collection activities, strengthen partnerships with other ecosystem observing activities in the region, and increase accessibility to data products. **(PEMAD, READ, FMRD, EAD, DMS, OMI, D)**
- 1.4 Surveys and Data Collection - Conduct gear-performance evaluations for the NEFSC bottom-trawl survey operation and examine potential effects on stock assessments in collaboration with the Northeast Trawl Advisory Panel (NTAP). Collaborate on other priority joint research with NTAP and provide research results and improved understanding to the stock assessment process. **(PEMAD, FMRD)**
- 1.5 Surveys and Data Collection - Develop a common database structure to support HabCam datasets at the NEFSC so data can be readily accessed by all NEFSC staff. **(PEMAD, DMS)**
- 1.6 Surveys and Data Collection – Explore the collection of environmental DNA data as a tool to augment fisheries, protected species, and ecosystem data collection programs. **(EAD)**
- 1.7 Surveys and Data Collection - Produce a common set of indicators of social and economic well-being for the Northeast region's fishing fleets and for each Northeast region fishery management plan. **(READ)**
- 1.8 Fisheries Assessments - Focus assessments on highest priority stocks through implementation of the new NRCC research- and management-track assessment framework **(National Priority) (READ)**
- 1.9 Fisheries Assessments - Incorporate understanding of ecosystem, climate, and habitat condition into assessment and management of U.S. fisheries through the implementation of the regional Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management Plan. **(National Priority) (READ)**

- 1.10 Fisheries Assessments - Develop protocols and guidelines for incorporating cooperative and external research into the new NRCC assessment processes working across the NEFSC and with partners and stakeholders. **(READ)**
- 1.11 Fisheries Assessments - Continue to integrate the new Marine Recreational Information Program catch estimates into NEFSC assessments and advice as scheduled by the Northeast Regional Coordinating Committee. **(READ)**
- 1.12 Fisheries Assessments - Coordinate with the Greater Atlantic Regional Fishery Office, the Southeast Fisheries Science Center and the Highly Migratory Species Management Division on high priority research and assessments including bluefin tuna, sharks, and species moving into the Northeast U.S. Shelf from the Southeast U.S. Shelf. **(READ, FMRD, PEMAD, EAD)**
- 1.13 Fisheries Assessments - Complete the second year of tasking for the Atlantic Cod Stock Structure Working Group, a US- Canadian effort to better understand cod stock structure in the Northwest Atlantic and the management implications of insights gained from that work. **(PEMAD)**
- 1.14 Fisheries Assessments - Disseminate the results of the fishing crew survey to document differences in crew remuneration and perceptions of fishery management processes among fisheries and ports to better understand the effects of fishery management on fishing crew and coastal community resilience. **(READ)**
- 1.15 Habitat and Ecosystem Science - Make habitat conservation investments in habitat requirements and limiting factors identified in MSA fishery management plans. **(National Priority) (EAD)**
- 1.16 Habitat and Ecosystem Science - Better understanding through field and model studies of how the changing climate is affecting living marine resource population dynamics, monitoring, assessment, and management. **(READ, EAD)**
- 1.17 Habitat and Ecosystem Science - Proactively address regional fisheries issues in offshore wind development projects and regional planning by working with GARFO, and ensuring NEFSC science advice and data streams are considered in these processes. To address fisheries and offshore energy interactions, support establishment of an inclusive and effective regional fisheries monitoring and research framework. **(D)**
- 1.18 Aquaculture - Invest and partner in marine aquaculture science, including coastal planning and siting, disease prevention, and genetics research. **(National Priority) (EAD)**
- 1.19 Aquaculture - Support aquaculture projects that improve water quality, fish production, and coastal economies. **(National Priority) (EAD)**
- 1.20 Aquaculture - Provide biological and socioeconomic science products and advice to support coastal and offshore aquaculture. **(EAD)**
- 1.21 Aquaculture - Promote the development of a sustained social license for aquaculture in the Northeast. **(National Priority) (READ, EAD)**.

## 2. Conserve and recover protected species while supporting responsible fishing and resource development

NOAA Fisheries is responsible for recovering protected species that are facing extinction and conserving marine mammals. These species are key components of their ecosystems and have particular social and cultural importance. These valuable and vulnerable living marine resources depend on our collective efforts to conserve them. The NEFSC conducts high-quality science for the recovery and conservation of protected species, including assessments of current status and research to understand and reduce human impacts. Science activities include using innovative technologies to survey and assess protected species populations and track their movement; investigating contributing

factors to the well-being or mortality of protected species; developing bycatch reduction techniques; supporting the implementation of adaptive management measures; implementing guidelines for reducing anthropogenic sound in oceans; understanding impacts of habitat loss; and focusing on science related to understanding the effects of changes in climate on the resources we manage. In 2019, NOAA Fisheries will continue to focus efforts on the recovery Atlantic salmon and North Atlantic right whales, other marine mammals, diadromous fish, and sea turtles.

- 2.1 Protected Species Science - Improve the quality of protected species stock assessments through the testing and implementing of innovative and cost-effective technologies. **(National Priority) (READ)**
- 2.2 Protected Species Science - Investigate and develop measures to mitigate threats to the recovery of North Atlantic right whales (e.g., ropeless technologies, gear modification). **(National Priority) (READ)**
- 2.3 Protected Species Science - Investigate and develop measures to mitigate threats to the recovery of Atlantic Salmon. **(READ)**
- 2.4 Protected Species Science - Understand the factors limiting the recovery of the endangered populations of Atlantic salmon and North Atlantic right whales. **(READ)**
- 2.5 Surveys and Data Collection - Complete core survey and data collection activities, strengthen partnerships with other ecosystem observing activities in the region, and increase accessibility to data products. **(PEMAD, READ, FMRD, EAD, DMS, OMI, D)**
- 2.6 Habitat and Ecosystem Science - Support offshore energy and coastal development, and national defense by minimizing or mitigating their conflict with protected species. **(National Priority) (D)**

### 3. Improve organizational excellence and regulatory efficiency

Improving organizational excellence and regulatory efficiency is a continual process that helps us be more responsive, to deliver better services, and to fulfill our mission. To achieve organizational excellence, NOAA Fisheries emphasizes strategic planning, effective program execution and performance monitoring, and identification and management of risks and challenges. Regulatory efficiency includes identifying and addressing existing regulations and processes that may be outdated, unnecessary, or ineffective, or that inhibit job creation and growth. Increased and improved interactions with GARFO is critical to supporting organizational excellence and regulatory efficiencies goals.

- 3.1 Collaboration - Expand cooperative partnerships with industry to develop cost-effective resource surveys and research and produce meaningful scientific results. **(National Priority) (FMRD)**
- 3.2 Collaboration - NEFSC work with GARFO leadership to improve the working relationships between the two organizations through development and implementation of a Regional Strategic Plan. **(D)**
- 3.3 Collaboration – Develop implementation plans based on Regional Strategic Plan in collaboration with the Greater Atlantic Regional Fishery Office **(D)**
- 3.4 Communication - Improve communication of data, products, and activities to external audiences. **(National Priority) (OMI)**
- 3.5 Operations and Management - Proactively recruit qualified individuals at all experience levels and grades, whose diverse backgrounds, educational experiences, and skills will advance the overall mission of the agency. **(National Priority) (D, OMI)**
- 3.6 Operations and Management - Develop and implement comprehensive safety standards through all phases of an observer's career and integrate additional safety measures into observer training, equipment, pre-deployment vessel tours, at-sea reporting, and post-deployment debriefing **(National Priority) (FMRD)**

- 3.7 Operations and Management - Review and develop options for the delivery of Administrative Services across the Center **(OMI)**
- 3.8 Operations and Management - Complete “welcoming” process that prepares new staff to better understand the NEFSC mission, operation, culture, and our regional fisheries to better unify our workforce’s sense of purpose and collective understanding of our work. **(OMI)**
- 3.9 Operations and Management - Successfully complete transition of contracting services to ProTech **(OMI)**
- 3.10 Operations and Management - Continue working toward the renovation and consolidation of the James J. Howard Marine Sciences Laboratory at Sandy Hook, NJ. **(OMI)**
- 3.11 Operations and Management - Implement recommendations from the DMS program review. **(DMS)**
- 3.12 Operations and Management - Ensure the Public Access for Research Results timeline and requirements are achieved. **(DMS)**
- 3.13 Operations and Management - Initiate external review of the NEFSC Director’s Office to evaluate operations and make recommendations for improvement. **(D)**
- 3.14 Operations and Management – Support staff development and training to improve employee engagement and organizational health **(D)**