



MID-ATLANTIC
FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Program Review: Perspectives

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*Mid-Atlantic Fishery
Management Council*

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Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council Program Review



JULY 2024

**THE PARNIN
GROUP**

Review Objective and Scope

- Primary objective to find innovative and efficient methods for Council to remain agile and responsive to new and evolving management challenges, including those related to climate change
- Identify opportunities to enhance the efficiency and adaptability of Council's processes, from early consideration of fishery management issues to the initiation of federal rulemaking



Project Oversight Team

- Council Staff (3):
Ecosystem, Habitat, Climate (+)
- NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic RFO (2):
Sustainable Fisheries, NEPA
- NOAA Fisheries Northeast FSC (3):
Ecosystems, Population Dynamics, Social Science Branch
- Group to help with proposal review and guide/advise work, review draft reports



Timeline

- Desire to get work completed prior to finalization of:
 - 5-year strategic plan, 2025 implementation plan, Regional Operating Agreement
- November 1, 2023, through July 31, 2024, presentation at August 2024 Meeting
- Everything was done well, but plan for more time!



Program Review Phases

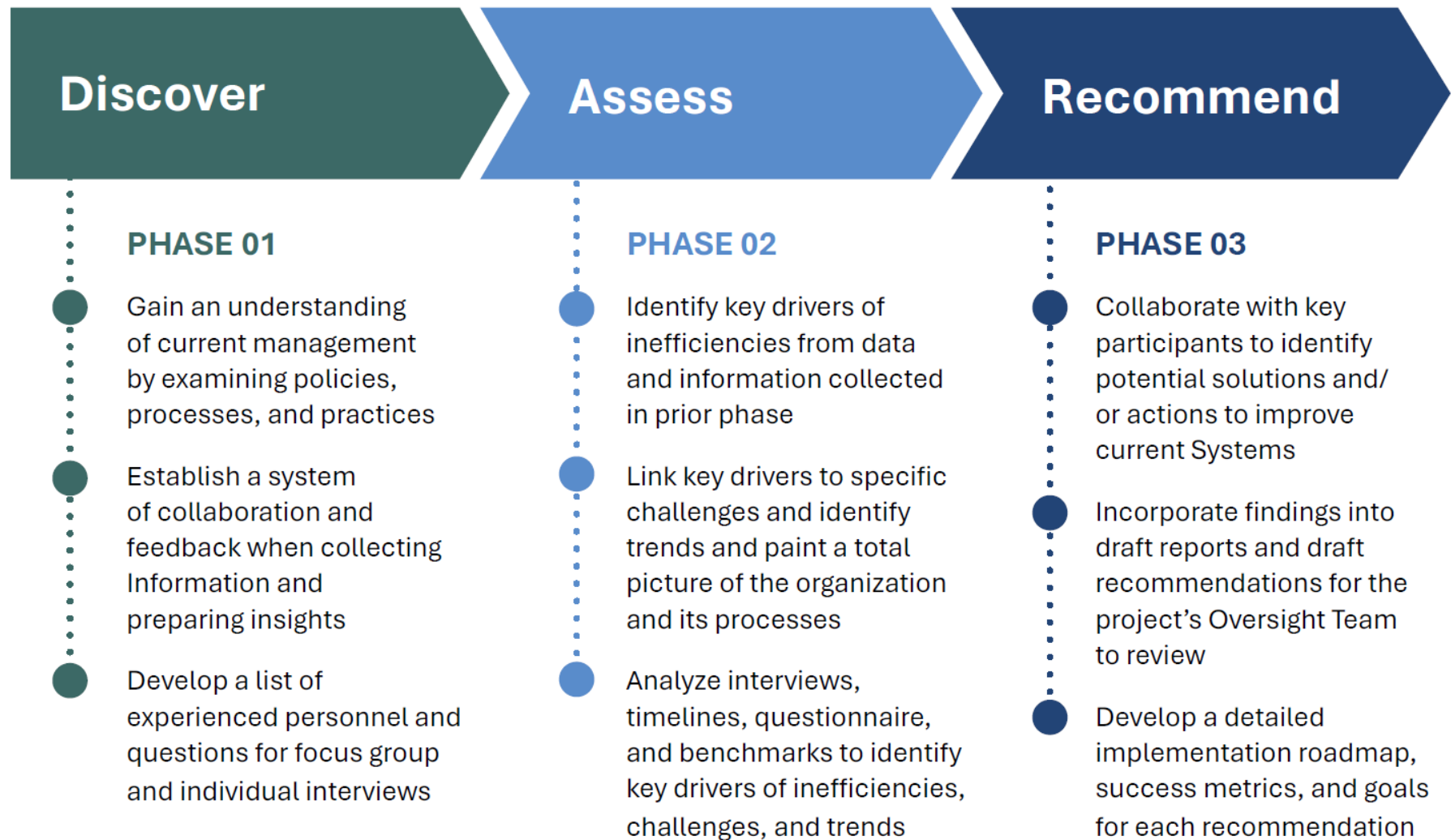


Figure 1. The Parnin Group's analytical approach.

Discover and Assess

- Parnin attended December Council Meeting to speak to attendees
- Attended other meetings virtually
- Conducted 10 focus groups, 6 individual Interviews, online questionnaire
- In total, interviewed 47 participants and received responses from 55 stakeholders
- OT worked closely with Parnin team to id 102 total contacts; provide context to connect findings with recommendations

| GROUP |
|-----------------------------|
| Council Member (voting) |
| Council Member (non-voting) |
| Council Staff |
| SSC |
| Advisory Panel Members |
| ASMFC Members |
| GARFO Members |
| NEFSC |
| TOTAL |

- » **Key Finding Category 1: Efficient and Flexible Management**
- » **Key Finding Category 2: Regulatory Process Documentation**
- » **Key Finding Category 3: Data Acquisition and Modeling**
- » **Key Finding Category 4: Climate Change Response**
- » **Key Finding Category 5: Coordination and Communication**



- **Anticipated Time Frame** - Long-term: greater than 5 years; Medium-term: 2 to 5 years; Short-term: less than 2 years.
- **Anticipated Task Complexity** - High: high degree of complexity with many considerations and complications, challenging to implement; Medium: somewhat complex, dependent on range of solutions, may be challenging to implement; Low: low degree of complexity, likely easy to implement.
- **Anticipated Impact on Process** - Increases flexibility (F); efficiency (E); and anticipation of climate change (C). High: could address all 3 criteria, Medium: meets 2 out of 3 criteria; Low: meets 1 of 3 criteria.



Recommendations Category 1: EFFICIENT AND FLEXIBLE MANAGEMENT

| RECOMMENDATION | ANTICIPATED TIMEFRAME | ANTICIPATED TASK COMPLEXITY | ANTICIPATED IMPACT ON PROCESS |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| R1. Limit Timeline for Scoping Actions/Development of Alternatives | Short-term | Low | Low (E) |
| R2. Develop Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) to Aid in the Development of Future Analyses | Long-term | High | High |
| R3. Reconsider Timelines and Frequency of Reviews | Medium-term | Low | Medium (F, E) |
| R4. Conduct a Framework Action Efficiency Analysis | Medium-term | Medium | Medium (F, E) |



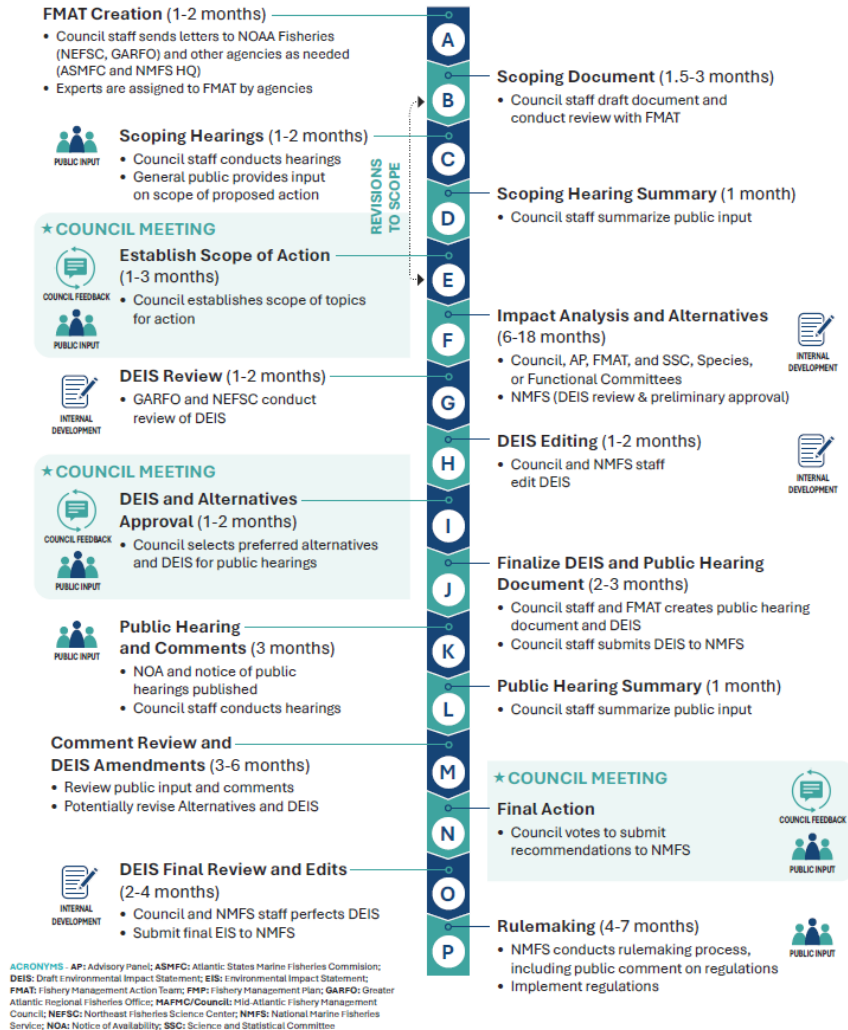
Timeline Analysis and Benchmarking

Table 4. MAFMC action timeline analysis details (for 10 actions).

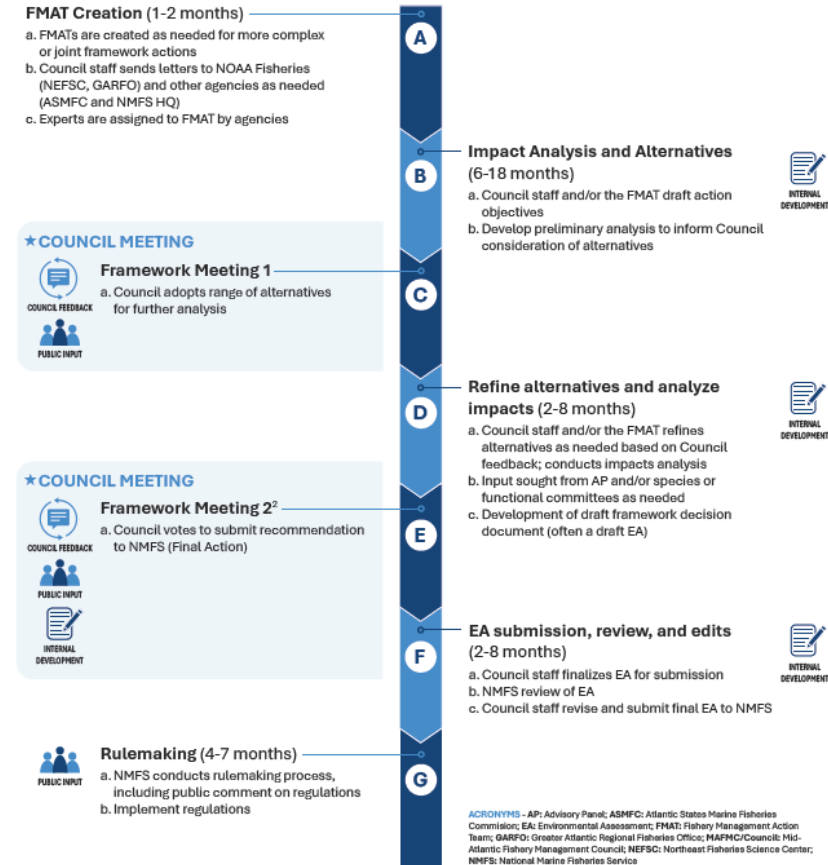
| STAGE ⁵ | AMENDMENT MEDIAN TIME | AMENDMENT TIME RANGE | FRAMEWORK MEDIAN TIME | FRAMEWORK TIME RANGE |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Initial (Scoping, Alternative development) | 24 months | 5-32 months | 12 months | 10-12 months |
| 2. Engagement and Review | 5 months | 4-7 months | 4 months | 4 months |
| 3. Council Transmittal | 10 months | 3-32 months | 9 months | 6-13 months |
| 4. NOAA final rule development | 3 months | 2-5 months | 2.5 months | 1-4 months |
| 5. Time from Council's final action to NOAA final rule | 14 months | 5-35 months | 11.5 months | 9-15 months |
| Total time taken | 41.5 months | 18-64 months | 24.5 months | 23-25 months |

Examples of Process/Communications Tools

MAFMC FMP and Major FMP Amendment Timeline



Typical Framework Action Timeline¹

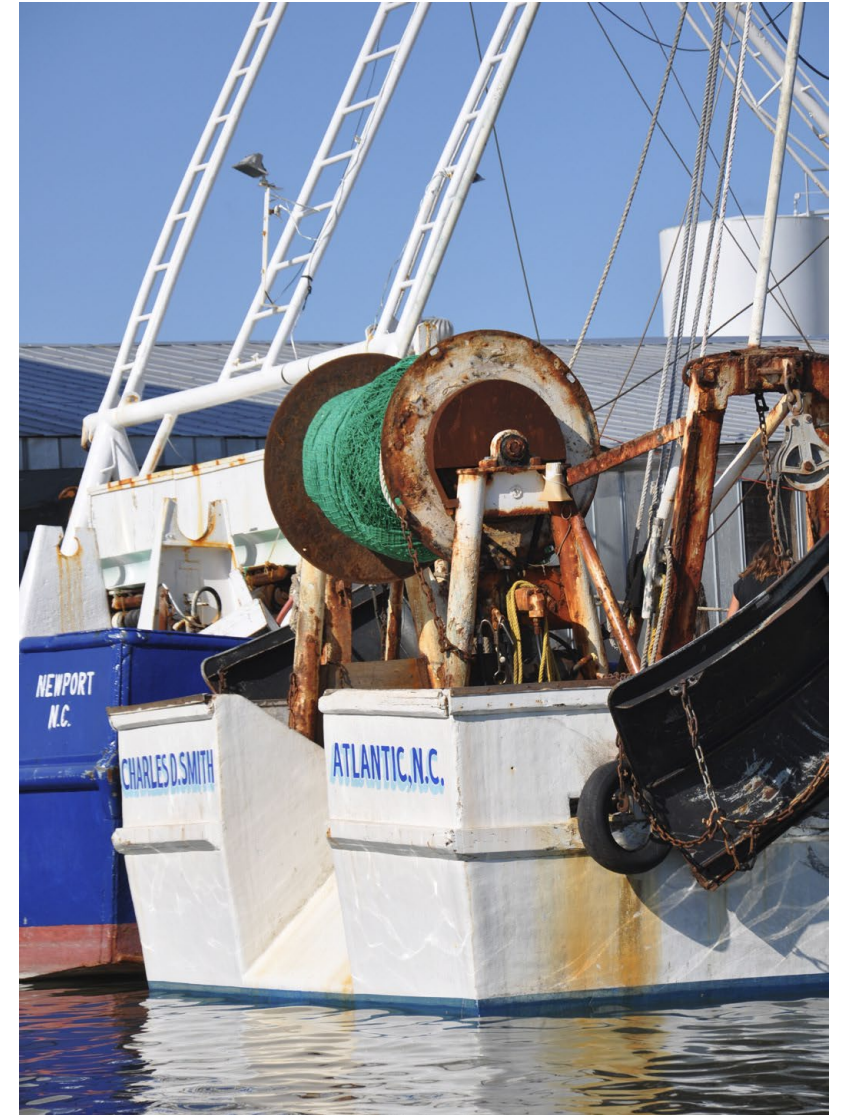


¹Typically a Council framework action does not include public hearings or a comment period. The Council may hold public hearings or a comment period per the ASMFC process if the framework action is part of a joint MAFMC-ASMFC action.

²More complex frameworks may take more than 2 Council meetings to reach final action.

My Overall Takeaways

- Report was well-received by Council
- Our Council staff are awesome! Input received reflected very positively on staff
- Need for better process communication tools
- Level of knowledge/perspectives about process from different groups was interesting to hear
- Room for improvement along a continuum from better staff resources to substantial fishery mgmt. process changes for Council



Next Steps

- Some recommendations included in MAFMC Strategic plan (2025-2029)
- And the 2025 implementation plan to direct Council/staff priorities
- Additional work under IRA planned to help more fully develop/implement recommendations



Questions about the project?

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Link to project description and report:
[here](#)

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