

EAST COAST CLIMATE CHANGE SCENARIO PLANNING INITIATIVE

Update following:

February 2023 Climate Change Scenario Planning Summit Meeting,
May 2023 NRCC Meeting

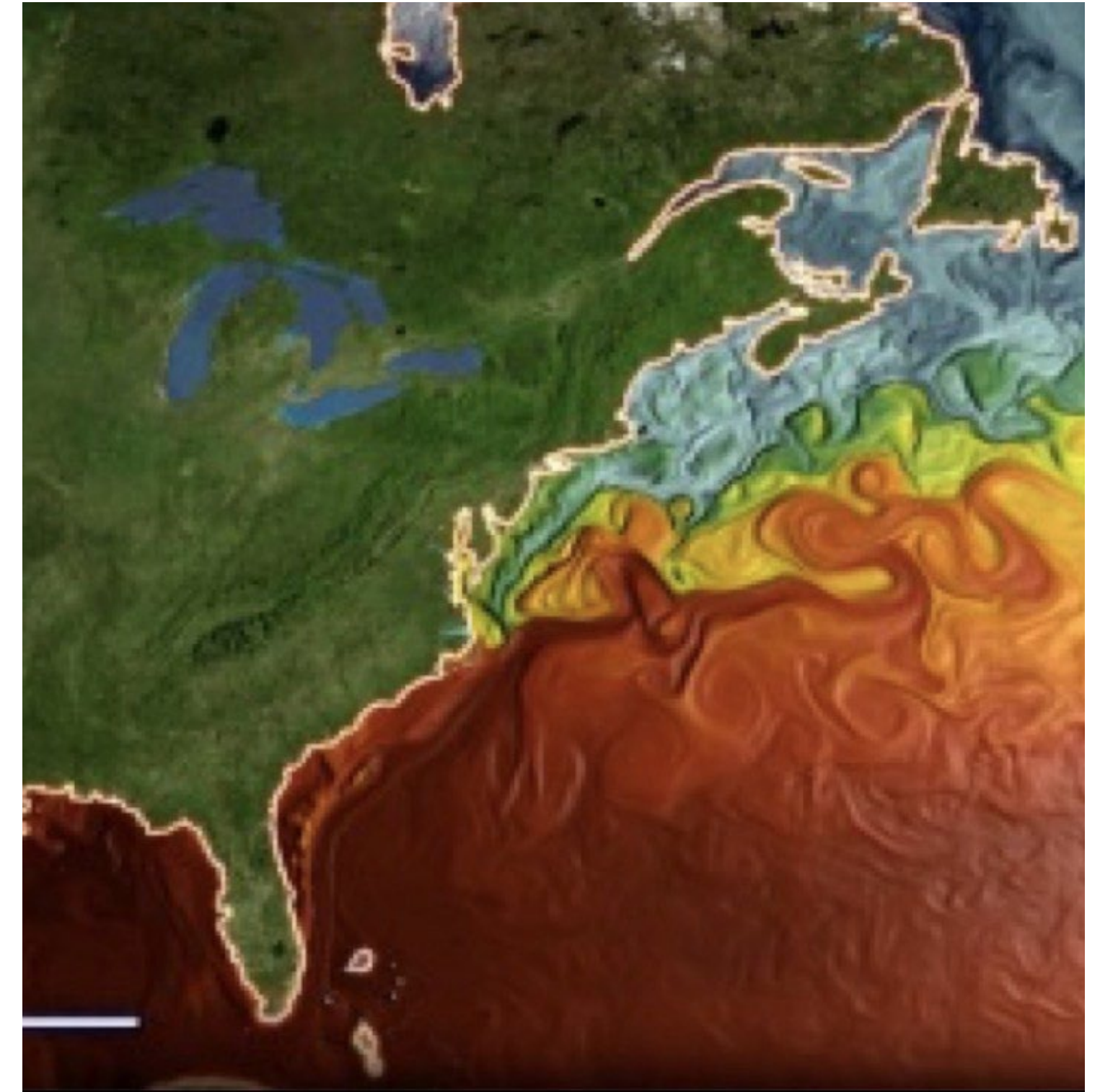
Roger Pugliese, SAFMC Core Team

SAFMC Meeting, September 11, 2023



Initiative Objectives

1. Explore how **East Coast fishery governance and management issues** will be affected by climate driven change in fisheries, particularly changing stock availability and distributions.
1. **Advance a set of tools and processes** that provide flexible and robust fishery management strategies, which continue to promote fishery conservation and resilient fishing communities, and address uncertainty in an era of climate change.



East Coast Scenario Planning Initiative Timeline

Steps in this Multi-Year Initiative



Key Topics identified by Councils/Commissions

1. Cross-Jurisdictional Governance

- Identify improvements to structure and representation for governance on the U.S. East Coast
- Identify guidelines for when and how management responsibility should change
- Improve the efficiency and the efficacy of joint fishery management plans (FMP)
- Improve coordination and collaboration among management entities

2. Managing Under Uncertainty

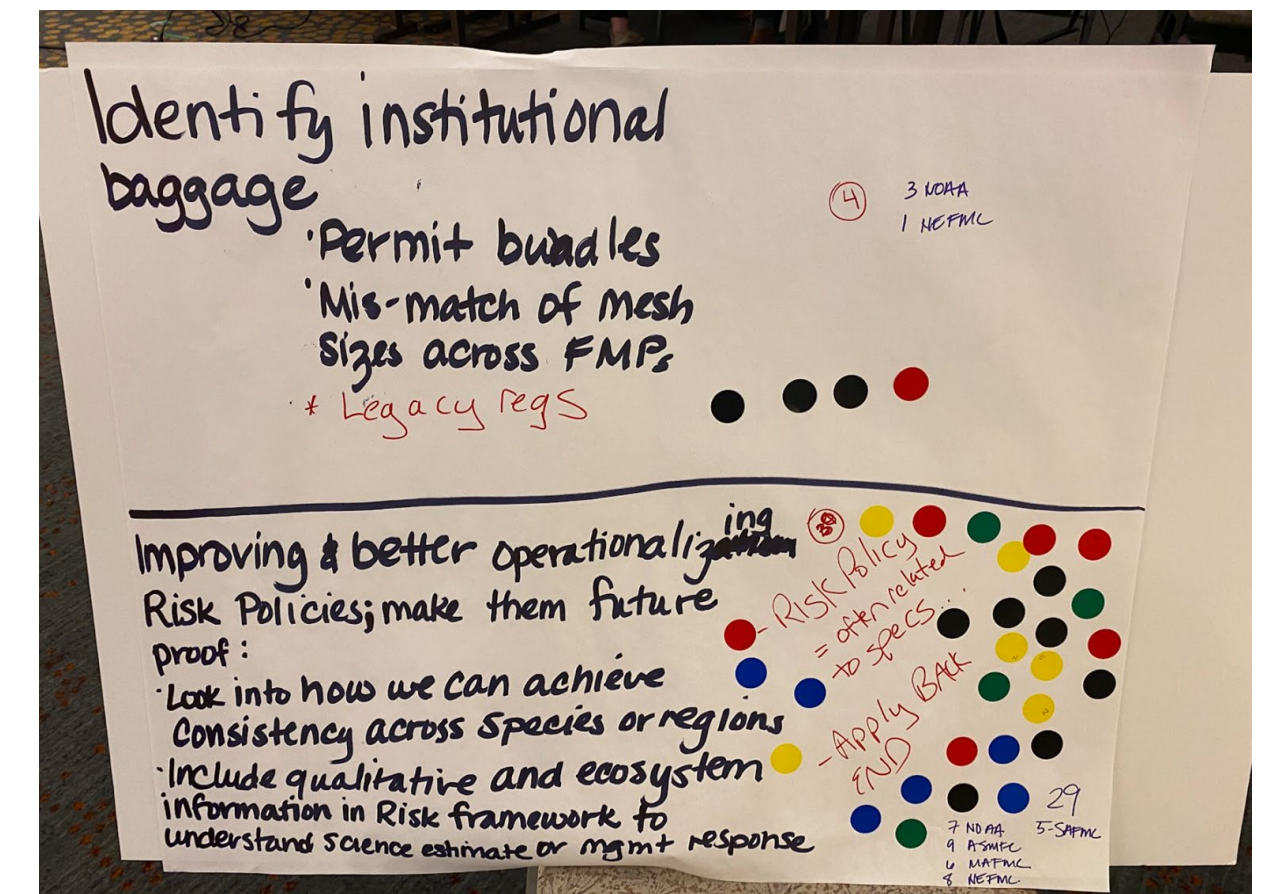
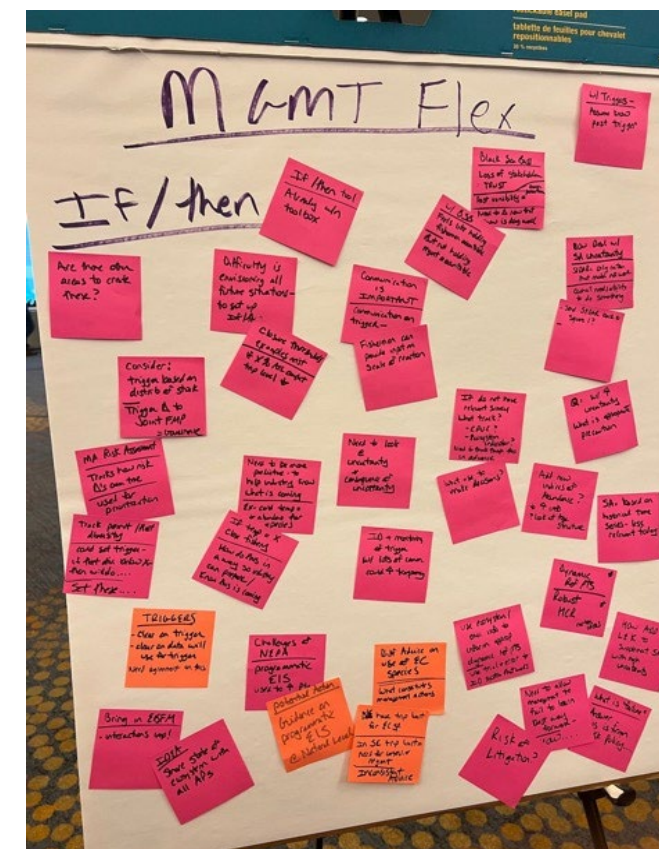
- Better accommodate uncertainty in the stock assessment process and address related management challenges
- Increasing flexibility, adaptability, and robustness in management

3. Data Sources and Partnerships

- Prioritizing data and information needed to manage in a changing environment
- Using funding more efficiently
- Utilize the fishing industry for data collection
- Foster partnerships for data sharing

Summit Meeting - February 2023

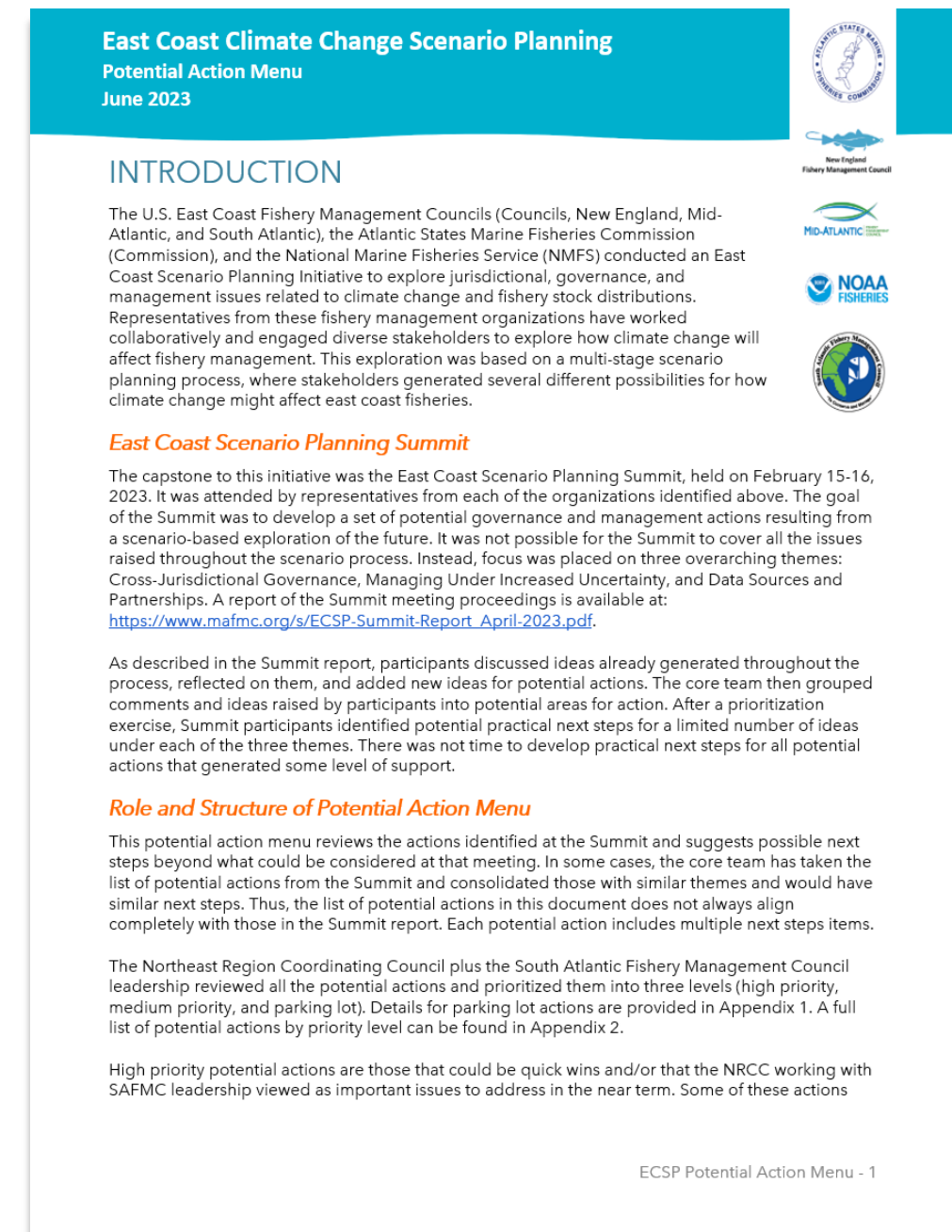
- **Goal:** develop set of potential governance & management actions resulting from scenario-based exploration of the future
- Attended by over 50 fishery managers representing 3 East Coast Councils, ASMFC, and NOAA Fisheries
- Facilitated discussion addressing the 3 previously identified key topics
- Resulting Products:
 - Detailed Summit Report
 - Action Menu
- Meeting Materials: [East Coast Climate Change Scenario Planning Summit — Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council \(mafmc.org\)](https://mafmc.org)



Introduction to Action Menu

Purpose of the Potential Action Menu

- Expands on, clarifies, and prioritizes the potential governance and management actions identified during the summit.
- Intended to be an evolving document, used as a planning tool to guide development of collective and individual priorities, and a place to capture future issues and ideas.



NRCC + SAFMC Review of Action Menu - May 2023

- **Provided input on**

- Are the descriptions adequate and clear for common understanding of each action?
- Whether each action is a high, medium, or low priority
- Revisions to specific next steps
- Where additional groundwork is needed before considering certain issues

SUGGESTED STANDING WORKING GROUPS

Group	Level	Members	Meetings	Charge
East Coast Climate Coordination Group	Leadership	1 each: MAFMC, NEFMC, SAFMC, ASMFC, NOAA-GARFO, NOAA NEFSC, NOAA SEFSC, NOAA SERO	1x per year in person, with NRCC	Oversee and Coordinate Implementation
Climate Innovation Group	Staff	TBD; will likely rely on the Core Team	TBD; likely webinar and occasional in-person	Monitor progress and actions for each organization; support the Coordination Group.

High Priority Potential Actions

HIGH PRIORITY POTENTIAL ACTIONS

- Only includes High Priority Actions identified by the NRCC review
- Listed by Theme
- Those involving SAFMC are highlighted

SAFMC Considerations:

Does the Council support staff and advisors (APs, SSCs) devoting time and effort to the highlighted actions?

Are there any actions that the Council considers high priority?

Are there any actions that the Council opposes pursuing as a high priority (if so, could recommend moving to the medium priority or the “parking lot”)

Are there medium priority or parking lot topics that the Council would like staff to consider pursuing?

High priority actions - Cross-Jurisdictional Governance theme

Theme 1: Cross Jurisdictional Governance

Potential Action	Tasks	Lead
Reevaluate Council committee structure, use, and decision making	Conduct a leadership planning exercise to further explore options for committee-based decision-making, committee structure, and committee use, building on ideas discussed at the Summit	Coordination Group
Re-evaluate and potentially revise Advisory Panel representation	Evaluate AP representation and appointment process, recruitment and selection, consider underrepresented and underserved groups	Each management body
Develop joint management agreements with aim of clarifying roles and increasing efficiency	Review joint FMPs and agreements between the MAFMC and Commission (summer flounder/scup/black sea bass/bluefish) to identify areas for improved efficacy and efficiency	Commission and MAFMC staff
Improve coordination across NOAA offices and regions	GARFO and SERO review respective management action procedures and processing to highlight opportunities each employs which may benefit or expedite implementation of actions approved by the Councils.	GARFO, SERO

High Priority Potential Actions - Managing Under Increased Uncertainty Theme

Theme 2: Managing Under Increased Uncertainty

Potential Action	Tasks	Lead
Identify ecosystem-level contextual information that can be considered within the management process to help incorporate climate information into decisions	NMFS offers to present findings of newly released Tech Memo looking at example ecosystem risk assessments to Councils and Commission	NMFS staff coordinating with Councils/Commission
	Consider adding major state-only-managed fisheries to these ecosystem risk assessments for a more complete perspective	NMFS
	Identify opportunities to use specific types of quantitative and qualitative ecosystem information to identify and avoid risks	Climate Innovations Group, individual Councils and Commission
	Share lessons learned	NRCC or other
Streamline FMP documentation and rulemaking	Review the use of programmatic Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) for Council actions and encourage their use where appropriate	MAFMC; considering this near-term
	Identify areas where NEPA documents can be streamlined, including when incorporation by reference to recent related documents would be appropriate	GARFO, SERO, NMFS HQ, Councils
	Develop more clear and consistent guidelines for use of Categorical Exclusions (CEs) under NEPA, including MSA document templates; identifying NMFS vs. Council responsibilities	GARFO, SERO, NMFS HQ, Councils
	Work with NOAA General Counsel (GC) to establish consistent GC guidance with regards to the use of CEs and Supplemental Information Reports (SIRs), rulemaking, public comment etc.	GARFO, SERO, NMFS HQ, Councils
	Identify process steps Council and NFMS staff can take to use MSA documents to satisfy NEPA requirements	GARFO, SERO, NMFS HQ
	Consider alternative rulemaking approaches or action development approaches	GARFO, SERO, NMFS HQ, Councils

High Priority Potential Actions - Data Sources and Partnerships Theme

Theme 3: Data Sources and Partnerships

Potential Action	Tasks	Lead
Expand study fleet, include recreational fisheries, and ensure data are used	Identify places where study fleet and associated projects' data can be used; address data access; ID incentives; include environmental data	Councils, Commission, and Centers
	Include Recreational Study Fleet Pilots in GARFO's Recreational Saltwater Fishing draft policy implementation plan	GARFO, NEFSC
Use survey mitigation around offshore wind to transition to industry-based surveys or other survey platforms	Implement the NOAA Fisheries and BOEM Federal Survey Mitigation Implementation Strategy - Northeast U.S. Region	NEFSC,
	Explore opportunities to utilize smaller platforms such as commercial vessels for conducting surveys	NEFSC, SEFSC
	Develop plan for integrating multiple survey data streams into the assessment process	NEFSC, SEFSC
Improve the use of existing data	Hold meetings to discuss what existing data streams and historical datasets could be better utilized to inform decision making, assessments, and monitoring. Do this across regions and management bodies.	Councils, Commission, Regional Offices, and Centers
	Have similar meetings at the PDT/FMAT (IPT for SAFMC) level for more immediate FMP needs.	Councils and Commission

Next Steps

- **Communication**

- Share summit report and potential action menu
- Press release

- **Finalize scenario planning toolkit**

- Designed to be used by any East Coast fishery stakeholder
- Summarizes the ECSP scenario work and offers suggestions for how other groups can use the material to have valuable conversations about the challenges of climate change
- Includes presentations, draft agendas, scenario creation worksheets, and guidelines for use

- **Review summit outcomes and action menu with other organizations**

- August and September ASMFC, MAFMC, SAFMC meetings

- **Initial East Coast Climate Coordination Group and Climate Innovation Group meetings**

- Core Team will continue to coordinate pending establishment of Climate Innovation Group

- **Councils and Commission consider incorporating these actions into work plans**

- Timing / mechanisms to be discussed