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THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

NOAA Fisheries Environmental Justice Strategy Summary





Introduction

- *The strategy is a result of several EOs signed by President Biden aimed at promoting equity and environmental justice within the federal government.*
 - NOAA Fisheries convened an Equity and Environmental Justice (EEJ) Working Group to develop a framework for embedding EEJ into their day-to-day work.
- Identified barriers to fair treatment and meaningful involvement in NOAA Fisheries' work include:
 - Unawareness of underserved communities,
 - Structural barriers,
 - Barriers to accessing services,
 - System complexity,
 - Gaps in expertise,
 - Gaps in representation.



Key Terms

Environmental Justice:

- The fair treatment and **meaningful involvement** of all people, regardless of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, disability, or income during development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies, including but not limited to:
 - **Equitable** protection from environmental and health hazards;
 - Equitable access to decision making processes; and
 - Equitable opportunity for underserved communities that have been marginalized.

Meaningful Involvement:

- Stakeholders have an opportunity to participate in decisions about activities that may affect their environment and/or health;
- The public's contribution informs NOAA Fisheries' decisions;
- Community concerns will be considered in the decision-making process; and
- Decision makers will seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected.

Equity:

- The consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to **underserved communities** that have been denied such treatment.

Key Terms

Underserved Communities:

- As defined by Executive Order 13985, refers to **communities that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life**. These include geographic communities as well as populations sharing a particular characteristic, history or identity. Adapting EO 13985 these groups could include but are not limited to:
 - women and girls;
 - Black, Latino, Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and other persons of color;
 - members of religious minorities;
 - lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons;
 - persons with disabilities;
 - persons who live in rural areas;
 - and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

In Fisheries:

- Specific to the fisheries context, underserved groups within fishing communities may include, for example:
 - subsistence fishery participants and their dependents,
 - fishing vessel crews,
 - and fish processor and distribution workers.
 - territorial fishing communities.
- Underserved communities will vary by region, and by the barriers they face.
- Furthermore, many of these community categories intersect. Hence identification of, and meaningful involvement with underserved communities will be a regionally specific and an on-going process that will require long-term commitment.



NOAA FISHERIES' EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE GOALS

Prioritize identification, equitable treatment, and meaningful involvement of underserved communities.

Provide equitable delivery of services

Prioritize EEJ in our mandated mission and work.

Objectives

Empowering Environment:

Provide the institutional support, including training and resources, needed to implement multiple EEJ approaches at NOAA Fisheries. Internal leadership and management will identify EEJ as priorities and encourage staff to consider EEJ in every aspect of their work.

Incorporate Equity and Environmental Justice in Policy and Plans:

Ensure that our policies promote equal opportunities for all and do not create unintended inequities or unequal burdens for underserved communities

Equity in Research and Researching Equity:

Identify underserved communities, address their needs, and assess imports of management decisions.

Outreach and Engage Equitably:

Build relationships with underserved communities to better understand their needs and improve information sharing with all stakeholders.

Equitably Distribute Benefits:

Distribute benefits equitable among stakeholders by increasing the access to opportunities for underserved communities.

Inclusive Governance:

Provide for the meaningful involvement of underserved communities in the decision-making process.

Questions for the OC AP

1. How can staff facilitate the representation of all fishery stakeholders (fishermen, crew, distributors) on advisory panels?
2. How can staff help Council members build relationships with advisory panel members and the public that allows for two-way communication and trust? Open houses?
3. How can staff facilitate involvement of underserved communities when requesting public comment/input?
4. Does staff reach fishing communities through sufficiently varied communication platforms, languages, and outreach activities? Are you aware of preferred methods of communication within these communities?



THANK YOU!