

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

ADVISORY PANELS

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's advisory panels are required under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976. Under the Act, the advisory panel process is designed to assure, to the greatest extent practicable, that all aspects of a fishery are considered in developing management plans and the measures to implement them.

The fishery management process seeks relevant information from all interested and affected parties including the general public, commercial and recreational fishermen, the fishing industry, and environmental organizations.

Advisors assist in the collection and evaluation of information and provide recommendations on all aspects of fishery management plans and amendments. They provide fair representation of commercial, recreational, and other interests, and advise the Council on current fishery issues and trends including socioeconomic implications and effects of proposed management measures.

The Council's advisors include those who are active in the commercial or recreational fishing industry and are knowledgeable and interested in the conservation and management of fisheries. Their expertise and interest as advisors is often consistent with their interests as user groups and communities involved in those fisheries.

MAFMC ADVISORY PANELS:

*Mackerel, Squid, Butterfish – Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass – Bluefish – Spiny Dogfish
Surfclam and Ocean Quahog – Tilefish – Ecosystems and Ocean Planning – River Herring and Shad*

PURPOSE OF ADVISORS

The advisory panels are intended to facilitate the Council's work in preparing and amending a fishery management plan or in addressing a special issue or problem. Advisors may also provide advice on matters concerning annual quotas and specifications. They reflect expertise and interest from the standpoint of geographical distribution, industry and other user groups, and the economic and social groups encompassed in the Council's geographical area of concern. In addition, they provide advice on the current trends and developments in fisheries under the Council's jurisdiction on the following matters:

- the capacity of commercial and recreational fishermen;
- and processors to harvest and process each species under the Council's management;
- the effects of Council management measures on local communities and their economies;
- potential conflicts between user groups;
- potential enforcement problems specific to a particular fishery.

APPOINTMENT/DURATION

Appointees to the advisory panels serve three-year term appointments. Advisors may be reappointed to serve consecutive terms, but all must reapply in order to be considered for reappointment. Neither proxies nor designees can serve in place of an appointed member. Vacancy appointments shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term of the vacancy.

APPLICATION PROCESS

At the end of each three-year term, Council staff solicits applications for advisory panels through press releases, emails, website announcements, and other means as appropriate. Each applicant must submit an Advisory Panel Application before the advertised deadline in order to be considered for appointment.

SELECTION

The relevant Council committee reviews the applicants' qualifications and submits a list of recommended appointees which they expect to address that panel's representation needs. The Executive Committee reviews applications and committee recommendations and produces a list of recommended appointees for final consideration by the Council Chair. The Council Chair makes the appointment decision based on these recommendations, and the Council then notifies the appointees of their selection as advisors.

TERMINATION

An advisor's membership on an advisory panel may be terminated based on lack of participation. After a three-year term of appointment has expired, Council staff initiates membership renewal to advisory panels. At this time, an advisor may reapply to continue to serve in his or her role.

PARTICIPATION

When advisory panels are scheduled to be convened, travel orders for participation will be provided to members by Council staff at least two weeks prior to the meeting date. It is expected that all advisors shall attend such scheduled meetings. The Fishery Management Plan coordinator will notify the advisory panel of scheduled meeting dates, location and issues to be addressed at the meeting. Advisory panel members are encouraged to attend Council meetings and public hearings on fishery management plans related to the species for which they have been appointed as an advisor.