NOAA Fisheries Draft Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy

Requesting Public Comments

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
Sharon Benjamin (GARFO) - June 7, 2022
Objectives

- Context for NOAA Fisheries Equity and Environmental Justice (EEJ) Strategy
- Defining EEJ terms
- Barriers to achieving EEJ
- Requesting feedback
Mandates for Equity and Environmental Justice

- EO 13985 (2021) - Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government
- EO 14008 (2021) - Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad
- EO 12898 (1994) - Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations

Also: MSA, ESA, MMPA, CERCLA, and the Oil Pollution Act
Key Terms: Equity

*Equity* means 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: Environmental Justice

*Environmental Justice* is the **fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people**, regardless of race, color, gender, national origin, or income, with respect to the 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
- Equitable opportunity for disadvantaged communities that have been historically marginalized
Key Terms: Underserved Communities

*Underserved communities* have been **systematically denied a full opportunity** to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life.

- Geographic communities
- Populations sharing a particular characteristic such as:
  - women and girls;
  - Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and other persons of color;
  - persons facing discrimination or barriers related to gender identity; 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.
Barriers to Equity and Environmental Justice

- Unawareness of underserved communities
- Structural barriers
- Barriers to accessing services
- System complexity
- Gaps in expertise
- Gaps in representation
Examples from Greater Atlantic Region

• **Recreational Fisheries Outreach**
  Translation of several recreational and safe boating guides into Spanish

• **Increase Diversity in Hiring, Recruitment and Retention**
  Building relationships with stakeholders at Minority Serving Institutions, STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) programs, and affinity organizations
The NOAA Fisheries’ draft EEJ Strategy asks:

- Who are our underserved communities?
- How can we better communicate with them? How can we better serve them?
- How can we improve equity in our research and monitoring programs?
- Does everyone have equal access to benefits?
- Do some communities carry the weight of regulatory burdens more than others?
- How can our governance or management resources be more inclusive?
Strategy Development

NMFS EEJ Working Group Forms

EEJ Strategy internal review

Regional implementation plans

2021

April

NMFS EEJ Working Group Forms

2022

February

EEJ Strategy internal review

2023

Spring

Finalize EEJ Strategy

2021 2022 2023

November

Preliminary community input

Public feedback

WE ARE HERE
We need your input!

Please provide comments by **August 19, 2022:**

- **Provide Input via Google Form** [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdq5LzUzPfvSJYAdlrAAXAFjbo1Fnd0qLbwpWG972onQ6kO3Q/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdq5LzUzPfvSJYAdlrAAXAFjbo1Fnd0qLbwpWG972onQ6kO3Q/viewform)
- **Webinars:** May 24, June 21, June 30, and July 19
- **In-person:** Meeting dates and venues will be announced
Thank you!

- NOAA Fisheries has renewed focus on equity and environmental justice
- Request input by August 19, 2022

EEJ Strategy, comment form, and more information at this link: