



New England Fishery Management Council

50 WATER STREET | NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS 01950 | PHONE 978 465 0492 | FAX 978 465 3116

John F. Quinn, J.D., Ph.D., *Chairman* | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

MEETING SUMMARY

Habitat Committee

Four Points by Sheraton, Wakefield, MA

May 30, 2017

The Habitat Committee met to review public comments on the Deep-Sea Coral Amendment and recommend final preferred alternatives to the Council. The Committee also discussed various ocean planning issues.

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Committee: John Quinn (chair), Doug Grout (vice chair), Terry Alexander, Vincent Balzano, David Borden, Peter Christopher, Peter deFur, Warren Elliot, Elizabeth Etrie, Mark Gibson, Patrick Keliher, Mathew McKenzie, Eric Reid

Others: Michelle Bachman and Rachel Feeney (NEFMC staff), Mitch MacDonald, David Stevenson, and Travis Ford (GARFO), Chris McGuire, Maggie Raymond, Gib Brogan (Habitat AP). Approximately eight additional members of the public also attended.

KEY OUTCOMES

- Committee requested that the PDT analyze an alternative developed by the Pew Charitable Trusts and partners for a broad zone in the canyon/slope region south of Georges Bank
- Committee affirmed the preferred alternative for the inshore Gulf of Maine coral zones, and recommended No Action (no coral zones designated in the offshore Gulf of Maine)
- Committee recommended that the Council develop comments in response to potential oil and gas seismic surveys in the Atlantic, a DOI request for comments on marine monuments, and a candidate National Marine Sanctuary in Hudson Canyon

BRIEFINGS/UPDATES OF GENERAL INTEREST

Staff noted that we are still awaiting publication of the proposed rule for Omnibus Habitat Amendment 2 and final amendment and environmental impact statement. Once decision making

on the coral amendment is complete, staff and the PDT will complete the document and turn focus to the clam dredge framework adjustment. Ms. Bachman also noted that she is chairing a work group of the Council Coordination Committee (CCC) related to habitat. One priority for this group this calendar year is to evaluate habitat-related research priorities across the various Councils and regions, to look for areas of agreement and elevate these common priorities to the CCC and NOAA. The group is also interested in the process differences between regions that help Councils and partners effectively engage on habitat issues such as research and non-fishing impacts.

DEEP-SEA CORAL AMENDMENT

Ms. Bachman provided an overview of the seven public hearings and written comments received to date (see separate written summary). There were roughly 12-20 people at most of the hearings, and 75 in Ellsworth. Overall, there were comments from fishing industry members and groups, environmental organizations, and members of the public. These included recommendations both for and against the Council's preferred alternative. In most cases another alternative already included in the amendment was recommended as a better approach, but in the case of the broad zone option for the canyons and slope, a specific alternate management area was developed by The Pew Charitable Trusts in collaboration with other conservation groups. This management area was presented at all the hearings. Ms. Bachman also reviewed Habitat Plan Development Team (PDT) progress on development of the environmental assessment (EA) to evaluate the coral amendment alternatives. She noted receipt of some additional information from Maine DMR, but that this information had not yet been reviewed by the PDT for incorporation into the EA. Alternatives added for consideration at the April Council meeting (600 m minimum broad zone, Option 2 smaller discrete zones in the Gulf of Maine) have been analyzed and this information is included in the EA. Doug Grout and John Quinn who attended and ran three and four hearings, respectively, had no additional comments on the comments received.

Ms. Bachman solicited Committee member questions about the hearings and public comment.

Mr. Alexander asked whether the PDT had considered information from the REDNET redfish research project, which included 250+ tows throughout the Gulf of Maine to assess redfish catch and bycatch. Ms. Bachman noted she was aware of the work, but not sure if it was included in the EA. Coral bycatch was certainly documented during the project, with only one instance noted. Mr. Alexander noted that some of the effort was around the Jordan Basin and Lindenkohl sites. He personally did tows from Three Dory Ridge to Cashes Ledge, noting that redfish were quite abundant. Ms. Bachman responded that the data from the project corroborate the observer data from 2013-2016, which suggest low rates of encounters with corals. It does appear likely that the industry tries to avoid coral habitats and bycatch. Audience member Maggie Raymond (Associated Fisheries of Maine) agreed that the bycatch information (or really, lack thereof) from the project would be very useful to note in the document. Dr. Feeney commented that the Council's Research Steering Committee plans to review the report in July.

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Next the Committee discussed whether they wished to update their recommendations for preferred alternatives, given the public comment. Ms. Bachman directed members to the decision document provided with the materials. Most of the comments focused on the broad zones and discrete Gulf of Maine zones. Few comments were related to No Action, however the Commission recommended that the boundaries of the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts be reconsidered to be consistent with whatever is adopted in the coral amendment. Note that several national monuments including this one are currently under review by NOAA and/or DOI.

Dr. Quinn asked about the timing of the amendment relative to this new alternative. Ms. Bachman responded that the PDT had analyzed the 600 m minimum alternative (referred to as Option 6) from April, and reviewed the impacts of the option relative to other broad zones.

Mr. Borden confirmed that 75% of the coral records are below 600m. Ms. Bachman referred him to Table 52 in the draft amendment, which includes this exact result. He asked whether all historical coral records are reflected in that number. Ms. Bachman responded affirmatively. He asked about the age of the records. While some are from the late 1800s, most are more recent. Ms. Bachman also noted that the coral presence records are spatially patchy, with scientific effort concentrated in particular areas, e.g. Lydonia and Oceanographer Canyons.

Ms. Etrie asked about the fishing effort data used to support the Pew broad zone proposal. How are the Ocean Portal data they used different from the data analyzed by the PDT? Ms. Bachman responded that the vessel trip report data (VTR) used were from the MARCO portal, and are from a NEFMC-BOEM collaboration, covering the years 2007-2012. The data summarize revenue by gear type and fishery and show areas with higher and lower estimated revenues per mapped grid cell. These data are similar to those used by the PDT, except that the PDT data include additional recent years through 2015, and we can summarize revenue by management area, rather than just inspecting the data visually for hotspots.

In terms of vessel monitoring system data (VMS), the portal includes data for certain VMS declaration codes, with speed filters applied to discriminate fishing from non-fishing polls. The data are then kriged to show high and low effort areas. The PDT is using similar data, but fishing and non-fishing probabilities were assigned using a modeling approach, developed at the NEFSC, and more data were used because all VTR data for bottom tending gears were matched to VMS data when both sources of information were available. Testing at NEFSC suggests that the model outperforms a simple speed rule, although imputed vessel speed is an important variable in the models. To estimate hours fished in a specific coral zone alternative, the PDT determines which VMS polls fall into each zone, and then sums estimated hours fished by gear type and year. Hours fish is estimated by multiplying the probability of fishing/non-fishing by the amount of time between two temporally-adjacent polls. Overall, the portal maps should give a reasonable picture of mobile bottom-tending gear effort in relation to coral zones, but the PDT data set is better for analysis of hours fished.

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Dr. McKenzie asked whether the PDT could analyze the Pew proposal prior to the Council meeting. Ms. Bachman replied yes; it is relatively quick to run a new area through the analysis. Responding to a comment raised in discussion of the alternative, she noted that she hadn't spent a lot of time thinking about the whiting fishery and where it is captured in the data. (Note – following up after the Committee meeting, the PDT dataset does include information from the whiting fishery, even though vessels operating in that fishery are not declared into the multispecies fishery and thus would not be captured with a multispecies VMS declaration code. Given that the portal data are based on declaration codes, the portal VMS maps likely miss much of the whiting effort, unless vessels are declared as squid, or perhaps under another FMP).

Dr. deFur asked about the coral dives summarized on pages 228-229 of the EA. The list doesn't include any dives in Alvin and Atlantis canyons. Is there data on all the canyons? Ms. Bachman responded that yes, there are dive sites in all the canyons (this information is summarized in the affected environment section on geographic distribution of corals). The list on page 228-229 is in the broad zones impacts analysis section – the intent was to summarize the shallower dives that would fall outside (shallower than) some of the moderate and deep (500, 600, 600 minimum or 900 meter) alternatives. All the recent (2012+) dive sites fall within the 300 m and 400 m zones. Dr. deFur responded that he was looking for coral occurrence in all the canyons. Through the MAFMC and SAFMC, we have learned that there is a lot of coral occurrence in the canyons, and it seems like a notable amount are at depth less than 600 meters. In the Mid-Atlantic, we had a lot of discussion about avoiding those areas because they hang up the gear.

Ms. Bachman responded that the shallow edge of the coral distribution is challenging to discern based on the recent dive information, because there were practical limits on where dives could be conducted, both in terms of depths at which the ROVs could be used, and to avoid interaction with fishing gear. However, what is clear from the dive records is that there is some coral habitat shallower than the 600 m minimum preferred alternative. In terms of how deep the footprint of fishing extends, a big reason why we held the workshops was to find out more about maximum depth of fishing. Given the spatial resolution of the VTR data, and the need to infer fishing/non-fishing behavior associated with the VMS data, it is impossible to precisely define a fishing footprint. This is especially true at the edge of the shelf and on the slope, where depth, which is an important determinant of species distribution and therefore fishing activity, changes very rapidly over short distances.

Audience comments

Morgan Callahan (The Pew Charitable Trusts) provided some background about their alternative. Key points she included in her description are that it protects more corals, respects the footprint of mobile gear, integrates input from New Bedford workshop, exempts red crab, and falls within existing range of alternatives. In response to a question, Ms. Bachman noted that the alternative is included with the public comments.

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Eric Reid asked about the timeframe used to determine the footprint of fishing. Ms. Callahan responded 2011-2014. Audience member Greg Wells (Pew) noted that in areas where commercial fishing was noted, and corals were known to occur, the boundary was drawn at 500 m based on feedback from the workshop, which indicated that 500 m was the minimum depth at which trawls were presently used. (In areas without corals, the boundary was drawn at 550 m.)

Mr. Reid asked if Monkfish Category F trawling was taken into account. Mr. Wells responded that yes, it would be included in the data.

Mr. Reid asked what the timeframe is for the coral observations. Ms. Bachman responded that the data are the same as those used by the PDT. She noted that she would look further into the distribution of dates associated with the coral records. Her feeling was that it was unlikely that older records were driving the boundaries of the zones, given recent presence data, recent dive data, slope data, and the results of the habitat suitability model.

Mr. Reid commented that there are several disclaimers on the ocean data portal. It says that it can't be used for analyzing a fishing footprint because the data is too short. He noted that the Deep-Sea Coral Research and Technology Program data portal suggests that for the period 1964-2017, depths of 300-650 m, there are only five observations outside the monument. Four of these have a spatial accuracy of 1,000 m.

Mr. Balzano asked if they just used feedback from the workshop when drawing the boundary. Mr. Wells responded that they used the VMS and VTR data to determine if there was fishing in the area, and then used depths of 500 m or 550 meters to draw the boundary, depending on whether corals were or were not likely to be present.

Dr. McKenzie asked if they had been shopping the idea around. Mr. Wells responded that they had spoken to some Committee members, and NOAA staff. Dr. McKenzie said the alternative seemed to be a reasonable approach to balance coral protection and use of the area.

Mr. Borden expressed concerns about process. The Council has adopted its preferred options, and this option is not in the hearing document. I'm here representing ASMFC. This option was not available to ASMFC when they met a few weeks ago. I can think of very few instances where we stop and take a new option.

Mitch MacDonald (NOAA GC) responded that there's nothing illegal about raising this alternative. There's precedent of this Council changing alternatives up until the last day. There's a robust discussion. There's a lot of public process.

Dr. Quinn asked whether a motion would be required for the PDT to analyze it. Mr. MacDonald replied that it's within the range of what has already been considered. If the Committee usually tasks the PDT, they should do so here, if desired.

Ms. Etrie commented that while she thought the PDT was already planning to look at the alternative, she was fine with tasking through a motion. She recommended looking into the Monkfish F permits also.

Mr. Reid asked if this alternative is analyzed, would other new alternatives be analyzed? Dr. Quinn responded that yes, any brought up during the comment period would be evaluated.

Dr. McKenzie recommended getting the analysis. Mr. MacDonald suggested it would be good to have the Committee task the PDT, via consensus or motion. Either way, this is an alternative raised through the public hearing process. Parallels to Omnibus EFH Amendment 2 were discussed.

Motion 1

Etrie/McKenzie: Motion to task the PDT to analyze the compromise alternative proposed during public hearings by the Pew Charitable Trusts, Wild Oceans, Earthjustice, and CLF in their May 24 letter.

Mr. Reid agreed that this option was within the range analyzed, but reiterated his earlier comment about other alternatives. He suggested that the Council should develop a model or zone of areas suitable for the use of fishing gear. Can the PDT develop a fishing gear suitability model?

Ms. Bachman responded that we have had conversations about which habitat types and areas are suitable for fishing in a general way. For example, extremely steep areas are difficult to fish with all gears. We have maps of depth and slope, and some information about sediment characteristics, but it would be very time consuming to develop a fishing gear suitability model. The coral habitat suitability model was a large team effort developed over several years. I'm not aware of work that asks the question in this way.

Mr. Reid noted concerns that the new compromise exempts lobster gear. A month ago, lobster gear was evil. It concerns me that we are going to exempt a gear and let it expand without limit. With the Jonah crab fishery increasing in importance, lobster trap use will expand.

Dr. McKenzie emphasized that the compromise alternative is the culmination of a six week campaign to take up the Regional Administrator's request to hash out an agreement. This was an attempt to compromise. Moving it ahead for analysis is a reasonable, rather than regulating through litigation.

Mr. Borden suggested that the use of effort data from 2011-2014 was problematic, since the PDT used 2010-2015. Ms. Bachman responded that we would develop comparable tables and figures for the new option, and also look into the monkfish and whiting data questions.

Mr. Borden responded that traditionally there was a monkfish fishery fishing 350 fathoms. I'm repeating myself from the hearings. The concept is to not allow an expansion. What's the timeline for freezing? Should look at a longer timeline.

Ms. Etrie noted that the first time she had heard about this alternative is in the documents Michelle provided. I made the motion, because I think we have the time for the PDT to look. I have no opinion about the merits at this point.

Mr. Kelliher noted that he first heard of this option at the Ellsworth hearing. There were no maps. If this was brought forward prior to the hearings, the comments would look different. Too little, too late. This option should not delay the process.

Mr. Christopher said that GARFO supports the motion.

Mr. Grout suggested a reference to the May 24 letter in the motion, and the motion was revised.

Christopher McGuire (The Nature Conservancy) indicated that they support a motion tasking the PDT. Should look at the monkfish effort equally across all the alternatives. If this is not looked at by the PDT, and the Council decides to accept it for analysis or as a final action, the process will certainly be delayed.

Mr. Elliott agreed he was troubled by the process. At the Mid-Atlantic, we worked through these alternatives at the workshops.

Motion 1 carried 11/1/0.

The Committee moved on to a discussion of the Gulf of Maine alternatives. Ms. Bachman reviewed the alternatives, analysis and public comments.

Dr. deFur noted comments made during the hearings about fishing industry avoidance of corals, but also that the options would create hardships and displace effort. How do we feel about the data we have? Ms. Bachman responded that the fishing revenue data were reviewed through the workshops. It seems like the gear types and target species associated with each area are well captured by the data, but that the magnitude of effort is hard to estimate. The Gulf of Maine areas in particular are small relative to the spatial scale at which effort data are reliable.

Motion 2

Alexander/Balzano: Motion to select the following as the Committee's preferred alternatives for the Gulf of Maine. In the Inshore Gulf of Maine, the Committee selects as preferred 4.2.2.3.1, Mount Desert Rock, Option 2, and 4.2.2.3.2, Outer Schoodic Ridge, with the following gear restrictions: 4.3.1 Option 2. And in the offshore Gulf of Maine, the Committee selects no action (no coral zones or fishing restrictions) as preferred for the Jordan Basin and Lindenkohl Knoll areas.

In terms of rationale, Mr. Alexander suggested that the alternative supports public comments. Those areas haven't been heavily fished, and there is no damage. Dr. Auster said that the patches of coral are as big as a table top. Redfish is not in trouble. There's been a 65% decrease in effort since 2010. At Lindenkohl Knoll, a lot of the pollock harvested in the area are taken on off those lumps in Option 2.

Audience comments

Maggie Raymond (Associated Fisheries of Maine) stated that there is no documentation of the positive impacts of current closures. We have had some closures for 30+ years. When we close these coral areas, there will be a proliferation of lobster gear with no understanding of impact. Moving us away from these sites moves us onto unhealthy stocks. Redfish, white hake, and pollock are important species to have access to. I support the motion. Some protection in downeast Maine areas is appropriate.

Erica Fuller (Earthjustice) commented against no action in the offshore GOM. Recent dives have identified coral gardens in Jordan Basin, and the designation is expected to have positive impacts on many stocks. There will be long-term benefits to fisheries and communities. Ensure some protection in the offshore GOM.

Greg Wells spoke against the alternative as well. We want zones in all the GOM areas. Support exemption for lobster gears if larger areas (i.e. boundary Option 1) are selected. Recent coral symposium in Boston included a paper that indicates that corals in GOM are genetically distinct, so these areas should be a high conservation priority.

Motion to split (McKenzie/Grout):

Part 1: Motion to select the following as the Committee's preferred alternatives for the Gulf of Maine. In the Inshore Gulf of Maine, the Committee selects as preferred 4.2.2.3.1, Mount Desert Rock, Option 2, and 4.2.2.3.2, Outer Schoodic Ridge, with the following gear restrictions: 4.3.1 Option 2.

Part 2: And in the offshore Gulf of Maine, the Committee selects the no action alternative as preferred for the Jordan Basin and Lindenkohl Knoll areas.

In terms of rationale, Dr. McKenzie felt he could get behind the inshore options, but not the offshore ones. Mr. Alexander was not open to a friendly amendment on the issue.

The motion to split failed 3/6/2.

On the main motion 2 (as originally combined):

Alexander/Balzano: Motion to select the following as the Committee's preferred alternatives for the Gulf of Maine. In the Inshore Gulf of Maine, the Committee selects as preferred 4.2.2.3.1, Mount Desert Rock, Option 2, and 4.2.2.3.2, Outer Schoodic Ridge, with the following gear

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restrictions: 4.3.1 Option 2. And in the offshore Gulf of Maine, the Committee selects the no action alternative as preferred for the Jordan Basin and Lindenkohl Knoll areas.

Ms. Etrie supported the motion. This finds a balance between conservation and fishery impacts. Maggie highlighted the rationale. I'd prefer Option 1 with a lobster pot exemption in the Mt. Desert Rock zone, but willing to accept Option 2.

Mr. Alexander commented that the combined motion shows that there is some protection in the Gulf of Maine.

Mr. Balzano pointed out that the action overall is discretionary, and this motion is supported by public comment.

Motion 2 carried 9/0/3.

OCEAN PLANNING DISCUSSION

Next the Committee discussed various ocean planning issues of interest to the Council, and discussed whether the Council should write comments, and if so, what those comments should be.

OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION

Ms. Bachman provided a brief introduction to the issue that offshore oil and gas exploration could resume in the Atlantic (see recent Executive and Secretarial Orders as well as comment letters from Mid- and South Atlantic Councils).

Dr. Quinn asked if the Council should comment, noting there was time on the June Council agenda for discussion.

Dr. deFur commented that the Mid-Atlantic dealt with this a few years ago by developing policy papers on these types of issues. When the EO was announced, we had these policies and could quickly draft comments. I strongly encourage this committee saying oil and gas development is incompatible with protecting marine fishery resources. Dr. McKenzie agreed.

Mr. Grout commented that ASMFC has weighed in with concerns about the negative impacts of seismic testing. Their concern was that there wasn't adequate information on fishery impacts. ASMFC asked BOEM for additional studies on impacts of the noise associated with seismic on marine resources.

Audience comments

Gib Brogan (Oceana) commented that they have been working on the seismic issue in the southeast. It has been helpful when the Council's get involved. Fisheries shouldn't be an afterthought in these decisions.

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Meghan Lapp (Seafreeze Ltd.) commented that their vessels fished in Gulf of Mexico during seismic testing, and saw miles of dead fish behind the seismic survey vessels. Also, while oil and gas is possible in the Atlantic, offshore wind is happening now. I was at a recent meeting for Deepwater Wind. They are proposing 200 feet wide structures. Cod don't spawn in areas of the operation. Whales die-offs have been documented off England due to sound. We are looking at losing a lot of area. The Council should focus on offshore wind.

Dr. Quinn asked if the Committee would recommend drafting comments by consensus, and there was no objection. Ms. Bachman commented that she would accept any specific ideas for the letter. Ms. Etrie suggested focusing the letter on economic impacts. She asked what the exact status of drilling off New England/North Atlantic was.

Ms. Bachman responded that BOEM develops 5-year lease programs, and we are at the start of the 2017-22 program. There is an EIS that explores various options. The January agency record of decision left the Mid- and South Atlantic off the table, but the EO is prompting a reconsideration. Leasing off New England/North Atlantic was never under consideration, but clearly we have fisheries with interests in the Mid-Atlantic region.

Dr. deFur noted that squid are effected by the sounds associated with seismic testing.

Ms. Etrie suggested that policy development might be added to a list of habitat priorities for the coming year. Ms. Bachman noted that we could certainly build on the MAFMC information and policies. It might help to have an informational meeting to educate the advisory panel and Committee members on these sorts of issues. Ms. Etrie agreed it would be very useful to be able to respond quickly.

NATIONAL MONUMENT

Ms. Bachman provided some background on the EO related to national monuments, and Dr. Quinn explained that the CCC has requested to be involved in the evaluation of monuments.

Mr. Grout noted that when the idea of a monument in New England first came up, we were cautioned that we couldn't do any lobbying on this. With a letter from the Secretary of Interior asking for comment, can we now send a letter with our opinion?

Mr. MacDonald agreed that yes, the Council can certainly respond to direct inquiries. Also, there's a new letter or opinion about the Council's ability to comment.

Dr. Quinn noted that there is a distinction between executive of legislative branch comments. Mr. Elliott agreed – at the CCC meeting, Adam Isinger noted that there is new guidance. Mr. MacDonald noted that Gene will address this issue at the upcoming Council meeting.

By consensus, the Committee agreed it would be helpful for the Council to provide comments.

NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY IN HUDSON CANYON

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Ms. Bachman and Dr. Paul Ticco provided background on the marine sanctuary designation process. There is a candidate sanctuary in Hudson Canyon. NOAA can choose to move the candidate area into the designation process at any time over the next five years. The designation process takes 2-3 years, and is a public process subject to NEPA, unlike monument designations which are made by the President of the United States.

Mr. Reid asked for a chart. He noted that the Mid-Atlantic Council was very specific about their lack of support, over concerns that they would not have control over fisheries management. Recreational groups don't support. Why did the New York Aquarium select this area? I can't accept this canyon as more diverse than Long Island Sound, and there are already closures in place.

Dr. Ticco said that while he couldn't speak for the aquarium, they wanted an area larger than the coral zone. The proposals emphasizes that fishing would not be limited and that it would continue to be managed by the Councils. Mr. Alexander mentioned an area that was unpopular with the West Pacific Council – it was noted that the area in question is a monument, not a sanctuary.

Ms. Lapp (Seafreeze Ltd.) commented that specifically to this nomination, the New York Aquarium took VTR data from the ocean portal and drew a boundary around the most actively fished locations. She noted that designations are reviewed every five years, so management issues could change in the future.

Mr. Elliot noted that the Mid-Atlantic Council's concerns were around uncertainty regarding future Council authority to regulate fishing in the area. Dr. deFur agreed that terms could be modified during the five-year evaluation. Dr. Ticco emphasized that such changes were made by the regulatory agency (i.e. NOAA) and not by those who proposed the sanctuary.

Dr. Quinn suggested that the Committee should urge the Council to weigh in.

Ms. Bachman asked Dr. Ticco to explain the role of the proponents of the nomination in the designation process. He explained that they have no formal role.

She asked if her understanding was correct that the Council should at least monitor this issue, if we don't comment now. Mr. Reid felt it would be appropriate to express the same concerns as the Mid-Atlantic, i.e. a big concern about the ability to manage fisheries in the area.

OTHER BUSINESS

Dr. Quinn mentioned he was part of a delegation that traveled to Europe to understand how the windfarms there interact with fisheries. It would be useful to bring in lease holders from the wind energy areas here to present information on how they plan to interact with the fishing industry. Would like to focus on this over the summer. Dr. deFur asked if European wind farms have security perimeters; Dr. Quinn was unsure.

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Mr. Reid asked to see a chart of all the closed areas of the Atlantic, so we know how much ground we have lost. Dr. Quinn said he would suggest that to the Executive Committee.

Mr. Lapointe (Fisheries Survival Fund) suggested adding Statoil to the list of leaseholders. The Block Island site allows fishing inside. He noted he was working on a map and would consider adding fishery closures.

On another topic, Ms. Bachman noted that the PDT had been working on a clearer definition of bottom-tending mobile gear in the context of the coral amendment. Mr. Borden agreed this would be useful to flesh out. Would help for common issues on offshore wind.

Gib Brogan (Oceana) – Habitat is on the third day of the Council meeting, when people can be burned out from three days of meetings. Can that be moved given that the plan is to take final action on the coral amendment?

The meeting adjourned at 3:38 p.m.