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Equity and Environmental Justice in Fisheries Management

HMS Advisory Panel

May 20, 2022

Session Objectives

- Develop a shared understanding of equity and environmental justice (EEJ)
- Provide examples of existing efforts and ideas to integrate equity and environmental justice in fisheries management, including for Atlantic HMS
- Ask for your input on the NOAA Fisheries Draft EEJ Strategy

Key Terms: Environmental Justice

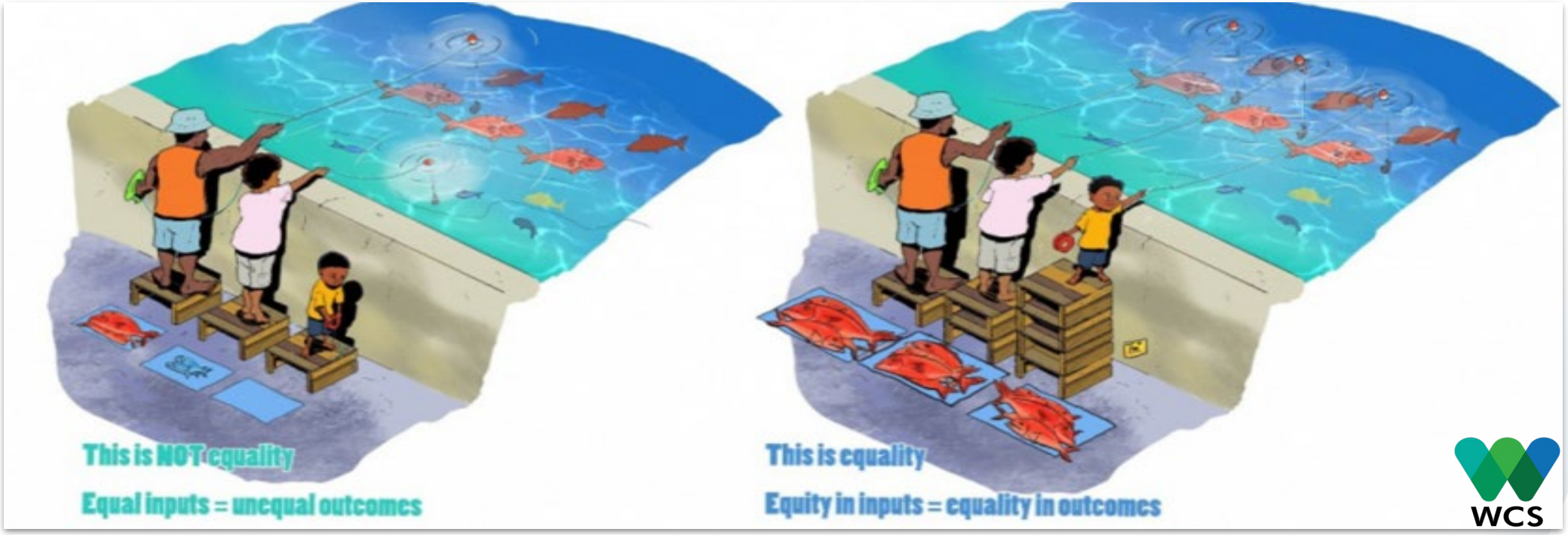
Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, gender, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies, including but not limited to:

- Equitable protection from environmental and health hazards
- Equitable access to decision-making processes
- Equitable opportunity for disadvantaged communities that have been historically marginalized

Definition from the Environmental Protection Agency

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.



Definition from Executive Order 13985

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.

Definition based on Executive Order 13985

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Mandates for Equity and Environmental Justice

- Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government - EO 13985 (2021)
- Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad - EO 14008 (2021)
- Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations - EO 12898 (1994)
- Also: MSA, ESA, MMPA, CERCLA, and the Oil Pollution Act

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Barriers to Equity and Environmental Justice

- Unawareness of underserved communities
- Structural barriers
- Barriers to accessing services
- System complexity
- Gaps in expertise
- Gaps in representation

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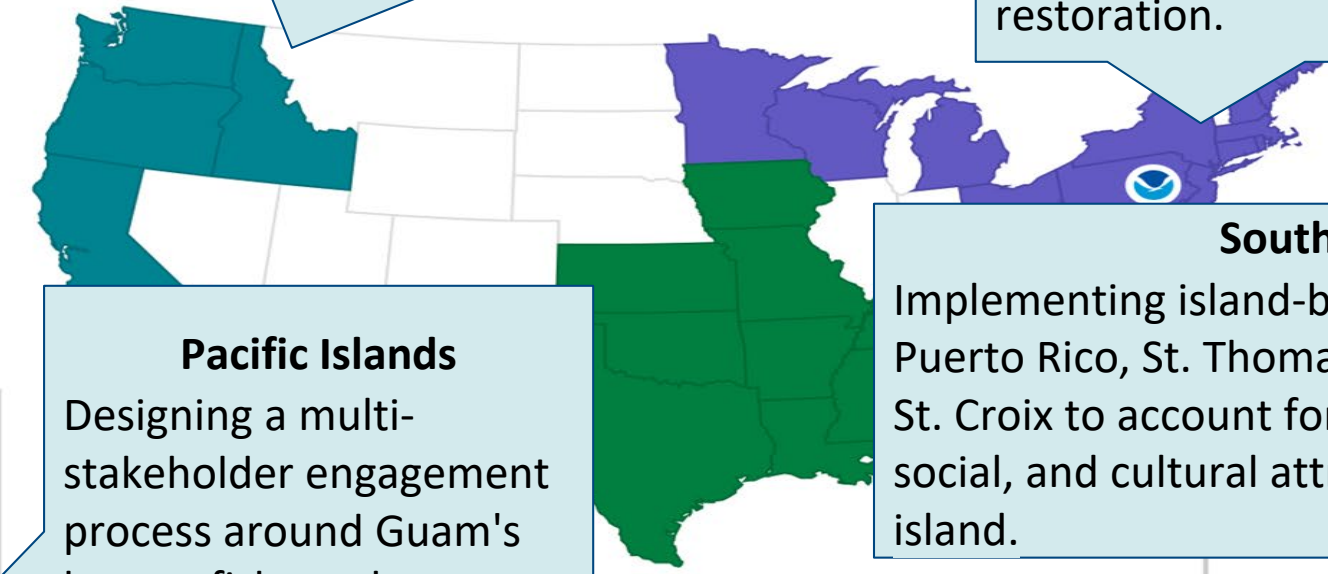
Examples of Equity and Environmental Justice in Fisheries

Alaska

Hired a tribal research coordinator to link AFSC scientists and Alaska Indigenous communities.

West Coast

Engaging coastal WA tribes in estimation of climate-driven shifts in groundfish distribution and availability to coastal fishing communities.



Greater Atlantic

Assisting with a project to help climate vulnerable underserved communities in the Chesapeake Bay to prepare “shovel ready” green infrastructure projects that will increase equity and inclusion in restoration.

Pacific Islands

Designing a multi-stakeholder engagement process around Guam's bottomfish stock assessment.

Southeast

Implementing island-based FMPs for Puerto Rico, St. Thomas and St. John, and St. Croix to account for unique fisheries, social, and cultural attributes of each island.

Atlantic HMS-related Examples

- To broaden engagement of minority fishing communities with the rulemaking process, and improve compliance with new measures, we translate certain materials (e.g., compliance guides, species ID and safe handling cards, etc.) into Spanish and Vietnamese, have provided interpreters at public meetings, held HMS 101 educational workshops, etc.
- Amendment 4 to the 2006 HMS FMP focussed on U.S. Caribbean territories - made changes to the collection of dealer data and authorized gears to better match business and fishing practices in the U.S. Caribbean territories
- We actively consider diversity (ethnic, geographic, fishery, etc.) as we consider nominations to the HMS Advisory Panel with the goal of achieving diverse input and advice on HMS fishery issues and management

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NOAA Fisheries' Draft EEJ Strategy

- Framework to incorporate EEJ into our daily activities
- Requires step-down implementation plans at the Regional/Programmatic level
- Seeks to remove barriers to EEJ
- Seeks to promote equity in all we do

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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?

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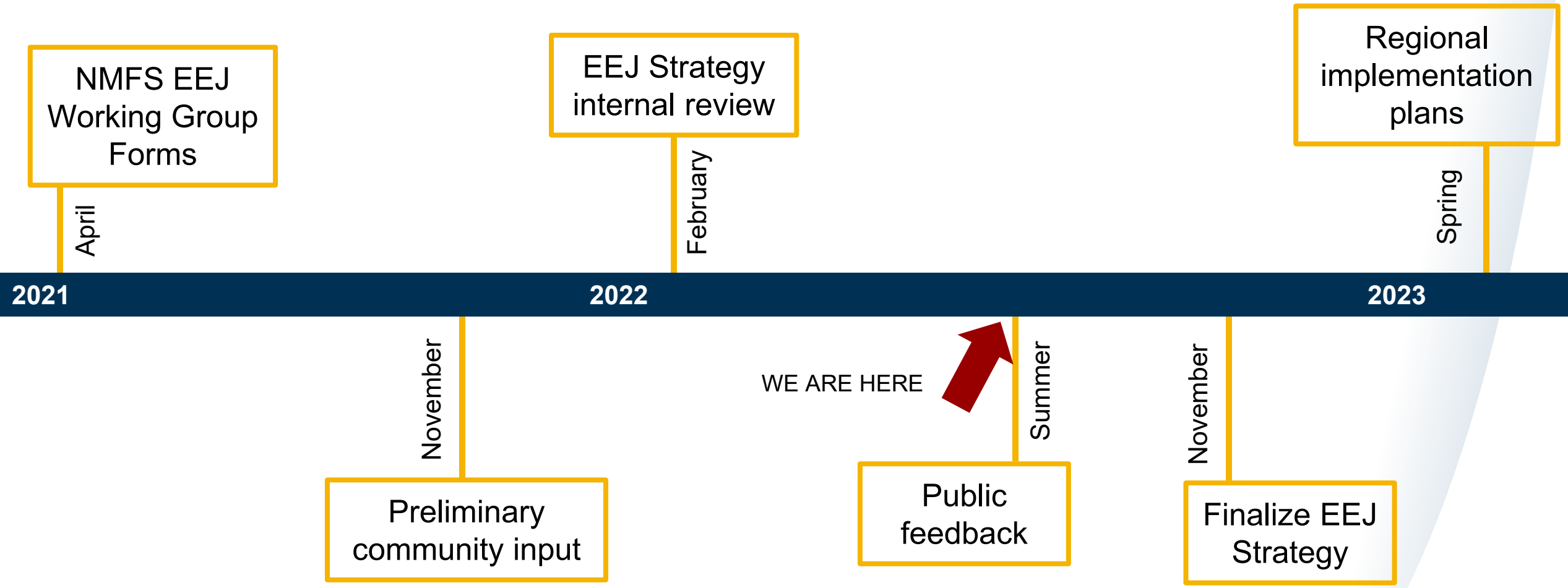
Strategy Development



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We need your input

- We need your help to reduce barriers to underserved communities and to incorporate EEJ into our daily activities
- Please provide your comments on NOAA Fisheries' draft EEJ Strategy via:
  - https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/noaa-fisheries-invites-public-comment-new-draft-equity-and-environmental-justice
  - Webinars: May 24, June 21, June 30, and July 19
  - In-person: meeting dates and venues will be announced
  - Please provide your input by August 19, 2022

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Summary

- NOAA Fisheries has a renewed focus on equity and environmental justice.
- As HMS Advisory Panel members, you represent diverse fishing communities.
- We look forward to working with you to continuing efforts to advance equity and environmental justice.
- Thank you!

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