

Annotated Agenda
MAFAC Meeting – Silver Spring, MD
Oct. 15-17, 2019

1. Title of Discussion: Overview of Electronic Technologies in U.S. Fisheries

2. Presenter: Brett Alger, Electronic Technologies Coordinator

3. Objective/Purpose (Informational)

Purpose is to provide an opportunity to learn from and discuss with Brett on the various technology and policy developments that support modernizing fisheries-dependent data collection for U.S. fisheries.

4. Background/Synopsis

NOAA Fisheries is working with fishermen, Fishery Management Councils, and other partners to improve the timeliness, quality, cost effectiveness, and accessibility of fishery-dependent data by integrating technology into monitoring programs. Electronic monitoring (EM) has clear potential to meet these challenges by incorporating cameras, gear sensors, and electronic reporting (ER) into fishing operations. To date, we have implemented EM in six commercial fisheries, including the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) pelagic longline and five programs in Alaska. We are currently on track to implement more EM programs as follows:

- Alaska – halibut deck-sorting compliance monitoring program in 2020
- Northeast – herring mid-water trawl - 2020
- Northeast - groundfish fishery implementation - 2021
- West Coast - bottom trawl, non-whiting and whiting midwater trawl, and fixed gear - 2021

We are also working towards implementing ER in commercial, for-hire, and private recreational fisheries. These fisheries may use smart phones, computers, and tablets to collect, transmit, receive, and store fishery-dependent data. This shift poses new challenges, such as differences between data streams from for-hire and private recreational fisheries, the integration of disparate programs and reporting requirements across states and regions, and the effective implementation of technologies that complement traditional data collections.

Brett Alger is the NOAA Fisheries' Electronic Technologies Coordinator, based out of Silver Spring, MD. He works on technology and policy development, and implementation of electronic monitoring and reporting in fisheries-dependent programs for U.S. fisheries. Prior to his move to Silver Spring in 2017, Brett worked in the NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office in Gloucester, MA for eight years, leading efforts to advance electronic monitoring and reporting, and helped coordinate and implement the Northeast Multispecies (groundfish) Fishery Management Plan and groundfish sector program.

5. Action to be taken by MAFAC members

This is an informational presentation. No action is anticipated.