



# **Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment**

## **Working Group Survey Results September 2007**

### **Methodology**

The Working Group Survey was opened on August 28 and closed on September 12, 2007. Julia Knisel, Working Group Chair, used the Working Group's listserv to invite members to complete an online survey hosted on the Council Coordinator's SurveyMonkey.com account. The Working Group Chair issued a reminder to the listserv in early September.

Out of the 52 invited to complete the survey, 24 responded providing a response rate of less than 50%.


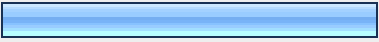
The survey responses are anonymous. No email addresses or tracking of individual responses can be conducted.

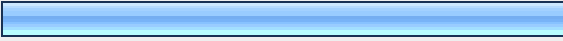
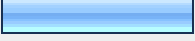
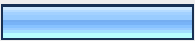
The Secretariat Team designed the survey questions with leadership from then-Working Group Chair, Kate Killerlain Morrison. Issues from the June 2007 Working Group meeting presentation, "The Canadian Perspective," were included in the survey.

### **Survey summary contents**

The following ten pages contain a summary of the responses and the directly quoted text of the responses for the seven open-ended questions and requests for suggestions. No spelling or grammatical changes have been made to the text of these open-ended responses.



Gulf of Maine Council Working Group Survey • **September 2007**

1. Should draft agendas be circulated for comment by the Working Group and Committees prior to Working Group meetings?			Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, everyone needs to participate in meeting agenda planning.			60.0%	12
No, Management and Finance should solicit our ideas for meeting content and then develop meeting agendas for us.			40.0%	8
			<i>answered question</i>	<b>20</b>
			<i>skipped question</i>	<b>4</b>

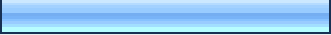

2. Do you feel adequately informed of Secretariat Team and Management and Finance Committee work?			Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, brief background descriptions shared at meetings are adequate; I feel informed by receiving Meeting and Call Notes.			60.0%	12
No, certain discussions are not adequately reported back and I'd like to hear more about the context.			20.0%	4
No			20.0%	4
			<i>answered question</i>	<b>20</b>
			<i>skipped question</i>	<b>4</b>

3. If no, how can we improve communication while still ensuring that we delegate effectively to the Secretariat and Management and Finance?		Response Count
		9
		<i>answered question</i>
		<b>9</b>
		<i>skipped question</i>
		<b>15</b>


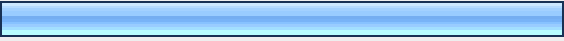
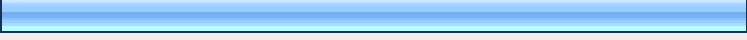
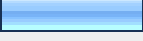
**4. Is the current process and format for the budget adequate?**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, I am comfortable with having a budget summary prepared by Management and Finance as a consent agenda item. I do not think it is necessary to discuss budgets at the WG meetings or receive all of the budget materials.		65.0%	13
No, I need to clearly understand budget issues and prefer to have a budget presentation at the WG meetings.		35.0%	7
		<i>answered question</i>	<b>20</b>
		<i>skipped question</i>	<b>4</b>

**5. At our upcoming October Working Group meeting, do you feel we should recommend to the Council that it not make any adjustments to the current organizational chart for two years?**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		35.0%	7
No, we should take organizational suggestions as they come and not force the Council to wait until 2009 to review.		65.0%	13
		<i>answered question</i>	<b>20</b>
		<i>skipped question</i>	<b>4</b>

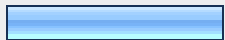

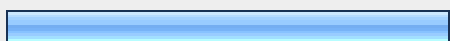
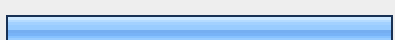
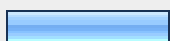
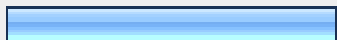
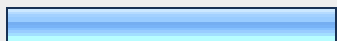
**6. How can we make better use of in-person meeting time? (check all that apply)**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Rely more heavily on Consent Agenda for pro forma issues		45.0%	9
Provide open Committee work time before or after meetings		60.0%	12
<b>Make discussions more issue-based and encourage participants to prepare for topics in advance</b>		<b>80.0%</b>	16
Other		15.0%	3
		<i>answered question</i>	<b>20</b>
		<i>skipped question</i>	<b>4</b>

**7. If you checked "other" on question 4, please provide further detail**

		Response Count
		4
		<i>answered question</i>
		<b>4</b>
		<i>skipped question</i>
		<b>20</b>

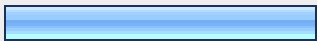
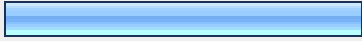




8. Forums for the next two Council meetings will likely be focused on (1) Visioning Ecosystem Based Management (as decided at June 2007 Council meeting), and (2) Climate Change or Ocean Management (Spring- at the request of Massachusetts). What issues would you like discussed as agenda items at the Working Group meetings? (check all that apply)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Offshore energy planning		23.5%	4
<b>Climate change and sea-level rise adaptation</b>		<b>52.9%</b>	9
Ocean planning and multiple use management		47.1%	8
Habitat restoration best practices/case studies		41.2%	7
Effects of contaminants on human health		17.7%	3
Sustainable industries		35.3%	6
Other		35.3%	6
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>17</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>7</b>

9. If you checked "other," please provide your ideas

		Response Count
		7
		<b>answered question</b>
		<b>7</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>
		<b>17</b>

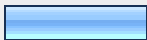


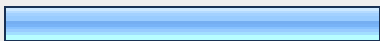
**10. What issues would you like discussed in separate forums to be scheduled in conjunction with the October and March Working Group meetings? (check all that apply)**


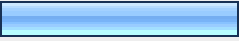
		Response Percent	Response Count
Offshore energy planning		33.3%	6
<b>Climate change and sea-level rise adaptation</b>		<b>38.9%</b>	7
Ocean planning and multiple use management		27.8%	5
Habitat restoration best practices/case studies		16.7%	3
<b>Sustainable industries</b>		<b>38.9%</b>	7
Other		11.1%	2
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>18</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>6</b>

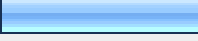
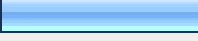
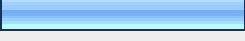

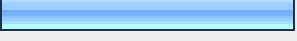

**11. If you checked "other," please provide further detail.**

		Response Count
		3
		<b>answered question</b>
		<b>3</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>
		<b>21</b>

**12. What should be the schedule for Working Group meetings?**

		Response Percent	Response Count
1 day = 8 hours (9 AM – 5 PM)		15.0%	3
1.5 days = 11 hours (Day One: 9 AM – 5 PM, Day Two: 9 AM – NOON)		30.0%	6
1.5 days = 11 hours + 0.5 day for Committee work time		15.0%	3
<b>2 days = 7 hours (Day One: 1 – 5 PM, Day Two: 9 AM – NOON)</b>		<b>40.0%</b>	8
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>20</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>4</b>

13. If the Working Group met for 1.5 or 2 days, would you participate in a work-related field trip such as a tour or site visit?			Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, I would participate in the meeting and a field trip.			75.0%	15
No, I would just come for the meeting.			25.0%	5
			<b>answered question</b>	<b>20</b>
			<b>skipped question</b>	<b>4</b>

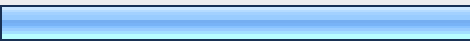

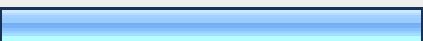
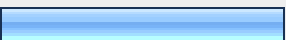
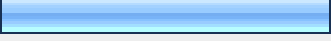
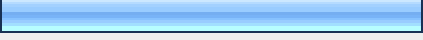
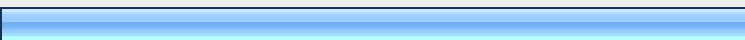
14. To further strengthen our interpersonal relationships, which of the following would you like the Secretariat to organize? (check all that apply)			Response Percent	Response Count
Carpooling to meetings			21.1%	4
Yoga before meetings			21.1%	4
Small group problem-solving exercises during meetings			26.3%	5
Group dinner at local restaurant on one Working Group meeting night			79.0%	15
Social gathering after meeting (dinner on your own)			31.6%	6
Other			10.5%	2
			<b>answered question</b>	<b>19</b>
			<b>skipped question</b>	<b>5</b>

15. If you checked "other," please provide further detail.		Response Count
		3
		<b>answered question</b>
		<b>3</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>
		<b>21</b>


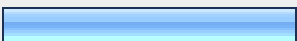
**16. What other improvements could we make to the Working Group so that your participation is more enjoyable and is a better use of your limited time?**

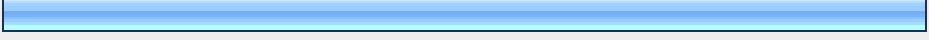

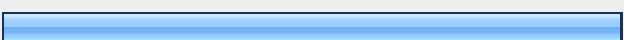
		Response Count
		11
<i>answered question</i>		<b>11</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>13</b>

**17. Over the past year, the Working Group has discussed internal communication issues. One issue relates to email communications.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Responses to all emails should be shared with the entire group originally involved in a conversation thread ("reply to all" individuals listed in original message - do not remove people from list or add others as the discussion continues)		50.0%	10
Responses to scheduling and other logistical email requests should be sent to Administrative Assistant (no "reply to all")		60.0%	12
When a question is posed and individuals are polled for a response, failure to reply to emails by dates noted implies agreement		45.0%	9
Do not forward emails without original author's approval		30.0%	6
Do not include email text verbatim in meeting agendas, briefing notes, or other materials		35.0%	7
When distributing material, avoid duplication between lists and overlapping individuals		45.0%	9
<b>Use a descriptive "subject line" and indicate if a decision is requested or if it is for information purposes</b>		<b>80.0%</b>	<b>16</b>
<i>answered question</i>			<b>20</b>
<i>skipped question</i>			<b>4</b>



18. Does the Council need a Harassment Policy?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
No		68.2%	15
Yes (by checking this box, you will be provided with an opportunity to select options in the next window)		31.8%	7
<i>answered question</i>			<b>22</b>
<i>skipped question</i>			<b>2</b>

19. Yes, and I believe that the items below should be included.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
The policy would apply to all individuals involved in any Council activity (i.e. conference call, meeting, correspondence)		100.0%	6
Circumstances and definition for sexual harassment		83.3%	5
Circumstances and definition for managerial harassment		83.3%	5
Statement that when harassment is encountered, the individual will document situation, provide copies to people involved, and place it on file in Council archives		66.7%	4
<i>answered question</i>			<b>6</b>
<i>skipped question</i>			<b>18</b>

20. Is there anything else that you would like to recommend for operation improvements or policy additions?		
		Response Count
		6
<i>answered question</i>		<b>6</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>18</b>

## Working Group Survey open-ended responses

### 3. If no, how can we improve communication while still ensuring that we delegate effectively to the Secretariat and Management and Finance?

- Regular, quick updates to the WG from M&F on the topics they are dealing with and the decisions taken
- The Agendas are too long, one page one day. Background should be one page
- send around minutes to entire wg
- define what types of decisions are made by the Secretariat team and the M&F committee, do not include contractors on either team in terms of decision making authority
- provide copies of minutes on the website for those interested in reading them, make everyone aware they are there
- circulate minutes to all
- I am new to the Committee - my lack of information is due to that, not the Committee.
- advise WG in advance of the M&F meeting agenda and how to call-in.

### 7. If you checked "other" on question 4, please provide further detail

- Less issues, more products/projects
- Many, if not most, WG meetings include invited presentations by groups/individuals local to the hosting institution about broad issues of concern in the GOM. This is certainly interesting, but I do not think this is the best use of WG meeting time. There are many other avenues for WG members to learn about marine and coastal issues through their jobs; For many WG members, participation in the WG is a collateral duty, and meeting attendance is at the expense of other primary employment responsibilities (in both time and travel funds). I feel strongly that WG time should be focused on issues that directly advance GOMC commitments as outlined in the Action Plan. While always interesting, these peripheral presentations take time away from WG. It is impossible for me to travel to 4 2-day meetings per year, and I have often thought that the frequency of meetings could be cut to 2-3 if these outside; presentations were eliminated.
- jurisdictional based
- Make decisions by voting as the Council does, instead of consensus.

### 9. If you checked other please provide your ideas

- CANUSLANT - oil spill preparedness and response under long-standing US-Canada collaboration
- discussion is good, but I want to know the Action that is requested of me during the meeting.
- related to 'effects of contaminants on human health' is the issue of emerging diseases and contaminants
- regional eco labelling
- understanding ecosystem form and function and how it relates to condition and translates to human standards of living
- Discussion on how GOMC fits into landscape of other regional entities in the Northeast.
- Council Role in cross-border ocean data integration and interoperability

### 11. If you checked other, please provide further detail.

- Question 12 & 13 - answered that way only because it's in MA. if in ME or CA I would want more time 1.5 days or 2 days meeting; I would participate in field trips (but not in MA)
- Not sure what is meant by separate forums but would suggest not adding extra days to WG meetings
- regional eco labelling

### 15. If you checked other, please provide further detail.

- NB: problem-solving breakouts during meeting should be focused on agenda item, should not be conducted to help learn how to solve problems
- exchange for (weekly work) sessions in other jurisdictions
- Yoga is a good idea, but it might be interesting to broaden the activity list based on the experiences/skills of WG members. For example, someone might be able to lead a yoga session, another meeting we could have someone give a slide show about boat building, or an a wine-tasting

class, etc.. The idea being that it would give us an opportunity to share and learn with each other about WG members' interests and expertise outside of the Council realm, and create a fun learning atmosphere.

**16. What other improvements could we make to the Working Group so that your participation is more enjoyable and is a better use of your limited time?**

- coordination of meeting times with Cat ferry schedule if meeting in Yarmouth, Bar Harbor, or Portland
- The agenda should be one page one day, Not as dense, keep it simple. Tell me what action you want me to take (discussion, yes, no) The briefing book is too large - keep it simple. These are the projects & their status, these are other items we need to decide on or take a direction; Decisions need to be made.
- Stay focused on issue-based discussions, not budgetary and organizational details. Review results of mini-grant and other projects to evaluate progress in meeting Action Plan objectives and lessons learned, etc. More sharing of relevant work going on in various jurisdictions.
- Better communication before the meeting, more in advance, so we know what the agenda items are and can prepare.
- Pls see answer to #7.
- re-emphasize make optimal use of people's time while at the meeting; engage more people more of the time
- better decision making resolution process remove the jack factor, be more focused on ongoing jurisdictional issues. organize events or take time for basic education of members enhance their knowledge base so they benefit personally and corporately as well as council-wise"
- dsrop the consent agenda, require committee reports at each meeting, plenty of time to discuss issues so consensus can be reached
- Demonstrated-Needs; funding awards for travel/accommodation for participants.
- Get briefing notes out 2 weeks in advance and have more diverse contributions to agenda (more different people in charge of agenda topics). Make the meetings very efficient - long days are OK as we travel far to get there.
- a brief 5-10 minute update by the committee chairs of recent project activities; Provide funding for travel to WG members; face-to-face retreat style meeting between WG and Council members, independent of GOMC staff, should be convened to improve interactions and understanding of purposes.

**20. Is there anything else that you would like to recommend for operation improvements or policy additions?**

- Harrassement policy - obviously we need one if the question is being ask. This needs to be addressed but not by the full working group, but the people involved.
- Better communication on what Management and Finance and the Secretariate are doing, what decisions are made and reasons. If they are making decisions that involve a committee or contractor, that group or individual should be involved in the process.
- make the decision-making mechanisms clear, and avoid giving decision-making authority to contractors
- less time discussing at working group meetings
- External review of Council operations followed by recommendations with the ultimate goal towards improved EBM for the GOM
- Streamline functions of overlapping groups, ie. M&F comm.; Council Advisory Group; Look for common functions and individuals across various groups; look to eliminate duplication of effort.