

What is Ecosystem based management (EBM) and why do we need it?

Workshop leader: Margaret (Peg) Brady, NOAA

Panelists: Jason Link, NOAA Fisheries & Betsy Nicholson, NOAA Ocean Service

Summary: The panelists provided an overview of ecosystem-based management (EBM) as a strategy to sustain marine ecosystem health. The management of marine ecosystems is transitioning towards EBM which is informed by science and includes key elements such as: understanding the connections and linkages between and within ecosystems as well as with social and economic systems; understanding the cumulative impacts of multiple activities both within and among activities, applying adaptive management strategies, and undertaking trade-off evaluations. EBM is a stated priority of the National Ocean Policy. The panel and participants explored steps that the Sea Grant network could undertake to facilitate the implementation of and improve the understanding of the concept of EBM. Specifically the panelists focused on the implementation of the ecosystem based fisheries management policy and the implementation of the Northeast Regional Ocean plan.