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Annual Meeting of the Marine Mammal Commission

A Way Forward –

Any of Three Doors and at Least One Goal Line

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Where is the Goal Line?

- Develop metrics to evaluate MMC and Agency performance. For 2015 for example – address:
 - Fewer than 20% of 400 domestic stocks had adequate assessments
 - Less than 50% of the funding needed to achieve mandates under MMPA and ESA was available to NMFS
 - Discretionary funding for research in the Arctic for NMFS was less than \$1 million
 - NOAA Days at Sea for marine mammal surveys was 30-60% of minimum needed



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“Three Doors- A Choice for the MMC”

- 1) More of the same
- 2) Lead the charge to re-ignite interest in marine mammal conservation
- 3) Lead the charge to ignite concern about the impact of climate change on marine mammal conservation



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“Three Doors - #1”

1) More of the same

- Broadly attempt to implement strategic plan
- Work with Congress, the responsible regulatory agencies, and industry and NGOs to support unfunded needs
- Focus on Large Marine Ecosystems
- Focus on capacity building in US and internationally



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“Three Doors- #2”

- 2) Lead the charge to re-ignite interest in marine mammal and marine ecosystem conservation
 - Focus on what the MMC can do in the next 2 years to influence the next 10
 - Focus on problem identification and determining stakeholder interests
 - Promote innovative solutions and partnerships among Congress, the responsible regulatory agencies, and for-profit and non-profit organizations

“Three Doors - #3”

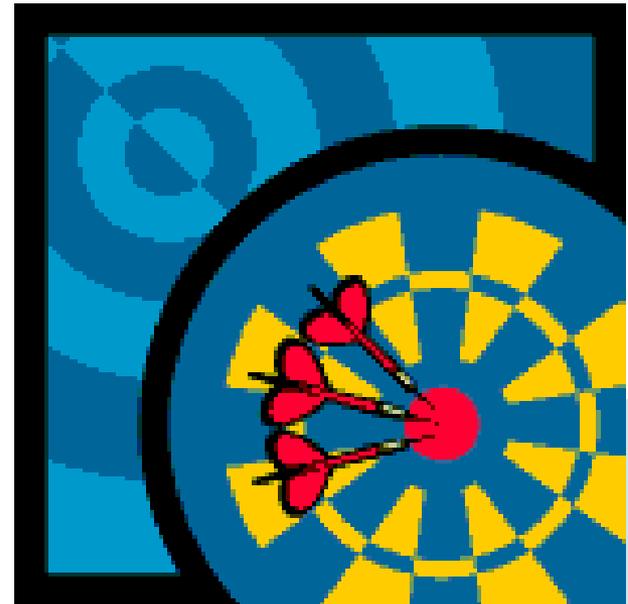
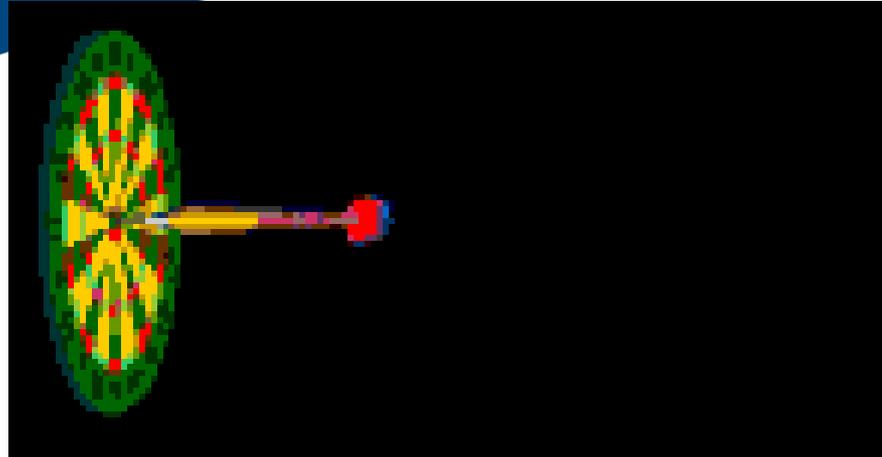


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- 3) Lead the charge to ignite concern about the impact of climate change on marine mammal and marine ecosystem conservation
 - Focus on the “big gorilla” in the room
 - Support long term monitoring
 - Help identify winners and losers; for losers – make an effort to protect refugia (eg., polar bear)
 - Encourage ecosystem process studies and modeling efforts



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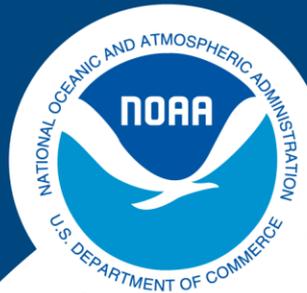




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Thank you – it's been an honor (albeit short)

- **Acknowledgement for help and understanding:**
 - **Shannon Atkinson**
 - **Lisa Ballance, John Bengtson, Bob Brownell**
 - **Joe Geraci**
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 - **Rebecca Lent, Lloyd Lowry**
 - **Richard Merrick**
 - **Ian Stirling**



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Background Slide- #1 (MMC Strategic Plan. Feb 2014)

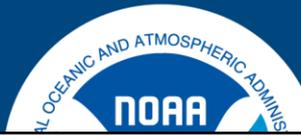
- SO#1 – Marine mammal populations in the Arctic are maintained as viable functioning elements of their ecosystems
- SO#2 – Robust mitigation and monitoring measures are developed and implemented ... to mitigate impacts of oil and gas ...
- SO#3 – Marine mammal strandings are more thoroughly investigated ...
- SO#4 – Anthropogenic threats are identified and reduced
- SO#5 – Understanding of human impacts is improved



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Background Slide - #2 (MMC Strategic Plan. Feb 2014)- High Priority Projects

- #1 – Promote research, monitoring and conservation efforts in the Arctic
- #2 – Develop global priorities for research and conservation
- #3 – Promote long-term monitoring
- #4 – Promote development of health monitoring system for marine mammals
- #5 – Improve marine mammal stock assessments



Background Slide - #3

MMC Priorities Document (April 2014)

Criteria	Principle	Priority
Value	Prevent loss of species, habitat and ecosystem function	Address impacts of climate change
Status	Conserve ecosystem	Populations of special concern
Vulnerability	Monitor populations and ecosystems	Assess status and trends
Uncertainty	Conserve stocks	Fishery impacts
Institutional capacity	Minimize human impacts	Impacts of oil/gas development