**North Atlantic Right Whale Species in the Spotlight: Overview and Implementation of a NOAA Fisheries 5-year Action Plan**

NOAA Fisheries designated North Atlantic right whales as a Species in the Spotlight (SIS) in 2019. In 2021, NOAA Fisheries completed the SIS Priority Action Plan for North Atlantic right whales as is required for species identified as among the most at-risk of extinction under this initiative. The plan builds off the North Atlantic right whale recovery plan and was developed with input from NOAA Fisheries’ regional implementation teams. It identifies the following urgent actions we can take in the next 5 years to halt the decline of this species:

● Protect North Atlantic Right Whales from Entanglement in Fishing Gear

● Protect North Atlantic Right Whales from Vessel Strikes

● Investigate North Atlantic Right Whale Population Abundance, Status, Distribution, and Health

● Collaborate with Canada on North Atlantic Right Whale Recovery

● Improve our Knowledge of Additional Factors Limiting Right Whale Recovery

The action plan will help NOAA Fisheries and its partners focus resources, expand partnerships, and increase public outreach during the next five years to promote recovery of right whales. We focus on the primary threats for right whales, while also highlighting other key actions (e.g., further understand climate impacts on right whales). Partnerships are critical to North Atlantic right whale recovery and the Plan identifies many important efforts underway. We will provide an overview of the action plan, note progress NOAA Fisheries has made on these actions including work with our partners, and highlight opportunities for additional partnerships.