

# Reporting Guidance

## Coastal Zone Management Act, Section 312 Evaluation Metrics and Recommendations

July 2019



Office for Coastal Management  
National Ocean Service  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
United States Department of Commerce

## Overview

This document provides guidance to coastal management programs and national estuarine research reserves on requirements for reporting on the status of Section 312 evaluation recommendations (necessary actions and recommendations) and their Section 312 evaluation metrics. The portion of the guidance covering evaluation metrics applies to reporting years 2017–2022 for reserves and 2018–2023 for coastal programs.

Section 312 evaluations provide recommendations to programs to ensure that they are in compliance with the Coastal Zone Management Act and its implementing regulations, and to improve program effectiveness. This information is collected to determine a program's progress towards implementing Section 312 evaluation recommendations. The information is collated annually into a report for Office for Coastal Management leadership to help inform management decisions and identify system-wide challenges.

The Section 312 evaluation metrics were developed to track the effectiveness of individual programs. Each coastal program and reserve chose three metrics based on existing national performance measurement systems. Coastal programs were required to have the national coastal hazards performance measure as one of their three measures. The evaluation metrics were developed in consultation with the Office for Coastal Management and are based on a program's goals and objectives. Each metric contains a goal, objective, strategy, performance measure, and target. Completed evaluation metrics were approved by the Office for Coastal Management.

## Section 312 Evaluation Recommendation Reporting

### When and Where to Report

The information should be included in the annual performance progress reports through NOAA Grants Online reporting.

- For coastal programs, this is in Section B of the annual performance progress report.
- Reserves do not have a specific section where this information is included in the progress report. It is preferred, but not required, that recommendation reports be submitted as a separate document in the performance progress reporting task module in NOAA Grants Online.

### Recommendation Report Format

**Recommendation** type ("Necessary Action" or "Recommendation.") and full text of recommendation.

#### Short Summary

- Description of key activities and results that address the recommendation during the reporting period. Most descriptions should be 1-5 sentences.
- If the status of the recommendations is either "not started" or "not on schedule," include a short explanation and describe any plans to address the recommendation.

**Deadline(s)** established by the evaluation recommendation, if applicable.

**Status** (“Completed” + completion date, “In-progress,” “Not on Schedule,” or “Not Started”)

### **Closing out a Recommendation**

If a program has fully addressed a recommendation during a reporting period, it should mark the status as completed in its performance progress report. For this submittal, a brief paragraph summary of how the recommendation was addressed over multiple reporting periods should be included. A recommendation that is not a necessary action may also be marked as complete if a program explores pursuing the recommendation but determines it is not in the best interest of the program. A brief paragraph summary describing how the conclusion was reached should be included.

After a recommendation is reported as complete in the performance progress report, and the site liaison concurs through approval of the performance progress report, no future reporting is necessary. If you have questions about whether a recommendation should be closed out, please consult with your site liaison. Please note that not all recommendations are written as tasks with end points, and in some cases programs will need to continue to report on recommendations until the next evaluation.

## **Section 312 Evaluation Metric Reporting**

### **When and Where to Report**

Coastal programs and reserves should report through existing performance measure databases, following existing deadline requirements. No separate reporting is required through the performance progress reports submitted via NOAA Grants Online.

The Evaluation Team will compile the data after they are entered and validated by the Office for Coastal Management staff. Because the office has multiple databases for performance measures, the evaluation team will pull the data from each database and compile annually for evaluation purposes.

If revisions are made to data that are counted toward an evaluation metric target after the data have been validated by office staff members, please contact the evaluation team lead, or let your site liaison know so that they can contact the evaluation team lead, and the target numbers can be updated.

#### *NERR Research and Monitoring Database Only*

The research and monitoring database captures data by calendar year. The evaluation team will download data from this database after February 28 each year. The first full data download will begin in 2020, and it will cover two years of data.