



Importance of Strategic Direction

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Strategic Outline

- Who are we?
 - Mission
- How did we get here?
 - History
- Where are we going?
 - Planning

Who Are We?

The American Fisheries Society (AFS) is the world's oldest and largest organization dedicated to strengthening the fisheries profession, advancing fisheries science, and conserving fisheries resources

Who Are We?

“The mission of the American Fisheries Society is to advance sound science, promote professional development, and disseminate science-based fisheries information for the global protection, conservation, and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems.”

AFS 2020 Vision

How Did We Get Here?

- History
 - Established in 1870
 - Originally the “American Society for Fish Culturists”
 - 126 Presidents (including 7 women)
 - 5 Executive Directors (1st in 1965)
 - 141 Annual Meetings (1st in New York City)

How Did We Get Here?

- Guiding Documents
 - Constitution and Rules
 - Procedures Manual
- Leadership Team
 - President and Officers
 - Executive Director and Staff
 - Governing Board and Management Committee
 - Unit Leaders and Committee Chairs

Where Are We Going?

- AFS Strategic Plan
- President's Plan of Work
- Executive Director's Program of Work
- Unit plans and Committee charges

Importance of Planning

- Why plan?
 - Share the AFS vision, motivate volunteers
 - Coordinate efforts across AFS Units
 - Increase effectiveness of AFS mission and strategic plan
- Planning truisms:
 - “Failure to plan is planning to fail”
 - “Plan your work and work your plan”

Strategic Plan vs. Work Plan

Strategic Plan

- Multi-year plan for the Society (and for Units)
- Reflects core values, AFS mission, constitution, inspires future vision
- Re-imagined every 5 years

Work Plans

- President's annual plan of work selects major priorities, reflects themes, engages membership
- Executive Director's annual program of work focuses on priorities and staff activities
- Work plans identify "immediate" priorities: who, what and when

AFS 2020 Vision

AFS Strategic Plan for 2010-2014

- "In short; we must plan for the unpredictable, seize opportunity and thrive on change. We will use our collective intellectual capacity to the fullest to achieve our goals."
- Goals:
 1. Global Fisheries Leadership
 2. Education/Continuing Education
 3. Value of Membership

AFS 2020 Vision

1. Global Fisheries Leadership

- Promote fisheries conservation throughout North America and the world, at all levels of government and society, and among all levels of AFS by supporting sound science and networking opportunities.
- Increase science-based fisheries conservation by interactions with AFS members and government policy makers.
- Promote fisheries conservation through development and dissemination of public outreach materials.

AFS 2020 Vision

2. Education/Continuing Education

- Encourage educational institutions at all levels to maintain excellent academic programs in fisheries sciences and related disciplines to assure recruitment of fisheries professionals that meet the needs of employers.
- Ensure that the fisheries professional certification program reflects the integration of many sciences relevant to fisheries while ensuring its recognition as a mark of scientific excellence and expertise.
- Provide a wide array of continuing education opportunities using innovative methods to reach the widest possible audience of fisheries professionals.

AFS 2020 Vision

3. Value of Membership

- Determine and respond to the needs and opinions of AFS members.
- Enhance participation of students and professionals at all levels of the society to assure recruitment, retention, and leadership development into the future.
- Promote diversity within AFS and the fisheries profession.
- Develop innovative and cost effective methods to make fisheries science and management information readily available to AFS members and all levels of government entities worldwide.
- Practice good governance and organizational management.

2011-2012 Plan of Work

"Fisheries Networks: Building Ecological, Social and Professional Relationships"

- AFS is a large collaborative network of fisheries scientists (e.g., over 130 committees, boards, sections, divisions, chapters, and subunits)
- Ecological networks are well-studied in fisheries science (e.g., food webs)
- Social network analysis is an emerging area in fisheries science (e.g., fishers, fishing villages, fishing industry, consumers of fishes)

2011-2012 Plan of Work

1. Global Fisheries Leadership

- Promote and participate in the 6th World Fisheries Congress: “Sustainable Fisheries in a Changing World”
- Update AFS website and web services following recommendations of Electronic Services Advisory Board

2011-2012 Plan of Work

2. Education/Continuing Education

- Co-organize and co-lead “Education and Employment Conference” sponsored by the Coalition for Natural Resource Societies
- Implement recommendations for revising AFS Professional Certification Program

2011-2012 Plan of Work

3. Value of Membership

- Conduct a compensation survey for fisheries professionals
- Address the “affiliate” membership issue
- Evaluate Society governance, including the size and structure of the Governing Board

Closing Questions

- Who is your Unit?
- How did it get there?
- Where is it going?
- What is your leadership strategy?



3 Characteristics of a Successful Organization

1. Maintains a reputation for value
 - Has a portfolio of valuable assets that yield a return on investment by members
2. Creates a nimble infrastructure
 - Allows for quick seizure of opportunities to create value
3. Maintains an enjoyable culture
 - Based on trust and communications

Past President, Mary Fabrizio