NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Fisheries Information System (FIS)

Project Selection Process (PSP)

Final, V8.1

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Document Location

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Change History

Release Number	Date	Description
1.0	5/22/2006	Initial release.
5.0	9/5/2006	Converted to a directed process format.
6.0	9/13/2006	Minor revisions to wording.
7.0	9/14/2006	Revisions to wording and additional detail.
7.5	9/22/2006	Add details regarding evaluation criteria to Phase II, Task 1.
8.0	4/4/2007	Added roles and responsibilities and proposal evaluation criteria
8.1	4/10/2007	Clarified Phase II activities and included a proposal template as Appendix A

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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide a guide to the Project Selection Process (PSP) for the Fisheries Information System (FIS) Program. The PSP describes a directed approach to determining the high-priority projects and selecting project execution teams responsible for implementing the projects. (The directed approach is a method by which projects are selected based on predefined goals of the FIS Program Portfolios.)

This document is supported by the Program Gantt Chart and the Program Management Plan.

Project Selection Roles

Table 1 depicts roles and responsibilities of the various governance bodies in the FIS Project Selection Process.

Table 1 – FIS Project Selection Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Program Management Office (PMO)	Overall management, control, and facilitation of the project selection process
Program Management Team (PMT)	Provide leadership in establishing FIS Program priorities, project selection, and review and approval of the spend plan
Professional Specialty Groups (PSGs)	Supports the PMT by providing expert advice, guidance, and recommendations on FIS program needs, issues, and priorities

Project Selection Timeline

Table 2 outlines the timeline for the FIS Project Selection Process. The objective of the PSP is to identify and execute the projects that will achieve FIS goals. The following timeline defines how these projects are identified and the necessary time periods in which each task is due, in order to obtain the appropriate funding for each fiscal year.

Table 2 – FIS Project Selection Timeline

Task	Month Due
Phase I: Establish Project Priorities	
1. Review Existing Priorities and Future Needs	March
2. Develop Estimates for Schedule and Cost	March / April
3. Review and Approve Combination of Projects	April
Phase II: Select Projects and Execution Teams	
1. Publish Request for Proposals (RFP)	May

Task	Month Due
2. Review Proposals and Select Project Team	August
3. Develop Final Spend Plan	September

Project Selection Process Description

This section provides a description of each task represented in Table 2.

Phase I: Establish Project Priorities

The focus of Phase I is to evaluate the goals and priorities of the FIS program, and to select the high-priority projects to be funded in the upcoming fiscal year.

Task 1 – Review Existing Priorities and Future Needs

The initial vision of the FIS program is provided by the Portfolios and Program Gantt Chart, which provide the strategic direction for FIS. These materials will be analyzed and validated as the initial step in Phase I in order to establish priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. Within this task, the FIS Program Management Office (PMO) and FIS Program Management Team (PMT) will meet to discuss the current priorities and to identify any new priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. (Prior to the March timeframe, PMT members will identify and assess regional priorities in order to prepare for the program priority discussion.) Based upon this discussion, the highest priority projects from the Program Gantt Chart will be selected and defined further in Task 2.

Activities that will be performed in Task 1 are:

Activity	Responsible Party
Review Program Gantt Chart and Eight Portfolios	FIS PMO
Discuss Program Priorities	FIS PMO, FIS PMT
Select High-priority Projects	FIS PMO, FIS PMT

Outcome: Identification of High-priority Projects

Responsible Party: FIS PMO, FIS PMT

Month Due: March

Task 2 – Develop Estimates for Schedule and Cost

In Task 2, the high priority projects that were selected by the PMT for the upcoming fiscal year will be further defined by the PMO with assistance from designated SMEs. The cost and schedule estimates of these high priority

projects will be developed in order to assist in the decision making process for fiscal year funding. Based upon the cost and schedule estimates, the FIS PMO will recommend a combination of projects that satisfy budget constraints and allow the FIS program to progress toward its goals.

Activities that will be performed in Task 2 are:

Activity	**Responsible Party**
Identify Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)	FIS PMO, FIS PMT, PSGs
Meet with Subject Matter Experts of High-priority Projects to Define Approach and Outcomes	FIS PMO
Develop Initial Work Breakdown Structure and Schedule of High-priority Projects	FIS PMO
Estimate Cost for High-priority Projects	FIS PMO
Recommend Combination of Projects	FIS PMO

Outcome: Estimates for Cost and Schedule for Each High-priority Project

Responsible Party: FIS PMO, FIS PMT

Month Due: March / April

Task 3 – Review and Approve Combination of Projects

After a project recommendation list has been created, the FIS PMT will meet to review and discuss the recommended projects. During this meeting, risks, project priorities, existing projects, and funding issues will be discussed in order to decide on the appropriate combination of projects. Based upon the discussion, the FIS PMT will review the recommended combination of projects and revise if necessary, then will create a list of fundable projects as the outcome of this task.

Activities that will be performed in Task 3 are:

Activity	**Responsible Party**
Meet and Discuss Recommended Combination of Projects at PMT Meeting	FIS PMO, FIS PMT
Revise the Recommended Combination of Projects	FIS PMT
Create List of Fundable Projects	FIS PMO, FIS PMT

Outcome: Approved List of Projects for Funding

Responsible Party: FIS PMO, FIS PMT

Month Due: April

Phase II: Select Projects and Execution Teams

The second phase of the Project Selection Process is focused on selecting a project execution team for each fundable project. The project execution team will be the group responsible for executing a fundable project.

Task 1 – Publish Request for Proposals (RFP)

As an initial step in Task 1, the FIS PMO will initiate the proposal process by identifying the candidate project execution team. Under the directed process, the project team will likely be identified during Project Selection in Phase I. If a project team has not been identified, the PMO will solicit input from the PMT and/or PSGs to identify candidate teams. Once the teams have been identified, they will be invited to participate in the proposal process.

The PMO will create a Request for Proposals (RFP) that will include, at minimum, a brief description of the project and an explanation of desired goals and objectives. Each candidate project execution team will be asked to provide a Proposal which includes the following:

- Project Description: A brief description of the project's goals, objectives, benefits, and expected outcomes.
- Management Approach: The management approach shall describe the team structure (including identification of the Project Sponsor and Manager), risk management, and communication methods.
- Schedule and Milestones: The technical approach shall describe the high-level activities (in terms of a work breakdown structure), schedule (activity duration), milestones, and deliverables that will used to generate timely, accurate, and meaningful results. The potential to leverage existing tools, resources, and products should also be provided.
- Cost: A cost estimate shall be included which describes the labor and other indirect costs that will be needed to execute the project.

A template for completing the Project Proposal can be found in Appendix A.

Activities that will be performed in Task 1 are:

Activity	**Responsible Party**
Identify Candidate Project Execution Teams	FIS PMO, PMT, PSGs
Create Request for Proposals for each Fundable Project	FIS PMO, PSGs

Request Proposals from Candidate Project Execution Teams	FIS PMO

Outcome: Request for Proposals for Each Fundable Project

Responsible Party: FIS PMO

Month Due: May / June

Task 2 – Review Proposals and Select Project Team

After the RFP has been distributed, candidate project execution teams will have a minimum of 30 days to submit a proposal to the PMO. The PMO will review received proposals to ensure that all required information has been provided. If information is missing, the PMO will contact the proposal authors to request the required information.

The PMO will present the project proposals to the PMT for their evaluation and approval. The PMT should use the proposal evaluation criteria (see Appendix A – Proposal Evaluation Criteria) to help determine the degree to which each proposal will likely meet the goals and objectives of the project as described in the RFP. The PMT may approve, tentatively approve, or reject each proposal. If the PMT approves the proposal, the project is selected for incorporation into the spend plan. The PMT may also tentatively approve the proposal pending additional information or adjustment to the project scope or direction. In this case, the project is included in the spend plan pending final approval in Task 3 below. If the PMT rejects the proposal, the project is not considered for funding during the current spending cycle.

Activities that will be performed in Task 2 are:

Activity	**Responsible Party**
Review Proposals for Completeness	FIS PMO
Evaluate Proposals	FIS PMT
Approve Project Team Proposal	FIS PMT

Outcome: Project Team Proposal Approved for Each Fundable Project

Responsible Party: FIS PMO, FIS PMT, Evaluation Committee

Month Due: August

Task 3 – Develop Final Spend Plan

After the projects and execution teams have been selected, the original cost estimate for all fundable projects will be reviewed and revised if necessary. Any

additional information for project proposals tentatively approved is incorporated. A Draft Spend Plan is created by the PMO and distributed to the PMT for review and approval.

Based upon any funding revisions and approval by the PMT, the Final Spend Plan will be created. At that time, the project execution teams will be provided with specific information to begin planning their funded projects.

Activities that will be performed in Task 3 are:

Activity	**Responsible Party**
Revise Project Proposals and Create Draft Spend Plan	FIS PMO
Review and Approve Draft Spend Plan	FIS PMT
Create Final Spend Plan	FIS PMO

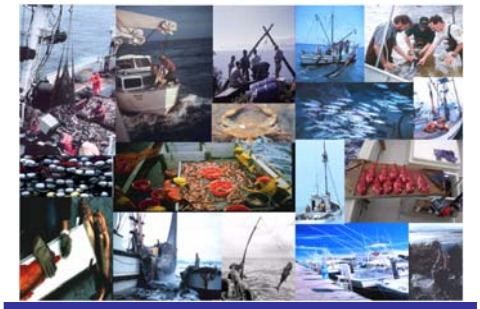
Outcome: Final Spend Plan and List of Funded Projects

Responsible Party: FIS PMO, FIS PMT

Month Due: September

Appendix A – Proposal Template

The following document is a template that should be used by candidate project teams to create their project proposals.



Fisheries Information System

Proposal

National Marine Fisheries Service

Project:

Prepared by:

Version:

Date:

Contact: FIS.PMO@noaa.gov

Document Location

This document is stored in the Fisheries Information System (FIS) documentation repository. The FIS Program Management Office (PMO) retains the source of this document on the Fisheries Statistics Division shared server.

Document Development

Subject: Change history for *Proposal*

Comments: Comments regarding this document should be sent via email to the FIS.PMO@noaa.gov

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1.0		Initial release

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1 Project Description

1.1 Goals and Objectives

<Briefly describe the goals and objectives for establishing the project. How does this project directly relate to the mission, vision, goals and objectives of the FIS Program? Why is the project important? What are the benefits and intended outcomes?>

2 Management Approach

2.1 Resource Management

<Determine the list of project participants, including their roles and responsibilities, and the name of each person who will be fulfilling each role. As a minimum you will need to define the Project Sponsor and/or stakeholders, Project Manager, Project Point of Contact.

In addition you may have one or more of the following parties in your project structure: Project Team, Reference Groups, Working Groups, and Consultants. If these participants are critical to your project, please list them as well.>

Table 1: Project Members

Project Role	Name	Responsibilities
Project Sponsor		
Project Manager		
Project Point of Contact		

2.2 Communication Management

<Provide a summary of the overall key communication and management issues for the project, concentrating on what will contribute to the project's success or where a lack of communication can lead to failure. Modify the example as needed for your project.>

The following strategies have been established to promote effective communication within this project.

- The Project Manager will present project status to the project Sponsors on a monthly basis; however, *ad hoc* meetings will be established at the Project Manager's discretion as issues or changes arise.
- The Project Manager will provide written meeting minutes for all meetings relevant to the project and distribute attendees, and other participants upon request.
- The project Sponsors will be notified via e-mail of all urgent issues. Issue notification will include a description of the issue, time constraints, possible impacts, and resolutions if proposed.
- The Project Team will have weekly update/status meetings to review completed tasks and determine current work priorities. Minutes will be produced from all meetings.
- All electronic Project Documents will be maintained in by the Project Manager and stored for reference in QuickPlace.

2.3 Risk Management

<A risk analysis should be undertaken upon commencement of the project and regularly reviewed throughout its life cycle.

Include a summary of the major risks, mitigation strategies, estimated additional costs to deploy the strategies (these should be included in the budget) and an overall assessment as to the level of risk associated with the project. Also discuss how risks will be managed in relation to risk identification, reviews and reporting.>

3 Project Estimates

3.1 Schedule and Milestones

<List the project output or deliverables. These may be new or modified products, services, documents, or management practices that need to be implemented to meet each identified outcome.>

List the milestones and major activities for the project. Milestones are indicated by a blank scheduled start date, these are the dates identified during the initial planning stage used to monitor progress of the project. Activities in the predecessor column must be completed prior to the activity commencing.

For this task, you may use Microsoft Project, if this software is available.>

Table 3: Project Schedule – Major Tasks and Milestones

ID	Activity Description	Planned Start	Planned Finish	Predecessor
1	**Task 1**	MM/DD/YY	MM/DD/YY	
2	Activity 1.1			
3	Activity 1.2			
4	**Task 2**			
5	Activity 2.1			
6	Activity 2.2			
7	Deliverable			6

3.2 Cost Estimates

<Summarize the project's budget and expected overall budget projections.

Provide detailed list of resourcing requirements, for example human resources, IT equipment, information requirements, special equipment, etc. Use the following table to calculate the project cost estimates. Please note that the items listed in the Project Needs column are provided as examples only. Modify the list as suits the specific needs of the project.>

*Instructions: To calculate costs, place the totals for each category in the Total column on the right. To update the grand Total, click the last cell in the Total column. When the tab turns **gray**, right click and select the "Update Field" option.)*

Table 5: Cost Estimates

Project Need	Description	Estimated Cost, per item	Date Needed	Total
Hardware				
Software				
License Fees				
Service Contract or Maintenance Fees				
Testing Equipment or Facilities				
*** Additional Project Staff**				
Consultants				
Training				
Project-specific Travel				
Administrative Support Fees				
Other				
			Grand TOTAL	$ 0.00

Appendix B – Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Each proposed FIS project will be evaluated using a standard set of criteria. The purpose of this evaluation process is to select the best possible investment projects for funding through the FIS Program. The following table describes the standard criteria by which all proposed projects will be evaluated:

Criteria	Description
Strategic Alignment	The project is aligned with overall FIS strategy and is strategically important; i.e. the project supports high priority initiatives
Business Impact	The project offers important benefits to the agency and its stakeholders. The project supports multiple goals and provides cross-Regional or agency-wide benefit
Technical Feasibility	The project utilizes a sound technical approach, has a well-defined management approach, and qualified staff resources
Implementation Cost	The project cost required to deliver the business benefit
Implementation Time	The project will deliver benefits in a short timeframe.
Leverage Investment	The project builds on strengths, experiences, and competencies and leverages existing investment in tools, resources, and products
Risk/Complexity	The project involves minimal risk and involves limited implementation complexity

The following form is a template to be used for the scoring of individual project proposals:

Evaluation Criteria – Form

Project Number	Project Number
Project Name	Name of the Project
Evaluation Date	Month/Day/Year

Scoring Mechanism	**Scoring Steps**
The level of contribution was determined by the degree to which the proposal meets each evaluation criterion. The level of contribution is defined as: **1**: Minimal or no contribution **2**: Low contribution **3**: Moderate contribution **4**: Strong contribution **5**: Extreme contribution	1. Assign a level of contribution score to each evaluation criterion (for more details see the scoring mechanism). 2. Multiply each level of contribution score by the weight per each evaluation criterion. 3. Annotate the result value of each evaluation criterion in the score per criterion column. 4. Add all the values in the score per criterion column to obtain the total benefit score for the proposal. 5. The proposal with the highest total score provided more benefits to the FIS Program.

Evaluation Criteria	**Weight**	**Level of Contribution**	**Score per Criterion**
1. Strategic Alignment	0.20		
2. Business Impact	0.20		
3. Technical Feasibility	0.15		
4. Implementation Cost	0.15		
5. Implementation Time	0.10		
6. Leverage Investment	0.10		
7. Risk/Complexity	0.10		
		Total Score	

The following table provides scoring guidelines for the evaluation criteria. Please note that this is just a guide and that judgment should be used to determine the value of a prospective project investment.

Criteria	**Minimal Contribution**	**Low Contribution**	**Moderate Contribution**	**Strong Contribution**	**Extreme Contribution**
Strategic Alignment	Little or no impact on FIS mission	Limited support of FIS mission activities	Moderately supports FIS mission activities	Strongly supports FIS mission activities	Supports critical FIS mission activities
Business Impact	Provides benefits to a single FIS partner	Provides benefits to a few FIS partners	Provides benefits to several FIS partners	Provides benefits to many FIS partners	Provides benefit to all or most FIS partners
Technical Feasibility	No or poorly defined plan	Limited confidence that plan will meet project objectives	Moderate confidence that plan will meet project objectives	Strong confidence that plan will meet project objectives	Very strong confidence that plan will meet project objectives
Implementation Cost	>$1M	$500K – 1M	$250K – 500K	$100K – 250K	<$100K
Implementation Time	>36 months	24 to 36 months	12 to 24 months	6 to 12 months	<6 months
Leverage Investment	No reuse of existing systems or investments	Minor reuse of existing systems or investments	Moderate reuse of existing systems or investments	Significant reuse of existing systems or investments	Extensive reuse of existing systems or investments
Risk/Complexity	Very high levels of risk/complexity	High levels of risk or complexity	Moderate levels risk/complexity	Low levels of risk or complexity	Little or no risk/complexity