



MANAGING *Our Nation's* **FISHERIES II**

Focus on the future

Registration Information

March 24 – 26, 2005

Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, D.C.

Sponsors: Regional Fisheries Management Councils, Interstate
Marine Fisheries Commissions, NOAA Fisheries
(National Marine Fisheries Service)

Managing our Nation's Fisheries II: Focus on the Future is the second conference in a series designed to improve the management of marine fisheries in the United States. The first conference, held in November 2003, focused on regional fishery management programs, their successes, and remaining challenges for managing our marine fisheries resources. The 2005 conference will focus on those challenges as well as on key issues for reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and on recent recommendations from the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy.

The conference format allows diverse perspectives on major issues and challenges. In a reflection of the regional council process, advisory panels will deliberate each issue and report to a conference committee composed of Council representatives from each region, NOAA Fisheries officials, and representatives from the Interstate Fisheries Commissions, Coast Guard, NOAA General Counsel, State Department, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Three advisory panels will discuss ecosystem-based management, strengthening scientific advice for management, and developing guidelines for Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) programs or other forms of dedicated access privileges. A single scientific and statistical committee will also address these major issues and produce findings for the main conference committee.

In addition, four smaller conference workshops will explore the contemporary issues of marine protected areas and coldwater corals, reconciling fisheries statutes, overall fisheries governance, and overfishing and stock rebuilding. A panel moderator will open these discussions, followed by presentations by three to four panel participants and an 'open-mike' session when audience members are invited to participate.



Please join us **March 24-26, 2005** in Washington D.C. to discuss the next steps toward the improvement of fisheries management in the U.S. Fishery participants, members of environmental groups, academia, research, state and federal agencies, interested members of the public, Congressional members or staff, and reporters covering fishery issues are all encouraged to attend. **PRE REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.**

See www.managingfisheries.org for more information.



Senator Ted Stevens, Alaska

A member of the Senate for 36 years, Ted Stevens is the most senior Republican Senator. Stevens is the co-author of the governing law for managing fisheries in the U.S., the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), which was renamed in his honor in 1996. Stevens holds the position of Senate President Pro Tempore, and is member of the Appropriations Committee and the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation.



Congressman Wayne Gilchrest, Maryland

Congressman Gilchrest serves as the Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife, and Oceans. In the 107th Congress, he introduced H.R. 4749, a comprehensive MSA reauthorization bill. Among the major provisions of the bill was a requirement for pilot ecosystem-based fishery management plans (one for each coast), modifications to the Essential Fish Habitat and Habitat Area of Particular Concern definitions and requirements, criteria for IFQ programs, a prohibition on the sale of recreationally caught fish, and establishment of a Highly Migratory Species bycatch mortality reduction research program.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Conference Advisory Panels

Developing an Ecosystem-based Approach to Fisheries

The U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and others have recommended that fishery managers continue to move toward an ecosystem-based management approach. This panel will examine progress made to date in defining and designing ecosystem approaches for fisheries. The panel will discuss the process for developing ecosystem goals and objectives, technical requirements, availability of necessary information, and how to develop realistic fishery ecosystem plans. In addition, there are different views on how to approach regional ecosystem planning. Is another layer of oversight necessary, in the form of regional ocean or ecosystem councils, or can different user groups and resources managers coordinate and work within existing processes? How should ecosystem regions be defined? How should the Magnuson-Stevens Act be revised to move us toward ecosystem-based management? What steps should be taken as we proceed toward this goal?



Crab pots getting stacked and ready for the October Bristol Bay Red King Crab Fishery, Dutch Harbor, Alaska.

Strengthening Scientific Advice for Management: Increasing Confidence in Council Stewardship

Reliable science is essential for successful fisheries management. The Magnuson-Stevens Act requires each Council to establish Scientific and Statistical Committees to assist with developing and evaluating scientific information for fishery management plans. Although all of the Councils have prestigious SSCs to provide the best available scientific advice, the councils have received criticism for a perceived bias towards socio-economic considerations overriding scientific advice. To address this perception, the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy has recommended that SSCs, rather than Councils, have the authority to determine allowable biological catch levels. Other draft legislation suggests requirements for extensive, independent review of scientific information and/or creation of separate ‘scientific authorities.’ Is there a need to separate conservation from allocation decisions, and can this be done effectively? Is such a separation realistic for management actions other than stock assessment and setting of catch quotas? What steps should be taken to ensure confidence that fisheries are managed on the basis of scientific information? Do we need additional independent reviews of scientific information? How should the Magnuson-Stevens Act be revised to strengthen scientific advice?

Criteria for IFQ Programs: Balancing Safeguards and Flexibility

The U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and the National Research Council recommended that IFQs or other forms of dedicated access privileges be available to fisheries managers, because they can provide substantial benefits including ending the race for fish. Draft legislation proposes specific requirements and specific provisions for developing such programs. Proposed requirements include referendum for approval, expiration dates, transferability and ownership issues, specific community considerations, cost recovery for management, performance reviews, and other provisions. To what extent are guidelines and review processes necessary? What provisions should be prescribed to fisheries managers, while still allowing flexibility for IFQ programs to be tailored to specific regional, social, economic, and fishery conditions? What other forms of ‘dedicated access privileges’ can be developed which provide similar benefits?



Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr.

Retired Navy Vice Admiral Conrad Lautenbacher, Ph.D. is serving as the Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and is also the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Administrator. VADM Lautenbacher has directed an internal review and reorganization of the NOAA corporate structure to meet the environmental challenges of the 21st century.

Conference Workshops

Marine Protected Areas and Cold Water Corals

Marine protected areas (MPAs) are considered to be an important tool for managing fisheries and other human activities in the ocean, and hundreds of MPAs have been implemented throughout the U.S., primarily for fisheries management. Executive Order 13158 requires that the Department of Commerce and Department of Interior develop a scientifically based, comprehensive national system of MPAs. This workshop will provide a forum for discussion on approaches to implementing a national system of MPAs to address fisheries as well as other needs. Additionally, the workshop will allow participants an opportunity to exchange ideas on how to define MPAs (compared to other types of closure areas), and how to protect and conserve coldwater coral communities in U.S. waters. The overlap of jurisdiction and management authorities is also an important consideration in the development of MPAs.

Overfishing and Stock Rebuilding

The 2003 Report to Congress on the Status of U.S. Fisheries documents substantial improvements in sustaining and rebuilding previously depleted fish populations in the U.S. Yet for those major stocks where status information is available, 21% were still being harvested at unsustainable levels and 24% remained depleted. National Standard 1 guidelines are being revised to establish a combination of maximum allowable timeframes and fishing mortality controls to rebuild depleted fish stocks. Although controlling fishing mortality is one of the keys to sustainable fisheries, a formulaic approach may inhibit development of rebuilding plan which could both rebuild stocks and minimize economic impacts on fishermen and communities. This workshop will provide an opportunity to discuss current regulations and potential improvements to ensure sustainable fisheries and continued rebuilding.

Fishery Governance

The U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy recommended changes to strengthen fishery governance by building upon past success. Recommendations include further empowering Interstate Fisheries Commissions, broadening membership on regional fishery management councils, and training for new council members. An overarching National Ocean Council, along with regional ocean councils, is also suggested. This workshop will provide a forum for participants to discuss whether, and to what degree, the Magnuson-Stevens Act should be revised, or other legislation enacted, to improve the process by which laws, procedures, and institutions address fishery issues. The role of existing regional fishery management councils, within a potential structure of regional ocean (or ecosystem) councils, will also be a focus of this discussion.

Reconciling Statutes

There are a number of Acts and Executive Orders governing the fisheries management process, and in some cases the provisions and processes appear conflicting or redundant. For example, the requirements for social and economic analysis, scientific review, and public process specified in the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) are substantially the same as under the National Environmental and Policy Act (NEPA). However, the timeline and administrative process under the two Acts often conflicts. NEPA has now become the defining act for processing and review of management actions, and a focal point of litigation. The Administrative Procedures Act (APA) and the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA) provide similar examples relative to fisheries plans and regulations. Other Acts, including the Endangered Species Act and the Marine Mammal Protection Act, also overlap authorities within the MSA. The workshop will examine ways to resolve the conflicts between these statutes in order to clarify and streamline the regulatory process.



Fishermen at a fish auction in Honolulu.

Senator Olympia J. Snowe, Maine (invited)

A member of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, Senator Snowe is the Chair of its Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere and Fisheries. In the 108th Congress, Senator Snowe introduced S. 2066, which would reauthorize MSA with changes to the definition of overfishing and associated rebuilding requirements, criteria for IFQ programs, establishment of a national cooperative research program, an increase in funding, and a requirement that councils develop at least one Fishery Ecosystem Plan.

Senator Daniel K. Inouye, Hawaii (invited)

Senator Inouye is a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee and a member of the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, as well as a member of the Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere and Fisheries. Senator Inouye has long been a supporter of the regional council process, and has been a strong advocate for fishermen in Hawaii and the Pacific Islands region.



AGENDA

Wednesday, March 23 Thursday, March 24

5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.
8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.
8:30 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.
9:15 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.
9:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

12:15 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.
1:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.
8:30 a.m. – 10:15a.m.

10:15 a.m.-10:30 a.m.
10:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m.

12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
1:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.

3:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Friday, March 25

Saturday, March 26

8:00 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.
10:15 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Pick up Registration Materials – Diplomat Room
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Opening Remarks – Palladian Ballroom
Keynote Speakers, TBA – Palladian Ballroom
Break

Concurrent Sessions: • Council Reports / Ecosystem Advisory Panel – Palladian Ballroom
• Science and Management Advisory Panel – Empire Room
• SSC Review of IFQ Program Issues – Congressional Rooms

Lunch break, (no host)

Concurrent Sessions (with break at 3:30): • Ecosystem Advisory Panel (continued) – Palladian Ballroom
• Science and Management Panel (continued) – Empire Room
• SSC Review of Ecosystem Issues – Congressional Rooms

Poster Session and Reception with no host bar – Diplomat Room

Banquet – Palladian Ballroom Keynote Speaker, TBA

Keynote Speaker, TBA – Palladian Ballroom

Concurrent Sessions: • IFQ Programs Advisory Panel – Palladian Ballroom
• Workshop on MPAs and Cold Water Corals – Empire Room
• SSC Review of Science and Mgmt Issues – Congressional Rooms

Break

Concurrent Sessions: • IFQ Programs Advisory Panel (continued) – Palladian Ballroom
• Workshop on Overfishing and Stock Rebuilding – Empire Room
• SSC (continue as necessary) – Congressional Rooms

Lunch Break, (no host)

Concurrent Sessions: • Conference Committee reviews Ecosystem Issues – Palladian Ballroom
• Workshop on Fisheries Governance – Empire Room

Break

Concurrent Sessions: • Conference Committee reviews Science & Mgmt Issues – Palladian Ballroom
• Workshop on Reconciling Statues – Congressional Rooms

Conference Committee reviews IFQ Program Issues – Palladian Ballroom

Break

Conference Committee receives reports from Workshop Moderators

Closing Remarks from Conference Committee