PARTICIPANTS:

CAROLYN BELCHER
South Atlantic Council

RICK BELLAUNCE
New England Council

TONY BLANCHARD
Caribbean Council

MERRICK BURDEN
Pacific Council

JOHN CARMICHAEL
South Atlantic Council

JANET COIT
NOAA Fisheries

KELLY DENIT
NOAA Fisheries

MARC GORELNIK
Pacific Council

MARCOS HANKE
Caribbean Council

JON KURLAND
NOAA Fisheries

DAVE WITHERELL
North Pacific

MIKE LUISI
Mid Atlantic Council

JARAD MAKAIAU
NOAA Fisheries

JACK MCGOVERN
NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office
PARTICIPANTS (CONT'D):

CHRIS MOORE
Mid Atlantic Council

TOM NEIS
New England Council

BRAD PETTINGER
Pacific Council

SAM RAUCH
NOAA Fisheries

ERIC REID
New England Council

MIGUEL ROLON
Caribbean Council

CARRIE SIMMONS
Gulf Council

KITTY SIMONDS
Western Pacific Council

ARCHIE SOLIAI
Western Pacific Council

GREG STUNZ
Gulf Council

WILL SWORD
Western Pacific Council

WES TOWNSEND
Mid Atlantic Council

BILL TWEIT
North Pacific Council

RYAN WULFF
Sustainable Fisheries
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PROCEEDINGS

(9:00 a.m.)

CHAIRMAN LUISI: I call this meeting to order today is day three of our May 2022 Meeting of the Council's Coordination Committee. We are here at Annapolis and we have a half day planned for everyone today. I do want to mention a couple things before we start. There is a -- we will be taking a break as indicated on the Agenda around 10:30 or any time near that when we conclude with our International Affairs discussion so that folks that need to check out can check out. So, if you haven't checked out already, you'll have time to do that.

Secondly, I just want to mention, you know, I've mentioned before, I work here in Maryland as the Acting Fisheries Director and there is a press release that is going out this morning dealing with our blue crab fishery which is a major fishery for our state as well as Virginia and the Potomac River. And so I might have to step away from the table from time to time
to try to push the media away until I can clear
the decks here today and get home and deal with
that so, I apologize in advance if I have to step
away and Chris or Wes can moderate if that ends up
happening, but I'm hoping that we'll be able to
wrap up and I'll be able to get home before that
starts to hit with the media.

So, okay, the first thing we have today
on the agenda, we have an hour for a discussion on
Environmental Justice. We have a presentation,
Archie, from the Western Pacific Fishery
Management Council. He's the Chair. He's going
to go through a presentation on equity and
environmental justice so Archie, if you're ready
to go I'm going to turn the mic over to you and
take it away.

MR. SOILAI: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and
good morning to our CCC Family as well as our
federal partners. Happy to be here this morning.
I want to wish a warm talofa (phonetic), aloha,
buenas and tirow (speaking native language) from
my colleagues that are listening from Marianas,
how are you, in America Samoa? I have a very brief presentation this morning, Mr. Chair, but as you recall last year and doing the CCC meeting that was held in October, two councils, the North Pacific and the Western Pacific were asked to present on EEJ Management within the regions and Kitty presented during that meeting on how the Pacific Ocean connects the land to our people and the oceans.

And so, we have reciprocal relationships with our marine environment that shaped our cultures and traditions for several millennia and the Council's mission and challenges were discussed by Kitty at the time and we have continued to draw heavily from the Pacific Island way of doing things and blending our ocean values of our region with contemporary science to form our own distinctive paths. And since last year, our Council has been planning with equity and environmental justice across all we do including our open and inclusionary council process. And so, I will be talking about the EEJ planning
within our region and our recent workshop that we held just last month. Now next slide, please.

So, while EEJ has always been a priority for the Western Pacific Council, we've been discussing in how our region can capitalize on Biden's Administration's EEJ directives and institutionalize advancing that within the region and for our people. And so, we think of it as a four-man canoe for each paddler represents the categories of equity which are procedural, structural, distributional, and generational dimensions of equity.

And we received a lot of feedback from our communities that participated in the workshop and over the last and we framed these concerns across these dimensions and I want to highlight the concerns that were shared within generational equity on the bottom left of the slide here. These impacts have and have the potential to impact the cultures and traditions of our Western Pacific communities for generations. And just some of the ones that we wanted to highlight are,
you know, the geographic isolation and distance from the seat of government here in D.C. We have 15 hours at the most time differences between D.C. And some of the territories.

The exorbitant costs of getting goods to the islands as compared to other locations, the heavy dependence on marine resources for our island communities; American Samoa for instance, their GDP is 95 percent dependent on the tuna (phonetic) industry. Cultures and traditions are structured on the ocean resources, but traditional governance, traditional knowledge versus current science and protocols sometimes come into conflicts. The inherent importance of access to marine areas for cultural practices and sometimes, there are policies and laws that inhibit cultural take and that always comes into conflicts with local customs. Next slide, please.

So, last month in April we had a workshop that brought together indigenous council members, advisory panel members and NOAA regional staffing leaders to work on EEJ issues and the
group talked about how we can incorporate and integrate EEJ with the council work that we do within the region and on that slide here, this is a large scribe, our panel discussion, you'll see this, it's also in the hallway that we work together and we share it with CCC today, and the council's EEJ impacts and contributions globally, regionally, and for our communities within fishery management. Next slide, please.

We focused on the four tools of organizational change which are fund, empowerments, implement, and advocate and here are the thoughts that are around how we want to strike good EEJ momentum for our region. Participants included outreach and engagement, building local capacity, bolstering the bottom up approach, funding community impact, collaborating with local agencies and supporting self-governance. Next slide, please.

And lastly, Mr. Chair, moving forward, we will capture the dialogue and to address strategy that will be presented sometime in the
near future remaining steadfast to continue a voice for the community in the federal process and respect cultural values within decision making, modeling the change and being the change using the Council as our EEJ tool and getting together again this summer to finalize our draft strategy. And we look forward to working with NOAA to advance our imports of EEJ for our communities in the Pacific. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Thank you very much Archie. Let me see if anyone at the Council around the table has any questions or wants to make any comments regarding Archie's presentation. Janet?

MS. COIT: Thank you. Just wanted to offer appreciation for the work that you presented and that you, Kitty, and others have done is really impressive and meaningful and I think the way you presented it, I think that was visual and very accessible so it looks like really fine work. I appreciate it.

MR. SOILAI: Thank you.
CHAIRMAN LUISI: Bill Tweit?

MR. TWEIT: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thanks, Archie, this really is a really grabbing presentation. I'm really chewing about the under federalization, just that it gives us a voice and I'm wondering if you could just speak a little bit more about what you were hearing in that when people say that it gives us a voice because I think that's something we're really struggling with as a council as well is how to be that.

MR. SOILAI: I think the feedback that we were getting from the participants in the workshop is that sometimes there are federal decisions and policies that are made without effective and meaningful collaboration with the local communities, particularly within the island group areas and that really came out as one of the items that they wanted to highlight is that more council involvement to make sure that, you know, the voices are heard and decisions are filtered up to the federal level making sure that, you know, their customs and values and traditions are taken
into consideration. Many of the policies are made. And I think one of the examples that we use is the coral reef habitat (phonetic) designation that was made without effective consultation with the local communities and that we are still pushing back on for American Samoa, Guam and CNMI.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Okay, thanks for that, Archie, appreciate that. Any other questions or comments before we move on? Okay, seeing none, our next presentation on this item on the agenda is the CCC Environmental Justice work group report and let me ask Kitty to -- would you mind introducing your staff who is going to give this report?

MS. SIMONDS: Right, so the Mid-Atlantic Council, and our Council Co-Chair of this group and that included representatives from all over the councils. So, Maria and José were going to present this together, but I think José wasn't feeling well and so, Maria is going to present for the entire group. So, she's on and it's 3:00 a.m. In the morning, something like that in Hawaii so,
have at it Maria. Hope you've had your coffee.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Yeah, Maria, thanks for getting up early and being available to present this report to us. I think there probably were a few people around this table that might have been up at 3:00 this morning, but I have a feeling you're in much better shape than those folks. So, Maria, if you want to do a quick sound check and then I'm going to turn things over to you for presentation. And we do, José is online as well. He was not feeling well and so he's not with us here today, but he is online so any questions that are asked, any comments we certainly be taking notes. Maria?

MS. CARNEVALE: So, thank you for that. There are other members of the working group as well so, thank you for that and see what the others are like. So, aloha, I will be sharing some of the good efforts with you today. Thanks a lot to the meeting so, next slide.

So, I will be starting off with a bit of background, provide an overview of the meeting
schedule, our process, some highlights of our report and talk about some of the potential next steps that the CCC could consider, next slide.

At the October 2021 Meeting the CCC made a motion regarding equity and environmental justice efforts. The Executive Director provided further guidance towards the development of a report containing specific details and those are there on the slide. The identification of the EEJ problem and an initial discussion rooted in MSA. The group working on this, like Kitty has mentioned, has representatives from each of the Councils and several from NOAA SF [sustainable fisheries] Headquarter Staff. The Mid-Atlantic and the Western Pacific, so José and myself have served under the guidance of Chris and Kitty as the Co-Chairs and so, mahalo for that. Next slide.

So, we met eight times; most meetings were two hours and some of them were actually three so grateful for folk's time. The first two focused on the development of a workshop and
discussions around that. And then, the rest of the meetings focused on the reports. The group used a digital white space to share about documents, resources, share meeting links, and agendas and all, so we were just practicing, just real accessibility there. The meetings were organized with intentionality that focused on inclusivity and collaboration. So, these values went into producing the report. We strove for consensus, ways forward, but we also captured regional distinction as much as possible. We held further reviews and we discussed as a group how best to incorporate and adjust comments; next slide.

So here are some important key terms and definitions that were included in the paper and for example these, equity and environmental justice, they have multiple applications, interpretations, and real meaning. The group spent a lot of time throughout these last few months exploring and then reexploring the application of these terms to fisheries management
and then, how they relate to each other and that was the bulk of our conversation. The report attempted to capture and clarify when possible, but it remains really broad and fluid when the group felt necessary. Next slide.

So, at the last CCC Meeting, NOAA's three guiding questions and they are going to be on this slide upcoming. And the CCC, well in our group to spread dialogue about EEJ. The CCC and NOAA Fisheries were really being responsive to these policies and directives so we are including all these executive orders and some from the current administration. That's on the bottom there. Next slide.

So, this is what we'll get into, really rooting our work in MSA. So, the MSA requires a transparent and collaborative process in the development of the fishery management plans and championing the participation of affected community and populations. Let's just go through this. In the NS1 [National Standard] and some of the key elements that balance that management
would strike amongst resource use and users. NS3 stipulates that a stock of fish be managed at the unit throughout its range and that management unit to be defined according to the focus of the FMP Objectives, may be organized around biological, geographic, economic, technical, social, or ecological perspectives. NS4 prohibits discrimination between residents of different states and requires that allocations be fair and equitable, promote conservation, and prevent excess shares. NS8 requires considering the importance of fishery resources to the fishing communities. The MSA requires a fair representation of council and advisory panels in membership to provide a balanced representation across various interests, commercial, recreational, other interests, and geographical areas. And then it must recognize the special role of tribes and indigenous peoples, and the development and implementation of fishery policies acknowledged in the MSA. Next slide.

Now, we're going to talk a little bit
about the different opportunities council has had to support EEJ. This conversation highlights the regional diversity within EEJ-related work and initiatives, as well as the importance of the MSA design which allows for each region to take steps and actions that are relevant to it while working in an open public process.

I just want to remind you that these conversations are ongoing, these actions are long-ongoing. So, just to reflect back in the summer of 2021, the Office of Sustainable Fisheries met with staff and leadership of each council and the three fishery commissions to understand their current approaches to engage in underserved communities and a summary of those discussions was presented at the last October's CCC Meeting. So, here are those three questions that NOAA posed to the group that helped guide our work. In addition, one Council since has also sent a letter to the Administration regarding the EOs 13985 and 14031 and that Council, as Archie just said has been working with the advisory
bodies and the community of an EEJ programmatic assessment and the development of a strategy.

Next slide.

So, the working group decided to use and there was a bit of discussion around it these six thematic areas developed by the NMFS EEJ National Working Group and that framed a few key sections of the body of the report. So, they are showing here in red, and basically, what the Council has done and then, some challenges. Next slide.

So, this is a word association. There's a lot with several highlighted examples. A full listing is available in Appendix 2 of the report. There are several common areas and these match with most of the larger repeated language in the section so you see some words really sticking out like communities, engagement, process, membership, educational. And one highlight is that two-way education between decisionmakers like the Regional Councils and members of the public is important for meaningfully adjusting equity in EEJ.

The Council's work to improve
communication and relationships via diverse educational and outreach efforts in various ways including cultural awareness training for council members and staff, educating stakeholders on the council process, supporting the Marine Resource Education Program events, the MREP. And hosting and participating in educational activities for high school, college, and graduate students, community engagement. In addition to routine engagement activities the Councils have developed regionally-specific engagement strategies for two-way communication and engagement, especially with underserved communities in their region. High-level examples of these are listed in the lower-left hand on this slide over in pink. So, identifying staff needs for engagement and outreach like hosting events of council bodies and local communities outside of council meetings, hosting meetings across an extensive area or in rural communities to increase opportunities for engagement with the council process.

Several councils have worked to reduce
communication barriers, and this is up in the righthand corner of the slide. Many councils provide multilingual documents on an as-needed basis, accommodate video presentations, and provide translation services.

Councils have also taken a flexible approach to providing information and materials in a way that is responsive to tribal and stakeholder needs such as providing information in hard-copy format which continues to be really important for some regions.

The Councils have taken several actions to facilitate the use of the scientific information available up to the lower-right hand corner. The restructuring management plans for archipelagic ecosystem base, such as in my region, the Western Pacific, or island-based as in the Caribbean. Incorporating local knowledge and traditional knowledge in fishery management and developing and using NOAA fishery community social vulnerability indicators.

All councils have created policies that
prevent harassment and discrimination and then, councils have taken steps to build local capacity for engaging in fisheries management, recognize and support the diversity among local fisheries, and have been hesitant to limit access to fisheries.

And then, all councils engage, and I can't stress this enough, through the open public process structured around inclusionary practices and consideration. Next slide.

So, you see here another word association but looking at the challenges in the report. So, I believe in the Western Pacific they have already heard from their communities as Archie just mentioned, as many of these bullets are listed Western Pacific have the front end of the (phonetic) bullet so, hence why that language is so large. You will notice that there is also a lot more unassociated work in this graphic which might indicate really that these challenges are quite regionally-specific. I'm not for sure but could indicate. So, just kind of highlighting a
few, I'll go clockwise on this slide here.

So, adequate knowledge of underserved and disadvantaged communities is necessary for program evaluation to account for and adapt to mitigating EEJ-related impacts. Time and resources to meaningfully integrate EEJ considerations into day-to-day work. Those language and geographic areas that you've heard about like time zone differences, considering public process components like comment time limits that can constrain individuals and associations and governments, and in particular, when English is their second language. There is a limited pipeline of diverse and qualified candidates. Reliance on Census-level characteristic data that does not necessarily reflect fishing community' vulnerabilities. They're not one and the same.

In the context of climate change and more broadly, there is a need and challenge to understand the connections across adaptive fisheries policies, resilient fisheries, and then EEJ considerations altogether.
Lack of certain regional investments and then the existence of some data-poor fisheries. And then, some also felt that MSA can tend to preserve or lean towards the status quo. Next slide.

So, here's our conclusion. So, in the report we share that understanding and advancing equity and environmental justice in the context of federal fisheries management took a lot of careful thought and a lot of discussion. This report required nimble thinking from the work group, it required us to understand not only the federal directives and policies related to equity and environmental justice, but you know, the ability to view fisheries management from new angles, and an understanding of the various paradigms and regional perspectives at play.

The collaborative approach used to write this support was a useful start to sharing information and regionally-specific approaches toward directing EEJ across all Councils and NOAA and having NOAA fisheries and the Councils
contribute to this report and take part in the supporting dialogue is definitely a step forward. Or, you know, equity and environmental justice within federal fisheries management. And it is clear that while some challenges exist for meaningfully advancing equity and environmental justice, all Councils are beginning to capture these issues and considerations in their work. Next slide.

The Councils, through the CCC and NOAA, have an opportunity to set a collective tone on EEJ, particularly through the narrative of public process created by the MSA. The MSA allows for regional diversity. This feature of the MSA is important as it allows councils to forward the EEJ strategies that are meaningful and specific to their regions while also allowing the Councils to learn from each other.

There are several opportunities for advancing EEJ across the regions. Some common themes include capacity building via the Council and staff training, reimagining outreach
strategies, increasing and simplifying communication materials as a start. This report is also just a really good first step to better understanding applications of EEJ directives to U.S. fisheries management. Next slide.

And here are potential CCC next steps that we talked about as a group. We felt that the dialogue around these issues and all those meetings that we held and across the Councils was of high value in and of itself for the topic at hand. So, using the CCC as a kind of natural structure to continue these learnings in some fashion is the intention and kind of ideal with this first bullet. And if you recall, it is comprised of both NOAA and Council staff so, we discussed how we could coordinate our efforts and resources, especially within EEJ planning efforts. So, like some ideas are listed and the group noted a workshop may prove helpful to initiate this cohesive work of that second bullet. Next slide.

And in just a few months, February, you know, through May, the group really produced a
report that focused initially on that EEJ guidance. There is room to continue to synthetize some elements such as incorporating additional regional community feedback, and better connecting barriers with some remedies. For example, the group could better explore funding needs and regulatory reforms. The CCC could also identify a subset of potentially EEJ-related action. And lastly, the group noted that the CCC may choose to, you know, formally develop a working to achieve its next steps.

So, that's all I have, and it was mentioned I know José, our Co-Chair, is also on the line as are other members for any questions. Yep, but this is all we have prepared so far, so, thank you, and I'll pass it back to you, mahalo, Chair.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Thank you very much, Maria. Before we ask -- before I look around the table for questions, José, if you're online with us now, is there anything that you would like to add before we go around the table to see if anyone
has any thoughts or questions?

DR. MONTAÑEZ: No, thank you for asking.

Great job, Maria.

MS. CARNEVALE: Oh, thank you.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Excellent job, Maria.

Does anyone have any questions for Maria or want to make any comments regarding the presentation?

Janet?

MS. COIT: Good morning, Maria and José.

Thank you, wow, that was amazing. I haven't had a chance to read the report yet. I'm really looking forward to it, but the work that you presented is -- and I know that Danica (phonetic) and Abby (phonetic) who helped -- who led our strategy have also been in touch and learned from you. You really are advancing the ball in a way that is so meaningful. And I think it's an example, Sam Rauch is about to present on our EEJ strategy. It really dovetails very nicely around many of the same themes. I think it's an example of work that's going on in parallel that can feed into and strengthening the final results. And as each look
for input from the folks who really have something to say about this, where we have a lot to learn. It would be great to try to coordinate that in some way, but I'm really impressed, and thank you for the presentation.

MS. CARNEVALE:  Sure. Thank you, Janet.

CHAIRMAN LUISI:  All right, thanks for that. Anyone else at the table? Just for the webinar, Manny, I do see your hand, but I'm going to wait until after Sam's presentation and then, we'll have an opportunity. I think we still have some time on the Agenda. We will have an opportunity to go to the members of the webinar for questions and comments so, if you just leave your hand up, I will call on you in just a bit.

Next, I'm going to go to Sam Rauch to give us an update on NOAA fisheries and environmental justice initiatives. Sam, when you're ready.

MR. RAUCH:  Yeah, thank you, and let me say at the very outset apologize for the slides because these are the same slides we used for our
-- the main (phonetic) fisheries advisory committee meeting last week and I have not tailored them to the Council so, I'm not requesting public comments from you all, but I am seeking your input so before you complain about that these are the generic slides that we use for everybody. I apologize. It was my fault, but I have not had time to tailor them for the Council. We do understand the great work that the council has done and we are looking for more of a partnership on this issue.

All right, so if we can, move on and I think that the two prior speakers really expressed why this is important work for all of us. It is something that we have been, you know, the Councils have been doing this for a long time. We have been doing this for a long time. I don't think either one of us with maybe the exception of Western Pacific and the great work that they've been doing, have taken a step back and looked at it strategically like we are doing now. At least for the Federal Government, we've had an
environmental justice mandate since 1994.

The equity mandates are new, but it does a lot with what we and you all do all the time. And it does provide an avenue though, to look at how effective that's been. Can we improve? Where can we improve? Where can we build on some of this good work that we've been doing? And there is clearly I think, both -- everybody has identified different ways that we can invest in this process and get better outcomes so that's what we'd like to do. If I could, have the next slide, oh, the next one. Forgot to advance.

All right, so, we used the term -- so, we did just issue our draft equity and environmental justice strategy a couple weeks ago. I'm going to talk about the process that we intend to go through to finalize that at the end. And some of these slides will start to look familiar because they're very -- I think they are exactly the same in terms of what the CCC used in their work group. The term equity, and this comes from the executive orders. I am not going to reread
this but it is looking at -- it is tied in in the administration's mind with the provision of benefits. We all control access. We control -- at least we have input in terms of where we allocate our science and other resources. There are equity implications about that, about where we are doing that, how we looked at the impacts on underserved communities. And I'll talk a little bit about that more in a minute. If I could, go to the next slide?

So, this is the definition of environmental justice which is from the EPA which is also the same one that the CCC was using. The Commerce Department does not have a definition but the EPA has been using this definition for years. It works well for them, and we propose to adopt this for -- at least, the National Fisheries Service, in the strategy. And it looks at it at equity in environmental justice. I think when people think about environmental justice they think of the classic case where you're putting a toxic waste facility in an underserved community
because they don't have a participatory right to
sort of argue on their own behalf.

And then there's, you know, there's
natural rationalization about all these kind of
things that can go on, but that's what ends up
happening. But it is not just the negative. It
is also looking at it in the positive in terms of
the benefits that I just talked about.
Environmental justice is also -- are we even
unintentionally denying the benefits of the
Federal Government to certain communities for
various reasons, and can we stop that? The
President has talked about in the future trying to
direct 40 percent to those federal benefits where
we can towards underserved communities so they
call that the Justice 40 Initiative. If I can,
have the next slide, please?

So, the underserved communities'
terminology comes from the Executive Order, and
this is the definition from the Executive Order.
Quite a number of different examples -- they're
all communities that have systemically been denied
a full opportunity to participate in economic, social, and civic life for various reasons. There's a number of groups listed, but then at the end, there's a very catchall persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

So, there's a great deal of things to look at that and one of the things that we deal with different types of fishing communities out there and you all talked about National Standard 8 and your equity and environmental justice strategy talks a lot about National Standard 8 and the term communities, and the different ways that you can look at communities under the Magnuson Act and that matches very well with the underserved community issues here.

So, when we were doing this, we looked at how to categorize this. And I know Archie talked about the four pillars and the four-man canoe. I've seen recently last week sort of a three-pillar discussion. At one point, I was looking at 12 different ways to do this. There
are a lot of different ways to look at equity in environmental justice to try to get a handle on what that means and how to -- there's no right way. And you can bend or unbend any of these comments. This is our way, but we are proposing it. If there are better ways to look at and there are certainly different ways to look at it. We can do that, but one of the things that we were looking at, the first one is do we know who the underserved communities are? That is a difficult question. They are often underserved because they don't have the capacity to participate to self-identify. We also want to be cautious though about sitting there and identifying it on our own because if we're not a particularly diverse organization, we may not realize that either so, this is a tricky issue on both ends.

We do have a social indicators working group which you mentioned in your policy which is designed to look at the various different economic and social ways that we can consider that. And we use that, you all use that when we are doing
fisheries management decisions, when we're trying to get at if we close an area, what is that effect going to be. But there are limitations in that and there's better ways that we can do that. One of our budget initiatives is to invest in that with an equity environmental justice lens to see if we can't make that more useful to that. But step one, do we know who these communities are?

It is hard to actually improve equity in environmental justice without that, but that is a very difficult issue. It's not an easy question. For some people it is, for some communities it's easy, but for others, it's not.

Are there structural barriers? There clearly have been historically structural barriers to underserved communities. Are we intentionally or not creating structural barriers with some of our Magnuson Act programs? And I have heard a lot about, you know, we've done a lot in terms of limited-entry programs, but one of the things of limited-entry programs do have a tendency to do is to create barriers to entry. How can we work on
that? Is that a problem with communities that traditionally fished that now cannot because of the way that we have done that?

There are other kinds of things that we should look at and so, I know that we try to do that when we develop our management measures, fisheries management measures. And have we done it well? Can we improve that? Certainly, going forward can we do that? Are there ways if we have seen historical issues, once again unintentionally or not, but we, you know, we constantly look back and look at the effects of what we've done, and occasionally, we find out that there are effects that we didn't know were going to happen that did happen and we want to change, how can we go and maybe change some of those things?

And I also, barriers to accessing services, you know, we talked about linguistic barriers. There are other barriers, a lot of the federal grant programs, very complex. You need to get the language right. They are -- it's not just applying for federal grants though, you know.
When we look at how we have allocated the science historically, we've usually looked at where is the most significant fishing impacts to the economy. And sometimes, that has resulted in us focusing our scientific resources or our regulatory resources to certain areas and underserving other areas.

As Kitty will tell you, you know, we have been for years trying to get the Administration to support a territorial science initiative to sort of correct some of this imbalance, and I am pleased that last year in the budget the President did include money, for the first time ever, for a territorial scientific initiative. Congress didn't choose to fund it, but it is in the budget again, and so, we hopefully will get money to do that. That will start to correct some of that imbalance because while it may not be important in the gross, you know, these national economic parameters, it is critically important to the U.S. citizens that live in these places and we need to make sure that
we serve them adequately.

System complexity, the Council System is very complex to navigate if you don't know how to do that. The laws are complex. That creates an issue with many folks. How can we do that? Gaps in expertise, this is capacity building. We talked about, you know, do these communities have the capacity to represent themselves? Do we have the expertise to actually talk about in equity in environmental justice? The CCC document talks about training our own staff to be more attune to these things and from the NOAA fisheries perspective that's true, too.

This is something that we need to invest in. We're not -- we can't just assume we all know how to do this and that will magically create answers. We have to intentionally invest in these kinds of things. And not just on us, but in various communities to try and make sure that they can participate.

And finally, representation; I think this is one of the most obvious ones. When you
look at the Federal System, if you don't have a seat at the table, if you have don't have a voice at the table, you're not going to be able to secure the benefits on your own, but there are difficulties when we talk about coastal communities. In Alaska, you know, they can't go to every council meeting, so, how do they participate in that issue, you know? We talked about the difficulties of going in the Western Pacific with those huge distances and how can those communities participate? Those exist everywhere. It's not just a territorial issue, but there are communities that depend on fishing up and down the coast that, you know, may not be the common people that we see at meetings, and I know the Councils struggle was how to get those people to participate so that they can articulate on their own what their needs are.

So, these are all questions that we've asked. These are things that we're looking at. These are not necessarily the only way to bend these and maybe, you know, my group
representation. I might have missed something important. We have a lot of good people that are working on it so that they can help correct that. So, we want to get all that led into the strategy; get the draft strategy.

It is a national strategy so, the one thing that you may look at is where is my regional specific issue? It's likely not there because this is a draft strategy and it's also not a Magnuson Act strategy. It is a strategy for all of the National Fisheries Service issues, so it incorporates our Magnuson Act issues, but it is broader than that. So, I'm very happy that the Councils are working -- the CCC is working on a strategy that we can work together on that. Our national strategy includes the Endangered Species Act, other kinds of communities that we deal with that are not necessarily Magnuson Act-focused.

We were looking at stepping it down to the regional level. It's working with our partners in the region to more tailored what needs to be done, taking a national overview, getting to
specifics about what needs to be done, thinking to
remove the barriers, and promoting equity.

I will say something about the budget.

This is a strategy that builds on what we're doing
so, it incorporates a lot of what we're doing, but
it is ambitious about where we want to go. Some
of the things we've asked for in the President's
Budget for '23 that we won't be able to do; some
of the things in the future are going to need more
commitment of resources than even that to do, but
we thought it important to lay it out, to set a
framework for where we want to go, even if we
can't do it right now with current resources, but
there are some that we've asked for. And we'll
need to get that in order to carry out some of the
things we've like to do.

All right, so the strategy basically has
a series of actions at the national level that we
are proposing to take and to continue to take, but
it also, fundamentally asks us to ask ourselves
several questions in designing what we're doing.

Who are the underserved communities? We talked
about the difficulty in identifying that. How can we better communicate with them? Do we actually provide equal access to benefits? How can we improve equity in our research and monitoring program? We talked about some of that. Do we burden some communities more than others with the regulatory burden? You know I -- you know we've heard a lot about the Western Pacific beliefs that they have been burdened with some of these regulatory burdens and that we've not taken into account the importance of fishing to their community. It's a very fair point. And how can the governance of natural resources be more inclusive? And this is clearly where you all are part of our partners in governance and we all need to look at that and how we can be more inclusive to bring these groups to the table whether it means working on council membership in a more diverse and inclusive council membership or just participation figuring out how to bring those groups into the Council Meeting.

All right, if I could go, I have not
been moving the slides. I apologize. It's behind me. Could I go down to Slide 9? You guys could have said something. Were you? Yeah, okay, I tried, we're trying, all right. All right, Slide 9, strategy development. So, here's where we are. You know, we've talked with the CCC before about this. We talked back in October when the -- you passed your own motion on your own work group. We're here; we just put out the policy. We are talking to various groups. We're trying to get feedback. We are very interested in working with the Councils to get your specific feedback in how we can mesh the two policies together, recognizing that ours is going to be a national overlay policy that will do more -- with more than just a council.

We're currently hoping to finalize our strategy in the winter, sometime after November. It will depend on the level of feedback that we get and how we can address those things and how well we are at actually reaching out to some of those underserved communities. That is a
difficult issue. We're working on that now trying to do outreach without necessarily assuming that we've got it right. So, that's some of the flexible goal for us, but that's what we'd currently like to do. And then we would follow it up in the Spring of '23 with these more regionally-specific plans and that would be an opportunity for your individual Councils to work with your individual regions and science center pairs to help craft those more specific plans. And then if I could, have the next slide, please which is the last slide?

So, we need input from everybody to the extent that you can help us share these opportunities for public input, they're here. We've got a number of phone webinars. We're trying to set up some in-person meeting dates and venues. And we are happy to come talk to your individual Councils or if the CCC would like to work on that, I think we've been working with the CCC and work group on that. We're happy to continue to do so. The strategy is online. We're
trying also to figure out how to translate it into Spanish which we haven't done yet, but we're working on that. So, we're trying to do that. These are the public participation dates, but we are happy to also tailor specific outreach participation to the Councils or the CCC as you see fit.

And with that, Mr. Chairman, I apologize for not keeping up with the slides, but I will turn it back to you.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Yeah, that's okay, Sam, we were moving things along as you would have going. You know, we have talented people around the table. Okay, so we received a number of presentations. Let me ask members of the CCC if anybody has any questions for any of the presenters or any comments at this time. Yeah, Tony?

MR. BLANCHARD: (Speaking native language). I think that in the Virgin Islands we have the same problem as in the Pacific. You are trying to reach people that don't think inside the
box like people sitting at the table. You actually got to go outside of the box and think like they would think in order to reach them.

For me, I always say there are some people that you will never bring into the loop no matter how hard you try, but I think when we look at ways to contact people, like me example. We look at it in a more modern way of doing so and a less personal way of dealing with people. And I think what we have failed to do here is to make contact with people on a personal level. We have lost, in my opinion, the way of being able to communicate with people on the same level. Now, that is partly our fault, but for people like me, like I say you've got to get us outside of the box. You need somebody from the community that is trusted to be able to go into the community and get the word out.

In my opinion, I think looking at ways like we're using the Internet. What I don't -- let me rephrase that; like the Council would go through the Internet, Facebook, and everything
else. You're not going to get some of these people out and the majority of these people you are not going to get in contact with them. There are people like me that for the most part would like to stay back in the shadow and just go along day to day doing our jobs.

I understand the Government has a job to do which I agree with them because without regulations we would be in probably not so good place, maybe in a worse place, but in order for people to come to the table you have to have ask -- first of all, you have to get in to understand the importance of what you are trying to do. And you have to get to buy in meaning a buy in is you got to try to find a way of having them accept that this is the best-case scenario which in my case -- in my opinion sometimes the best-case scenario is not best-case scenario.

So, like I will say once again, you have to think outside of the box to reach these people. Have somebody that is trusted and from their community. They want people, have them to go in,
have the word to go out, and try to get them to buy in. If you try to get them through the Internet, you try to get them through Facebook, you try to get them through other ways of communication, you will not get them. I don't do Facebook; I don't do any social media. I have an email because of the Council. So, that should tell you the mindset of most of the older guys that you might be dealing with.

The modern -- the younger guys would buy into that game quicker than we will buy into that game. There is a distrust in the media. There's a distrust in (inaudible) the government in my opinion. I know it sounds kind of harsh, but honesty is the best policy. So, you have to find the trust factor to get to these people. You actually have to assure them that you're willing to work with them instead of telling them what to do because that becomes a problem where you are forcing your agenda at people that is not receptive or don't understand why certain things are done a certain way. And that's my best advice
that I could give to you.

    CHAIRMAN LUISI: I appreciate that,
Tony. Will?

    MR. SWORD: Yeah. Thank you, Mr.
Chairman. Thanks, Sam, for the presentation.
Boy, I was impressed that you memorized and said
everything so fast without even looking at notes,
wow.

    Very good, I have some questions because
I haven't seen any of the Executive Orders that
you mentioned, but I was taken with Executive
Order 13985 for underserved communities. Also,
Executive Order 14008 on disadvantaged
communities. American Samoa is 65 percent at the
poverty level and it's been getting basically
worse -- I just want to say this as a preview to
my question. Since our head of the delegation
back in 2013 gave away all our quotas, our
percentage at that time went from 38 down to the
current 13. We lost one cannery, 2,000 jobs.
Talk about underserved?

    And then, you know, recently we gave
away bluefin quotas to somebody else without getting anything back for our person as in long liners (phonetic). So, you know, we have solutions, but I just want to find out what the strategy is for, you know, for National Marine Fisheries Service at the next WCPFC because most of our fisheries is international. And that will come up, I'm not sure, we have other suggestions we want to give you, but what is the strategy to try and serve our community which is both of those underserved and disadvantaged?

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Sam?

MR. RAUCH: We do have our international person here I think I had best defer.

MS. COLE: Thanks, and nice to see you, Will, hi (laughter) I'm Alexa Cole from the International Fisheries Office, but as you know, and as others know, that last year WCPFC we made a really big push to try to focus our attention on American Samoa to try to get recognition for American Samoa as this is a small-island developing state. The strategy was not as
successful as we would hope it to be, but it is a multiyear process and it's an effort that will continue at this year's meeting and into the future.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: All right, thanks, Alexa, for that. All right, Carrie?

MS. SIMMONS: Yeah, thanks, Mr. Chair.

I just want to say I think the working group did a great job putting together this document, this report, in really a very short period of time and I appreciate the effort that Sam just took us through.

So, I have a very meaty question so, I apologize in advance, but on page 21 of the report, there are some specific recommendations, research activities to include for underserved and disadvantaged communities to address these needs and address impacts of management activities. And so, my question is what can we do to move these forward? What can the Councils do?

You know, we have five-year research and monitoring priorities. We update those and we ask
for this information. You know, we don't have any crew information at all really for us to develop our community social vulnerabilities analysis in our amendments. So, how do we get this information? How do we move these research needs forward? What can we do? Will that come organically when we see the regional drafts and we put staff on there that will help us get this information, but how do we move this forward? Because I feel like this has been out there for a long time, but we haven't been able to fill these gaps. So, what can we do? Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Sam?

MR. RAUCH: So, I will -- I'll reiterate that we do have a budget initiative that is part of that if Congress chooses to fund that. It would allow us to invest in equity and environmental justice specifically. That will help to do some of these things. If we do not get that funding, we are constantly challenged with how we can make new investments compared to all the other new investments that people want to make.
without a budget increase, but the President has asked for money specifically to make investments in equity and environmental justice and science is a part of that.

So, if we get that, I imagine we will be better positioned to do that. If we don't, our plan in laying out the strategies to try to figure out ways to make progress on some of these things. Like, as you know that always come with tradeoffs and we'll have to figure out what we will stop doing to do that.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Okay thanks, Sam. We are bumping up against our time limitations for this item on the Agenda. I do have a note from our premeeting before the CCC started, but there is a potential motion that was being discussed and Chris Moore just asked me to call on Tom Nies. So, we'll wait for that motion. No motion prepared? Okay, if you want to ask your question, that's fine. And I saw Archie. Well, we'll take two more questions. If there is a motion that the CCC wants to put on the floor, we can take it. We
can handle that. I want to go to Manny and then we're going to move on after that. Thank you. Go ahead, Tom.

MR. DUNN: Thank you. I guess this would be more of a comment. Just that I appreciate the presentations by everybody, and including you, Sam. My point of view, I think it's real important that -- I think it was the first bullet you gave me. I think, at least in our region, we're going to need a lot of help identifying who the underserved communities are because it's not really painfully obvious to us I don't think.

When you're talking about traditional things like healthcare and education, I think that's a lot easier because everybody deserves access and wants access to that. When you start talking about commercial fishing or recreational fishing in federal waters at least, it starts to get a little bit more complicated in figuring out who those people are. It seems to be so, I think we -- and I'm glad you identified it as an issue
because I think that's going to be one of the challenges for some of the regions like us that identifying who it is that are underserved is how do we get at them? A simple example and you could, you know, a lot of people working in our processing plants in New England would fit the bill as underserved communities, but I don't really know how the fisheries management process helps them or addresses them on the council level.

You know, if you consider them an underserved community, what do we do with them? I don't really see that. Maybe they will. Maybe this is my own bias showing through, but it's difficult for me to see how those people would want to get involved directly in the fishery management process. Their representatives might, but it's hard for me to see how they would individually, but I think those are -- that's going to be the biggest problem for us. I think once we identify those underserved communities it will be a little bit -- hopefully, a little bit easier to figure out how to reach out to them and
how to involve them in the process.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Sam, did you want to respond?

MR. RAUCH: Just briefly. There are a number of councils that have dealt with these kind of issues and I agree with you that it's hard to do that, but we do have things that many of our councils have experience with these like crew share and like processor quota and those kind of things. Sometimes, it's not easy to do, but there are tools that we maybe have sometimes we need legislation to do some things, but there are things we can do so it's a discussion that we'd like to have.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Okay, thank you. Archie?

MR. SOILAI: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair. Tom just touched on what I wanted to say. You know for us in the Western Pacific, especially the territories, I think it's a definition of underserved communities is very straightforward because we think that all the territories are
underserved so the definition is pretty simple for us, but what I wanted to recommend, no question, but I wanted to recommend as you plan for your webinars to consider, you know, having a community outreach, you know, to the territories, especially, being so remotely located.

Going back to what Tony was saying, we find in our island territories that webinars don't work. One, people don't have access, two, you know, they're not tech savvy, and three, they're just not interested. They'd rather meet face to face as we do in the Pacific, you know. We want to settle a problem, you take it out in the backyard or you sit down and you talk about it.

(Laughter). Yeah, and whatever solution comes out,

You know, they'd be happier. But I think as you saw in our presentation, community engagement and participation is of critical importance to our region. So, thank you.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Yeah, thanks for that, Archie. I'm going to take one more comment.
Marcos had his hand up and then Kitty, I think I'm going to come back to you for the motion if you want to make that motion.

MR. HANKE: I'm going to be very brief. We have been discussing representation of the Council lately, and I agree with the position of Western Pacific, with what Tony said, and so on, but I think there is something that we -- I want to stress out that is for me is very, very important. Create and support the new research funds that you guys covered already for the territorial fishery and socioeconomic science being developed. That's super important, especially including the fishing communities. And the marginalized and the underrepresented communities like ours cannot compete with the competitive funds at a fair level sometimes.

This has aggravated the extreme complexity and many times territorial science is not a priority. We need that to be a priority because we have a lot of poor areas with a lot of different needs, and this can be good money for
the buck if you include and create mechanisms to include the fishing community. This will create local capacitation, better science, understanding, new bonds, and new connections between the managers and the fishing community. And I think it's something extremely important and address everything that we've been discussing at this meeting up to now, not just on this presentation, but also, on the science development and other things. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Great, okay, thanks, Marcos. Before the motion, Kitty, if I can -- I'm going to go, yeah, Jon, please.

DR. HARE: Thank you very much. And I, you know, I really appreciate that comment, Marcos, and the conversation here because I think this ties together a lot of what we've been talking about over the past several days. We face significant challenges in the future. We sort of need to build the capacity of what we're doing now, data-limited species is as an example.

We need to be more inclusive in how we
do things which includes cooperative research, to Eric's point, during my presentation. So, I think a lot of these things tie together and we just need to sort of hold them into a unified strategy to providing the science, to inform the management, but have that management serve the stakeholder through their direct involvement.

So, I just wanted to tie that loop together. And that is something that in NOAA Fisheries we are thinking about it at that holistic level and then carving it up into these pieces that fit into the process within which we work. But we are taking this larger view, and really appreciate the conversation here as we've been talking through these issues and now, we just need to tie them together.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: All right, thanks for that, Jon. I'm going to go to one -- I'm going to take one comment from the webinar before we come to the motion. We have Manny who has been waiting patiently. Manny, if you want to provide any comment; if you can keep that comment to just a
couple minutes; that would be preferred, thank you.

MR. DUENAS: You're surely asking for a miracle, but anyway, thank you for the opportunity. I just want to emphasize that this whole exercise should be a bottom-up approach at the council level. Also, I am sick and tired of the National Standard 1 to 3 being the trump card for the whole exercise and our Number 8, the communities are always left behind. So, I don't understand whether this is equity and environmental justice or equity versus environmental justice because all I see out of this are lawsuits and requirements and protected-species issues.

I mean look at protected species. They have over one-third of the budget of NOAA Fisheries. That sounds ridiculous. Go watch the movie Dave with Kevin Kline where he experienced $50 million being wasted on telling people how good they should feel about buying a car they already bought.
So, at the end of the day I have a lot more comments but thank you for the opportunity.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: I appreciate that, Manny. Thank you for your comments. I'm going to turn next to Kitty.

MS. SIMONDS: Well, everybody should watch that movie Dave if you haven't. Probably the younger people haven't watched it, but it is really great. Okay, are we ready?

Okay, really fast. This is a draft motion. So, I move the CCC establish an EEJ work group to share information about different approaches to meet EEJ objectives, taking into account the draft EEJ strategy. The work group should consider developing terms of reference, holding an EEJ workshop, and EEJ workshop and publishing a peer-reviewed journal article on their work. We've made this very simple. We haven't established timelines for these activities except we know that we're going to have the workshop a couple months before your draft comes out because we want to make sure that you include
what we want to do into your draft strategy.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Okay, thanks, Kitty.

So, we have a motion before us. Is there a second to the motion? Tom Nies seconds the motion.

Is there any discussion on the motion?

Any discussion? Is there any objection to the motion? Being no objection the motion carries by consent, thank you. Thanks, Kitty, for that. Is there anything else that needs to come before the CCC on this topic at this point? Okay, seeing none, we're going to go ahead and move on to our last item on the agenda before our break.

It's a presentation on International Affairs and we have Alexa Cole who has already addressed the Council or the CCC. Alexa is the Director of NOAA Fisheries Office of International Affairs, Trade and Commerce. So, Alexa, I'm going to turn to you and whenever you're ready, you can go ahead and get started.

MS. COLE: Great. Thank you very much.

I see familiar faces although there are also a lot
of new ones. And it's always good to see my Western Pacific colleagues who will pepper me with questions regardless of the topic. I am Alexa Cole. I am the Director of NOAA Fisheries Office of International Affairs, Trade, and Commerce which is a new name and we'll talk a little bit more about the restructuring that we did in our office in a little bit.

But first up, are topics that are related to the discussion that you were just having which talks about both the council involvement in international fisheries and the new effort related to transparency and environmental justice in our international fisheries engagement. I will also touch briefly on some area-based management efforts and the U.N. BBNJ process and then, talk about some updates from my office, as I mentioned.

We're lucky for a lot of the regional fishery management organizations to have active and engaged council participation both through our Advisory Councils, on some of them we have council
members as commissioners for those RFMOs and the
council participation has been critical to our
development of U.S. negotiating positions at these
RFMOs. Just as we've been talking about here, you
bring perspectives to the work that we do at these
international organizations that we might not
otherwise have and so, engagement with the Council
has been critical and beneficial to our engagement
and some of those positions that we have on the
commissioners are written into the statutes,
Kitty. (Laughter).

Kitty takes credit for many of those.
And that has been, as I've said, it's been very
useful for us to be able to engage. Some of our
commissioners as you can see not on this slide
because I've already forgotten. I'm failing like
Sam to advance the slides. At WCPFC and our South
Pacific RFMO, our North Pacific Fisheries
Commission, the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries
organization, and in addition to serving as
commissioners, we have advisory bodies for many of
those and council members serve there as well.
I wanted to highlight in particular what is not yet our RFMO, but what is sort of on its way to becoming an RFMO which is the Western Central Atlantic Fisheries Commission. This is one where we were -- there will be increasing engagement with councils and our engagement with councils I think is going to be critical as this organization is developed. And so, I wanted to highlight it briefly here today. So, this is what we would call a regional fisheries body. It is managed by the U.N. Food and Agricultural Organization. It isn't yet officially an RFMO, but there are 20, nope, 34 members including the United States who engage there.

They are working at developing into a regional fishery management organization that will then have binding management authority, but it doesn't have that yet, but that decision was taken in 2019. And this is focused on the development of living marine resources in the wider Caribbean area.

And so, right now there are already --
there is an enormous amount of work already going on related to what we call the (inaudible). There are working groups on spiny lobster, queen conch, sharks, spawning aggregations of snappers and groupers, and other species, more fad (phonetic), fisheries, data, and statistics, and IUU fishing.

So, there is a lot of work underway. You will see members of my staff at council meetings in the Southeast Region over the summer and into the fall coming to provide more information on some of the efforts that are happening under these working groups and some of the progress that's being made. We're really looking forward to getting some more input from the Councils and getting some greater and continued engagement from you on these areas.

I wanted to highlight this because I think this is one which is -- we have not yet established all the formal roles. It's not a formal RFMO, but it is one where they are tackling a number of species that aren't covered by organizations like ICCAT yet. One of the big
groups that is really exciting and really important from our view, is the new Flying Fish, Dolphin Fish Working Group which might be kind of the best name of a working group ever if you ask me.

(Laughter). And so, that's going to be hosted in January 2023.

So, I think you will hear more about that when some of my team comes to the council meetings over the summer and in the fall. So, I just wanted to flag that one in particular because I think it's one where we're going to be looking for more council engagement and it's not already established and remember to do this.

The other thing I wanted to flag, and this ties directly to the conversation that we were just having, is an initiative that my office has been working on with our new Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Fisheries, Dr. Kelly Kryc, which is we are publishing in the Federal Register today, tomorrow, or Monday. I can't promise you which one it is, but it's coming out,
which is a new solicitation for federal commissioners. For all the nonfederal government commissioners, sorry, it's nonfederal commissioners and non-council commissioners.

What we're trying to do is develop a much deeper and more diverse pool of candidates for these commissioner positions across the RFMOs. So, this federal register notice will indicate all the different regional fishery management organizations for which there are nonfederal, non-council commissioner positions and it is soliciting volunteers for those positions.

We are not -- it is not about any individual that is currently a commissioner who won't be a commissioner. We have some vacancies and we may fill other positions as well, but our goal is to get this out as broadly as we can. So, I would ask the Council for your help in getting this message out both to the Council Members and to any other underserved communities in your region that you can help engage with and who won't see it on the Internet, who won't see it during
the webinar to be able to get this message out.

We will do better at the International Fisheries organizations when we have a diverse pool of candidates for our commissioners, when we make sure that the U.S. Federal Commissioner is hearing from all the appropriate stakeholders in these processes. The more we can hear from a diverse pool the better job we can do. So, this notice is coming out.

There will be an opportunity for anyone. You can self-nominate, you can nominate someone else. It's a pretty straightforward process in the Federal Register Notice I want to be clear for anyone who is currently a federal commissioner, you don't have to go through this process. You can just raise your hand in case you get questions and let us know that you still want to serve. And it isn't targeted against any of our current sitting commissioners, but it is recognition of the fact that some of those commissioners have been serving for a very long time; that it's a good opportunity to try and make sure that we have
a good, diverse pool of candidates for when
vacancies come.

Some commissioners are serving at the
pleasure of the President. The President changes
from time to time. His or her pleasure may change
from time to time and so, we want to be able to
have good candidate to put forward should we be
looking to fill any vacancies or any commissioner
spots. So, I just wanted to flag that. That will
be coming out in the Federal Register Notice, as I
said, any moment now. We were hoping it would be
out yesterday, but best laid plans.

So, area-based management efforts was
another topic that I was asked to talk about
briefly. This is -- I don't think I need to tell
the Councils things about area based management
efforts. You know them probably much better than
I do, but it is a tool that we do use in the
international realm as well, but we are looking to
see where we can find the long-term
sustainability of these fisheries and using
area-based management tools to be able to achieve
our goals there. They come in various shapes and sizes.

There isn't just one standard definition or what that means in any given area, but they are an increasingly appealing tool that are being used in the international fisheries realm. We've already used them in some ways where we have seasonal fishery measures to protect breeding grounds or to protect juvenile stocks. We use spatially-based bycatch measures as well, and a number of RFMOs and then also, trying to use closed areas to protect benthic areas or other habitats.

So, this is something that we are seeing more and more of in the regional fishery management space, and it certainly connects up with this administration's priorities on 30 by 30 and other efforts that are ongoing in this Administration. So, we do expect to see more of that and that is another area where councils' engagement with our international fisheries negotiating teams through advisory committees and
as commissioners. We think that this was an area where you could also provide useful input and advice into that process.

BBNJ is a topic I know there's been a lot of interest in. Kitty, you cannot ask any questions on this. I'm banning Kitty questions on BBNJ. (Laughter). Am I not allowed to do that, Sam? Oh no, all right, Kitty, you can ask whatever you want.

We just had our fourth session in March of 2022. It was supposed to be in March of 2020. It, like many other things, were affected by the pandemic and it was delayed for four (phonetic) years. You can see up there the four main thematic areas that have been part of the BBNJ negotiations. The fourth session was scheduled to be the last negotiating session and although there was some really good progress that was made at that negotiating session, it was not enough to get it across the line and finish. There is another session tentatively scheduled for August of this year which we hope will be the last session again.
We were a little bit hampered in the fourth session by some of the COVID protocols which allowed us to only have one person in the room at a time and one person roaming in the hallways which just made it slightly complicated for some of the negotiations to move forward, but we did make some good progress.

I wanted to just mention a couple of the places where I think we are -- we've gotten to in the negotiation that I know will be of some interest to the Councils. There are a number of area-based management tools where some delegations are continuing to advocate for a centralized global process that's going to have management authority over all activities like fisheries on the high seas.

The United States and a number of other delegations support a different process. We support a twofold process that would have a global BBJN body that would assist in the identification of areas that require protection on the high seas and potentially make recommendations while the
RFMOs and other global regional management bodies would be the ones to develop and adopt and implement any relevant management measures. The U.S. did not support having the global body being the one who does that adoption and implementation of those management measures.

Another area is that we also support the BBNJ body developing and adopting management measures in areas where there are no global or regional management bodies without the competence to do so. There are not many areas of the ocean left where there are not regional fishery management organizations and there are no areas of the ocean left where U.S. vessels are fishing where there isn't an RFMO in place. We are not aware of U.S. vessels fishing in any areas beyond the competency of either within the U.S. EEZ or on the high seas within an RFMO. So, we don't expect that any management measures that do come out of that global body in those small areas where there is no RFMO to have much of an impact, if at all, on U.S. industry since U.S. industry fishes
exclusively in areas where there are agreements.

We have heard from a number of stakeholders that they wanted us to recommend that the agreement expressly exclude fisheries. That is -- it's not a negotiating position that will succeed. It's the best way that I can say that and so, we have really focused our attention on trying to ensure and trying to push forth that twofold process so that there can be decisions that come out of the body that have recommendations, but that the implementation and the adoption of those recommendations would continue to happen in the RFMO.

So, the State Department has the lead on these negotiations for us. They have a number of stakeholder webinars and discussions. I encourage those of you who have participated to continue to participate and make sure your views are heard. Any of you that are interested in it and haven't participated, please, do so. If you need information about having it connected into those, feel free to reach out to me and we can make sure
you get connected into those webinars and workshops. I expect that there will be some later this summer before they move into the August negotiating session.

    It's hard to remember to turn the paper and the slides. All right, so just a couple of updates. As I said, we have a new office name and with this new office name was the establishment of a new division which is our Trade and Commerce Division. Within that division we have two branches, one which is a trade monitoring branch where our seafood import monitoring program lived and we are now bringing into that division the three other NOAA Fisheries Trade Monitoring Program, the one related to (inaudible), related to Patagonian tooth fish, the one out of the West Coast Tuna Tracking and Verification Program for tuna coming out of the Eastern Pacific and also, the highly-migratory species out of ICCAT.

    So, all of those programs will now be combined together within this branch of this division so that we can make sure that we are
finding some efficiencies, that they are working and collaborating together so that the trade monitoring data for one program isn't stove piped from another so that we can make sure that they are consistent and collaborating together. It also involves a second branch which is our Trade and Commerce Policy Branch that is going to be able to focus more attention on U.S. industry and supporting and facilitating U.S. domestic industry as well as the export of U.S. seafood products to other countries. That division will be responsible for negotiating export health certificates and things like that, working on free trade agreements and providing subject matter expertise there, and engaging in other international trade bodies.

So, we are really excited about this new division. We think it will align a lot of the Administration and the Agency's efforts related to the support of the U.S. industry, and to help and to facilitate trade for the U.S. seafood industry.

A couple of very quick last updates on
programs that we get a lot of questions about. One of them was the MMPA import provisions. As many of you know, we've been working on implementing this for about six years now. The deadline was November 30th, 2021, for all the countries to provide their information and to seek a comparability finding. I am happy to say that all but four countries that export products that have bycatch of marine mammals did submit their materials which is in no small part due to the Herculean efforts of folks in my office, not me, but them, who conducted over 120 consultations in the year before that date.

So, we are now in the process of doing 2,600 or so comparability findings. They're done fishery by fishery so we are hard at work on doing those comparability findings. Once those comparability findings are done, we will issue a federal register notice which will indicate which countries have received, which fisheries have received a comparability finding and which fisheries may be subject to import restrictions.
after that. Currently the import restrictions are due to come into effect on January 1, 2023 so we have our work cut out for us in the next few months as we're plowing through those comparability findings.

I would note of the four countries that did not submit their materials, the trade from those countries totals less than a million dollars so these are not any of our significant trading partners. I think the last update is on what we call our Moratorium Protection Act because the name is too long. We issue a report every two years where we identify countries for IUU fishing for bycatch of protected living marine resources, and for directed shark catch (phonetic) on the high seas.

In our 2021 Report we identified 31 nations and entities, 7 for IUU fishing, 29 for bycatch. There was five of them that were overlapped between the two, and it got identified twice. So, that identification triggered a two-year consultation period that we are right in the
middle of doing those consultations with all those 31 nations and entities. Bycatch, obviously, that was a huge change from past reports where we had previously only identified one nation in the past. This was a big push to try to move more nations to developing bycatch measures domestically that are comparable to those of the United States.

All of the nations that we identified were related to ICCAT fisheries so, coming out of the Atlantic and that's because at ICCAT we have not been able to get agreement on a multilateral bycatch measure as we have been able to do at both IATTC and WCPSD in the Pacific. And so, this is, you know, we spent many years trying multilaterally to get an agreement. We were unable to get that kind of agreement so we now have taken bilateral or unilateral action to identify those countries.

At the end of June of 2023, we will have to make certification determination, positive or negative for those nations, positive it's all good, negative comes with port denials and the
possibility for import restrictions that are at the discretion of the President. And I think that was the last slide. I tried to go quickly because I know you're running late.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: No, you did great. We're right on time. We do have a few minutes for questions and comments, but before we do, I just want to thank you for the work that you do. I've had limited experience in the international fisheries management realm and in my -- it was frustrating a little bit for me, but yeah, thanks for the work that you do and I appreciate you being here to provide that comment, to provide your presentation. Does anyone have any comments or anything they want to ask of Alexa at this time? John?

MR. CARMICHAEL: A bit of a process comment I guess. I think I heard you in there. Thank you, for the presentation. Keeping up with all that. You mentioned something about attending the Southeast Councils this summer or fall. Could you elaborate some on that? What would that be
about and what sort of time are you thinking of?

MS. COLE: Thanks, yes, some of my team are planning to attend -- trying to get to at least one meeting of each of the Southeast Region Councils this summer to talk a little bit more about (inaudible), about some of the working groups that are going on and the upcoming working group for the dolphin fish and flying fish that's coming up in January. So, it's going to be focused on WCAFC and some of the efforts there and some of the details about the work that's happening there.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yeah, it would be great if you could follow up with us. We could try to make time on our September Agenda.

MS. COLE: Yes, I think they have been working, but I will double check that they have.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Okay, thanks for that. Archie? And then we'll go to Bill and then Eric.

MR. SOILAI: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Alexa, for the great presentation. It's always good to see you again in the
non-international meetings and online.

Just two questions, Chair, I wanted to -- first of all, when you're talking about international fishing, especially in the Pacific. The elephant in the room is always going to be China, right? And it will always be China, as far as we're concerned. And, you know, I think that the U.S. Needs to posture itself to develop more advantageous international conservation and management measures within the RFMOs as a priority. The U.S. sets a standard. We're over regulated, our industries are and you've heard that from, you know, the industry more times over, but I think working closely with the Pacific Island Nations to maintain that U.S. Influence and more importantly out compete with China and then brokering for the influence within the Pacific is very important.

So, I wanted to ask firstly what progress is the U.S. making internationally with respect to strengthening the U.S. negotiations in all RFMOs, but especially, those in the Pacific,
firstly? And then, I wanted to follow up -- I saw your presentation about the new nominations of commissioners, but last year in April and October myself was recommended you know, via the West Pac to serve on the RFMO and Roger Deng as a commissioner to the WCPFC. We haven't heard anything back on that so, I wanted to follow up to see what the status was of those nominations.

MS. COLE: Thanks, Archie. Let me take the second one first because it's easier.

(Laughter). We are working on a whole -- our goal is to take to State Department a big pile of nominations to go over with and move them to the President and the White House Liaisons Office. So, your nomination and Roger's are both in that package and we are working on those. So, the goal is rather than sending them up onesie (phonetic), twosie (phonetic) where they have not had a lot of success
in getting them through quickly, they take years and years. The goal is to try to bring a whole package to the State Department. They know that it's coming. They know that we're doing our best work and we're working closely with Kelly Kryc to facilitate those.

On the second piece, we've worked together a long time in the international fisheries arena. We continue to try and address the ever-changing ground that we have and our negotiations particularly in the Pacific with the Pacific Island Countries and trying to counter the influence of other delegations and strengthen the position of the U.S. Delegation. We worked really closely together last year to try to make progress on that and the recognition of America Samoa. We are going to continue to do that, but I also think that we have been harmed in the Pacific by, in particular, by the pandemic where those relationships are so personal. And so, our goal
is now that countries are opening up to try to actually get out to the Pacific and talk face to face with some of our colleagues in those countries where I really feel that the relationships have languished a little bit and been harmed by living in this virtual world since they negotiate as a block. It's very hard to have the individual conversations that we used to be able to have.

So, that's been one of the -- that's high on the list. I know for Kelly, and she and I have been talking about that a lot on how we can make progress out in the Pacific on that.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Okay. Thanks, Alexa.

Bill Tweit?

MR. TWEIT: Thanks, Mr. Chair, and thanks, Alexa. And just a real quick question, a parochial question. Does the reorganization change how commerce is going to be engaging in some of the advisory panel processes? And the one thing that I'm particularly interested in is the Bearing Sea Fishery Advisory Body, both for the
down the hall (phonetic) for the international
convention as well as -- if there ever is, a
U.S.-Russia meeting again?

MS. COLE: I don't see the
reorganization of our office will impact that. I
mean we will -- my office has been engaged in
those processes in conjunction with the Alaska
Region in the past and I don't see that the reorg
to my office will make any adjustment to that
process, and as you say, it'll be some time before
we're having that meeting with Russia at this
stage. But we'll continue to be working together
at the Alaska Region on those issues.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: All right, thanks for
that. Archie, I called on Bill, but I saw your
light go on so if you have a follow up for Alexa,
that would be great.

MR. SOILAI: Yeah, no, thank you. I
just wanted to reiterate again that, you know, our
-- the U.S. Purse Seine Fleet, that supports the
American Samoa Economy and I think I mentioned it
yesterday, in 2018 there were 38 vessels, now
there's only 13 and, you know, a continuing
decline in the number of those vessels is not
sustainable for the cannery that supports the
American Samoa Economy. And I think you are well
aware of, and Sam as well, of the situation that
we are in and listening to the industry,
especially, the boat owners with respect to
options, right? That they have. It's just not
good for the territories. It's not good for
American Samoa and so, I just wanted to just
reiterate the importance that that whole picture
plays with respect to sustaining that small
economy. But thank you, for all the work that you
do, Alexa.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Okay, I'm going to go
to Eric Reid and then I have John Gourley on the
webinar, and then I'll come to Kitty to wrap this
discussion up. Eric Reid?

MR. REID: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Thank you, Ms. Cole, for your presentation. I'll
be very brief. Could you explain to me again
exactly what positions you're soliciting for?
It's not the federal position. And to be honest, I'm the NAFO Commissioner, not from the New England Council, but we're in the process of replacing a council member who is going to term out with a new representative of that organization. So, it's not exactly clear to me what positions you're going to solicit for like today or whenever it's going to come out. Thank you.

MS. COLE: Sure, so any commissioner position that isn't specified as a council nomination position or a tribal nomination position or the federal position is included in this Federal Register Notice, but the solicitation, the fact that we are trying to get a pool of candidates does not mean automatically that we are going to replace and fill every commissioner slot. So, we are soliciting for the nonfederal, non-council position at NAFO, but again, that is not an indication that automatically there is going to be a replacement. If you are in a commissioner position, you're
interested in staying in it, you should let Mike know. You can let me know. You can tell me right now and I will put you on the list. You don't have to go through the process, but the goal is so that we have a pool of candidates to draw from in the event that there are either vacancies or that the President seeks to put someone else in. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Okay, thanks for that. I'm going to go to the webinar and have John Gourley on the webinar and I'm not even -- I don't want to even think about what time it is where he is right now, but John, thanks for getting up early or staying up late. I guess, either way. The floor is yours for any comment or question that you might have.

MR. GOURLEY: Thank you very much. Yeah, it's approaching 1:00 in the morning, way past my bedtime. Thank you, Alexa. I had a question about the BBNJ. You said there was basically two different thoughts (phonetic) on the management, one of them basically, the US position
is where the RFMOs, basically, have the final say and the decision making on what is adopted as fishery management measures and what isn't. And then you have the other group. Will it be decided during the August Meeting on which management approach is going to be used? And if it is going to be decided in August, what is the chances that the rest of the countries are going to -- or the rest of the U.N., or whatever, is going to adopt the U.S. plan to have say a global management that makes recommendations to the RFMOs?

MS. COLE: Thanks, John, thanks for the question. If this ends up being the final session of BBNJ, then, yes, it will be decided this summer at that meeting. That is among the issues that remains to be decided and would need to be decided for the - these discussions to be finalized. It's really difficult for me to handicap the likelihood of these final positions. I'm not in the room negotiating them. The U.S. Has a number of supporters that are on the same -- have the same position as we do. We are not isolated in this
position and we were isolated in a position where we were trying to carve out fisheries. We are not isolated with trying to have this two-step process, but it's hard for me to guess where this is going to come down. It's going to be a series of agreements. Nothing will be agreed until everything is agreed and, you know, the tradeoffs, there are a variety of tradeoffs, but the U.S. has been firm in this position and as I say, we have friends so that is -- that always helps in these negotiations if you're not alone. So, I can't give you much better handicapping than that.

MR. GOURLEY: Is there something that we can do as Councils to help? I'm assuming the State Department is basically working by themselves. Is there something the Councils can do that could support the U.S. position, or are we just basically out of the loop?

MS. COLE: So, the State Department isn't working by themselves. They're -- they are leading the Delegation, but they have a variety of other stakeholders from the U.S. Government
participating, NOAA actively is working with the State Department. The best thing that you can do is as I mentioned there will be a number of stakeholder calls and webinars and things like that leading up to the August negotiations. The more that you can participate in those and make sure that the State Department is clearly hearing your views, I think the better. So, that would be my best advice in terms of engagement is participating in those stakeholder events.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Thanks, Alexa.

MR. GOURLEY: I appreciate it, and thank you.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Yeah, thanks, John. All right, lastly I'm going to go to Kitty.

MS. SIMONDS: Oh, and John, I should add that the Councils are involved in, you know, in giving our comments. So, I've been on some of those listening sessions this year and for several years now we wrote letters to the State Department and the Department of Commerce about that very same issue. So, they're well aware and it was
during the Trump Administration I think that when we were actively involved, we -- remember we hosted an international workshop with the FAO about BBNJ and so we represented all the Councils at that -- the last meeting that FAO had so, I believe it's the Gulf Council's turn this year to represent the Councils, but I've been, you know, been on the listening sessions just to make sure that they know that the Councils continue to, you know, want them to support what they are supporting so, I just want to add that.

So, I just want to say to Alexa who we've all worked with for years and years and, Alexa, should I tell them that you got us this $3 million, $4 million -- we had a bust in the Northwesterns and so, the way negotiations read is those funds come to the Council and that was the last time Alexa, nobody else, no other enforcement person after you, has done anything for us in terms of money from the foreigners.

So, but just going back to we in the Pacific, Archie, you know, talked about the Purse
Seiners and obviously, we managed the U.S. Long Liners and the U.S., as we told you before, has three tuna fisheries in the Pacific, they are very, very important to the U.S. and to our own economy. You know our fishery contributes more than 50 percent of the swordfish to the Continental U.S., as well as Bigeye and Yellowfin.

So, because we've had these series of negotiations that haven't worked for all of us, we're all -- we've all have been talking about a new strategy in the Pacific where we not just depend just, you know, on the State Department and the Commerce Department, but last year we drafted a strategy and wrote to the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security and Interior because all of these departments have issues and oh, my gosh, and contribute billions of dollars to those same countries who are in the commissions that we work with.

And our strategy is for all of these departments to get together and find a better way of dealing with those countries so they -- so we
can get them to agree to the kind of things that the U.S. believes we should be doing for our fisheries because we're helping all of them all the time for the last, well since the '80s in terms of the compact of free association. You know the U.S. is generous with all of these countries for many reasons, 402 (phonetic), whatever.

So we've had discussions with Monica Medina who is over at the State Department. Remember, she was the ACL person several years back selling that to us and also, her Deputy who is head of the fisheries and polar -- yeah, she is a law professor at the University of Hawaii so, we're meeting with her next week before she travels to Washington, D.C.

So, altogether I think that if we all do work together that we may see something better for us in the future. And I truly agree with Alexa that when we're not together at international meetings where all of us are talking to all of the different countries, things work better that way.
and it's just really been impossible with these virtual meetings because you can't run over and talk to the FSM or, you know, all of us who are -- we all know these people very well so, it's just, you know, Alexa is there speaking and we can't be negotiating on the side so, anyway, I want to thank Alexa. I think that we're going to be in a better position when we get all these departments to work for us and we have, you know, heard back from the Department of Interior, the Department of Defense who told us about the Indo-Pacific strategy where all the departments are part of.

So, you know, everybody should come together and work it out though, so, thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: And thank you for those comments, Kitty. Okay, we're going to go ahead and break at this time so those of you who need to check out can do so. Let's come back at 11:00 and we'll pick up our last few items on today's agenda. Thank you.

(Recess)
CHAIRMAN LUISI: We'll get started right at 11:00. Once they take their seats, we're going to get started again. All right, there you go.

Okay, welcome back from the break, everybody. I know many of you have quite a journey ahead of you today to get home, so we're going to do -- I'm going to do the best I can to stay on target, stay on schedule, so that it doesn't impact your arrangements to get home. We're going to move next into discussion regarding integration of the ESA Section 7 with the Magnuson-Stevens Act, this is a follow up from the January meeting regarding implementation of policy directive 01-117 and opportunities to improve coordination between councils and NOAA Fisheries. We're going to start with a presentation by Kitty Simonds. Kitty Simonds from the Western Pacific. She's the Executive Director and I'm going to turn over to Kitty whenever she is ready for that presentation. Whenever you are ready, Kitty.

MS. SIMONDS: I'm ready, but they need my presentation up there. They have Uncle Sam's
up there. Okay, everybody. So, over the past year, the CCC has been discussing progress made and remaining issues surrounding the ESA policy directive, to integrate you know, Section 7 and the Magnuson Act. So, you know the policy directive recognized the unique role of the Councils and was intended to foster cooperation throughout the consultation process, for our actions. So, in NMFS' words the councils are, and I quote, "an integral part of the Department of Commerce team" and "play a critical role in supporting NMFS's ability to comply with the ESA". Next slide. So, the CCC May Meeting last year, we requested strengthening the relationship between NMFS and the Councils on ESA consultations for our fisheries by updating the policy directive to improve the process and timing for our council involvement. The CCC also requested changes to improve communication and process for draft BiOp reviews, and developing a process to work with the Council on ESA issues through, this is what is important, the normal council process rather than
through RPMs and RPAs resulting from consultations. So, then, this led to the January CCC call, at which NMFS asked each Council to elaborate on council issues associated with implementing the ESA policy directive. Next slide.

So, our Council highlighted our persistent delays in completing BiOps and lack of coordination with fishery action timelines, development of RPMs, the recent BiOps in our region have included RPMs that have required management changes to the action in a manner similar to RPAs. So, with continued delays, the Council has asked for a realistic timeline for councils to draft review that respects the council process and existing meeting schedules.

So, since our March Council Meeting, PIRO (phonetic) has started to reach out to the Council through SFD on the ongoing consultation timelines and RPM coordination, but we've yet to receive a satisfactory timeline, in response to our requests and we are still in the dark on
potential RPMs, for two out of the three outstanding consultations. New England and Atlantic Councils highlighted recent issues they experienced with the White Whale Consultation, they noted the ESA policy directive was not followed because the consultation was triggered external to the council process, and as a result, the Council was not provided an opportunity to develop RPMs or RPAs. They also highlighted issues with council staff not being included in working groups, resulting from Sturgeon BiOp RPMs and that FOIA and FACA and are impeding council involvement, which I don't understand, but. Next slide.

The Pacific Council highlighted this successful example, with the Southern Killer Whale Consultation, which involved early coordination through a council working group to develop a risk assessment. But they also noted coordination has not gone as well, in other BiOps, especially, when NMFS developed RPMs external to the council practice, which does not allow adequate time for
council review and input.

The South Atlantic has not had too many consultation issues since the policy directive was implemented, but they still highlighted communication issues and the need to coordinate on deadlines and council involvement on working groups. Next slide.

So, based on the issues identified by the Councils over the past year, some of other potential changes to the policy directive include adding language to encourage and incentivize early coordination with the Councils or RPMs, in addition to RPAs, as that at the time, that policy directive was developed -- our collective understanding was that RPAs and jeopardy BiOps, could necessitate changes to FMPs, but RPMs generally, do not. However, recent BiOps have required changes to management action through the council process. So the directives speaks to situations in which NMFS should coordinate with the councils in developing RPAs but remains silent on RPMs, so, an update, we think is warranted to
involve councils early, for both RPM and RPA development.

Second is adding language for council and NMFS to agree on coordinated schedules for council involvement, input, and development of the RPMs and RPAs and draft BiOp sharing. This is the intent of this change would be to help MFS to complete BiOps within reasonable timeline, as well as, ensure that consultation timelines meet the timelines for implementing fisheries management action. Three, NOAA GC (phonetic), and this was an idea that we had and Sam, he was going to speak to this. To facilitate sharing a draft BiOp with council staff to facilitate early NMFS council coordination. The goal for this would be to provide an avenue for early council coordination in developing draft RPMs and RPAs while keeping the documents exempt from earlier releases.

Number four, adding an overarching policy statement that NMFS will work in close coordination with the councils through the MSA council process to address fishery impacts on the
species rather than relying on RMPs and RPAs resulting from consultations. This would be an extension, you know, of the recognition of the Councils' unique role which is what is already included in the directive.

So, ultimately, these changes point to the need to address fishery impacts to ESA listed through the council process. The ESA Section 7 requires that the Secretary review other programs administered by him/her and utilize such programs in furtherance of the purposes of this Act. This means that NMFS has tools other than Section 7 consultations to conserve and manage impacts through ESA and federal-managed fisheries through MSA. So, rather than waiting for a public draft BiOp to be available, why don't we work together through our normal council processes, to identify conservation concerns and develop solutions together through the transparent stakeholder-based process under the Magnuson Act?

In our region, we review protected species and interactions with our fisheries
throughout annual SAFE report review process. And, the past four years, we have been awaiting consultations to be completed, there have been ample opportunities to identify conservation concerns associated with the fishery interactions. So, in those four years, our Council has developed and took final action on updated seabird mitigation measures, and as well as an action to prohibit wire leaders to reduce impacts to the ESA listed Oceanic White Tip Sharks. And so, NMSF also has additional tools through which they can coordinate with the council. For example, NMFS has a species in the spotlight initiative under which NMFS has an action plan to prevent extinction of Pacific leatherback turtles. We have not been approached with any initiative specifically to address our fishery impacts through the action plan, but if NMFS has concerns, we of course, trust you would prioritize those actions in the plan. So, the Councils would like to work with NMFS to refine these improvements, to integrate in ESA and MSA processes.
Mr. Chairman, that's my presentation.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Thank you very much for that Kitty. I'm going to hold off on questions. Right now, I'm going to turn over to Sam. So, I just want to let staff know that Sam is presenting, so, you are going to have to be on your toes with slides, here. So, it's all you, Sam.

MR. RAUCH: Yeah. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the kindly reminder to move to progress the slide. All right, so I do want to build on what Kitty has said. The descriptions of the existing policy and the roles of the Councils are completely accurate and we several years ago, evaluated the relationship between our ESA enterprise and the Councils and determined that the Councils do play a critical role in various different aspects of that, and we need to account for that. And allow for that, and also, allow for the variations of the different councils -- the Councils all have slightly different processes to how they approach things.
And so, there is some variation in there, which is why we've allowed for individual regional council agreements.

So, if I could, have the next slide?

See? I'm learning. Next slide. So, I won't reiterate this since Kitty went through this -- this is the history of this CCC request in January 2022 discussion about the concerns of the Councils, that you still have in this. So, if I could, just in the interest of time, if we could, go to the next slide which is our review. So, after looking at this, it's still clear that there is a lot of different regional variations and there are some processes that work better than others. And there's reasons for that, but there also could be some issues there for how they were implemented. One of the questions we had is, is there a problem with the guidance itself? The guidance, and we have various sources of guidance. It all talked about frontloading and working with the Council early in the process, and so it mainly there are -- and I don't want to say that they are
not, and I know Kitty has got some potential things that we could look at for guidance, and I welcome that discussion, but in the main, the guidance does talk about early and frequent collaboration, trying to work together on this as a joint enterprise. And so, it is not clear to me that there needs to be wholesale revisions to the guidance, but I'm certainly willing to look at that and see whether or not there is additional changes that need to be made for that.

One of the things that I think is -- no, not yet. I'm trying to decide if I want the next slide yet. I don't want the next slide yet. One of the things that I think is an issue with the guidance and you all mentioned it, is that when we were developing it, we were looking at a paradigm in which the Council is proposing to take an action. We consult on that action, we work with the Council to make sure ahead of time ideally, that the action is going to be ESA compliant, and so, there is a clear role for that, because we are talking about a particular action that the Council
has taken. That works relatively well. What has been more problematic, and I think you all termed it as when you are doing an external-generated review, where we have had a situation where the fishery has tripped a re-initiation trigger. There is some endangered species bycatch cap that has been tripped, there is some new information, or some court orders us to go back, holistically and look at all the fishery management actions in total, under effect.

So, there's not a council action that was starting that, we are required to do that on short notice, and it hasn't fell within that easier paradigm. And that is something we're struggling with, too, is that you know, what exactly in that situation is the action? What is then the role of the Council since you are not -- you didn't propose an action to do that? It is your status quo that is under review, how do we work the Council into that process, where does that go? And oftentimes, we are under accelerated timeframes that don't match the Council's process,
which is sometimes, quite lengthy.

So, these are issues that I think that if we were to revisit the policy, we'd want to talk about how the Council -- what the Council's role in that particular paradigm, because that is -- it's not unanticipated, I mean, I think that was happening back when we did the policy for this but not to the level it is now. And I think that is the true model where many of the concerns have been raised, we've heard where in terms of externally-driven re-initiations, what is the role of Council in that? And I think that there is a good way to do that. So now, if I could, go to the next slide.

So, these are some policies on frontloading. We talked about the operational guidelines, which say that entering a public process is critical for frontloading ESA issues, which is very much consistent with the existing ESA, the policy on ESA and MSA integration which talks about early involvement, talks about working through the Council, but once again, it works
better in that first paradigm where there is a particular action on the Council. I think it doesn't clearly address well the idea of what happens when we are in the re-initiation on the entire FMP, not on a particular action. And I think that is some place where we can work together to try to work through that issue of how that should happen. There are regional operating agreements with at least a few councils, we've got integration agreements with the South Atlantic and the West Pacific, and then we all are also mindful of the NEPA policy which sort of outlines the relationship between us and the Councils underneath and it does a lot of our -- drives a lot of our decision making. So, if I could, have the next slide, please. So, our initial thoughts are that we have many of the tools, we understand that there are -- there are both implementation issues with how, even under -- the -- what I call the easier paradigm, how that is being implemented across the regions, and we are committed to working on that. It's not apparent to us at the
outset that there needs to be large-scale guidance changes, but we are willing to talk with you about that and change the guidance if people it need to. We are committed to working not just with the existing region structure staff, but our Office of Protected Resources is going to try to engage with the Councils with the Regional Offices to try to look at these issues and spread best practices from one region to another. Can we look at what is an issue in that particular region to see if we can't make progress on that? So, that is going to be a work in progress as we move forward.

So, one of the things we'd like to do is work with the CCC and the various Councils on this issue, look at effective uses and best practices, one of the things that when the Councils have done that to some extent. But, so far it has been -- this is what's -- what has worked well in our region, and we need to do some exporting of those best practices. Why is it working well? These are two-way streets in that, the Councils need to engage as well, and be prepared to engage to that
level which I know the Councils are willing to do, but we need to make sure that those avenues exist. We can't just assume that they exist.

What are the impediments? What in particular do we do in these time-sensitive or more programmatic external reviews? Those are really challenging to deal with and what is the role there on that? So, what other recommendations do we have? So, we want to keep working, I don't have a more explicit answer to that. These are things that we are continuing to work on. We are working -- we continue to work through that issue of, from our perspective, what does it mean to be reconsulting on the entire FMP, and then, what role do you all have in that? So, that's where we are at the moment. I'm happy to take comments. And if I could, have the last slide. It's that.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: All right, thanks Sam. I know that there is a motion that we are going to entertain, but before we do that, for the two Presenters, does anyone have any questions or any
thoughts, comments that they would like to make at this time? I see no hands.

    Kitty, I'm going to come back to you. I believe you have a motion that you would like to make?

    MS. SIMONDS: I'm shocked that nobody else has anything to say. And, I always like to be the last person. So, but I need to say a few things here, right? Okay.

    So, well, we agree with Sam that what's in the directive is good, but it's about following the directive on the part of certain people. And that's the issue and what we need to communicate. We have not had good communication. I call once a month, hello, how are my BiOps doing? So, you know, I communicate. So, you just talked about this two-way street, well, we do, you know, we try to communicate.

    So, yes, so there are these things that are in the directive that they could work and we will just have to work on them in the future. But we do have a few things, as I mentioned earlier,
and so, we're -- we'd like to have a working group. So, that's going to be a motion. So, shall I go ahead and do that? Oh, I did have one thing. I saw you said there -- some of those agreements that we have that should work, and so, I just want to mention that for our ROA, we're probably going to have to have an arbitration clause in there. Okay? Just so you know that, because disagreements in terms of how we work with each other, me (phonetic) and the RA. So, I'm having -- I'm asking Fred (phonetic) to write it up for me if he can find something that is already out there. Okay, ready for the motion?

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Go ahead, Kitty.

MS. SIMONDS: Unless somebody has something else to say?

CHAIRMAN LUISI: No, go ahead, Kitty.

MS. SIMONDS: There it is. Okay. Move to form a working group to consider potential changes to the ESA policy directive, addressing issues, identified by the CCC through the May 2021 and January 2022 Meetings.
CHAIRMAN LUISI: Okay, thanks for that -- it's another workgroup, so I'd like to ask Tom Nies, if he would like to second that motion?

MS. SIMONDS: Yes, yes, it's a working group.

MR. NIES: I'll second the motion.

MS. SIMONDS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: So, we have a motion by Kitty, seconded by Tom. Is there any discussion on the motion? The lug nuts are getting a little loose on the bus right now, any discussion on the motion? Okay, seeing no discussion, is there any objection to the motion? Yeah, if we can put Kitty and Tom up there, just for the record. I see no objection to the motion, the motion carries by unanimous consent, thank you.

Anything else, to come before us on this topic? Okay. Seeing no hands, let's go ahead and move onto our next item on the Agenda. This is the CCC Committees and Workgroup Reports. I just want to point out that we have half an hour allotted to this on the Agenda and we have four
Presenters. If you can, just keep that in mind, as you are going through your presentations, we are really going to try to keep on task and keep to the timing. So, we are going to start with Tom Nies. Tom is going to give us a presentation on Councilmember Ongoing Development Workgroup.

MR. NIES: Thank You. Next slide, please. I just want to acknowledge the people on the Steering Committee for the Council Ongoing Training Program, as well as the two Meeting Facilitators we've hired. You all know the two Facilitators who did the Fisheries Forum for years, and now, they are working with us on this. Next slide, please.

CMOD 2022, it was originally I think supposed to be 2020 or 2021, will be held in November in Denver, Colorado. We picked that location because of its long history with fisheries. No, we picked that because it's easy to get to, because they've got a good airport, and it makes everybody travel at least a little bit to be fair, the topic is the new approaches to EBFM
and EAFM and consistent with CMOD. There is also a skills development element to that, which is going to effective motions.

The next steps are pretty simple. There's a draft agenda in the binder, as well as information memo, EDs. I'll be sending the information memo to you again, once the meeting is over. We need the Councils and ideally MNFS' Headquarters and regional offices to identify the attendees by July 21, 2022. MNFS has 10 seats here, and in our opinion, as it would help to have regional office representatives there, but obviously, it is up to NMFS whoever you send, for your 10 people. Each Council gets four attendees, so, we're generally thinking that you'll send three councilmembers and one staff member, but that is up to you. The reason we need to identify the attendees, is because some of the attendees are probably going to get picked to give presentations, and -- or we're going to have find other people to give the presentations, depending on who is attending, and that pretty much covers
my report. I'm willing to answer any questions if there happen to be any.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Thanks, Tom. You follow directions very well there. I appreciate it. I am not used to it, I have two teenagers at home and I'm not used to being listened to, so.

MR. NIES: I'm sorry, sir.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: I appreciate that. Any questions for Tom? Thank you very much, Tom. Next, we are going to move to Dave who is going to give us a presentation on the Scientific Coordination Subcommittee. Dave, whenever you are ready.

MR. WITHERELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Council, the North Pacific Council, is pleased to be the host of the Seventh Meeting of the National Scientific Coordination Subcommittee, and the Meeting will be held in Sitka, Alaska on August 15th-17th. Our Council will be paying for three folks from each of the Councils to attend, and you can choose whether you want to send two SSC members and some staff, or
three SSC members. You are welcome to send an extra person or two if you feel like you would like to do that, but, that would be on your own dime. We do have a room block set aside in the Westmark and the Aspen Hotels at a reasonable rate for the summer in Sitka. We look forward to hosting you, there will be receptions. It will be streamed -- but one way it's not a hybrid meeting where you get remote participation and we do have a number of folks coming in as keynote speakers, so we are looking forward to hosting that.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Thanks, Dave, any questions on the meeting this upcoming summer?
Okay, seeing no questions at this time. Let's move onto our third presentation, Jessica Coakley with Mid-Atlantic Council staff is here to give us an update on the habitat workgroup. Whenever you are ready Jess?

MS. COAKLEY: Great, thank you for that introduction, Mr. Chair. So, for those that aren't familiar with this workgroup, the CCC Habitat Workgroup is comprised of staff from all
eight councils. The Chairmanship actually rotates with the CCC, and we have representatives from all five of NMFS' Regional Offices on the workgroup and those are folks that are involved in the essential fish habitat consultation process, or serve as liaison for the Councils that are directly involved in habitat. We also have representatives from NMFS' Headquarters Offices of Habitat Conservation, and Offices of Science and Technology. Next slide.

We are a network of fish habitat practitioners with a focus on essential fish habitat. We meet to share fish habitat management and science issues across the region. We spend a lot of time looking for opportunities to problem solve around shared national challenges and around shared regional issues that apply to all the Councils. We also serve as a library of experts for each other. A really great resource for what I'll just call well-seasoned staff and new staff as well. And we've picked up a few recent ones in the last year, we have, Matt Seeley joined from
the Western Pacific Council, and Sara Rheinsmith from the North Pacific Council, are new staff on our workgroup. So, we are a really great support network, just in terms of pulling together all the EFH expertise.

The workgroup was formed in 2014, I had the pleasure of Chairing it that first year when it formed. We meet a handful of times a year online for about one to two hours, and we've met twice as a group in person. Next slide.

So we have a number of accomplishments under our belt over the last eight years and I've highlighted some of them here and these are also, there are some hyperlinks in there if you would like to access those reports. In 2016, NOAA hosted an EFH Summit, and our workgroup fully participated in that and contributed substantially to their regional profiles and summit reports. Our workgroup also played a big role in the development of the National Habitat Area of Particular Concern Guidance Report. We also, in 2019, had the opportunity to get together for the
second time, at the EFH Consultation and Regional Innovations Workshop, where we shared current practices, capabilities, challenges and came up with some short- and long-term action items for each of the regions, some of which have been implemented.

In our region, we had spoken with our Greater Atlantic habitat staff, and we've had some changes that we made to the website, and we made some improvements in terms of how we interact with one another. Next slide.

Another outgrowth of the 2019 Workshop was the CCC EFH Partners Letters that you sent, and as the Chairman in 2020, all eight signatures on that went out to other partner federal agencies, that are involved in the consultation process, to inform them about what our Councils' roles are in that, and then, to provide them with contacts for our Council and habitat staff within the region. And that's really helped foster some better connections. I know the New England Council has indicated that it's really helped them
better engage with the U.S. Army Corps of
Engineers staff in their region as well. Next
slide.

So, that's what we've done. I'm going
to talk a little bit about what we are doing right
now. So, one of our current focuses is what we
are calling deeper dives, so during these short
webinars we are taking some extra time to
highlight Council habitat topics of interest.
We're doing one to two councils per meeting. So
far, we've had both the North Pacific and Gulf
Council present on their essential fish habitat
review work that they've been doing, and they
showed some really interesting products, including
a Google form that the North Pacific was using to
gather information on EFH from the stock
assessment scientists, rather than going to them
individually, which we were able to share out to
the group, so we could take a look at that. And
New England also presented on their development of
habitat areas of concern that they are working on
right now and used that as an opportunity to get
input from the group, as they are working through their development process. Next slide.

I'd be remiss if I didn't mention wind, I don't think we've heard a lot about wind today, so we have to make sure we talk about wind. We do have a wind subgroup and it is not all the regions that are involved, its regional appropriate participation, but there's short calls to gain council habitat staff and NMFS staff insights, on some of these best practices dealing with wind issues and dealing with BOEM, and I know this has been really helpful, and we're hoping some of those lessons learned can be translated to other kinds of activities in the region. So, these workgroup -- subgroups will report out during our webinars and let us know -- you know, some of their thoughts and ideas as they talk through these processes.

As I noted earlier, Fishery Science Center engagement is an important component that we've worked on in the past, and it's something that we are continuing to focus on. There's been
an awful lot of turn over at the Science Centers lately, and particularly, in some of the habitat science divisions. So, we're planning some time on our schedules to have them come and meet with us, get to know one another, and talk about some shared topic of interests, and some of these may include things like regional habitat science priorities, looking at different funding opportunities for projects to really help advance habitat science work in other areas of collaboration that may help advance our council priorities.

We are also picking some really interesting topics to focus on. In July, we'll be talking in more detail about fish and habitat climate vulnerability. It was interesting enough, my dog had to jump up and check this one out. But he does also jump up when I say walk or I say cookies, so you know, you take it for what it is worth. But the habitat staff on this workgroup are really interested in these topics, so in July, we are going to receive a talk on the fish talk
vulnerability assessment that's just wrapping up in the South Atlantic and should be complete soon. NOAA Fisheries' Mike Johnson is going to be talking about the Northeast Habitat Climate Vulnerability Assessment that just wrapped up, and then, we're going to get a presentation from Michelle Bachman on the New England Fishery Management Council led CVA -- HCVA Habitat Dependence -- NRHA Crosswalk Project which is being done to try to integrate the outputs from all of these different vulnerability assessments, into an easy-digestible narrative, so we can sort of highlight the main takeaway points across all of those different types of projects. So, we'll take an opportunity as a group to talk about that in July.

So, one other thing that I think is a really great outgrowth of our workgroup, and all of our collaborations is, as we've gotten to know one another, we found opportunities to work together to really advance, some of the national-level priorities.
So, the staff at the New England Council, Michelle Bachman, myself, staff at our Regional Office along with staff from the Alaska Regional Office and North Pacific Fishery Management Council, we put in a competitive proposal to go after the Fish Habitat Advancement and Innovation Funds to develop a National fishing effects database. Both the Northeast and North Pacific have developed very-detailed fishing impact models that look -- that are part of their EFH reviews, and they've used that to support that. And all of the research and the literature and all that information that was used, rather than having it sit on some Endnote database on someone's desk, you know, and then they leave and it just disappears we're going be able to build that out into a database to house all of that, that International Fishing Effects Information, and as part of this project, we have plans to expand to include some of the more warmer water gears, that are used in other regions, like we've already been talking with Graciela in the
Caribbean and, our hope is to use the CCC Habitat Workgroup to help provide us input, so we can develop this detailed library and provide different levels of access for council staff and NOAA Fisheries' end users, so they can access the information directly, or even upload or update information when their reviews are complete, or when they come across new information, so we don't have to keep rebuilding this every time, you know, we do, new reviews. And it's an opportunity to actually expand this type of approach to modules nationally like having a wind effects module that we could build out to actually house all of the BOEM literature and information on wind effects nationally and make that accessible to the Councils.

So, I covered what was done in the past and I've covered what we've been doing presently, and I just want to note for 2023 and beyond this group is just very outcome and product-oriented group, and we really do well with a focus. And everyone wants to move this habitat work forward
for all of our Councils, and to take advantage to take the opportunity to have these workgroup members together. So, one of the topics that we were thinking of that might be interesting to focus on going forward might be, incorporating climate and climate resilience, like how we can fold that better into our essential fish habitat or habitat areas of particular concern designations. But there may be other areas of common regional or national interest that you think are a higher priority. I'm sure the workgroup would be happy to focus on those as well. We did meet in person, in 2016, and then in 2019, with some of those specific products and outcomes I noted, and I know, you know, after having been here this week, it's good to meet in person sometimes, and for this workgroup I think it's a good thing to meet every few years with a really good focus and a product in mind, when we do that.

So, with that, I'll take any questions on behalf of the workgroup.
CHAIRMAN LUISI:  Yeah. Thanks, Jessica, that's an excellent summary of the work you've been involved with. I'll look to the CCC. If anyone has any questions for Jessica at this time or wants to make any comments? Tom Nies?

MR. NIES:  Thank you for the presentation, Jessica. And I don't know if I'm directing this to Jessica or other CCC members. I would be in favor of them taking the focus in accordance with the last slide of climate resilience and habitat, I forget the exact wording. And I also think, it's probably time for them to start thinking about another meeting. I hate to set a date, but maybe they could think about planning one in 2023 or 2024, anyway. You know, I mean, I'd support that. I don't know if you want to take that in that direction, and let them figure out a date and come back to us when you want to have it.

CHAIRMAN LUISI:  Chris?

DR. MOORE:  Yeah, we would support that as well, Thank you, Mr. Chair.
CHAIRMAN LUISI: Janet?

MS. COIT: Thank you, Jessica. To what extent, are you interacting with the Northeast Science Center, or GARFO, or other folks on your wind efforts? I just want to make sure you are linked in and benefit from what you are doing.

MS. COAKLEY: Well, some of the members of our workgroup are on the Northwest Wind Workgroup, and I know Kerry Griffin from the Pacific Council. So, Kerry is also on our workgroup and he's on the subgroup, so the subgroup is very focused on kind of sharing staff-to-

Staff kind of lessons learned, best practices, trying to help each other, and particularly, with experiences learned in the Northeast lately, with the Pacific and we have persons from the South Atlantic Council, as well, that are on -- Roger is on that with us, too.

Yes, so, South Atlantic, as well, on that workgroup, because you know, things are starting to move quickly in those regions as well. And,
they have a lot of questions about how things have played out in the Northeast, and trying to figure out maybe how to do things better and more effectively. So, they are connected.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Jon Hare?

DR. HARE: Yes, thank you, and thank you, Jessica. Just to emphasize the coordination that is going in our region. If I remember correctly, the Mid-Atlantic Council hosts the regional webpage for Wind Energy Development, that includes information from the New England Council and from the Fishery Service, so we are closely coordinated on wind, and we try to have individuals from different organizations, sort of representing different meetings that we have. So, I think in terms as wind works out in other regions, like Jessica said, you know, following that model of crosslinking people to your point, Tony, right? It comes down to people, crosslinking people on these different groups to quickly share information has been reasonably effective.
CHAIRMAN LUISI: Okay, thank you. Thank you, Jon. Tony Blanchard?

MR. BLANCHARD: Good presentation. And when we were talking about fish habitats, and I would try a perfect example. When there is, what was true in 2017 in the Virgin Islands and in Puerto Rico, if we are using old maps, trying to get good data in my opinion, that is not going to work. Because if you've ever seen a CAT 5 go through an island, you would know what kind of devastation we're talking about. So, it would be ignorant, it might be hard to say that. What was destroyed on the land is not destroyed in the Ocean. So, the point that I am trying to make here is, we can't use old information, and especially, when it comes to mapping and bottom structure. Because structure can be changed within a blink of an eye. So, where we would suspect that there is still coral, it might be flat bottom. So, that's just the point I am trying to make that we need to be careful when we use old maps to come up with new solutions.
CHAIRMAN LUISI: Thanks, Tony. Jessica, can you go back to your previous slide to 2023 and beyond? I think what I'd like to do here, instead of a formal motion, I think this captures what the person who resembles Tom Nies to my left said, regarding a support for incorporating climate and climate resilience in future discussions, as well as, meeting in person sooner than later, and so, what I'll ask the CCC is there any objection to providing that direction through Jessica to the Habitat Workgroup, the Habitat Committee? You know, I'm seeing some thumbs up, and some heads nodding in support. I just want to put that on the record. So, Jessica if you can carry that message forward to the members of the group, that would be -- I would appreciate that. Thank you.

JESSICA: I will, and thank you very much, I know they'll be excited, and we'll all be excited to work on the tasking, so, thank you.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Excellent, okay, we are going to move on -- we have one last presentation. It's the Communications Workgroup.
update on CCC tasking regarding cross-council meeting calendar and we have Mary Sabo with us regarding Mid-Atlantic Council staff, and whenever you are ready. Mary, you can go ahead and start.

MS. SABO: All right, thank you, I don't have any slides today and this will be brief, because I don't actually have anything to present today, so, the CCC's Communication Council Communications Group is made up of the communication leads from all eight Councils. I have to say that working with them is one of my favorite parts of the job. You all have great comms people on your teams. So, in October, there was a task in the group to create a -- some sort of cross-council calendar that would facilitate better meeting planning, and just allow different councils to see when other councils and SSCs are meeting.

Given workloads over the winter months we haven't been able to schedule a meeting before this, but we have one scheduled for this Wednesday to review calendar options, and decide on the best
way to move forward, and then planning to work on it this summer and hoping to have a final product to present at the October Meeting. So, the goal here is to have an interface that all eight councils can keep updated with their own meeting information, so that we can provide a relatively user-friendly and up-to-date resource with meeting dates, and locations and other information. So, the plan is to have this hosted on the joint counsel website.

And, that's it for the updates, but I'd be happy to take any questions or recommendations, as we move forward with that project.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Thank you, Mary. Does anyone have any question or any comments? It sounds like the work that is planned will be reported out at our October Meeting which we'll look forward to. Dave?

MR. WITHERELL: Thank you Mr. Chairman. My work with the Area-Based Subcommittee reminds me how important it is for the Councils, as a group, to communicate how we do business and the
importance of the business that we do. And, in
the past the CCC Communications Group, has met in
person and developed ideas and strategies to get
that message out on behalf of the Regional Fishery
Management Councils. And, I'm just going to ask
the question, since Tom has got a grin on, Mary --
if you thought it would be useful to have an
in-person meeting in the near future?

MS. SABO: Sure, yes, I think I've been
to two in-person meetings with the group in my
time with the Council, and I always find them to
be tremendously helpful. Now, I've come away with
a long list of things to try, and new technologies
and that sort of thing. So, I personally would be
in favor of an in-person meeting.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Is there support for
that around the table? Tom?

MR. NIES: So, I don't know who you are
referring to, but I think if we are going to have
this group meet, we should have them do what the
Habitat Group did, and come forward with a
proposal for why they want to meet and what they
want to address. And then decide whether we should have a meeting or not. Which I think our CCC Terms of Reference say is supposed to happen.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: He returned.

(Laughter). Yeah, I mean, I can agree with that. If there is something that can be presented to the Councils, and we can, we can do that you know, virtually in support of that concept, I think that's -- that would be the path forward. Does that sound okay, Mary, with you, to carry that message?

MS. SABO: Sure, yeah. And I can, during our meeting next week, we can discuss the potential need for and topics to be addressed, at a possible -- to be confirmed by the CCC Meeting of the Communications Workgroup.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Great. Thank you.

Bill?

MR. TWEIT: Thanks, I'm just wondering if the value added to have more participation than we have been getting recently from NMFS, if we were to have something in person sort of organized
around the topic.

    MS. SABO: Yes, I think we've had participation from NMFS for the two in-person meetings, so, I would expect that we would reach out to them to participate.

    CHAIRMAN LUISI: I'm getting some heads nods to my right here, so, they will be participating in that discussion. All right, and I appreciate it very much, Mary, thank you, for your time, and we look forward to hearing a report at our October Meeting. Thank you.

    MS. SABO: Thank you.

    CHAIRMAN LUISI: Okay, the last time on our agenda before we do a wrap up, is that we have a public comment section. Is there anyone from the public in the audience that is here, in person, that would like to make any type of public comment at this time? Being no hands, let me go to the webinar. Is there anybody participating virtually on the webinar that would like to offer any public comment to the CCC at this time? You can raise your hand. I see no hands being raised, so, I'm
going to move on to our meeting wrap up and other business. I've asked Chris Moore to provide us that wrap up and so I'm going to turn the mic over to Chris.

DR. MOORE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As Mary gets ready to put a slide or two up, I just want to remind folks that specifically, the folks that are responsible for agenda summaries, to get those to Mary by tomorrow. So, each of the EDs had an assignment, and we've gotten most of the summaries, but if you haven't gotten them in yet, you have until tomorrow. So, if you can send those into Mary tomorrow, she'll put together a draft, we'll get that draft out by Monday, and when she sends it out on Monday, she'll ask you to basically, provide any comments or edits by that following Wednesday, which is the 25th, and by the 27th, we should have a summary of the meeting posted.

So, this is just the summary. We do minutes of meetings as well, we've had a court transcriber listening to the meeting, for the last
three days, and those notes should be available within two or three weeks. We'll get those around for folks to see as well and approve.

We have several actions and outcomes from our meeting this week. I'll go through those relatively quickly. If we could, move down, so, there you go. There is the different topics. We had a good discussion relative to newest updates, priorities. We didn't have really any actions or outcomes from that particular agenda item. The same with budget and science. In terms of the legislative outlook, we approved and updated the Forage Fish Consensus Statement. Next.

On day two, we had a robust discussion relative to climate change and the CCC recommended that NOAA Fisheries postpone further development of the Council Governance Policy. We then moved onto area-based management, America the Beautiful, you can read that there. CCC requested that NOAA Fisheries provide addition funding. They -- we requested that NOAA convene a meeting with CEQ. Certainly, if there are any questions as I am
going through this, if there is anything that you
see that you think we didn't capture correctly,
now is a good time to let me know. You'll have
another opportunity when we get the draft around
in terms of the summary of the meeting, but,
certainly, if there's something that jumps out at
you today, then certainly, let me know. Next.

We had a good overview of recreational
fisheries, and a good overview of management
strategy evaluations we didn't have any actions or
outcomes associated with those particular items.
On the National Seafood Strategy, we provided some
feedback on the draft strategy, Paul asked us to
provide some additional feedback if we so desired,
so that's an ask that you can respond to, outside
of that, we had no action items. Next.

We had a good discussion about
environmental justice, we agreed to establish a
workgroup, share information on different
approaches. We heard from Alexa regarding
international affairs, there are no action items
there. We just finished up talking about ESA/MSA
and agreed to form a working group as well. In terms of committee working groups, we did have some tasks there, so it's really not none, we just have some things we'll put in there, relative to our last discussion, relative to the communications group, as well as the habitat workgroup. So, both of those will be reflected in that particular -- under that particular topic.

And we'll talk about this in a little bit, our next meeting is scheduled for October 18th-20th. That meeting will occur in Washington, D.C., as I understand it. Morgan and I had a brief conversation about it, no hotel has been picked yet, but you all are working on it. So, we'll know soon. And with that, Mr. Chair, I'll be glad to take any comments/questions or if anyone has any concerns, now's the time.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Thank you, Chris, for that summary of the actions that were discussed here this week. Does anyone have any questions or see anything that we may have not captured regarding those discussion, Dave?
MR. WITHERELL: Oh, thank you, Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to ask Sam if he had a response relative to the CCC's request for special GIS funding for the ATB Initiative and when we might find out or hear a decision about that?

Sam?

MR. RAUCH: I don't have a response right now, I'll get back to you on that.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Okay, anybody else? Carrie?

MS. SIMMONS: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair, I think it was on the first day there was a discussion about extending the deadline for the climate change action plans, regional actional plans. It was a June deadline, then it was changed to July, is that correct?

DR. MOORE: Yeah, I believe it will be July 29th, let me just check my notes, and that's running through the federal registry process. I believe that it is going to be announced, late this week, which is late this week, or early next week, but I'll check, and get the specific date
for you.

It's -- if you could, just give me a second, thank you for your patience. It's going to be July 29th.

MS. SIMMONS: Does that cover all the regions or just -- I think it was three in the announcement, or is that all the regions? Could you --

CHAIRMAN LUISI: That's for all the regional action plans that are open for public comments which --

MS. SIMMONS: Okay, that would mean -- we don't have it on our June Council Agenda? That's already been submitted for federal registry notice, and so, that would miss our August Council Agenda. Is there anyway we could get that deadline pushed back for the Southeast, and could be in end of August for us?

DR. HARE: I'll look into that for you, thank you.

MS. SIMMONS: Thanks. Yeah.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Any more questions.
Okay, seeing none, is there any new, and/or continuing business that we need to take up at this time? Kitty?

MS. SIMONDS: I just have a last comment, should I wait until you are finished to go?

CHAIRMAN LUISI: We are as close to done a you can -- almost so, and so yeah, we are 30 seconds --

MS. SIMONDS: Okay.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: -- from being done, so go ahead and make your comment.

MS. SIMONDS: Is that I forgot to tell you all that on the 17th, well remember you have been hearing about our BiOps and those kinds of things, on the 17th Earth Justice filed a complaint on behalf of their clients, the Conservation Council of Hawaii, and an individual, named Nacachi (phonetic), who we know very well, against the National Marine Fishery Service on Oceanic White Tips on two long-line industries, so, they are asking for, I guess a response in 90
days, so maybe, I'll see some BiOps before, I
don't know. So, I just wanted to mention that.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Okay, thanks, Kitty,

Marcos?

MR. HANKE: Yes, I want to take the
opportunity, for me, it is very special point, I
want to say to Tony Blanchard thank you, so much.
He is -- this is his last meeting as a CCC
(phonetic) Member, and for being so up front with
a personality that we can rely.

We know that he's representing you know,
in the best way, the fisherman from the Virgin
Islands, and we always have opportunity to sit
down to talk on the difficult points. He is
always like that, and I want to you -- to put that
out there. He is very respected by everybody in
the Caribbean. Thank you, for his experience, and
it's an honor to work with Tony. I wish we had
around us more people up front, and clear of soul
and mind and heart, like Tony is, and thank you,
very much, Tony.
CHAIRMAN LUISI: Thank you for those words, Marcos, and thank you, Tony, for your representation of the Caribbean and time spent on the CCC, thank you.

MR. BLANCHARD: I appreciate that.

CHAIRMAN LUISI: Is there anything else under other business, at this time? Seeing no hands, I want to thank everybody for what I consider to be a very productive meeting.

I hope you enjoyed my hometown here of Annapolis, and I know some of you have a long journey ahead to get back to your regions. So, please, be safe, stay healthy and be careful and I look forward to seeing all of you in October in Washington, D.C.

This meeting is -- we stand adjourned, thank you.

(Whereupon, at 12:01 p.m., the PROCEEDINGS were adjourned.)

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CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

STATE OF MARYLAND

I, Mark Mahoney, notary public in and for the State of Maryland, do hereby certify that the forgoing PROCEEDING was duly recorded and thereafter reduced to print under my direction; that the witnesses were sworn to tell the truth under penalty of perjury; that said transcript is a true record of the testimony given by witnesses; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which this proceeding was called; and, furthermore, that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

(Signature and Seal on File)

Notary Public, in and for the State of Maryland

My Commission Expires: June 7, 2022