



D7 Social Science Planning Team

June 2019

Action Memo

Staff: Sarah Marrinan
Other Presenters: Steve Kasperski (AFSC)
Action Required: 1. Review Social Science Planning Team Report

BACKGROUND

From May 7 through May 9, 2019 the Social Science Planning Team (SSPT) met for its annual in-person meeting at the Hilton Hotel in Anchorage, AK. The group discussed the Data Gap Analysis, new and underrepresented research relevant to the North Pacific, the use of qualitative information in the fisheries management, Economic Data Reports including the Council's recent actions to consider revisions to these data collections, as well as receiving an update on the Fishery Ecosystem Plan action modules.

The following provides a brief summary of the status of SSPT topics and any recommendations for Council consideration:

Data Gap Analysis (DGA):

The DGA is a document conceived by the SSPT that highlights gaps in available social and economic data that are necessary to understand changes in net benefits and direct/indirect impacts of fishery management decisions in the North Pacific. This document is being developed to aid the SSPT in its mission of improving the quality and application of social science data that inform management decision-making and program evaluation.

As there was much discussion on the organization on the current draft of the DGA during this SSPT meeting, the next steps with this document is for the current authors to incorporate that feedback and reorganize the document in a way that more inclusive of different fields of social science to better facilitate the description of different data gaps. Once this reorganization is complete (expected in late June), all SSPT members should contribute knowledge about gaps relative to their expertise.

Presentation of new and underrepresented research relevant to the North Pacific:

This topic has become a reoccurring theme on the SSPT's agenda and is relevant to the SSPT's goal of maintaining an understanding of current and ongoing social science research in areas relevant to North Pacific fisheries management and to serve as a network that makes newly developed resources accessible to the Council process. Relevant research was presented on network analysis which demonstrates cross-fishery spillover, calculation of local economic multipliers for Alaska communities, examples of ways to present community-level information in the situations where confidentiality masks much of what can be presented, a reference list for relevant literature on focused on equity and access, well-being, indigenous stewardship, and advancing research approaches/ understanding of social sciences, and work on conceptualizing and measuring various components of wellbeing. The SSPT also received additional literature for consideration submitted through public testimony (also available on the electronic agenda). The SSPT intends to continue having a standing opportunity to share new and underrepresented research at meetings. No action is necessary on this issue.

The use of qualitative information in the fisheries management

One area of previous confusion at the Council has been the characterization and interpretation of qualitative research methods and data. The SSPT may be helpful in bridging the gap, for instance in describing the difference between anecdotal information versus systematically collected qualitative information that can meet social science best practices and represents rigorous scientific information.

The SSPT is considering a two-step process to informing on and promoting qualitative methods in the Council process. The first step is for the subgroup of Courtney Carothers, Mike Downs and Jim Fall to organize some of the existing literature and consolidate relevant examples of the use of qualitative information in fisheries management and other applied examples. **The hope is for these members to present to the SSC, AP, and Council at an upcoming Council meeting in December or February if there is availability on the Council's agenda.** The second step of the process would be for better incorporation of qualitative methods into the Council analytical documents. At this stage the SSPT does not have a path forward on this task as it hopefully will be guided by that earlier presentation and discussed again at the SSPT's May 2020 meeting.

Economic Data Reports (EDRs):

The SSPT reviewed the EDR discussion paper (presented to the Council in April 2019) and discussed the Council's request for SSPT input on revisions to this data collection.

In general, the SSPT supports the idea of revisions to the current EDR programs, and the SSPT agrees it would like to have a role in the framing of these potential revisions moving forward. This task seems to fit within our mandate and has potential to respond to the Data Gap Analysis. **In order to provide that guidance, the SSPT would like to have an EDR-focused day long technical workshop.**

Conducting a workshop outside of our typical two-meeting format appears within the SSPT's purview but it is unclear whether it would be funded by the Council. If possible, members discussed a late-summer time frame. In preparation for a workshop, staff (who have yet to be tasked) could seek to address the SSC previous comments from the April 2019 meeting and do some of the legwork in planning for such a workshop and preparing ideas for the SSPT workshop to consider. If a workshop is not feasible, the SSPT discussed that there may not be a contingency plan to address these issues before the next May 2020 SSPT meeting, the next time the group is scheduled to meet in-person. It was noted that the Council would likely wish to move forward before that time.

Update on the Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan Action Modules

The SSPT received an update on the Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan and forthcoming Action Modules. The SSPT appreciated the update and is supportive of the FEP Team recommendation to have a standing agenda item for reviewing the BS FEP progress at each SSPT meeting. The SSPT is also open to providing updates/check-ins at the FEP Team meetings as needed. **The SSPT recommends a member of the SSPT attend FEP Team meetings when possible.** There is likely to be overlap in subsistence sections of SSPT data gap analysis; the 'lead authors' of that section may want to interact with the FEP Team regularly/attend meetings of the FEP Team. The call for nominations for the FEP Task Forces will go out following the June Council meeting. **In general, the SSPT recommended that membership be as inclusive as possible, a member suggested adding "indigenous scholars" to the itemized list of potential Task Force members produced by the FEP team. Additionally, the SSPT would like to receive an update on FEP Task Force membership at the November SSPT interim conference call.**

The full meeting agenda, reference documents, and all public comments submitted for considerations are included on the electronic agenda: <https://meetings.npfmc.org/Meeting/Details/746>