

Ninth World Fisheries Congress – March 2024

Seattle, WA

<https://wfc2024.fisheries.org/>

I attended the Ninth World Fisheries Congress (WFC) on behalf of the NPFMC and also at the invitation of staff from the Australian Fisheries Management Agency. I have been working cooperatively with AFMA staff and others on a recently completed and published Lenfest project describing potential uses of indicators for ecosystem-based fishery management, and also providing AFMA staff with my perspective on the NPFMC experiences with development of EBFM approaches as AFMA works to incorporate tools to adapt to the impacts of climate change on their fisheries. Lenfest organized a presentation and panel on the ecosystem indicators project (Operationalizing ecosystem-based fisheries management (EBFM) through inclusive research, engagement, and partnerships) which was held on Monday from 11 to 5; I participated as a panelist for the wrap-up of the session. AFMA staff organized a session on Tuesday from 2-5 (Ecosystem-based management in multi-species and environmentally dynamic fisheries) and asked me to moderate the second portion of the session.

I also attended the second day of the very well-attended session (Incorporation of ecosystem information into fisheries management) organized by several Dr. Ivonne Ortiz, Dr. Stephanie Zador, and Dr. Beth Fulton (CSIRO, Australia) and held on Tuesday from 2-5 and Wednesday from 9 to 12:30. A second Wednesday panel (Crafting usable science to inform fisheries decision-making in a changing climate – lessons from the science-policy interface), also organized by Lenfest, and held from 4 to 5:30, also was well attended and informative. I also attended the Tuesday panel organized by Dr. Sarah Wise and other NMFS staff (Implementation of Equity and Environmental Justice in US Fisheries) describing the NMFS EEJ policy. The Tuesday plenary talks by Dr. Vera Agostino of FAO on the role of fisheries in addressing world hunger and Shakuntala Thilsted of CGIAR ([CGIAR: Science for humanity's greatest challenges](#)) on seafood and nutrition were both compelling, I highly recommend viewing the live feeds of both, which are at: [Plenary Session 2 - Food & Nutrition \(boxcast.tv\)](#), starting at 1 hour and 46 minutes. They provide an excellent reminder, from a global perspective, of the importance of our work.

The WFC agenda included numerous other panels on a broad range of topics that were quite relevant to NPFMC interests: on indigenous fisheries, bycatch management, adapting to climate change, developing blue economies, observer programs, biodiversity, and of course climate change. IPHC staff organized a workshop session (The International Pacific Halibut Commission: 100 years of science-based fishery management) on Tuesday from 2-5:30 marking their first century of management. The poster session also included a lot of relevant material and some familiar faces: a couple of the highlights included the posterboard and interactive presentation by AMCC, Ocean Conservancy and others on indigenous knowledge and indicators, and the exercise that Dr. Chris Anderson conducts annually with students to taste test salmon from wild-caught and aquaculture sources. Among the approx. 1000 attendees, I saw quite a few familiar NMFS staff and many from our industry and non-governmental organizations, Alaskan tribal members, ADFG and WDFW staff, SSC members. In particular, I'd like to acknowledge the role of AFSC staff as organizers, participants and attendees at many of the workshops; their expertise was quite evident.

Coincident with the WFC, the Lenfest Ocean Program released the executive summary of a paper by Dr. Beth Fulton and Dr. Keith Sainsbury on the results of the Lenfest funded [project](#) to examine the use of indicators in EBFM. NPFMC participants in this project included myself, Diana Evans, and Diana Stram. AFSC staff were also engaged. Of particular note, Fulton and Sainsbury propose the use of an Ecosystem Traits Index, a tool for summarizing a broad range of individual indices to provide an overall

measure of ecosystem health in terms of both ecological and human dimensions. It seems to me that this approach would be of practical use for EBFM efforts by the NPFMC.