

## **Council motion**

### **D-1 Bering Sea Local Knowledge/Traditional Knowledge/Subsistence Information Protocol and Onramps**

**October 9, 2023**

The Council supports and commends the work of the Local Knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, and Subsistence (LKTKS) Taskforce. The Council approves the LKTKS Protocol in full as a living document to provide guidance for identifying, analyzing, and incorporating Local Knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, and subsistence information into the Council's decision-making process when there is a clear Federal fisheries nexus. The Council also approves the following 'LKTKS Policy' statement to summarize the approach in the guidance:

*The Council adopted the Local Knowledge (LK), Traditional Knowledge (TK), and Subsistence Protocol (LKTKS Protocol) in October 2023. The LKTKS Protocol provides foundational information and context for identifying, analyzing, and incorporating LK, TK, and subsistence information into the Council's decision-making process. At the core of this work is the recognition of diversity among the people that engage in, depend on, and are impacted by the federal fisheries managed by the Council. Effective fisheries management that supports sustainable fisheries and ecosystems requires robust science and an inclusive decision-making process that fosters relationships and trust.*

*The Council recognizes the importance of the LKTKS Protocol for informing its decision-making process and envisions it will foster a more inclusive decision-making process, expand its information base, and improve the robustness of the best scientific information available to inform its decision-making. The approach to working with these knowledge systems includes:*

- 1. The Council, staff, and advisory bodies intend to demonstrate respect for LK and TK systems, LK and TK holders, the social science of LK and TK, and subsistence gatherers and their information.*
- 2. The Council, staff, and Council advisory bodies recognize the importance of understanding and using the appropriate terms for LK, TK, and subsistence information while carrying out their work.*
- 3. The Council, staff, and advisory bodies are committed to taking the appropriate steps to accurately identify LK and TK holders, the social science of LK and TK, and subsistence information and to identify when such knowledge and information has a clear federal fisheries nexus to integrate into the Council process.*
- 4. The Council recognizes the importance of, and will work to prioritize, early and ongoing communication with relevant entities holding or representing LK and TK systems. This includes but is not limited to Tribes, Alaska Native Organizations, fishermen, fishing or processing associations, as well as cooperatives, and others.*
- 5. The Council will endeavor to understand and acknowledge capacity differences among the entities (i.e., Tribes, Alaska Native Organizations, fishermen, fishing associations or cooperatives, and others).*
- 6. The Council will endeavor to adhere to local and cultural protocols that entities have established for sharing and communicating LK, TK, or subsistence information when they are shared with the Council, staff, or its advisory bodies.*

*7. The Council acknowledges the challenge and importance of having the appropriate capacity for identifying and working with LK and TK systems and subsistence information. The Council will work to identify opportunities to increase this capacity and engage in opportunities for increasing LK, TK, and subsistence capacity as able.*

*8. The Council, staff, and advisory bodies intend to equitably work across and account for multiple knowledge systems.*

#### On-ramps

The Council supports the existing on-ramps previously recommended by the Community Engagement Committee and identified through a Council motion in February 2021. The Council also approves the following on-ramps for incorporating LKTKS, understanding additional capacity and resources may be necessary for full implementation of specific on-ramps in the future.

1. The Council adopts the LKTKS Protocol.
2. The Council supports the use of the LKTKS search engine and dedicating Council staff time to maintaining it as needed.
3. The Council supports Council participation (non-quorum) in engagement trips and meetings that provide opportunities for two-way dialogue, knowledge sharing, and direct engagement with Council members.
4. The Council continues to support NMFS' consultations with Tribes and development of the resulting reports early in the Council's decision-making process. The Council supports staff participating when requested and available. This process will be reviewed annually by the Council Executive Director and Chair to determine whether information is shared adequately to inform Council decision-making.
5. The Council supports Federal agencies providing management reports (B reports) to do so with formal Tribal co-management partners if desired.
6. The Council will modify the Council Statement of Organization, Practices, and Procedures (SOPPs) and/or terms of reference (TOR) for the Advisory Panel to include a designated Alaska Native Tribal seat to be held by a Tribal representative.
7. The Council will consider expanded LK and TK social science expertise on the Scientific and Statistical Committee during the annual nomination process, in balance with other necessary expertise and availability of expertise.
8. The Council recommends improving the process to solicit broad public input, including LK and TK, and subsistence contributions, to select core research questions and research priorities to assist the Council in managing the nation's resources.
9. The Council supports implementation of the LKTKS template for working with LK, TK, and subsistence information when there is a clear nexus to federal fisheries under the Council's jurisdiction, to formalize a process for incorporating LK, TK, the social science of LK and TK, and subsistence information into the Council's decision-making process. Implementation of the template will be an iterative process and is intended to prompt Council analytical staff as they consider the information that should be included to inform Council decision-making. The template is not intended to prescribe a narrow approach for staff, but instead provides a starting point as staff work to include these knowledge systems in products used to inform Council decision-making. This template is meant to be used in conjunction with other staff

analytical templates and the LTKS Protocol, as needed and appropriate, and staff will continue to use discretion in balancing timeliness of analyses with incorporating information. It is envisioned that the questions will be modified and evolve over time as they are put into practice.

10. The Council will modify its public comment procedures to allow testifiers to provide introductions without it counting against their allowed time limit for oral public comments at Council, Scientific and Statistical Committee, and Advisory Panel meetings.