



# North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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## Social Science Planning Team

### MINUTES

November 9, 2018 Teleconference

*The Social Science Planning Team (SSPT) held a teleconference to review responses to several Council requests, receive an update on the data gap analysis, and plan for the May in-person meeting.*

#### Members in attendance:

Sally Bibb (NMFS AKR)  
Courtney Carothers (UAF)  
Sam Cunningham (NPFMC)  
Mike Downs (SSC; Northern Economics)  
Mike Fey (AKFIN)

Elizabeth Figus (NPFMC)  
Steve Kasperski (AFSC)  
Seth Macinko (URI)  
Sarah Marrinan (NPFMC)  
Marysia Szymkowiak (AFSC)

Matt Reimer (SSC; UAA) was absent.

#### Others in attendance:

Jon McCracken (NPFMC)  
Julie Raymond-Yakoubian (Kawerak, Inc)  
Chang Seung (AFSC)

Brian Garber-Yonts (AFSC)  
Diana Stram (NPFMC)

#### Draft Terms of Reference

During its June 2018 Council meeting the SSC and Council requested greater specificity about the SSPT's objectives and operations and recommended drafting a Terms of Reference (TOR). **The draft TOR is attached (Attachment 1) and is seeking Council consideration.** To develop the TOR, the SSPT charter proposal (which was presented to the Council in June 2017) was merged into the TOR format used by the groundfish plan teams. This draft was shared with the SSPT members in track changes in order to identify areas covered by the groundfish plan teams that had not previously been discussed by the SSPT.<sup>1</sup> SSPT members discussed a few aspects of the TOR:

- Members discussed the language around the disciplines represented by members. The SSPT is seeking diversity in the social science disciplines represented on the group. Concerns were raised about being overly prescriptive in the disciplines included in the TOR in case a certain type of expertise was sought in the future.
- **The specific language around membership may depend on if/ how the Council chooses to clarify its policy on requirements for member affiliations. This language is highlighted in red.**
- The SSPT plans to appoint (or reappoint) a chair every two years, with no term limits for the chair.
- In line with the SSPT's draft proposal (as well as other plan teams), the SSPT plans to operate based on consensus. In the event a decision needs to be made and consensus is not reached, both

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.npfmc.org/wp-content/PDFdocuments/membership/PlanTeam/SSPT/TORforSSPTmarkup1118.pdf>

majority and minority views would be represented in the publicly available report, with any appropriate context.

- The SSPT discussed the “functions” of the SSPT, which had been a list of tasks written up in its charter proposal. Including this list in the TOR is intended to demonstrate the focus of the SSPT; however, the group may not work on each of these issues at every meeting.
- Due to a change in the timing of the NMFS Office of Science and Technology and Office of Sustainable Fisheries Request for Proposals, which no longer overlaps with the timing of SSPT meetings, providing feedback on Alaska Fishery Science Center (AFSC) social science research proposals was removed from this list of functions.
- The group discussed the relationship between the SSPT and the Council’s research priorities. As has been previously discussed, the SSPT is not currently seeking the opportunity to go through and prioritize (re-prioritize) the Council’s research priorities; however, as the group works on next steps for addressing data gaps, the SSPT may wish to submit comments to the SSC about research priorities in the future.

SSPT members agreed to follow-up through email with any minor language changes or typographic edits.

## **Social Science Guidance at Other Councils**

At its June 2018 meeting the Council also asked the SSPT to review whether other fishery management councils have bodies similar to the SSPT to incorporate social and economic information into the decision-making. Thus, the SSPT received an informational memorandum prepared by Ms. Sarah Marrinan on the social science bodies that have provided guidance for other regional councils.<sup>2</sup> **This information is included in the D8 action memo for the Council.**

It does not appear that any other region has formed a group with the same scope and objectives as what has been set out for the North Pacific’s SSPT. However, several regions have groups that provide social science expertise, primarily serving as a review body. For instance, these groups (i.e. sub-committees, special SSC) have provided special attention to the data and methodology used in program reviews for these regions. Additionally, one Council staff member noted that she informally communicates about data gaps and potentially useful areas of research with their Science Center. This type of communication, while informal, may be more along the lines of what the North Pacific is seeking to enhance with the SSPT.

## **Data Gap Analysis Update**

At the May 2018 SSPT meeting, Dr. Steve Kasperski and Dr. Marysia Szymkowiak presented the first version of a Data Gap analysis intended to provide for a systematic examination of fisheries data and information gaps relevant to federally managed North Pacific fisheries. The SSPT provided initial feedback at that time. This document is meant to be iterative and ultimately spur the SSPT to make steps toward addressing some of these informational gaps. At the November SSPT meeting, Steve and Marysia provided an outline<sup>3</sup> to update the SSPT on the next version of the Gap Analysis, scheduled to be available for SSPT review in February, for further discussion in May 2019.

This version of the analysis includes a new organizational structure. It will begin with a section on the need for social and economic data in fisheries management and associated regulatory mandates for it and then is primarily focused around three non-exclusive categories of stakeholders who benefit from

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.npfmc.org/wp-content/PDFdocuments/membership/PlanTeam/SSPT/SS\\_advisoryGroups1118.pdf](https://www.npfmc.org/wp-content/PDFdocuments/membership/PlanTeam/SSPT/SS_advisoryGroups1118.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.npfmc.org/wp-content/PDFdocuments/membership/PlanTeam/SSPT/ExtrnlDataGapAnalysisOutline1018.pdf>

fisheries and other uses of living marine resources and their habitat: producers (e.g. harvesting vessels, crew, processors, charter sector operators), consumers (e.g. those who consume seafood, recreational anglers), and communities (including subsistence users and the sharing of resources). This analysis will also include data requirements and gaps for external costs as well as a discussion section that identifies patterns of data gaps and gaps that may be considered ‘low-hanging fruit’ to address (leaving the discussion of priorities for filling gaps to the SSPT).

SSPT members had a brief discussion about this update, highlighting some aspects of the outline they particularly liked and providing some additional comments for the development of the next version of the analysis. Members appreciated the new organization as well as the identification of missing demographic information (e.g. race and ethnicity) that could aid in a more thorough understanding of distributional costs and benefits. The outline provided was intended to provide a structural overview and therefore does not demonstrate all of the elements that would inherently be included under each section; however, SSPT members highlighted a few data gaps they wanted to ensure were discussed in this document, such as:

- Informational gaps on the considerations of environmental justice, Alaska Native populations, and marginalized and minority populations;
- The data gap of Traditional Knowledge; however, an SSPT member also expressed caution about the way we address TK in this document as this type of data gap is different in nature to other types of missing information; (i.e. TK cannot often be translated into a data point or specific indicator); and
- The information gaps on crew (and highlighting their role as more than just labor). For instance, we have crew residence, but we do not necessarily know what fisheries they are participating in.

Steve and Marysia explained that the document that will be circulated, hopefully in February of 2019, with the intention that this document will capitalize on the expertise from all SSPT members to better understand the information that is (and is not) available. It will be important for members to carve out time for this document and add their expertise so that it is a product of the team. A few members raised ideas for next-steps including pursuing collaborations with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to address information gaps on Alaska Natives as well as other opportunities for collaboration. Members also raised the point of focusing on what this information could be used for – i.e., how do we improve our analyses? The SSPT hopes to discuss these types of next steps more at the May SSPT meeting.

## **Request for a Process for Tribal Representation**

Sarah described that in addition to nominating a new member for the SSPT in October and requesting a seat for ADF&G, the Council also requested that staff bring back suggestions for a process for the Council to select an SSPT member to broadly represent Tribal organizations. The SSPT had extensive discussion about this request and received oral public testimony (Ms. Julie Raymond-Yakoubian; Kawerak Social Science Program Director) on this issue.

There was discussion, without consensus, on whether it is appropriate to have a special process to request Tribal representation on a plan team. Some felt that nominations should be based exclusively on whether the nominee’s expertise matched that which was requested and wondered if this was the evaluation process used in the last call for nominations. These members highlighted the important distinction of Tribes as sovereign governments, on par with the Federal government. Tribal representatives may already meet eligibility under the Council’s request for members who are affiliated with “public organizations or academic institutions”. There was concern vocalized by some members of the SSPT that the Tribally-affiliated nominees were not given full consideration in the previous nomination process. In particular, the SSC minutes stating that the “SSC sought to identify candidates whose affiliations allow independence (i.e., generally speaking are employed by state or federal agencies, or universities)...” led some members

to question how the Council's request for individuals with expertise in local and traditional knowledge was intended to be interpreted and who the Council was intending to target with this call for nominations. Were the Tribally-affiliated nominees not considered due to affiliation? If all nominees were fully considered in the previous nomination process, some members argued that a special process elevating affiliation over merit was unnecessary.

One member noted it may be necessary to have a special process for a single SSPT member to represent Tribes, so that Tribes may provide input on the process. Some members brought up the possibility that because there are 229 federally recognized Tribes in Alaska, there could be equity concerns with having Tribal representation from one Tribal government and not others. It was noted that there would not likely be a consensus nominee from all Tribes in Alaska. While consensus did not occur on the need for a special nomination process, there appeared to be an interest from SSPT members on clarifying current eligibility for membership and additional expertise or representation that was desired.

Thus, the SSPT did not provide suggestions for a specific process to identify a representative of a Tribal organization to serve on the SSPT. **The SSPT requests clarification from the Council on its current policy for SSPT membership affiliations. SSPT also requested clarification on the type of membership that the Council is seeking to augment (e.g., a representative of (a) Tribe(s) and/or Tribal organization(s); a Tribally-affiliated social scientist; an Alaska Native traditional knowledge bearer).**

While expertise in traditional knowledge (TK) will be beneficial for a team charged with improving quality and application of social science data that informs management, some members felt that the task of incorporating traditional knowledge (TK) into the Council process was best addressed through the Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan (BS FEP), Local Knowledge and Traditional Knowledge (LK/TK) Action Module team. This team is yet to be formed but may have more latitude to encompass a broader group of members and affiliations. For example, this may include individuals outside social science fields who are TK holders or who have a vision for what successful incorporation of TK into a federal fisheries management process may look like. While there may be overlap in the SSPT's objective of addressing informational gaps in the fisheries management process, this group may be better suited to address this specific task. The SSPT hopes there will be communication between these groups as this group is developed and makes progress.

## **Agenda and Logistics for May Meeting**

Steve presented a draft list of potential topics for the May 2019 SSPT meeting.<sup>4</sup> It will be important to prioritize appropriate time for next steps, any recommendations, and for minute writing; therefore, the agenda will be planned with this focus. With that in mind, including topics such as a discussion of fishermen/ stakeholder surveys or citizen science will be time-dependent. In addition to the rest of the suggested topics, there was a request to have an update on the LK and TK Action Module from the BS FEP, assuming this document is approved in December 2018.

The 2019 meeting is set to be held again in May. There will be follow-up with members to determine the dates in May that would work best, and to finalize the location (i.e. Anchorage, Seattle or Juneau). It was also determined that the meeting would be extended compared to the last SSPT meeting. The SSPT determined meeting for 2 ½ or 3 days would be more likely to provide appropriate time to collaborate on the SSPT report.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.npfmc.org/wp-content/PDFdocuments/membership/PlanTeam/SSPT/SSPTdraftAgenda4May2019.pdf>