

Responses to PEIS Questionnaire by Ecosystem Committee member Theresa Peterson

Questions:

1. Why does the Council need to reinitiate a Programmatic evaluation at this time?

- *The current management systems and analysis which are informed by the PSEIS do not adequately consider the marine environment and people dependent on healthy marine ecosystems.*
- *The marine ecosystems of the North Pacific are changing in a rapid and unprecedented manner, the existing PSEIS is over 20 years old and does not provide the framework necessary to manage fisheries in an ecosystem-based fishery management approach.*

2. What outcome(s) do you want to achieve through this process?

- *I would like to see a PEIS that includes a well vetted and visionary purpose and need statement, alternatives, goals and objectives which provides a framework for EBFM in a sustainable, equitable and forward-thinking manner. The PEIS should include a comprehensive, analytical evaluation of direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of federal fisheries management. The evaluation should reflect fisheries management under a changing climate and associated uncertainties. The PEIS should be responsive and inclusive to the ongoing need to inform fisheries management that recognizes the interconnectivity of fisheries management and cumulative impact considerations on the marine food web, habitat, coastal and river communities, indigenous communities, tribes and sustainable fisheries management now and in the future.*

3. What scope would you like to see for the new policy?

- Focused on groundfish fishery, specific species, or all Council-managed fisheries?
 - *The PEIS should include all Council managed fisheries and be structured to proactively inform the management of fisheries using an ecosystem-based fisheries management approach. A holistic, inclusive PEIS should include non-target species which are culturally and economically important such as salmon, halibut and crab. In addition, predator/prey species that are associated with groundfish fisheries such as prey for marine mammals should be included.*
- A broader or specific geographic range?
 - *The scope of the policy should cover a broad geographic range which includes the Gulf of Alaska, Bering Sea, and Aleutian Islands. All of the large marine ecosystems in the North Pacific are a connected, fluid body of water and an overarching management policy should approach the vast ocean region in a holistic manner.*
- Affecting all the management policy or specific components?
 - *The PEIS should be compiled and structured in a manner that includes all management policies. A forward-thinking document should provide guidance and information which informs EBFM in a changing climate. The analysis should include a comprehensive approach which considers the cumulative impacts of federally managed fisheries on the environment, habitat and people.*

Methods to include a variety of knowledge, values, and dependence on a healthy marine ecosystem should be included.

4. What changes would you like to see to the current groundfish management policy and its nine management goals and suite of 45 objectives?

- Do you feel there are any management goals and/or objectives that need to be added to a new management policy? If so, what are they?
 - *In reviewing the nine management goals and accompanying objectives, the goals and objectives do offer a comprehensive, inclusive approach to fisheries management. As the analytical process unfolds for the PEIS it will be critical to identify processes for meeting the goals and objectives.*
 - *As the goals and objectives for the PEIS are refined to meet the developing purpose and need and alternatives, there must be a review process which includes identification of 'how' the goals and objectives are being met.*
- Are there any management goals and/or objectives that have not been prioritized enough in Council decision making? If so, which ones?
 - *In terms of prioritization, as Council decisions weigh the National Standards in an equal manner, each of the listed goals and objectives must be weighed in an equal manner. A new PEIS would benefit from an understandable approach to factor in the identified goals and objectives which stem from the purpose and need, including a process to address gaps in objectives which are not being met.*
- Are there any management goals and/or objectives with which you no longer agree, or which need language to be updated? If so, which ones?
 - *I anticipate there will be a number of goals and objectives that need to be updated and expanded on as the process unfolds. As noted above, it will be critical to identify a process for determining if the goals/objectives are being met along with a process for correcting gaps in meeting identified objectives.*

5. Are there any specific regulatory or management-related steps you can think of at this time to better align the Council with future purpose and management objectives? These may not necessarily end up being folded into the Programmatic, but can provide additional illustration as the Committee and Council decide how to structure alternatives.

6. Please include any additional comments you would like to share.

- *I want to emphasize that responses to the questionnaire are preliminary thoughts responsive to the questions and serve as a starting point. I see broad stakeholder engagement as key in development of the PEIS in an inclusive, dynamic approach. I appreciate this initial outreach to energize the discussion and provide guidance for the discussion at the Ecosystem Committee as a premeeting prompt and hope the thought sharing process is useful.*