

And I want to highlight several important underlying themes in all of these examples for Congress to keep in mind as it works to reauthorize MSA and considers possible changes;

- A well-structured national policy framework that provides broad objectives with sound guidance, recognizing regional differences and allowing for the development of regionally based solutions.
- The critical importance of science and analysis - in stock surveys, assessments, fisheries dependent data collection and monitoring, research and other aspects - conducted by the many members of the NMFS/AFSC, ADF&G and other partner agencies to conserve and manage marine resources and to provide for sustainable fisheries.
- Ensuring accountability through monitoring and data collection in the fisheries, catch share and other management program reviews, and broad stakeholder participation.
- A process that fosters and encourages the cooperative efforts of diverse and often contentious interests that exist in the North Pacific, as in every region.

General comments

Finally, I would like to reiterate the Council Coordinating Committee's general thoughts regarding the reauthorization process, which were presented to the Senate Commerce Subcommittee by John Quinn three weeks ago on behalf of all of the regional councils. These represent some general tenets that we believe should be considered relative to any change in the MSA:

- Avoid across the board mandates which could negatively affect one region in order to address a problem in another region. Ensure that we have the ability to develop regional solutions to regional problems. Make provisions region-specific where necessary, or couch them as optional tools in the management toolbox rather than mandates.
- Legislation should allow for flexibility in achieving conservation objectives, but be specific enough to avoid lengthy, complex implementing regulations or 'guidelines'.
- Legislation should be in the form of intended outcomes, rather than prescriptive management or scientific parameters.
- Legislation should avoid unrealistic/expensive analytical mandates relative to implementing fishery closures or other management actions.
- Legislation should avoid constraints that limit the flexibility of Councils and NMFS to respond to changing climates and shifting ecosystems.
- Avoid unfunded mandates, and/or ensure that Councils and NMFS have the resources to respond to provisions of legislation.
- Preservation and enhancement of stock assessments and surveys should be among the highest priorities when considering any changes to the Act.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments on behalf of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, and I look forward to our continued dialogue on reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act that is so vitally important for our nation's marine resources and to the people and communities that depend on them.