



**NOAA**  
**FISHERIES**

# Environmental Justice in Fisheries Management

Council Coordination Committee  
October 21, 2021

# Session Objectives

Develop a shared understanding of equity and environmental justice

Discuss existing efforts and ideas to integrate equity and environmental justice in fisheries management

Identify actions that Councils and NOAA Fisheries can take together and separately to advance equity and environmental justice in fisheries management



# Session Agenda

- Key terms
- Administration efforts
- Environmental justice in fisheries (examples)
- Summary of Council Directors feedback, discussion, and brainstorm actions
  - Council operations
  - Pipelines for diversity in Council process
  - Tools needed to support environmental justice
- Review and identify priority actions
- Summarize next steps



# Key Terms

*Environmental Justice* is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, gender, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

Definition from the Environmental Protection Agency.



# Key Terms

*Equity* means the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment.

Definition from Executive Order 13985.



# Key Terms

*Underserved communities* refers to communities that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life.

Definition from Executive Order 13985.



# Equity & Environmental Justice: An Administration Priority

[Executive Order 12898](#) *Federal Actions To Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations*, signed February 11, 1994, directs federal agencies to consider “the disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of [an agency’s] programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations in the United States and its territories...”



# Equity & Environmental Justice: An Administration Priority

[Executive Order 13985](#) *Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government*, was signed on inauguration day 2021, setting the tone for the Administration of 46th President Biden as one that advances racial equity and supports underserved communities throughout the federal government.

[Executive Order 14008](#) *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad*, signed January 27, 2021, directs federal agencies to “make achieving environmental justice part of their missions by developing programs, policies, and activities to address the disproportionately high and adverse human health, environmental, climate-related and other cumulative impacts on disadvantaged communities, as well as the accompanying economic challenges of such impacts.”





# Ongoing Efforts in NOAA Fisheries

- NMFS Equity and Environmental Justice Working Group Goals:
  - Coordinate and share information about NMFS efforts to embed equity and environmental justice in external/programmatic work
  - Support implementation of and response to the suite of presidential actions focused on racial equity, environmental justice, and support for underserved communities



# Ongoing Efforts in NOAA Fisheries

- Reach: Increase coordination, communication, and engagement with underserved and underrepresented groups
- Research: Better understand the communities we serve, including through the collection of data to measure and advance equity
- Policy: Ensure that policies and programs are designed and implemented equitably
- Benefit: Create opportunities and provide services for communities that have been historically underserved
- Inclusive Governance: Directly involve underserved and underrepresented groups in decision-making processes



# Examples of Environmental Justice in Fisheries

Since 1996, NOAA Fisheries and Alaska Native Organizations have cooperative agreements to co-manage marine mammal populations.

Caribbean is implementing island-based FMPs to manage stocks surrounding Puerto Rico, St. Thomas and St. John, and St. Croix.



# Conversations with Councils & Commissions: Engagement with Underserved Communities

- Office of Sustainable Fisheries met with each Council and Commission to understand engagement with underserved communities
- In each meeting, we used a standard set of questions
- We heard several consistent themes across all discussions



# Opportunities in Council Operations

- Lessons learned from virtual and hybrid meetings
- Increasing accessibility for underserved communities participation in Councils process
- Language translation/interpretation services



Photo: SAFMC



Photo: PFMC



# Pipelines for Diversity in Council Process: Education & Engagement Initiatives

- Marine Resource Education Programs (MREP), with the help of local industry moderators and other stakeholders, provides an informal, hands-on educational setting for local fishermen to improve understanding and engagement in the federal fishery science and management process nationwide
- Young Fishermen's Development Act Grant Program provides training, education, outreach, and technical assistance initiatives for young fishermen
- NMFS encourages governors to consider qualified women and minority candidates for Council appointments



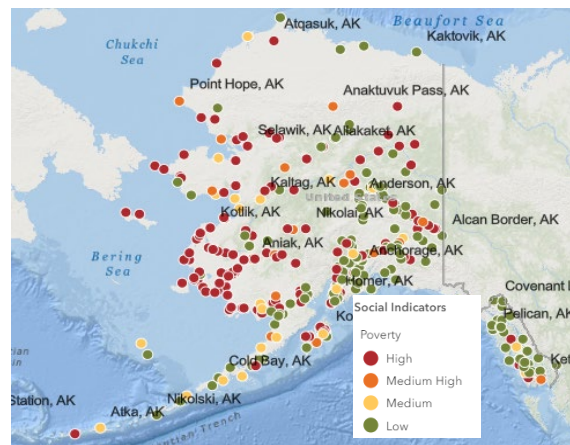
# Pipelines for Diversity in Council Process

- Partnerships with universities, Sea Grant, to consider how to partner with Councils on future internships
- Explore inclusion of Councils as option for NMFS and/or NOAA diversity programs (e.g., IN-FISH)
- Consider different hiring pathways (e.g., WesPac program)



# Tools to Support Equity & Environmental Justice

- [NMFS Community Social Vulnerability Indicators Toolbox](#): map and metrics for over 4,600 communities to assess commercial and recreational fishing dependence, as well as community environmental justice (poverty, race, income etc.), gentrification pressure, and climate change risk factors (sea level rise and storm surge) for use in NEPA, MSA, and regional Ecosystem Status Reports analyses



NMFS Community Social Vulnerability Indicator Map of Poverty





# Tools to Support Equity & Environmental Justice

- NMFS Office of Science and Technology conducts periodic socio-economic surveys of fishery participants as well as collects data from the U.S. Census, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and other secondary sources to inform environmental justice analyses and selection of management alternatives
- [NMFS Practitioner's Handbook for Fisheries Social Impact Assessment](#) provides guidance for a more standardized approach to environmental justice analysis across regions and ways to describe environmental justice concerns of fishing communities through the use of the NMFS Community Social Vulnerability Indicators



# Council Approaches: North Pacific



# Council Approaches: Western Pacific



# Discussion Questions

- What ideas do you have for opportunities to advance environmental justice initiatives together?
- Can you identify barriers standing in the way?
- From the discussion today, are there opportunities to adapt similar efforts to your regions?

# Wrap Up: Priority Actions

