



March 03, 2022

Dear Council Members and Staff,

I have a few incremental updates for you below, mostly changes to dates for postponed meetings. I look forward to providing a short briefing on outcomes of the recent meeting of the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organisation (SPRFMO) during the 190th Council Meeting.

### **Commissioner Appointments**

- NMFS is preparing appointment packages for Archie (for SPRFMO) and Roger (for WCPFC). Once they are done, they will pass them along to State, and we'll forward them to the White House.

### **UN Meetings**

As with RFMOs, most United Nations meetings related to fisheries have been postponed, some until next year:

- The UN also intends to hold an informal consultations of States parties to the UN Fish Stocks Agreement May 17-19, 2022, if conditions allow. That meeting will focus on the ecosystem approach to fisheries management as well as preparations for the UN Fish Stocks Agreement resumed Review Conference. The UN also intends to hold an informal consultation of States parties to the UN Fish Stocks Agreement in the first half of 2023, focused solely on planning for the resumed Review Conference.
- The UN Fish Stocks resumed Review Conference has been postponed again, and is currently slated to be held in 2023, if conditions allow.
- A UN General Assembly workshop on the impacts of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems and the sustainability of deep-sea fish stocks was originally scheduled for August 2020 but has been postponed to August 2-3, 2022. The workshop will inform a review of provisions and recommendations related to bottom fishing as part of the negotiations of the annual UN General Assembly resolution on sustainable fisheries.
- The fourth session of the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) will be held March 7-18, 2022. I don't have anything to share on BBNJ that wasn't covered in the public meeting last month that Kitty and Mark attended, but after we know the outcomes of the negotiations State and NOAA can provide briefings on them.
- The UN Ocean Conference, originally scheduled for June 2-6, 2020, will be held in Lisbon from June 27 to July 1, 2022.

### **Other items of Interest to the Council**

- Our Ocean Conference: The United States is partnering with Palau to co-host the 7th Our Ocean conference, now scheduled for April 13-14 in Palau. The conference will focus on the themes

that have long been central to the series: Sustainable Fisheries; Climate Impacts on the Ocean; Sustainable Blue Economy; Marine Protected Areas; Maritime Security; and Marine Pollution. Conferences typically host 500 high-level invitees including foreign ministers, CEOs, ocean leaders, and opinion makers in government, industry, finance, philanthropy, science, and civil society. The primary focus of Our Ocean conferences is for invitees to announce significant, new voluntary actions to ensure protection of the ocean, responsible management of marine resources, and sustainable future economic growth. Participants at Our Ocean conferences to date have pledged \$91.4 billion worth of new commitments. Implementation of prior commitments is reported annually to the host country to assess progress and impact. There is no negotiated outcome document or communique. This is not an official government meeting; it is a high-level, multi-stakeholder meeting.

- Deep-sea Mining: The ISA Council is scheduled to meet in person in Kingston March 21 to April 1, 2022. Greg O'Brien, from the Department of State Office of Ocean and Polar Affairs is scheduled to brief the Council on the ISA, from Kingston, during the 190th Council Meeting.

Sincerely,

C. Colin Brinkman  
Office of Marine Conservation