



WESTERN  
PACIFIC  
REGIONAL  
FISHERY  
MANAGEMENT  
COUNCIL

## **Social Science Planning Committee**

**November 18, 2021**

**1 – 4 p.m.**

**Web Conference**

### **REPORT**

#### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Craig Severance, SSPC chair, welcomed members to the meeting. Members in attendance were Severance, Judy Amesbury, Adam Ayers, Debra Cabrera, Justin Hospital, Kirsten Leong, Michelle McGregor, and Noelani Puniwai. Council staff Asuka Ishizaki, Maria Carnevale, Mark Mitsuyasu, and Zach Yamada were also present. Public members in attendance were Thomas Remington, Clay Tam, and Bryan Ishida.

#### **2. Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved.

#### **3. Socioeconomic Modules for the Annual SAFE Reports**

The SSPC at the April 2021 meeting recommended convening an inter-sessional meeting to review and provide input on modifications to the socioeconomic sections of the annual SAFE reports to better meet data needs for Council management actions.

Hospital provided an overview of the current socioeconomic sections of the Annual SAFE Reports, which includes information on people who fish, fishery economic performance, ongoing research/information collections, and PIFSC publications in the reporting year. The economic data are exclusively commercial at this time. SSPC discussed future improvements, noting that input for changes to be implemented for the 2021 report should be provided by the end of January 2022.

SSPC members provided the following suggestions for future improvements to the socioeconomic modules in the annual SAFE reports:

- Information on longline dual permits
- Non-commercial information, including:
  - Fish flow and post-harvest distribution that are not captured in the normal market information
  - Cultural information
- Build out the socioeconomic version of the data portal
- Explicitly highlight demographic information to address environmental justice needs (utilizing some of the existing social indicator work)

Additionally, SSPC formed a working group (Severance, McGregor, and Leong; staffed by Ishizaki) to develop an online input solicitation form to send out to primary users of the SAFE report (PIRO, PIFSC and Council staff). The target timeline for this effort is to send out the form in early December, with a one month turn-around for feedback.

#### **4. Social Science Strategic Plan Update**

The SSPC discussed potential revisions to the Council's Social Science Strategic Plan, which was last revised in 2017. SSPC members had provided a review of the existing plan following the April 2021 meeting. The SSPC agreed that the strategic plan is generally still relevant and no major updates are needed, noting that many of the items have had progress and can continue to make progress.

SSPC members were asked to contribute to the status document for the existing plan by December 20, 2021. Staff will follow up in January with potential edits based on the input on the status document and consider priorities, and SSPC will consider the final version at the spring meeting for adoption.

#### **5. Environmental Justice in Fisheries Management**

On January 21, 2021, President Joe Biden issued an Executive Order (EO) on "Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government," directing his administration to pursue a comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all, including people of color and other who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality. On May 28, 2021, President Biden published EO 14031, which adds to EO 13985, and explicitly identifies Asian American, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders.

Council staff presented on Council and NMFS' initiatives related to environmental justice (EJ), including the June Council letter to Secretary Rice re EO 13985 and EO 14031, the Council Coordination Committee (CCC) EJ October discussion and Workshop Working Group planning efforts, NOAA Equity and EJ Working Group listening sessions and initial regional perspectives across several offices including the Council and PIFSC.

SSPC members discussed the WP intra-regional distinctions and the desire for the CCC EJ workshop to reflect the diversity of the topic itself. SSPC saw this workshop as an opportunity to showcase some of the work in the Pacific as model approaches, offering data synthesis and support to help make the CCC workshop a success. One member noted approval process challenges with OMB for the collection of basic demographic data, which reflects the disconnect for engaging and monitoring EJ issues. The chair encouraged SSPC to start thinking about documenting the inequities, and offered to look at the Disproportionate Burden Workshop report for useful information for addressing EJ issues. One member offered to better connect the territories directly to the topic for follow on.

One SSPC member shared EJ related efforts ongoing by the PIFSC socioeconomics program, including developing a proposal in coordination with PIRO for social scientist and cultural

resource coordinator positions to be located in the island areas. Additionally, PIFSC is developing a proposal to utilize social science to think about how to operationalize equity and EJ in fisheries management.

SSPC finds this topic of great interest, is supportive of the current Council staff approaches and looks forward to seeing the outcomes of the workshop.

## **6. Fisher Observations**

The Council at the June 2021 meeting directed the SSPC to work with the Advisory Panels to explore conducting periodic check-ins with the fishing communities to provide information for the new fisher observations section of the SAFE report. Several SSPC members (Severance, Hospital, and Leong) have initiated work under this directive and developed a draft instrument and process document for further input by the AP and SSPC. Clay Tam, AP chair, provided an overview of the initiative, noting that the aim is to capture information that may not be captured by traditional fishery data collection efforts, noting that many of the fisher observations have contributed to historic empirical knowledge based on information gathered over generations.

The SSPC endorsed the approach of the draft instrument, which provides a list of core questions that encourage open dialogue, with additional prompts to make sure various topics have been addressed for consistency. An additional prompt suggested was to ask participants at the end of each meeting if there were any other questions or issues the facilitators should have asked about.

The SSPC also discussed the placement of the fisher observations section of the SAFE report. In the 2020 report, it was included as part of the ecosystem chapter as an outcome of the Plan Team discussions so as not to conflate it with the traditional fishery data section. SSPC noted that as the effort becomes consistent, the section may be moved into the fishery data section. Thomas Remington, SAFE report coordinator, noted that the Plan Team did endorse the importance of the fisher observations section, and had discussed ways of validating the observations with other types of data. SSPC members discussed ways in which the observations could be summarized in a quantitative manner that could provide a sense of magnitude (e.g., unanimously observed; majority of fishermen observed that...). The SSPC members also discussed how observations can be integrated with other data, and noted that the data integration section may be further developed for that purpose. One member also noted that the ecosystem status report could also be integrated with the SAFE report effort.

The chair encouraged members to provide any additional input on the draft instrument to Severance, Leong, Hospital, and Tam. SSPC members committed to reviewing drafts of the observation summaries in the spring.

## **7. Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

## 8. Discussion and Recommendations

The SSPC identified the following work items:

- 1) **Annual SAFE Report Input:** Form a working group to solicit input from SAFE report users on information needs for the socioeconomic module. Members identified are: Severance, McGregor, and Leong; staffed by Ishizaki. Task and timeline:
  - a. Develop an online input solicitation form to send out to primary users of the SAFE report (PIRO, PIFSC and Council staff).
  - b. Send out the form in early December, with a one month turn-around for feedback.
- 2) **Strategic Plan Update:** SSPC to contribute to the status document for the existing plan by December 20, 2021. Staff will follow up in January with potential edits based on the input on the status document and consider priorities, and SSPC will consider the final version at the spring meeting for adoption.
- 3) **Fisher observations:** SSPC members were asked to provide any additional input on the draft instrument to Severance, Leong, Hospital, and Tam. SSPC members will review drafts of the 2021 observation summaries in the spring.

## 9. Other Business

No other business was discussed.