



WESTERN  
PACIFIC  
REGIONAL  
FISHERY  
MANAGEMENT  
COUNCIL

## **Social Science Planning Committee**

**April 14, 2022**  
**1:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.**  
**Web Conference**

### **Report**

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

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

Severance thanked Amesbury for her service on the SSPC as well as her previous service on the SSC. Amesbury will be retiring at the end of the calendar year.

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

The agenda was approved.

#### **3. Annual SAFE Reports**

##### **A. Socioeconomic Module User Survey**

The SSPC at the Nov 2021 meeting formed a working group (Severance, McGregor, Leong, Ishizaki) to solicit input from SAFE report users on information needs for the socioeconomic module. Hospital reported out on that effort. A short set of open-ended questions requesting input on information gaps and suggestions for improving the reports was sent out by email in early 2022 to core users of the socioeconomic modules, which included PIRO and Council staff. Feedback was compiled into a google sheet and evaluated by PIFSC staff in the context of data availability, known data limitations, constraints, and areas for future work.

Feedback indicated that the socioeconomic modules support a diverse suite of fishery management documents. Interest was expressed to have updated information on economic impacts of fisheries and how they relate to the broader economy, culture, and community dependence on fisheries. The diverse set of responses highlighted the challenges of developing a comprehensive report that services a variety of user needs. Anticipated future needs highlighted include environmental justice and shifting demographics. Interest was also expressed for longer

term data series, online data analytics, and policy review. Hospital presented potential improvements to the modules based on the feedback, which included the following:

- For incorporation in the report for 2022
  - Update economic impacts of regional fisheries, where possible
  - Initiate Management/Policy Review on current drafts
- For future reports
  - Develop Community Engagement section (where feasible)
  - Expand revenue distribution information (where feasible)
  - Develop Non-commercial section(s) or embed content in Introduction/People Who Fish sections
  - Develop Environmental Justice section -or embed content in Introduction/People Who Fish sections

**SSPC endorsed the proposed changes presented by Hospital. SSPC agreed that creating a separate EJ section could be beneficial to highlight the important topic and to make it more visible. SSPC also agreed that non-commercial section could be included as a subsection of the socioeconomic module, and calling attention to the mixed nature of non-commercial fisheries in the region.**

McGregor offered to assist with reviewing the management and policy changes for this year's report.

### **B. Socioeconomic Modules 2021 Report Updates**

Hospital provided an overview of the socioeconomic module updates for the 2021 report, including the list of publications mapped to MSRA research priorities. The COVID narrative section for this year's report will include discussion on recovery in addition to impacts.

### **C. Fisher Observations**

SSPC members assisted in the fisher observation meetings convened in Feb 2022. Ayers provided a summary of the information gathered at the two meetings (one for Guam and CNMI, and the other for Hawaii and American Samoa). Feedback received from the meetings was compiled using SEEM (social, economic, ecological, and management) themes, then by MUS. No attendees were present from American Samoa, due to the meeting coinciding with COVID lockdown.

SSPC commended the organizers Clay Tam and Roy Morioka for convening the meetings, as well as the work by Ayers, Leong and Hospital for compiling the information into the data reports. SSPC discussed the lack of participation from American Samoa (due to the meeting coinciding with COVID lockdown), and how other sources of information could be used to fill the gap. The Advisory Panels have been gathering observations at their quarterly formal meetings, and those summaries are available in the meeting reports. SSPC also discussed ways to broaden participation and representation for future observations. SSPC members supported the data report format that includes the quotes from fishers so that their observations are reflected in their words.

**SSPC recommended including the fisher observations from the quarterly Advisory Panel meetings into the executive summary version of the data reports for the SAFE report. SSPC recommended that the working group continue to work with Clay Tam and Council staff to prepare for the 2022 report data collection, including consideration for recording the sessions to aid in accurately capturing the observations.**

The following next steps were identified:

- Council staff to provide available AP reports from 2021 that can be incorporated into the 2021 SAFE report version of the executive summary
- Ayers et al. to produce executive summary versions of the data reports for inclusion in the SAFE report, incorporating information from AP reports.
- SSPC WG to continue liaising with Clay Tam for the next year.

#### **4. Equity and Environmental Justice in Fishery Management**

Council staff provided an update on the Council's activities and planning associated with EEJ, in particular, the CCC Equity and Environmental Justice Report, the WP Equity planning framework, and activity planning data sheet. The SSPC was asked for input on how they would like to be involved and inform these planning efforts and how the Social Science Strategic Plan and any other associated planning efforts may integrate with EEJ.

SSPC members noted the need for data on individuals involved in the fisheries and demographic data (e.g., ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender) when addressing environmental justice and equity. An SSPC member noted that an example of a valuable qualitative research includes looking at how stereotypes affect access.

**SSPC formed a working group to provide feedback on WP Council Planning efforts and related documents with respect to Equity and Environmental Justice. Members are: Severance, Cabrera, Leong.**

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

SSPC initiated review of the Social Science Strategic Plan in 2021, which was implemented in 2017. At the November 2021 meeting, 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, and members were asked to contribute to the status document for the existing plan to identify potential edits. Council staff reported that based on the member contributions, plan goals and activities are still relevant, and no changes appear to be needed at this time.

An SSPC member noted that the Council's research priority document as well as the strategic plan are regularly referenced and useful for aligning priorities for PIFSC work. SSPC reaffirmed the relevance of the 2017 strategic plan, and will plan to revisit the plan when the planning efforts for EEJ have progressed further.

SSPC discussed some of the key capacity pieces of the strategic plan, including the need to fill the Council's social scientist position. SSPC recommended that the Council fill the social science staff position. Severance and McGregor volunteered to review the economist staff solicitation.

SSPC also reiterated its previous recommendation to add members from AS and CNMI. To ensure representation of SSPC membership from throughout the region (especially AS and CNMI), Severance will put together an overview to solicit new members, and will circulate to members for input. SSPC members agreed that members do not need to be an academic or have a PhD, noting that it would be important to have a diversity of social scientists represented both in terms of geographic, methodological and cultural expertise.

## **6. Review of SSPC Research Plan and Priorities**

Council staff reported that the two emerging priorities identified by the SSPC at the April 2021 meeting were incorporated into the MSRA research priorities update last year. The Council intends to put the priorities document through SSC review every other year for mid-cycle updates, so the next scheduled review will be in 2023. Council staff noted that SSPC may identify any emerging and urgent priorities at this meeting, and encouraged members to utilize the research priorities document to identify project needs when funding opportunities arise.

SSPC reaffirmed the existing current research priorities, including the additions made in 2021 to reflect the emerging needs associated with the pandemic.

**SSPC identified existing research priority HC2.1.1 (Support studies to expand understanding of ecosystem service valuation (non-market values; non-economic considerations), human well-being (seafood safety, security), equity and gender issues, and other intangible benefits) as a high priority item to address ongoing EEJ initiatives.**

## **7. Project Updates**

SSPC members provided several updates on relevant projects.

- Leong reported that she is in the process of writing up work by undergrad students on cultural dimensions of marine species and seascapes, and looking to kickstart the next stage which will involve a Pacific Islands Fisheries Center Young Scientist Opportunity summer intern<sup>1</sup> and a post-doc level researcher.
- Amesbury reported that she is working with Marine Lab professor Alex Kerr on invertebrate names in Chamorro language, noting that the language is starting to be lost because of the cultural practices of collecting mollusks and other invertebrates is not as common. On May 28, Amesbury will show the Open Ocean Fishing film at the Guam Museum and the fishermen will participate in panel discussion.
  - Leong noted potential overlap with a project that the Interagency Traditional Ecological Knowledge Working Group has discussed with the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History related to language revitalization.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/pacific-islands/outreach-and-education/pacific-islands-fisheries-science-center-young-scientist-opportunity>

<sup>2</sup> <https://coling.al.uw.edu.pl/about-us/>

## 8. Public Comment

No public comment.

## 9. Discussion and Recommendations

The SSPC made the following recommendations:

- 1) The SSPC endorsed the proposed changes to the SAFE report socioeconomic modules presented by Hospital. SSPC agreed that creating a separate EJ section could be beneficial to highlight the important topic and to make it more visible. SSPC also agreed that non-commercial section could be included as a subsection of the socioeconomic module, and calling attention to the mixed nature of non-commercial fisheries in the region.
- 2) SSPC recommended including the fisher observations from the quarterly Advisory Panel meetings into the executive summary version of the data reports for the SAFE report. SSPC recommended that the working group continue to work with Clay Tam and Council staff to prepare for the 2022 report data collection, including consideration for recording the sessions to aid in accurately capturing the observations.
- 3) SSPC formed a working group to provide feedback on WP Council Planning efforts and related documents with respect to Equity and Environmental Justice. Members are: Severance, Cabrera, Leong.
- 4) SSPC recommended that the Council fill the social science staff position.
- 5) SSPC reiterated its previous recommendation to add SSPC members from AS and CNMI.
- 6) SSPC identified existing research priority HC2.1.1 (*Support studies to expand understanding of ecosystem service valuation (non-market values; non-economic considerations), human well-being (seafood safety, security), equity and gender issues, and other intangible benefits*) as a high priority item to address ongoing EEJ initiatives.

## 10. Other Business

Severance called attention to the memo to Council family members requesting input on forage fish issues, specifically regarding the definition of forage fish and potential impacts to fisheries and fishing communities. SSPC members were asked to review the memo and provide responses to staff by April 30, 2022.