

**MAFAC MEETING**  
**October 12, 2021**  
**9:44 am CT**

Coordinator: Welcome, and thank you for standing by. Today's call is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time. All participants are in listen-only mode until the public comment portion of today's call. I would now like to turn the call over to Erika Feller. Thank you. You may begin.

Erika Feller: Great. Thank you. Hi, folks, and welcome - this is so weird. I can only see myself. I can't see everybody on the video. Thank you for putting that back the way it was. Hi, everybody. Welcome to what's going to be my last MAFAC meeting. So, I'm excited to see you all, and I'm already anticipating missing you guys. So, I'm going to kind of get into meeting objectives and agenda first, but we've got some housekeeping. So, I'm going to turn it over to Jennifer first.

Jennifer: Thanks, Erika. Hello, everyone. Welcome. It's good to see your faces. If some of you might want to turn on your cameras. I won't force you, but it would be great to see your faces also. I have the distinct pleasure of reading the Privacy Act statement to you all. And so, I'm going to run through this, and it's important and it's required by law, and then I will turn it over to Erika. Pursuant to the Privacy Act of 1974, agencies are required to tell people what our authority is for collecting Personally Identifiable Information or PII from them. The purpose of the collection, how we are using or sharing the PII, whether or not the person can refuse to provide the PII, and what, if any, is the consequences of refusing to provide their PII.

In order to collect PII at all in a system of records, even if accompanied by a Privacy Act Statement, we also have to notify the public generally of this collection, which is what we are doing with this statement right now. There is also a statement posted on the MAFAC meeting site.

We are sharing this because we want you as participants in this meeting, and public commenters cannot provide PII or business identifiable information, BII, or controlled unclassified information, CUI, during the recorded - providing that during the recorded virtual conferences.

Speakers, sessions, presentations, and any public comments during federal advisory committee meetings, are made publicly available. And today, this is through this webinar. We are not recording the webinar, but the audio is being recorded by the telecommunications company for the purposes of creating a transcript. That's why you need to call in, in addition to the WebEx.

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Erika Feller: Thank you, Jennifer. So, we've got a few things that we want to get done this week. I think first and foremost among them is, this is our first meeting with our new Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, Janet Coit. And I'm sure we're all looking forward to this opportunity to get to know Janet a little bit better, and I know she's looking forward to getting to know all of you.

So, we're going to kind of start off with introducing ourselves, but then beyond that, we've got some tasks we need to carry forward from our last meeting around seafood

resilience, some work on protected resources, some work, I think, on recreational fisheries, and all kind of our updates and discussions are around that, and we'll go over the agenda in a second.

We wanted to take a little bit of a deviation from our normal roll call mode, just to kind of give you guys a chance to introduce yourselves to Janet. So, what we thought we would do is, I have a list of all of your names, and I will call on you in turn and request that you provide a brief introduction of yourself to Janet, operating in full recognition that we have allocated about 10 minutes for this activity.

So, with that, I'm going to throw it over to Sebastian to set the stage for how introductions should go. Sebastian, you want to introduce yourself? Are you even here? I can't see you. All right. Well, that's a good start for making things brief because he's not here yet, and neither is Roger.

Roger Berkowitz: I am here, actually.

Jennifer: Roger is here.

Erika Feller: Roger is here. Okay, Roger, you get to go first.

Roger Berkowitz: For whatever reason, I can't go on screen. It either tells me I have the wrong number or something.

Erika Feller: So, Roger, I'll have to help you after you introduce yourself.

Roger Berkowitz: Okay. All right. So, my name is Roger Berkowitz. Up until December, I owned Legal Sea Foods restaurants. We were on the eastern seaboard. After December, I sold, and now I operate the Legal Sea Foods marketplace, which is online retail. I am also heading up a new organization, not for profit, called the Massachusetts Seafood Collaborative.

And this is where we represent 501(c)(3). We represent fishermen, processors, and

distributors of seafood, from the ports of Gloucester, Boston, New Bedford, and Cape Cod. And I think I've been a member of MAFAC for at least four years.

Erika Feller: Great. Over to you, Megan.

Megan Davis: Okay. Good afternoon. My name is Megan Davis, and I am a research professor at Florida Atlantic University, Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute. My field of work is in the field of aquaculture, and I do a lot of work in the Caribbean. Right now, we have a project with Raimundo Espinoza, and we're working with the Queen Conch in Puerto Rico. And I have been on MAFAC now, I believe this is my second term, and I've been on MAFAC for four years. Thank you.

Erika Feller: Raimundo.

Raimundo Espinoza: Hi. Nice to meet you. Welcome aboard. Hello to everybody. I guess I'm the only one that's present during our MAFAC in Puerto Rico meeting, but I believe you all can come down sometime. I'll be expecting you here soon. Yes. So my name is Raimundo Espinoza. I am the Executive Director of Conservación ConCiencia, an environmental nonprofit that works on conservation, showing how conservation can be a way for economic development.

We mainly work on - with coastal communities and fishing communities throughout the US Caribbean, as well as a couple of other countries in Latin America. We've been focusing quite a bit on the (inaudible) with Puerto Rico. Like Megan mentioned, we're partnering with her to do - we're doing community aquaculture, conch aquaculture with the fishing association, but we're also doing a lot of fisheries work around sharks, sustainable seafood, promoting and investigating of seafood fraud in local communities, and then seeing how fisheries can really be a driver for conservation within the sector.

So, thank you very much. Always happy to be here. I think this is my last year on MAFAC. I've been on my second term. I think this is my sixth year on it, but it seems like it went by. But very happy to be on board and really happy to be here today.

Erika Feller: Thanks, Ray. Tom Fote.

Tom Fote: My name is Tom Fote. I represent the Jersey Coast Anglers Association, and New Jersey State Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs, as the registered chairman. I hold a number of volunteer jobs. I serve also on the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. I am the governor's appointee from New Jersey, and I've been at that for about 30 years off and on since 1990.

All my work is volunteer. I'm a retired army captain vet, retired from Vietnam because I got wounded. I deal with fisheries environmental issues. That's all I do and it's been my passion for the last 35 years.

Erika Feller: Thanks, Tom. Robert Jones.

Robert Jones: Hi, Janet. Welcome to NOAA. My name is Robert Jones. I spent many years at the Environmental Defense Fund, working on fisheries and sustainable seafood and the supply chain issues in the US, Australia, a little bit in Europe, Cuba, around the Caribbean, Belize. I left EDF two years ago now, and I'm doing a variety of activities for clients on both marine and terrestrial food system reform issues. I have a little bit of an eclectic background in that I'm a classically trained chef from the Culinary Institute of America, and also an avid recreational angler. So, I work on both commercial and recreational issues with clients. Thank you.

Erika Feller: Thanks, Robert. I don't see Donna. Sara McDonald.

Sara McDonald: Good morning, Janet. Nice to meet you. My name is Sara McDonald. I'm a senior fisheries scientist with the Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch Program. And I also have a visiting scholar appointment at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, where I work with their professional Masters students. And I have been - I just started my second term on MAFAC. Nice to meet you.

Erika Feller: Thanks, Sara. And I don't see Donnie. So, we'll go on. And I don't see Peter Moore either. So, am I missing Peter? I am not. Okay. Stefanie.

Stefanie Moreland: Good morning. Stefanie Moreland with Trident Seafoods. We had a chance to meet on, I think, an initial trip just after the appointment, and appreciated the visit from leadership out to the Pacific Northwest at that time. Trident Seafoods is primarily dependent on wild fisheries in the Alaska region and the Pacific Northwest, and we also have value-added reprocessing facilities in Washington, Minnesota, and Georgia, serving the East and West Coast and many segments of the domestic market, and also export seafood globally. I participate here in MAFAC because we are big advocates for NOAA being able to successfully execute their core functions. Very supportive of the agency's work on science-based decision-making and strong responsible fisheries management. Thank you.

Erika Feller: Thanks, Stefanie. Jim.

Jim Parsons: Hi. Good morning. Jim Parsons, and I've been involved in various forms of aquaculture for the past 40 years, currently serving as CEO for Jamestown Seafood, for the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe out here in the Pacific Northwest. We're involved in both aquaculture and wild fisheries harvest. Also president of the National Aquaculture Association, and continue to advocate for aquaculture in any form, both fresh and saltwater, and glad to see NOAA engaging more and more in aquaculture. Thanks.

Erika Feller: Thanks, Jim. Harlon. Harlon, you're on mute.

Jennifer: Hey Darius, is there a number he needs to press on his phone to get off mute? Why don't we move on?

Darius: There's not.

Jennifer: Oh, I heard him. There isn't.

Darius: No, there is not. If he was on there, he is currently muted from the system. If not, Star 6 would be for unmuting.

Erika Feller: Good for everyone to know, I did send Harlon an email as well to make sure he was on the right call.

Jennifer: Okay. Why don't we move on to the next person while we get that figured out for Harlon?

Erika Feller: Yes. Harlon, we'll give you a chance to introduce yourself a little bit later, okay? Kellie.

Kellie Ralston: Thanks, Erika. Kellie Ralston with the American Sportfishing Association. Janet, it's great to see you again. Really appreciated your inaugural trip to ICAS this year. This is my second term on MAFAC. I've been honored to be part of this group for ASA. I've covered Southeast Fisheries Policy issues. And actually later this month, I'm going to be transitioning into a new role with the Bonefish & Tarpon Trust, covering conservation and policy issues for them at the State, federal, and international level. So, excited to take on that new role, but remain a part of MAFAC. Thank you.

Erika Feller: Joe, in his submarine.

Joe Schumacker: Good morning, everybody. I was checking. Can you hear me? You can. Great.

Looking at all the nodding heads. Great. Good morning, everybody. I'm calling to - in from the Great Northwest, and it's cold up here, Ray. My name is Joe Schumacker. I'm the Marine Resources Scientist with the Quinault Indian Nation, one of four coastal treaty tribes here on the Olympic peninsula of Washington State that have treaty rights that extend into the ocean uniquely in the Americas.

And along with many of the other treaty tribes here in Washington, right now, we're celebrating the return of the salmon and the fall fisheries are in full swing up here. And so, that's one of the good things that cold weather brings. It's a pleasure to meet you, Janet, and welcome to NOAA, and we hope to see you up here soon.

Erika Feller: Thanks, Joe. And Pat. You are on mute. Can - Darius, is there - or Heidi, is there somebody that we can get to help Pat that out?

Darius: Yes. I will work with Pat separately via the chat to get them hooked.

Erika Feller: Pat, I have you and Harlon noted in bold on my list, so we can come back to you guys. Sorry about that. And we also have Matt Upton, and Richard Yamada, neither of whom are here with us right now. So, I think that concludes that portion of it. And so, Janet, I think we've got a section on the agenda for you to introduce yourself. So, do you want to say anything now, or do you want to kind of move on to that?

Janet Coit: Can you hear me?

Erika Feller: Yes.

Janet Coit: I'm switching my screen layout. Hold on. I had it - you guys, we have all these different options. So, I had it in the side by side so I could see the speaker. So, I'm going back to the grid. Erika - well, first of all, what an amazing group of people, and it's a pleasure to - I actually have met some of you, and so nice to see friendly faces.

Some of you are new to me and man, I wish I were in Puerto Rico right now. So, we'll do our best with this format. We've had to do that for quite some time now, but it is pale in comparison to actually being together and having - so Kellie and others that I've gotten to meet, Stefanie, just that opportunity to meet in person and talk is - has been so valuable to me, and I very much look forward to doing it with this just an impressive group of people. Erika, I had prepared to share some thoughts, but I'm not sure. Is that what you'd like me to do now on the agenda?

Erika Feller: So, I wanted to - can I just take a quick spin through the agenda so we know what ...?

((Crosstalk))



Janet Coit: Yes, yes. I'm looking at the faces. So, you, I guess, take your direction.

Erika Feller: Yes. Let's just do a quick run through the agenda because I feel like that's good meeting form, and then I'll turn it over to you. So, just to give you guys' an idea, we've got some time on the schedule for Janet to introduce herself and share her thoughts. And then we'll move on to a session where we're going to pick up on the work we did in the spring on building resilient coastal communities and review the work we've done this summer and how we want to move forward at this meeting. We have a couple of presentations later this afternoon on climate change and economic development and the regional food enterprise centers that I think are directly relevant to what we need to do on resilient communities. So, I think those are going to be super interesting.

And then it's just that I'm sure it's going to be so much fun, but honestly, just the saddest thing of all time, a virtual Puerto Rico happy hour. But we're going to get to learn about Megan and Ray's work on conch restoration, and I think that's going to be super cool. And Janet, I think you made Ray's day by saying you wish you were in Puerto Rico, because then I know he knows that he will get you to come there.

So, and then tomorrow, we've got some work time built in early. So, the official meeting will start a little bit later, like around two o'clock, but we've got time starting at noon that I hope everybody will come to, to continue to work on the seafood resilience stuff before we move into sessions on the budget and the reports from the State directors and the Science Update and Recreational Fisheries Update.

And then we've got some subcommittee time, and then also some decisions we need to make at this meeting. Sara will be leading some work on protected resources on the project they started in the spring, but I'm also hoping we can agree on sort of a scope of work and how to move forward on the resilient communities work.

So, I'm sort of hoping we'll have a decision in front of us by Thursday, or yes, Thursday. I don't know what day it is. Any questions about the agenda? Heidi or Jennifer, anything I

missed? Okay, I'm going to - we're a little bit off time, but I'm going to try and wrangle us back to time.

Just keep in mind - let's see. I'm going to continue to sort of keep my list of who calls on step. So, I'm going to turn this over to Janet, and then we'll have a little bit of time for Q&A before we move on to the next step. And so, just, I think you guys can sort of use the hand-raised feature, and I will keep track of who wants to talk. I can't promise I'll get you in order, but I'll try and get at least everybody one question. So, Janet, over to you.

Janet Coit: Thanks, Erika, again. And I don't - so you're going to go back to Harlon and Pat, right, but they're still muted?

Erika Feller: Yes. Let's check back in on them when you get done with your discussion in the background.

Janet Coit: Okay. Great. So, good. I'd like to take a few minutes, maybe a little more, Erika, feel free to cut me off, to talk about some of the issues on my mind, and also very, very much hope to hear from you. In fact, I'm planning to participate in this meeting all three days.

However, I do have to leave at 2:00 today, and I have a couple of other commitments that I have to pop out for. But as much as I possibly can, I'd like to listen to dialog, and get to know you. I want to say to Ray that you, having worked for the last six and a half years for Governor Gina Raimondo, and now having the privilege to work for Secretary Raimondo, your name really stands out to me.

So, you know, I used to (inaudible) if someone is still married to so-and-so, you know their name would be. So, just picturing this Raimundo, Raimondo, Raimundo. Anyway, I do look forward to getting to Puerto Rico. I've never been there, and would love to make sure that we either do a future meeting or take a look at the work that NOAA Fisheries does there. So, thanks for offering to host.

So, yes. So, I'd like to - I mean, it's been a whirlwind between red snapper and North

Atlantic right whale rules, and MRIP reports from the National Academy of Sciences on offshore wind challenges. America has a beautiful program, learning a new federal bureaucracy and all the acronyms that go with that.

I have to say, it has been a steep learning curve and a whirlwind for me. So, having the position as Assistant Administrator of NOAA Fisheries is a privilege, and in a lot of ways, a dream come true. I've spent - you probably know my background, but in the last 10 years, leading a State agency, the work that I did around fisheries management and seafood marketing and promoting port infrastructure, and working on the green economy, the blue economy, working with Governor Raimondo on workforce development issues, growing our aquaculture industry.

That was - those were my favorite issues and so challenging, and I loved working with industry. I loved working with the environmental community and the real, tangible nature of the work we do - food, protein, tourism - you know, it's so all of the science and the regulatory and legal issues that are so important, all end up touching people very, very directly in our coastal communities. And so, it makes it very rewarding work and I'm sure you all feel that way.

So, there are so many issues that are on my mind, and many of them, as I get to hear about the work that you've done under Erika's leadership and previous to that, are things that you have taken a look at, have offered advice on, and are talking about at this meeting.

So, the meeting looks very fascinating. And I think the idea of having this kind of advisory committee so that we get the benefit of the dialog and the outreach and your experience, I think that was brilliant. I have heard - I just want to let people know that the work you're doing is really appreciated.

I was - I've been on a lot of calls about salmon and not all about the excitement, a lot of them about drought and salmon recovery, but Barry Tom, who I was able to meet on that same trip that I met Stefanie, you know, he mentioned a big federal agency called the

Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force and the work and the report that you did under the MAFAC umbrella about rebuilding goals and taking advantage of the work you did and commending people good report.

I suspect that the work you've done on that will contribute towards, you know, what I hope will be long-term recovery for the salmon in the Columbia River. That's the subject of a lot of conversations and a lot of litigation over the last few decades. But I just wanted to call that out, and I know there's many other examples of where the work that MAFAC has taken on, and the report and the recommendations you've provided, give us something to share, hold on to and build upon.

So, the work, as we look forward on resilience in the face of climate change, on promoting expanding aquaculture in federal waters, promoting seafood, showing how it's part of the climate strategy, looking at new technologies through which we can collect data, through which we can do better electronic monitoring, all of that work and the type of things you're discussing, I think, will help the staff at NOAA Fisheries and NOAA at large, to build resilience for our fisheries, for our seafood industries, and for all the many coastal communities that depend on marine resources for jobs, for sustenance. And so, I couldn't be more excited to work with all of you.

So, I just want to take a few more minutes. I think climate change is the issue that is the one that we'll all look back on and say, did we step up? What did we do? And if not now, when? I mean, the work that we're doing to understand how our changing climate impacts fish, impacts protected species, habitats, impacts the communities that depend on these fish, including for sustenance, also the seafood processors, the ice makers, the net makers, you know, the whole ecosystem of people involved in fisheries, that's the work that's going to define the time that I'm here, and it's really a top, top priority for the Biden Administration, one of the things that excited me about coming to commerce right now.

I have learned a lot about the science that we've been doing and how that capability can help us do a better job of managing fisheries sustainably. That is another area in terms of, do our governance structures and the policies we have in place now work when we're

seeing changes rather dramatically in some areas, rather quickly in some areas when we look at how we've managed fisheries for decades and what we need to do going forward?

I know that Roger Griffiths presented to you on the webinar last month through a number of fascinating webinars that he helped to sponsor. And our Climate and Fisheries Initiative that we're leading, but we're working with several other line offices at NOAA is, I think, the fulcrum or the foundation for a lot of the work that we're doing. But we're also working hard with the Councils to promote Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management scenario planning.

You know, when you get down to who is the “winner” and who is the “loser,” it's hard to make wise decisions. And I think we're trying to have this - have science-based decisions and conversations around fisheries management at a higher level that can be used to make sure that we modify policies or appropriately take into account risks as we move forward.

I think that the good news is, we've been working on this for a long time, and now it is absolutely - the lid is off. It's a key priority in everything we do, but we have a lot of hard work ahead. And some of the work is to accelerate opportunities for adaptation or resilience.

Coming from Southern New England, I mean, I've been immersed in fisheries from a New England perspective. So, I promise to go to Alaska as soon as I can. I hope to get out - I've been to the Caribbean a few times when I worked at the Nature Conservancy working on marine habitat issues.

I look to get out to our farthest-flung places in the western Pacific. But, you know, we've seen in Rhode Island in some ways, an increase in diversity. Southern New England is a place where many of the shifting stocks from the mid-Atlantic are actually off of our waters in more abundance.

So, I've seen even in the 10 years I was at DEM, some species go from commercially valuable to virtually nonexistent, like winter flounder. And other species, like flux, Black

Sea bass, scup-which is quite underutilized in the northern area, but increasing abundance-squid. So, I think that it's a matter of making science-based decisions and adapting our management regimes, but it's not always negative.

And I think that looking at how we help fishermen, businesses pivot and be resilient, have more flexibility, that is something I really focus on, and I think we're all aware, there's a Magnuson-Stevens Act Reauthorization Bill in the House. Been a lot of feedback, you know, I'm working on testimony.

I don't know that a Bill will get through Congress, but I think it creates an opportunity for all of us to think about the successes of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and what flexibility or changes we'd like to see going forward. I know you have a number of presentations, and I hope to catch the one this afternoon on climate change and the president's executive order and the work that Dr. Spinrad is leading, and the work across NOAA on equities is all - can be viewed under a rubric of climate change.

But even if there are people who are skeptical, then there still are those - anyone who works in the marine environment, is acutely aware of changes. And some of the best information that I've had as a DEM director in Rhode Island, was from the fishing community about what they've seen over the course of their careers. So, truly helping people become resilient. Excited to hear the presentation and to talk further about that.

One of the things that Secretary Raimondo was eager to work with me on, and again, it's just great to have the head of NOAA Fisheries have such a close relationship with the Secretary of Commerce, I think that's something I want to help leverage, but is really promoting US seafood.

In Rhode Island, most of our aquaculture has been almost entirely oysters, but not totally. We have some mussels and some other aquaculture, but it's mostly been shellfish and oysters. But the opportunity to both sustain our wild harvest fisheries, but then really grow and promote aquaculture, is something I'm eager to work with all of you on, and an area that I know many of you have expertise, and have looked at before.

Your report about establishing a National Seafood Council got a lot of attention. It continues to be something that people are talking to me about, and it continues to be a roadmap or recommendation that we want to build off of. Paul is here. Paul Doremus, Michael Rubino.

They are often turning to your recommendations, and we're working with anyone and everyone to try to make sure that whether it's the US Department of Agriculture, who we're going to hear from, some of the White House task forces, our presentations at COP26 in Glasgow that people are looking at seafood as a source of nutrition, as a food with a low greenhouse gas footprint, and as part of our resilience strategy.

So, very excited about your work on that and both in the past and moving forward. I know you've had presentations about the Aquaculture Opportunity Areas, AOAs, and we're eager to announce a couple more of those. And I think that the fine-grained information we have about those sites, will help ease the permitting and help us promote aquaculture in a way that I know many, many people at NOAA Fisheries are eager to do.

Another area that Secretary Raimondo asked me to work on is offshore wind. And I just want to flag, I've probably put more time into offshore wind. First of all, the first wind farm is off the coast of Rhode Island. It's actually in State waters off of Block Island. And if you look at the siting of the leases, Southern New England is really the epicenter.

There's lease after lease after lease sort of stacked up in Southern New England. So, looking at how we can use the expansion of offshore wind as a way to achieve our climate goals, while also protecting millions habitat, minimizing impacts on fisheries, looking for new opportunities, this is an area that I have some experience from Rhode Island, some valuable experience, that also is a huge priority for the secretary.

And for me, there's a lot at stake. We have both our surveys, which are the basis of many of our management decisions, and of course, the actual impacts to essential fish habitat or to migratory species or to resident species. There's a lot of unknown. So, NOAA plays a key role, not just NOAA Fisheries, but the [National] Ocean Service, and OAR, on

providing data requiring mitigation, looking at ideally lessons learned from Rhode Island about how you avoid conflicts upfront.

But whether it's our responsibility under the Endangered Species Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act, the Magnuson-Stevens Act, or just our responsibility for the fishing communities and the coastal communities who have historically used these waters, it is a huge area of focus.

And I think that what we're learning from the Atlantic project can help us do a better job on the Pacific coast, or in the Gulf Coast or in the Gulf of Maine, if that area takes off. But it's a work in progress and something I think that NOAA one needs to really, really step up on.

So, again, thank you. I know you were focused on offshore wind early on, and that your report on offshore wind is something that's been useful to NOAA Fisheries as we look at this really rapid and ambitious scale up. Erika, am I okay? I don't know if we're going to run over time here, but I'll just hit on a couple more issues, unless you cut me off.

One is the America the Beautiful [initiative], that “30 by 30,” preserving 30%, conserving, not preserving, conserving 30% of America's land and waters. That's part of the Administration's America the Beautiful initiative. That's something I've been point on since I began, because I'm in an acting role as the Assistant Secretary of Oceans and Atmosphere.

The report on the America the Beautiful initiative was unveiled before I got here, but since I have, I've been working closely across the Administration on how we define conservation. I know - I believe many of you met with Letise LaFeir, who's one of the senior political advisers on the team about America the Beautiful earlier.

But Dee and I talked about it at ICAS, and Kellie and others. Really the initiative is based on both conserving areas, but also providing access to people, as well as a number of other factors. But that's something I'm really excited to work on and define what that



means in marine areas, and you know what we're trying to conserve and what uses are allowed. So, that is still in a relatively early stage, but something that I think is of great interest to this group.

The Administration also, of course, has an equity Executive Order and both how we improve diversity within NOAA Fisheries, and how we make sure what we're doing has an impact that is spread across all communities, and when we take a look at overburdened communities.

That's something that's both being asked of us by the Biden Administration, but something that many, many people at NOAA Fisheries have already been working on, and are very eager to look at how historic practices and our science and our tools, our grant programs, affect overburdened communities and can be used better to promote resilience, promote investments, use of the ocean, and it's another area of great passion for me.

And it's almost - there's too many things to work on. So, I'm sure that one of the biggest challenges that I have in this role, and that many of you have, is just making sure I can be intentional and focused on the things that are most important, while the amazing staff at NOAA, so talented, carry the water on so much of the work that we do day to day.

And I am going to - I did a lot of work on environmental justice issues in my previous job, and I think understanding better what that means to people who are affected by our work, and then working with them, those are things that we will be very focused on, both within a climate view, but in a seafood promotion. I mean, really, it's very cross-cutting.

I think you're going to hear from Dr. Spinrad, and he's been great - he and I started the same week in June, and he's super excited about how our science can be used to both have a predictive capacity, but also really fuel new aspects of the blue economy. And we've talked to him about that in reference to aquaculture, in reference to recreational fishing, using new technologies, new ways of doing fishing surveys.

So, when Cisco and others talk about our data acquisition project and, you know, innovation going forward, just know that Dr. Spinrad is looking to us to demonstrate how that can be used to support what he calls the “new blue economy.” So, an embarrassment of riches when it comes to challenging and interesting and impactful issues, many of which are on your agenda, and many of which you’re experts on in your own right.

So, I hope this will be the first of many opportunities. And as I said, I’ll be here to be part of the conversations and to listen and learn, and I welcome questions. I really appreciate, from my former role and today in this role, just the number of partners that we have that allow us to make better decisions to leverage the resources that we have.

And so, you are foremost among those, and I’m thrilled to be with you today. So, thanks, and I welcome, if we have time for questions or for comments and discussion during this part of the agenda. Erika, I would very much welcome that. And thank you again for the warm welcome.

Erika Feller: I think it's safe to say on behalf of everybody, we're so glad you're here. We do have time for questions. I figure we can go until about 10 after with questions. So, I will call people's attention to the little icon on the bottom, the smiley face with the thing on its head. There's a place, if you click that, it'll let you raise your hand. And so, while you guys are figuring out the tech, maybe I will go over to Harlon and Pat, and I heard Donna's here, and just let them do a quick intro while I'm getting a queue of questions. Harlon has wandered off, so I am going to start with Pat.

Pat, that was your cue to introduce yourself. Pat has Erika Feller as his name on mine, so I don't know why that is, but I can see it's you, Pat.

Pat Sullivan: Great. So, hi, Janet. Pat Sullivan here. So, I'm an emeritus professor at Cornell University, former chair of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment. I was on the - I'm a fish population dynamicist and a statistician. I was on the New England Fisheries

Management Council Scientific and Statistical Committee for 22 years, moving now after retiring to California.

I'm on the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council, NPFC. I also chair the steering committee for the Center for Independent Experts. We're the folks that review all of the National Marine Fisheries Service's stock assessments. So, do that, and I also happen to be on the Scientific Advisory Committee for the Gulf of Maine Research Institute. So, I haven't totally left. I have one foot in the East Coast and one foot in the West. Wherever there's water, I'm interested. So, it's nice meeting you. Nice to hear about your priorities. Very much appreciate that. Thank you.

Janet Coit: Thanks, Pat. I grew up in upstate New York, and my three siblings and my niece and my aunt, they all went to Cornell. So, I've been there, spent a lot of time in Ithaca.

Pat Sullivan: Excellent.

Erika Feller: Donna, are you here somewhere?

Donna Kalez: I am here. Thank you. Good morning. Thank you so much, Janet. It was so wonderful to hear your comments and your passion for fisheries. I'm Donna Kalez, and my company is Dana Wharf Sportfishing & Whale Watching, way down here in Dana Point, California.

Right now, we're severely impacted by the oil spill and all of that, that's going on. But I just want to just tell you a little bit about Dana Wharf. We are a 50-year old business. We take out recreational anglers every single day, and we also do whale watching. I also sit on the board of the Sportfishing Association of California. So, represent all those folks down here off the West Coast, and I'm just really happy to be on MAFAC, and I'm really happy to hear your comments today. So, thank you so much.

Erika Feller: Thanks, Donna. And Harlon has returned to the screen. Want to introduce yourself, Harlon? No. No, we can't hear you. Maybe we can continue to work on Harlon's audio. And I've got Joe and then Ray and then Tom with questions. So, Joe.

Joe Schumacker: Thank you, Erika. And Harlon, sorry, man. Janet, thank you so much for your comments, and it's really great to see you taking this thing on, and there's so many subjects out there that are important to all of us in fisheries. I want to talk a little bit about offshore wind, and just briefly mentioned the experience that Rhode Island has had with planning bodies and really working out marine planning to limit conflicts in the ocean out there.

And just note that here on the West Coast, we've really kind of fallen behind in that, you know, the old RPBs that existed backland, have gone away. We have a regional ocean partnership that exists now that's in place called the West Coast Ocean Alliance. It's hanging on by a thread, basically, but it's a great body that really has tribal participation, along with State and federal folks at the table. And it's unique in that it covers the three States. Each of the states have their own bodies that are currently working on wind activities or are planning to have those bodies. With that cross West Coast body is just barely there.

So, my question to you is, do you know of anything in the pipe to continue with or improve the planning body or planning processes around the nation here, and what we can do to help foster that? Because I'm really worried that we're going to lose this ability here on the West Coast in the near future.

Janet Coit: Thanks, Joe. That's a great question and comment. It's interesting. In Rhode Island, it was under the Coastal Zone Management Act that the State put together what's called the Ocean Special Area Management Plan. And it sounds like you know a lot about that.

But it really did the upfront process of identifying with the tribes and with the fishing community, important areas, was the reason that the project went forward with no litigation, because it kind of worked through things upfront. So, that is what we aspire to.

I don't - in the Northeast, we still have a regional planning body, but the current effort with my conversations BOEM, and we have an MOU in the draft form between NOAA

and the Bureau of Offshore Energy Management at Interior Department, is to try to have some kind of planning process upfront.

Whether that means that it will be RPBs, or that would be a role of the Councils and the States working with NOAA information, I'm not quite sure. But our goal is to - you know, that term de-conflict, is to try to take a look at marine resources, whether they be proposed sanctuaries or important fishing grounds, spawning aggregations, and map things out upfront, and try to agree and have the areas that are leased, at least on the front end, try to avoid the biggest conflicts, whether those are scallops areas, you know, off of Southern New England or, I don't think it's gone well so far.

And I know the Secretary of Commerce feels like the Rhode Island experience is a good model for that, and has started with the planning process. So, it's rather long-winded to say, I'm really not sure whether the RPBs, or whether that would be the entities, but the idea is to try to put in place that kind of data collection and planning upfront, and do that in advance on the Pacific coast in a way that really didn't happen the way one would have hoped when it comes to the first projects in the federal water off the Atlantic.

And the ambition, 30 gigawatts by 2030, we think that should move really fast. So, it's something Jen Lukens, who you heard from with that scintillating privacy, thanks, Jen, but she's upfront. Jen has been the point person as the head of our Policy Office and helping think through these wind issues.

So, I would love to have her be a portal to get some more ideas and to work with you on the West Coast and others on MAFAC on these issues.

Joe Schumacker: Thank you.

Harlon Pearce: Hello.

Erika Feller: Oh, hey. We got Harlon, he has audio. We should seize the moment and let Harlon introduce himself.

Harlon Pearce: Yes, finally. I'm sorry. Every time I've been on, it would give me the wrong code and I had to change code two or three times to get back in. That's all right. Everything in Louisiana's screwed up, trust me. So, this isn't the only thing I've had to fight today. Just got off a two-hour conference call with (inaudible) the industry, both the charter recreation and commercial component.

Well, basically, I'm a (inaudible) fish peddler from the great State of Louisiana that's not so great anymore, and served nine years on the Council. This is my last actual meeting for MAFAC. A firm believer in aquaculture, a firm believer in the National Seafood Council, which I think is very necessary to help our industry, and just really honored to be a part of this group that I don't think gets enough recognition for all the hard work you guys do.

I really don't, and people don't seem to understand just how hard you really work, but it's been an honor for me to be in this group, and hopefully, I can help you down the road some kind of way. But other than that, I've got to put Louisiana back together right now, I'm afraid. It's pretty - its infrastructure basically destroyed from New Orleans down on the central part of the State.

It's pretty bad. It's pretty, pretty bad. We don't have enough shrimp plants to process the shrimp that we're catching right now. So, we've got to get five or six more plants back up and running. And I don't think that'll happen till next spring maybe, maybe next spring, if they come back.

If you think graying of the fleet was a problem, it is a problem, graying of the industry is going to be a real problem. We're going to be losing a lot of people in this industry not coming back. And I can understand why. It's just been rough for them completely. But it's, I guess, our job as people in this industry, to keep a great industry alive, both in the State of Louisiana and this great country of ours.

And, you know, that's why I firmly believe in this National Seafood Council can be part

of that progress and following and aquaculture as necessary. We have to get that started. Otherwise, we're going to lose everything which we worked hard to create. But that's who I am. That's what I'm trying to do, and it's been a pleasure being with you for the last five and three-quarters years, I guess. Thank you, manager.

Janet Coit: Thanks, Harlon. And I'm so pleased that you weathered the storm more or less. Let's see. I've got Ray next on my list.

Raimundo Espinoza: Hi. Thank you, Madam Chair Feller. Yes. I really appreciate the way you presented on, and you're bringing a lot of really important points. And one particular thing that I wanted to - that we want to touch on as well, because it really hits close to home and it really sets policy for the environment conservation in the US Caribbean and the entire nation really, with America the Beautiful.

You know, part of the America the Beautiful, as you know better than I do, is that one of the key components of really involving the local communities. There's the local stakeholders. And in the first document, it was really surprising for us in the US Caribbean, both Puerto Rico and the USVI, to really see that in the first document that it was put out that I'm sure has to go through a lot of revisions, the US Caribbean wasn't mentioned a single time.

And so, I brought this up through several ranks within several agencies, just to make sure it's something that doesn't fall off the radar just because it's the only region, the Gulf, Pacific, Atlantic, but it's the only region within the entire nation that was not mentioned in the entire document.

And so, that's very concerning from the point of view from fisheries, from 30 by 30, especially since it's something that's supposed to be locally-led. So, that's one of the things that is really, really concerning that we really try to make sure we push there's a locally-led aspect of it.

Second of all, under America the Beautiful, the aspects that are locally-led, under the

current laws that we have under the PROMESA Act, it really makes it impossible to be locally led, since we have the fiscal oversight board, which means that we can't really decide any of our own budget.

So, if we decided to do 100% protection of everything tomorrow, we probably would not get that approved because we have a fiscal oversight board. So, right now, the current situation of Puerto Rico makes it impossible for America the Beautiful to be implemented. So, that's one of the things I just wanted to make sure to bring it up.

We brought this up with the Secretary of Interior, Haaland, last week. So, you know, Puerto Rico also has the only US national forest, tropical national forest, sorry. Also, from NOAA's point of view, you know, we're entirely under federal fisheries sector for both USVI and Puerto Rico. In addition to that, we're one of the few biodiversity, marine biodiversity hotspots within the US.

So, it's really important for us to make sure that we bring this up, just because again, we're just getting started with America The Beautiful, and we want to make sure that we have a seat at the table to really make sure that we address a lot of the local issues that things aren't just replicated and copied of what's done elsewhere.

Puerto Rico is actually - has 26% of its jurisdictional waters under protection, which is very high considering that the goal of - in the next decade of 30 by 30, is 30% of the water. So, it's something that we can actually see now, only that Puerto Rico can not only participate as a full member, you know, with full participation at the table, but also to be an example for many other States and jurisdictions on how they can achieve higher levels of protection.

Anyway, so thank you very much, and I look forward to really collaborating and participating in any future efforts that we have within MAFAC and beyond as well.

Thank you.



Janet Coit: Thanks, Ray. Thank you. I'm glad you're bringing them up - those points up in every opportunity you have, and it is still early in that process. So, I think that your comments, that we can make America the Beautiful better based on your comments, and that is really impressive, 26% of your marine area is conserved. Wow.

Erika Feller: Yes. We have one more question. Just before that, I mean, I realize this is my last meeting and selfishly, I really, really, really wanted to go to Puerto Rico, but even if I don't get to go, I still think MAFAC really ought to plan a meeting there in the future, just because I think this is a place where MAFAC can really help bring that attention to Puerto Rico, and like actually get there and see the stuff, and have people come in and talk to you about what's going on there.

I think there was just an unprecedented opportunity that we sort of missed this fall of showcasing what's going on there and kind of, you know, like Ray said, you know, providing that seat at the table. I think that's something that MAFAC definitely can help out with. Hey, Tom, you have your hand up.

Tom Fote: Yes. I was interested to hear about your environmental justice. I've been working on environmental justice things that are actually on the board of New Jersey for 20 years. And I've been mentioning it at fisheries management for the last 35 years. We started raising the size limits of scup.

This affected the people fishing with the docks, piers. I grew up fishing in Brooklyn at Canarsie Pier, Steeplechase Fear, and Coney Island, and we only caught certain sized fish. And once we start raising the size limit of scup, summer flounder, Black Sea bass, we put these people out of the fisheries, and they wind up poaching.

And then we complain because they're poaching fish, but they can't land legal fish. And it's really environmental justice. They can't afford to go out in boats and charter boats. They're just not available. So, one of the things I've been looking at and screaming about for years, how do we handle that?

And hopefully, NMFS has been looking at that now, and I'll leave it at that. I also listened to you when you went to the directors meeting for the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, and we were talking about - and when we look at sector separation in - I know how Rhode Island feels, but we feel a lot differently in New Jersey about it, and so is New York and a few other States. And there's a couple of other issues that I'll wait until we get out to one of the summers to someplace else to talk about it.

Janet Coit: Yes. Two things, Tom. One, yes, we did try in Rhode Island. I mean, a lot of what you're talking about is obviously in State waters. It's clearly in State waters if it's from shore. But again, I'm making fisheries management decisions to try to take into account the folks that don't have a boat and that are fishing from shore.

And I think in federal waters, some of it is around how when you're basing decisions on history, or you've got expensive, you know, individual opportunities, you know, how do you promote new entrants into a fishery when you have policies that either require or that you own an expensive boat or you're - I think there's a lot of ways we can look at, combined with what Harlon said, about the graying of the industry, like how do we focus on retooling some of our systems so that we can have more access to fisheries?

But your points are well taken, and I will argue with you about the - a separate sector for the 'for hire' at another - at a later date. It's all about accountability.

Erika Feller: Kellie.

Kellie Ralston: Thanks, Erika. So, we had a couple of minutes left, so I thought I'd sneak in one question. Janet, one of the things, at least from my experience, is that all of these initiatives are really great and well-needed attention by the agency. But kind of underlying all of those great options are the need for better data honestly, and more complete data.

And so, I would also kind of add to your list, particularly on the climate change issue,

you know, species stock shifting. You've got the wind. All of that really is - there's a real need on the science side for those things, but also looking at it from the regulatory perspective.

And so, if you're talking about cross-jurisdictional issues, you know, how - what can you do where you are now, and then what are the needs? And I would say that's a science need, as well as a regulatory need. So, particularly looking at MSA reauthorizations coming up and kind of where the agency really has needs, I think, those are two important things to consider. Thank you.

Janet Coit: Thanks, Kellie. And when we did, we did a meeting a couple of weeks ago with all of our Science Center leads and all of our Regional leads and all of our Headquarters leads around climate change and, yes, the need for better and more data in terms of really understanding what's happening and basing decisions on science was definitely echoed throughout every single region and something we want to bring to the President's budget and to the Hill. And I totally agree with you. And I think you'll hear from (Cisco) and others also, and really Dr. Spinrad is extremely supportive of that.

So we have somebody who wants to promote not just increased, wants increased access to data, increased innovation. And one of the things we look at like calibrating surveys that are going to be disrupted from offshore wind, we've got to look at new ways of gathering data.

So I - it's funny that while I was speaking I was like gosh, I'm not really saying a lot about science, but I already felt like it was going on too long, so I'm glad that you raised the point that you did.

Erika Feller: Great. Janet, thank you so much. I don't have any more hands raised, except for (Kellie)'s, but I know she just wants to put hers down. If it's okay with you guys maybe we can call a close to this session and move on to our next agenda item, which is talking about the resilient seafood work. So thanks, Janet, for sharing your thoughts and being open to such a wide array of questions. It's really exciting that you're here.

So if it's okay, God help us all, apparently I'm supposed to lead the next discussion on the resiliency food work. And I made slides. And so what I was kind of hoping, this was my intention for this next section and I'm going to try and wrap this up by two o'clock and get us back on schedule, but what my hope is here is to review what we've done since the spring MAFAC meeting.

We've had a whole bunch of different conversations both among MAFAC members as well as presentations. I think we've kind of zeroed in on some topics around resilient seafood that we want to talk about. I think we kind of need to wrestle these things to the ground and say, this is what we're going to do, this is when we're going to do it here's who is going to take the lead on it and kind of talk a little bit about how we want to do the work.

So I've got slides. And I'm only going to put these up here after I make sure that everybody understands that some of this is, some of this you got in that document that I emailed around over the weekend which I'm sure you guys have carefully poured through and parsed every statement and have many, many deep, nuanced thoughts about.

Parts of it are my own views on, kind of, how we might organize the work. This is just my view to give you guys something to push off in terms of framing your own thoughts about how this goes forward. I'm acutely aware that we're going to make this decision and you guys are going to go off and do it and I'm going to go do something else.

So I really want this to be kind of an effort where we all feel like this is the right direction going forward. So please, please, please don't take the last three slides as gospel because it's just stuff I made up yesterday. Sounds good? Okay, I have no idea how to share my screen.

Heidi Lovett: So, Erika, I just sent a note to Darius to allow you to share your screen. So that share screen button at the bottom should become open, so to speak for you in just a moment.

Like maybe it lights up, I'm not sure. Actually, you could just click on it now and see if it works for you.

Erika Feller: Can you guys see that? Oh, hold on.

Heidi Lovett: There you go.

Erika Feller: Amazing. I don't know how to make this bigger. How do I make this bigger? Here we go. So I can - I'll see you guys and how you're reacting to this. So just as kind of a reminder of the path we have tread so far. We started out in May with a really kind of well-rounded discussion looking at, kind of, the seafood resilience issues from a bunch of different angles, looking at workforce development, looking at climate, looking at economic development, all kinds of stuff.

And we decided at that time that this was something that MAFAC was really interested in. You will recall that we had kind of a breakout session, with the virtual sticky notes. The-what was that thing called Heidi, Doodle board something or another? I don't know. It was pretty exciting.

Heidi Lovett: Jamboard.

Erika Feller: So we had a bunch of, what's it?

Heidi Lovett: The Jamboard, Jamboard.

Erika Feller: The Jamboard, there you go. It's a Google product. We had that discussion. It kind of gave us some raw material to think about. And what we agreed at that time was that we really wanted to do a bit of a deep dive into some of these topics. And so we've had a bunch of sessions over the summer listed up here. We, kind of, we did a deep dove with Sea Grant on their workforce development work. We dug into seafood strategy with Michael Rubino. We've learned a lot about fishery disaster determinations that I never knew going into that presentation.

We talked a lot about the AOA for aquaculture, and the regulatory efficiency and science planning. We had presentations from the Climate and Fisheries Initiative, as well as work on seafood markets.

And then we had a couple of work sessions in which we, kind of, took that great, big list of stuff we cooked up in May, considered the things that we learned in these sessions, and narrowed it down into the document that I circulated to everybody on Sunday. And there was a lot of participation, but not everybody obviously was able to make all of these meetings, but I just kind of wanted to give everybody sort of an overview of like, you know, there's been a lot of process that got into this document. And so, you know, we're here in October and ideally we'll be able to kind of figure out how we want to go forward on some of these topics.

And so here's kind of where we landed around this topic of seafood resilience and keep in mind my little explanation up here, explanations up here are paraphrasing from the document I circulated. Please don't take them necessarily as a gospel interpretation, but they were sort of three areas that I think people continue to come back to over and over.

The first is looking at workforce development and, particularly, looking at, kind of, the long-term picture for workforce development, where do we want to get to? How do we measure our progress in that direction? And we want to be inclusive. We want to look across commercial fisheries, aquaculture, the sports sector, as well as supporting industries.

There is a lot of interest in infrastructure. And we're thinking fairly broadly about infrastructure, not just the physical infrastructure of communities, but also maybe how communities organize themselves, some of the management infrastructure, as well as financial needs of fisheries. You know, I think for normal kind of investments in managing your businesses, but also investments in, maybe, how fisheries might need to change going forward.

And then the last bucket we talked a lot about was competing offshore uses. And I think wind is a big part of this, but I think it's a little bit broader than wind that they're - we're kind of looking at a future where there may be more offshore uses, more diverse offshore resources than there have in the past and this has implications for fisheries.

I think wind is one of those but I think there's others that are reasonable, reasonably foreseeable coming down the pipe. Also, with wind expanding into other coasts and what kinds of things do we want to think about in terms of ensuring that seafood and fisheries have a seat at the table, and that we're kind of thinking about these emerging uses in a way that also recognizes the importance of these areas for seafood production, and livelihoods, and access for recreation and all these other things that we value.

So there are also some cross-cutting themes. The big one is that climate change is throwing a new wrench in the works. And I think, you know, one of the ways I've come at this, and I think I've said this a few times I've sort of gut checking now to make sure people agree with me, but we know that the space that we're talking about is already kind of ecologically, socially, economically, quite dynamic and climate change is another thing that is happening.

We already manage in a space that is dominated by uncertainty. Climate change is introducing a new set of uncertainties into it and that is kind of a pressing consideration.

This notion of across the board how do we ensure effective two way communications between NOAA and its stakeholders? I think there's kind of a really important thing to think about there. And then finally, to Janet's point, how do we ensure that what we do considers diversity, equity, is inclusive and addresses considerations about environmental justice because particularly when you're talking about climate change impacts these things get all kinds of more interesting and pressing.

I'm going to kind of just pause right there and do a quick gut check and make sure that there's nothing anybody else particularly wanted to highlight here. Heidi, Jennifer, anything glaring that I missed.

Heidi Lovett: This is Heidi. I don't think there's anything that you missed. I just wanted to note that in setting up the agenda this way we did hope that we'd get feedback from all the various staff and leaders that are with us today as well. I think that was one of the major goals so I just wanted to make sure everybody was aware of that and so it's a conversation for the entire group.

Erika Feller: So this is all the stuff you guys already know. So here's - maybe we'll just get into the part that I made up and I will - I'll get through this really quickly and provide some - and we can have a discussion about this. So I think we've got these three tasks here, and for each one of them, I'll just throw workforce development up there to start with, we want to address these changing workforce needs. We need to think about what's the product that we're cooking up?. Who's going to take the lead on this? What kinds of inputs do we want to get? Where do we need to get information from so we can sort of plan our work? And then what's our timeline for what we want to produce?

And I'll just kind of go through these quickly with, like “Erika's ideas.” I think for the workforce development we're kind of looking at kind of a typical MAFAC report, something that has recommendations, ideas for goals, actions, metrics looks out over the next ten years. I don't have the first clue which group of people ought to be the lead on this. I think there's arguments that could be made potentially for the Commerce Committee but, in all honesty, there's other things the Commerce Committee could be doing so we should probably talk a bit about that.

From what I've heard I think there's a lot of work out there in the world around us that's come up. (Sebastian) brought the work that Maine has done on workforce development. We probably want to have a bit more of an open process, maybe think about meetings or Webinars with key stakeholders to get their input and working really closely with the Sea Grant partners to sort of frame the questions and take that input. And that, you know, MAFAC would look to approve a final report maybe a year or 18 months down the road.



Do you want me to just go for all three of these and then we can kind of come back and ask questions, Okay, real quick. So same deal with infrastructure. I think that this is the same sort of thing: goals, actions, metrics, a set of recommendations. It's probably on a similar kind of year to 18 months time frame. But I think this is trickier because it - there's a lot more going on here if you're talking about the physical infrastructure, the community, management issues, financial issues.

So this could potentially be one report that comes up that has kind of one lead subcommittee. But as I was kind of thinking this through, you can look at things like climate change impacts on protected resources and changing migrations and the implications for increased fisheries interactions with marine mammals or, you know, issues with by-catch clearly that's a role for protected resources.

But I don't necessarily think [the] protected resources [subcommittee] also wants to be developing recommendations about, you know, other management issues or kind of getting into access to capital or other types of issues. So that really is a role for maybe a different subcommittee. So I think we need to think a little bit about what the scope of this work is and how we might want to organize it.

And then also, you know, I think there's probably different types of input we might look for. So some things to think about there. And then finally on the competing offshore uses and ensuring seafood and fisheries have that seat at the table I think this is one where MAFAC has already done a lot of work with the Wind Report. And I think that this is probably something we could produce this week as - because the themes that really came up a lot during the discussions was really about looking at the role that NOAA plays, kind of providing some recommendations for how NOAA can effectively engage stakeholders, the different types of decisions maybe expanding a bit out from our wind work.

And, you know, I think that there is kind of a group of us that's really focused on some of those wind issues who would sort of naturally lead for this but something to think about. And you know, we've got a lot of key messages in the document already, which is kind of

why I think if we had the wherewithal we could probably do this this week or in a very short time frame either this week or in one maybe follow-up MAFAC meeting.

So that is actually my last slide. I'm relieved to be able to tell you. So I'm going to just kind of open the floor for questions, which-Jennifer or Heidi, can I get one of you guys to wrangle questions because I can't see that bar while I'm presenting?

Jennifer: Sure, I'll take care of it.

Erika Feller: Thank you.

Jennifer: The first person we have up is David O'Brien.

Erika Feller: Hi David.

Jennifer: David, you're on mute. Why don't, while David is figuring out his problem, let's go on to Stefanie Moreland. Darius, see if you can help David O'Brien please.

Stefanie Moreland: Thank you. Looking at the organization limits, I agree with your comment. Erika, regarding this last item that I think it's pretty concrete or tangible, the scope of work and what needs to be taken up here. But when I look at the initial layout of this, which I appreciate you putting this into a more accessible format than we left it in, there are a lot of parallels to how the agency presentations look that I've seen on the Climate Fisheries Initiative. And so I'm just thinking about the interactions there.

In particular, the Climate Fisheries Initiative, in my understanding, has three parts that have some parallels to what we're looking at here: science and development, operations and infrastructure and extension upper, I'm sorry, extensions and engagement. And if MAFAC is to engage on that initiative how do we ensure limiting redundancy here or would we pull that into the framework that's laid out here? So just a thought.

Jennifer: David, have you - are you able to speak? No, I still don't have audio there for David.

Darius: He's working on it.

Jennifer: Any other. Okay, thank you Darius. Pat Sullivan, go ahead.

Pat Sullivan: Great. Thanks, Erika, for organizing the presentation and the thoughts. I guess I just wanted to mention two things. One is that it's useful to think of resilience broader than going "back to normal," like we might need to go in transition. So that's an important thing to recognize, quite often we're thinking "can get back to the future" so to speak.

And then the other thing I want to mention is there's like for all of the stuff that you've outlined there's different pathways to sort of recognize how resilience may play a role. So for - so maybe ecological. So it may be that the ecosystem is resilient, or it may be how our government is organized may induce resilience, or it may be the sort of economic system of the local community that induces resilience, or it may be social [and/or] cultural.

So I'm part of this staff (working group science nature and people project) that is looking at climate resilient fisheries. And I think these four areas give us different pathways. So I just wanted to mention that which is part of your overall presentation, so thank you.

Jennifer: Thanks Pat. And the other hand in the queue there for comments or questions on what Erika has put forward here?

David O'Brien: Hey, Jennifer, I think my audio is fixed, David O'Brien speaking.

Jennifer: Oh, great. Hello, David, go ahead.

David O'Brien: Great, thank you. So this is a great segue to a presentation I'll be making later this afternoon with Andy Jermolowicz from the USDA. But just in this context, I want to put it out there that we've been looking at or developing an interagency aquaculture economic

development plan that covers a lot of these same topics, so a lot of, a lot of potential synergies there.

And we've said from the beginning as we've started putting together this aquaculture plan gives us a charge for our task force recognizing that there's a lot of overlap. There's far more similarities than there are differences, at least at first glance, between what the agriculture community needs versus the broader, you know, fisheries or seafood community.

So just want to put it out there. I think as we go through later this afternoon and we'll actually be walking through our outline at a very high level hopefully this group will find it informative to inform, you know this whatever comes next in this effort. And as part of that we actually had a series of listening sessions two weeks ago now with the public and we're putting together the transcripts right now but we'd be happy to share those transcripts. It's a public meeting so it's available to MASAC if they want to use those - that information in this effort.

Jennifer: Thanks, David. I've raised my hand so can I recognize myself, Erika? No one else is in line at the moment.

Erika Feller: Yes, you may recognize yourself. Will you recognize me after you're done?

Jennifer: I will recognize you after I'm done. First, Erika, thank you so much for taking the time to pull together all of those different presentations and wrangle kind of a synthesis and put them together as a framework I think for the work that the committee is going to do over the course of this meeting.

I recognize that the answer isn't, we are not looking for the answer here, but that's why we've built the presentations that we'll be having over the course of today and tomorrow to help inform the work and the decisions that you all have to make in front of you. I - the advice I offer up to you all is thinking about the questions and what questions you want

to answer first and foremost before maybe necessarily jumping on a work product. Sometimes they go hand in hand.

But to also remember some important things you do have the timeline here, Erika, and thinking about how long that might take. Things don't happen very quickly with MASAC unless it is something like the letter that you put forward on competing ocean uses. I'm in agreement with you that you all have weighed on in on that previously and that's something you could do some more again.

But I think also the most important lens is what do you think would be most useful for the organization? What is a set of recommendations that you put forward instead of perhaps just offering a position on something but thinking through how you could work through a process of listening to other stakeholders like you did with the Seafood Council recommendation?

So I really like the way that you have laid this out here, Erika, and I think what is on the committee right now is to help focus down on to what are those key questions and to narrow it as much as possible because it can tend to get bigger and bigger. I've seen this with MASAC over my tenure here is that everyone's very ambitious and wants to do everything and provide recommendations on everything but oftentimes the most useful things are the ones that are the most focused for the organization.

So I just offer that up as food for thought as you go through your deliberations here. And I - we also do, as Heidi said, have lots of staff on line, subject matter experts and members NOAA fisheries leadership to weigh in or answer questions as we go along. But that will conclude my thoughts and then we'll go back to my hosting with you, Erika, and call on you.

Erika Feller: Awesome, thank you. So I went back to this slide on infrastructure. And - because I think that this is the one like with Stefanie's comment about this is the place where if there are strange redundancies with I think the climate and fisheries if you know, if you look through this document -- and I'm really uncomfortable with you guys giving me as much

credit as you have I participated in the discussion but Heidi like seriously did yeoman's work and kind of dragged me kicking and screaming through getting this thing in place I think we all know that that's an understatement of what it was like -- but the - there is a lot in this infrastructure bucket.

It is so diverse. It's kind of the place where we just checked a lot of things that I think people were interested in. And I think they are things that we are very sincerely interested in. But like, you know, when Harlan was sort of talking about aging infrastructure and the graying of the fleet like we've we've heard things like that a lot. I mean I think that there is kind of a sense of there is a change, it's going to require investment it's coming.

I think about a lot of the things I've talked to Donnie McMahan about. I've thought about them in this kind of area potentially being really relevant as being an opportunity for MASAC to put some ideas on the board that could contribute to what NOAA is already doing.

But I think in other areas what we might do would kind of enhance or complement work that NOAA is already got underway. So some things that are new some things that are kind of complementary where we need to kind of sync up with what the agency is doing.

But this is the one I, you know, I kind of presented this as three buckets. Honestly, it still might be like five because this infrastructure bucket could probably be broken up into a few other things and really requires either some chopping up or some serious pruning I think to be something that tractable, that makes sense that is a meaningful contribution and helpful to the agency.

Jennifer: Thanks Erika. Next we have Tom Fote.

Tom Fote: I just wanted to thank (Eric) and Heidi for the hard work they put this together. You know, I sat through every one of the meetings but one that I had miss just because I was at another meeting but I got a pretty good idea of what we're basically discussing and thank you for putting it in a timeline. That's all I really want to say at this time.

Erika Feller: Thanks Tom.

Jennifer: Anyone else? Tom you just re-raised your hand. Maybe you needed to, maybe you were trying to take it down.

Tom Fote: Yes.

Jennifer: I know the rest of you have had - you all aren't shrinking violets so I would be curious to hear if anyone else who hasn't weighed in yet their thoughts on these three areas that Erika has put forward here. All right, Erika, I'm not seeing any other hands. Oh there's (Paul). Hi, (Paul). I would love to hear from you.

(Paul): Thank you, Jennifer, and thanks everybody. Yes I wanted to just provide some really formative thoughts on I think these are three great areas and they each have different degrees of - different degrees are amenable to the fisheries oriented solutions.

So there are huge issues where I think the solutions that we are likely to be looking at are ones where we need to really work effectively with other organizations. In the case of workforce development some of that would be within our own department, with other bureaus, obviously with Sea Grant as already recognized.

That's clearly an issue, a top tier issue, for the industry and frankly I think even describing the condition holistically for the industry and characterizing this problem well would be a contribution in and of itself. But when it comes to solutions we can influence but I think a lot of what the tools that we have available to us a lot of them reside in other organizations that we would need to collaborate with.

It's true for the entirety of the Seafood Resilience Enterprise that it's intrinsically a whole of government kind of effort. But there's, I think in each of these pieces, a different degree of contribution that can be made, a distinctive contribution that can be made by fisheries itself. So in a workforce development comment there.

On infrastructure I agree that this is absolutely huge. And I think, I just wanted to mention having scanned the paper that you circulated, Erika, lots of ways to kind of bundle issues within this broad label. But I do think that one way to frame it might be somewhat in the context of the industry's experience with the pandemic.

It revealed, or really put I think in starker relief, some of the shortcomings in the seafood supply chain writ large. And we could draw from some of the work we've done to evaluate economic impacts of the whole pandemic still playing out the differential impact on different pieces of the seafood supply chain by our rough look in part because of supply chain vulnerability.

US based seafood firms were hit harder and have had a longer recovery period than a lot of other elements of the seafood sector outside of the United States. So I think there's issues there with characterizing where the supply chain vulnerabilities have been most acute and what that means in terms of increasing resilience.

This has a nice tie in to some of the topics that we'll be talking about later today with USDA on thinking that's happening throughout the federal government more broadly around supply chain vulnerabilities in food and agriculture. So we have a connection to that discussion that is fairly new and very dynamic and one that I think would have a great deal of outside interest.

So and then last on the offshore competing uses while I'm sure there's a lot that can be offered immediately I actually think that this is an area where we do have some fairly distinctive competencies. Again, in a multi-agency setting we don't control offshore wind permitting but we can certainly, through the use of planning tools, methodologies and some of the underlying science, we can heavily influence how citing decisions are thought about, how they're executed not just for wind, for aquaculture and for looking relationally at various ocean uses including biological uses in novel ways and ways that I think could help address some of the underlying tensions that exist today in the



development pathways when they're looked at in a sector specific way which is typically how they've been developed.

So while there's some degree of ability to respond quickly to that I do think that over time as we think about our new administrators very heavy focus on flu economy and this notion of a faster growth rate in ocean based industries relative to the general GDP growth that's something to really think about as these issues become more challenging.

So I just wanted to offer a couple of those general thoughts about each of these three areas. I think that they are each in their own way very challenging topics where even the characterization, the kind of closing characterization of the problem would be a contribution to us moving forward and then sort of ordering the universe as far as the viability of different solutions goes. Thanks Erika.

Jennifer: Thanks. Thanks, (Paul). Next in line we have (Cisco). (Cisco), I think you're still on mute. I'm not hearing you (Cisco). Darius, can we get some assistance for (Cisco) please.

Erika Feller: Yes, seriously because this is going to be really good.

Jennifer: Yes, I'm waiting for it. Anyone else has a comment while we're trying to fix (Cisco)'s audio? You may have to jump through the screen he's wanting to say something so badly Erika.

Erika Feller: I don't know for what it's worth I, you know, I think while we're kind of getting (Cisco) sorted, we have the time tomorrow to spend some time working on this. And, you know, there's part of me that wants to go back to this document for each one of these sections see if we can't clear a little bit more clearly, a little bit more clearly maybe not clearly but a little bit more articulate what is the problem that each one of these tasks is going to solve?

And I actually think, particularly for infrastructure maybe that is kind of where we can use an exercise like that to figure out where the dividing lines are amid all of that stuff that's in that category. I'm not sure there's just so much in there.

Jennifer: (Cisco), do you want to try at it again?

(Cisco): So you want me to try again.

Erika Feller: Oh, we can hear you.

Jennifer: You're there.

(Cisco): Okay. I thought I had...

Jennifer: You made it work.

(Cisco): I was so proud of myself that I followed all the instructions until I guess I didn't. But that's okay. Anyway, thanks, (Jen), and it's good to see everybody and good afternoon and good morning. I just wanted to add a couple of thoughts to what (Paul) and others have said.

First is, I thought this document, Erika, that you circulated was really good. And I have some thoughts on all of them but I'm going to focus perhaps just on the one tomorrow or - and the last one that I'll talk a little bit more about tomorrow which is just addressing the competing offshore uses.

Tomorrow I'll be speaking on what we're referring to as our next generation data acquisition plan. And by that means, by that I mean what are the data that we're going to need to collect going forward, you know, ten, 15 years, you know, to address our fisheries mandates?

And there's three things that drive it. One is the changing ocean conditions that we know, you know, climate, et cetera. And the second one is the exactly that the competing offshore uses. And we've already talked about wind and aquaculture and such.

And we know that the ocean is getting busier for everybody and so that means that we have to change the way that we collect data. And we're just about to embark on this data acquisition plan that will be - it will start with a, I'm giving away the whole punch line for tomorrow, but it'll start off with a request for information, a public request for information of what data is needed going forward.

Again, ten to 15 years followed by three or four workshops, again public workshops, to try to get that discussion and that input more broadly in terms of how we build the resilience in fisheries, et cetera, that is required from the standpoint of the data that we need to support our decisions.

And so I think you're - the white paper that you circulated is very timely. It's something that, you know, anticipates different approaches that will be required due to, I guess in this part I guess I'm just focusing on the offshore competing offshore uses. And so I look forward to talking about this a little bit more on that subject and also perhaps others that come up.

But again just wanted to add that and give a little highlight of hopefully how I can get your input and not just tomorrow, but in the months to come. So thank Erika, much appreciated.

Jennifer: Thanks (Cisco). Erika, I do not see any other hands in the queue. I'll give everybody one last opportunity to weigh in. Erika, I'm not seeing any other hands. And I believe Heidi just posted the document in the comments for folks for easy access.

Erika Feller: So I that's fine if like me your mind gets a little bit blown by this. It's completely understandable. But I just kind of wanted to get the task out in front of us in terms of what I'm hoping we can get done this week in terms of framing out these assignments.

So we've got some great presentations this afternoon that I think will be really solid food for thought related to this. And then we've got some work time early afternoon tomorrow and I - we might want to think about a little bit Jennifer and Heidi about how to maybe

break that time up and where we might need to focus our time in order to be able to get through that.

So I actually think this gets us totally back on time if even a little bit ahead of schedule which is amazing. So what I would propose we're currently scheduled for a break at two o'clock, it's 1:47. Heidi, I defer to you do we want to return in 30 minutes and start our afternoon sessions early or do we just want to go ahead and luxuriate in a 43 minute break?

Heidi Lovett: Hi. This is Heidi. Because we have so many invited speakers and they all have their own calendars and schedules I'm nervous about trying to push things early. So I'd have to say I just don't know if they're available early so it would be a little too complicated to be honest.

Erika Feller: So why don't we take - oh, sorry, Jennifer.

Jennifer: I was just going to say I think maybe taking the extra 15 minutes to think about the presentation that we just had and narrowing down the thoughts and ideas and narrowing down for the conversations later that would be helpful. I just offer that up.

Erika Feller: Yes, also I haven't had lunch yet because I've been on the call since about 9 o'clock this morning so I would be really excited to eat. So why don't we break now and we will resume promptly at 2 o'clock which maybe means everybody's back, got their cameras turned back on by say 1:57 so we'll be ready to go promptly at 2:00. And do not hang up. Do not disconnect from the WebEx. Just mute yourself...

Man: Don' you mean 2:30?

Jennifer: Yes but the time is 2:30. Sorry, I was trying to get...

Erika Feller: Two-thirty, sorry we will resume at 2:27 so we can start promptly at 2:30. Sound Okay?

Stefanie Moreland: Quick question?

Erika Feller: Yes.

Stefanie Moreland: Is it - this is Stefanie. Is it possible to have those - that sample slide deck sent out by email rather than just Google Doc access?

Heidi Lovett: Erika, if you send it to me I can quickly send it to everybody.

Stefanie Moreland: Thank you. That would be great.

Erika Feller: Yes, that is a thing I can do. See you soon.

Jennifer: I'll hang out for a few minutes if anybody has questions or issues. And operator we are going on break.

Coordinator: Okay, thank you. I was going to pull someone out and ask because I was getting...

Jennifer: I understand. Yes so we're going ten minutes early on break.

Coordinator: Okay, so I'll go ahead and turn the music on in the other room.

Jennifer: Thank you.

Man: (Jen)...

Woman: And we're back.

Erika Feller: Great, thank you. We are going to resume our topic on building resilient fisheries and seafood sector with a bunch of presentations. I think first up are Marina Cucuzza and Heather Sagar who are going to talk about public comment on climate change. Over to you guys.

Marina Cucuzza: Thank you. Just confirming you can hear me okay and you can see my slides?

Erika Feller: Yes, we can.

Marina Cucuzza: Perfect. Good afternoon everyone. Thank you for the invitation to join this meeting and present today. My name is Marina Cucuzza. And I'm a Knauss Marine Policy Fellow working jointly within NOAA Fisheries in the Office of Science and Technology as well as in OAR in the Climate Program Office. And joining me today is Heather Sagar from the NOAA Fisheries Office of Policy.

And I'll be presenting on our joint effort focused on synthesizing the public comments received as part of Executive Order 14008 on tackling the climate crisis at home and abroad. Specifically, Section 216(c) which called for public input to NOAA on how to make fisheries, protected resources in aquaculture more resilient to climate change.

So the goal of this presentation is to provide you with a broad overview of the types of responses received as part of the executive order and how these public comments are being applied. So an outline for this presentation I'll start with a brief introduction of the executive order and talk about how NOAA responded.

Then we'll move on into the method so the qualitative data analysis process that was used to evaluate the public comments and identify major themes. Then we'll move on to results looking at the major themes identified. And finally applications or how these comments are being used.

I know you were briefed earlier this year on different components of the executive order so I'll take a moment here just to remind you that in January of 2021 President Biden released Executive Order 14008 on tackling the climate crisis at home and abroad. It had a number of different directives to the executive branch to advance the nation's resilience to climate change and placed climate at the center of domestic and foreign policy.

Specifically, Section 216(c) directs the Secretary of Commerce through the administrator of NOAA to initiate efforts within the first 60 days from the date of the order to collect input from fishermen, regional ocean councils, fishery management councils, scientists and other stakeholders on how to make fisheries and protected resources more resilient to climate change. And this includes recommendations related to changes in management and conservation measures as well as improvements that can be made in science, monitoring and collaborative research.

Here is a timeline of how NOAA responded. In March a federal register notice was published. And this initiated a 30 day public comment period. Stakeholders were encouraged to submit their public comments via email. There were also three national stakeholder listening sessions held, two of these are open to all members of the public and one was held specifically for state and tribal governments only. There were also special sessions held with the Regional Fishery Management Councils to provide additional opportunities for input.

And this picture here on the right is a screen capture of the NOAA Fisheries Web that highlighted the public comment process. And there is a link to this Web site on the MASAC agenda if you want to click there and read more.

Looking at the input received in total we received 231 public comments. And these comments represent over 2500 individual signatures as multiple people signed on to many of the comments.

Overall the focus of the comments was on science and management recommendations for fisheries and protected resources. Looking at who we heard from responses primarily came from non-profits, NGOs, and environmental advocacy groups in addition to members of the commercial, recreational and aquaculture fishing sectors, state and federal wildlife agencies as well as academics and scientific groups, among others.

Now I'll move on to describing the methods for the qualitative research process that was used to analyze the public comments. So to do this we used a formal qualitative research

process that's called quality of content analysis. And this is a research method that is used to identify relationships and themes within text data.

So it's a way to systematically but objectively distill large amounts of text data into summaries of key results. And you do this using a process called coding where passages of the text are grouped, labeled and linked to describe their meaning.

So in our case the qualitative data is the public comments coming in as well as the transcripts from the hearings. Then we go through this coding process and then we're able to identify major themes. This is an inductive approach meaning that the themes are completely driven from the data, we don't apply the codes to the data. We read the input that's coming in for major recommendations and then we can summarize them. And that gives us the themes.

To give you a sense of what this process looks like and to provide a visual here is a screen capture of NVivo which is a qualitative data analysis software. And this is a tool that I used to code all the public comments.

And to orient you here on the right this is a PDF of one of the comments that came in and you can see that there's some introductory text here. But then there's this list of seven different recommendations that this group is asking NOAA to do.

So looking here at the first recommendation it says, "NOAA should use existing regulatory processes to limit warming to 1.5 degrees." So this particular recommendation is about carbon emission and is particularly about a need for reduction of carbon emission. So it would be highlighted and grouped into this theme of carbon emissions with a subtheme of needing reductions.

Another example here is, "NOAA should use the Endangered Species Act to monitor and mitigate human caused threats to protected species from sea level rise." So this particular recommendation is about protected species also looking at the Endangered Species Act.



One final example here is, "NOAA should make federal government solution more inclusive and focus on equity." So this recommendation here is about the executive order process and NOAA's role in equity and inclusion.

So we went through all the public comments looking at the major recommendations just like this and all the recommendations were highlighted and grouped into these themes and subthemes. And this is an iterative process. And this is where it was helpful to have Heather do her own independent analysis while I was conducting this qualitative analysis and then we could compare notes and determine the major themes to make sure that we captured the full range of the public comments.

So in total, from this quality of data analysis process, there are 12 major themes identified. And these themes are summarized in a Tech. Memo that was released this morning. And the link to the tech memo is also the same link I referenced earlier where you can find information about the public comment process. And this is also linked in the MASAC agenda.

And this Tech. Memo is a synthesis of all the public comments. And I'll note here that the majority of comments that came in were really nationally focused but there were a number of comments that had region focuses or were particularly directed at tribes or had international components. And because those weren't nationally focused they got their own separate appendix at the back. So if you're looking for those types of comments you can find them at the bottom of the Tech. Memo.

This figure here looks at the frequency of code to major themes. So if you look across all the recommendations you'll find that the majority of comments focused on management, executive order approach and research needs and less so on things like carbon emissions, data needs and renewable energy.

I know that there are 12 major themes that emerged from the conscience analysis process. Those things are listed here. They are executive order approach, management for a changing climate, habitat considerations, protected resources, aquaculture, economic

considerations and advancing climate resilient fisheries and protected resources, data needs, research needs, reductions in anthropogenic carbon emissions, ocean based renewable energy, outreach, education, training and communication and finally, funding needs and consideration.

I don't have time to go through all of these major themes so I'll be highlighting some of them for you today. But there are some summary slides for each one of these themes at the back of this presentation which you have access to so you can get a high level overview of these different themes. And then if you want to learn more you can read the tech memo which has a much more detailed summary of each one of these things as well.

So looking first at executive order approach these comments focused on stakeholder inclusion and the implementation of the executive order. This quote here reads, "It's critical that ocean based solutions be locally defined and crafted to support local livelihoods." So this sentiment was shared by many of the different public comments that came in.

Comments that focused on executive order approach talked about how the executive orders implemented matters. In particular comments articulated that coastal community members, recreational, commercial and traditional fishers must be engaged and considered as partners in NOAAs efforts to implement measures that address climate. Vulnerable and front line communities who face disproportionate impacts on climate change were also noted as key partners in planning efforts and management decisions. It also noted that the voices of rural and indigenous coastal communities must be amplified. Many comments overall called for an increased coordination between federal agencies to foster a whole of government approach when addressing climate issues. This is called for in the executive order so it's echoed throughout many of the public comments.

These comments also urged NOAA to adopt a one ocean approach and to operate across jurisdictions, disciplines and agencies to better understand and predict how ocean conditions are changing and how species and communities are impacted by climate change. Some specific recommendations include having diverse council membership

including tribal representation on councils, having open access climate data and focusing overall on co-benefits so not only on protecting stocks but also ecosystems and habitats and considering the people who are associated with these fisheries and dependent on the fishery.

Management for a changing climate had the most number of comments associated with it. So you see really a wide variety of subthemes here such as science based ecosystem approaches, stock assessment consideration, management approaches, management tools and plans, recommendations to councils, comments related to the Magnuson Stevens Act. And finally place-based conservation and protection of ocean areas.

Overall comments highlighted the need for strong investment and prioritization of science and research to inform climate related decisions. Many comments called for a better integration of climate science into fisheries management. Overall comments noted that ocean based climate solutions must be ecosystem based. And these comments are very supportive of NOAA Fisheries EBFM efforts given that EBFM provides a framework for incorporating climate considerations into fishery management.

Many comments noted the need to continue to develop and expand management tools and frameworks that incorporate climate information into management. It was also noted that additional guidance is needed for the council regarding how to adapt fishery management plans to incorporate the impacts of climate change, unmanaged fisheries and ecosystem components. There were a number of different opposing viewpoints when it came to marine protected areas particularly related to what ecological and social factors should be considered in designating or expanding marine protected areas.

Comments focused on aquaculture addressed aquaculture as a kind of solution, aquaculture needs from the industry perspective, resilient aquaculture infrastructure and opposition to aquaculture. This quote here reads, "That supporting and leveraging aquaculture as a tool for climate policy has the potential to transform how you view and use our oceans and coasts." Comments on aquaculture overall stressed the need to keep

agriculture at the forefront of discussions related to climate and that aquaculture should be viewed as a climate and seafood solution.

A number of comments addressed the need to increase permit opportunities in federal waters and support for businesses to adapt to different climate related stressors. A number of comment also stressed the need for climate ready aquaculture infrastructure that can support unpredictable weather conditions given that many of these sites are coastal and are subject to increased storms and flooding and we need to focus on infrastructure.

There were a number of comments that opposed offshore Finfish aquaculture. And these primarily came from one environmental advocacy group who outlined a variety of different environmental and socio economic concerns associated with (unintelligible). And these include things like the discharging pollutants as well as public health concerns and animal welfare concerns.

Moving on to economic considerations and advancing climate resilient fisheries and protected resources. These comments focused on fishery supply chain, promotion of US seafood and working waterfronts and coastal economies.

This quote here is from a commercial fisherman and it reads, "When beef, pork and poultry processors shuttered because of the pandemic we continued to provide a healthy, sustainable and low carbon protein for American families." This highlights the need for the supply chain to be able to adapt to changing composition and learning due to climate change in order to meet market demands with a potentially variable supply.

The overall economic comments really highlighted that COVID-19 impacted of the fishing industry around the country and exposed some of the vulnerabilities of the seafood supply chain. It also highlighted the resilience of the system as many sales went direct to consumer during the pandemic when restaurants shut down.

Overall, these comments stressed the need to assess the seafood supply chain to quantify the economic impacts of sustainable seafood harvested in the US. There is also a need to

understand market challenges to integrating species into the supply chain as well as barriers to diversification of production systems. Overall, these comments endorse NOAA Fisheries efforts to promote the health and environmental benefits of US seafood and the food security that it provides. Comments also called for increased marketing and promotion of domestic seafood products including aquaculture.

There were also a number of commenters who wrote in to talk about businesses that are located by the water and concerns related to sea level rise. Moving on to outreach, education, training and communication. These comments focused on increasing ocean literacy, enhancing consumer education related to fisheries and aquaculture, job training programs and communication and outreach strategies. And this quote here highlights NOAA's role and showing consistent leadership in creating and disseminating accessible information for diverse audiences.

Overall, comments related to outreach focused on the role that NOAA plays in educating the public on how climate change is impacting oceans. And that these education programs should be targeted for diverse audiences and should also prioritize marginalized and underrepresented groups.

There were a number of comments focused on job training, particularly the need to cultivate and mentor the next generation of seafood harvesters and to build the nation's seafood workforce. There's also job training comments focused on displaced fishers who are searching fisheries due to different social and economic stressors and job training programs to be available to help support those who are entering new fisheries due to these different challenges.

Comments also addressed job training for fishers who want to start engaging more in the aquaculture sector. Overall these stressed that NOAA should develop strong outreach and education programs to promote stakeholders engagement in addressing the challenges that the nation faces in marine conservation and changing ocean ecosystems.

Finally, moving on to funding use and consideration. These comments addressed NOAA grant consideration, scientific survey funding and funding for fisheries and aquaculture. And the Tech. Memo lists in much more detail all the different funding needs that were spelled out in the public comments.

But some key points to highlight here many comments address funding for surveys. And these comments noted that in an environment of unpredictable change in marine ecosystems long term robust ecological monitoring must be put in place in all regions and funding should prioritize these surveys.

Number of comments also addressed NOAA's grant funding and the role that it could potentially play in contributing more to community resilience and environmental justice. And some of these comments addressed having more flexibility and deliverables, requiring active and intentional partnerships in NOAA grants and explicitly addressing equity and inclusion in these grants.

Moving on to some next steps and applications. I'll note here that all of the public comments we receive are posted online. So if you go to the same link I reference where the Tech. Memo is you'll be able to download all of the original emails that came in. You can also view the transcripts from the public hearing. The results, as I mentioned, are published in a tech memo you can read in much more detail about each of the major themes and you can see more quotes from the public comment.

In terms of applications there's a cross member team that's tracking the office specific applications of the public comments which will be used to inform rulemaking, policy and budget priorities. The public comments will also help guide and shape current and future efforts. And one example that's already in the works is the FI 22 through 24 Regional Action Plan. So these regional action plans are being developed by the science centers and regional offices. And they guide the implementation of the NOAA Fisheries Climate Science Strategy.

And each of the regional teams viewed all the public comments for the region and they used this to guide and shape the development of their plans. And these plans will be released for public comment next month in the draft stage. And the public comment will be used to help strengthen them before they're finalized.

Many of the public comments highlighted that they will need to be implemented at the regional level. And many comments also address that recommendations will be ongoing. And some of these recommendations will require building and advancing additional partnerships. Some of the recommendations also require additional funding for NOAA to implement some.

This effort to collect public input is the beginning of an ongoing dialog with stakeholders. And the public comments received as part of this executive order will serve as a starting point for additional public input and continued engagement with stakeholders to inform NOAA's efforts to ensure resilient fisheries and protected resources in the face of a changing climate.

And with that I'm happy to take any questions. And I know Heather is also on the line and she can also speak to any questions you may have. Thank you for listening.

Erika Feller: Thanks so much. So if you guys have questions like I said, that little smiley face with the thing on its head, is where you see the hand raise, at Pat Sullivan. So Pat, while other people are figuring that out you can go and then Harlan.

Pat Sullivan: Great thank you. Hopefully, the mic is working now. Thanks Marina. I really appreciate the presentation. So I have kind of two sort of general questions for you that are somewhat related. So one is, you know, I'm curious how this - how much this represents sort of the public? And I can see the ratio of different groups represented here and so I'm kind of curious if you could talk about that more.

And then there's a lot of really great ideas here. I'm curious how they will be used. Will this be overlapped with something else like cost or, you know, ease of implementing like

is it low hanging fruit and so forth? I'm curious how this, you know, how representative this information is and how it will be used I'm kind of curious about that. Thanks.

Marina Cucuzza: Thanks so much for your question. I'll take a stab at that and maybe I'll pass it over to Heather. But in terms of the ratios for representation I think that's a really important question. And, you know, obviously that these comments don't represent the views of all NOAA stakeholders just the ones that provided public comment. And there were definitely, you know, more NGO representation in this batch of comments than other different stakeholder groups. So that's something that's important to point out in terms of evaluating who we heard from and the makeup of those particular comments.

And then moving on to the second part of your question related to how these comments will be used. The Tech. Memo was just released today so I think we'll start to see how these comments are being used in the future. But right now having the application directly to the regional action plans is a great way to sort of have those regional comments be applied in the development and the shaping of NOAA's climate science strategy through the Regional Action Plans.

So that was definitely a first venue and mechanism to have these comments be directly integrated into the development of those plans which highlight some of those climate priorities in the region. Heather, did you want to add to that?

Heather Sagar: Marina, yes absolutely. And can you just pull up that slide that sort of shows how that's all being incorporated? First of all Marina has had an amazing Sea Grant Fellowship. For anybody that has not worked with her she is a rock star and I'm so glad she got to speak with you guys today.

I would just add that it was really interesting to me when I was reading through these comments how much integration folks had with different not only NOAA line officers comments that sort of went between NMFS, and NOS, and OAR and the weather service but also how they also incorporated like Department of Transportation, and the Nuclear Regulatory Authority. And, you know, and it was - the interior and just on and on. We've



taken all of the comments we received and those that could not be implemented by NOAA solely have been sent out to the other agencies as well. So I think while Marina is right, you know, the question about how many people or is this a subset of people that are interested in this particular issue? It was in some cases broader than we expected. And in some cases I wish that we had seen more fishermen responding.

Pat Sullivan: Great, thank you for that.

Erika Feller: I've got Harlan next.

Marina Cucuzza: Harlan, are you there?

Erika Feller: Harlan, I think you put yourself on mute during the break. That might be it. Hey maybe while we're waiting for Harlan to kind of get his audio sorted can I jump in and ask a question? This is Erika.

((Crosstalk))

Erika Feller: So to your point what you just said, Heather, you wish that more fishermen had participated. Just kind of looking sort of building on past questions I guess. In terms of like I see you've got like state and tribal wildlife agencies, you've got 27 responses. Are you able to kind of look at what the balance was between state and tribal wildlife agencies and maybe what the geographic distribution? Like I noticed territorial agencies aren't mentioned. So was there like did we get responses from across the Pacific or the Caribbean as well or were those mostly like the states?

Heather Sagar: I think outlined more in the Tech. Memo the details are outlined more in the Tech. Memo. If we didn't hear from a particular region or it's silent. The Caribbean has a whole section in it so we did definitely hear from the Caribbean region. And at the end in the appendix there is a whole set of what we heard from the tribes as opposed to what we heard from - so it sort of breaks out the tribal comments from the actual state DNRs.

Marina Cucuzza: Right. And I'll just add that the majority of the tribal comments we heard were concentrated in sort of the Pacific Northwest region. But all the comments we received are summarized and highlighted at the appendix.

Heather Sagar: You're on mute.

Erika Feller: Sorry, I had myself on mute. Was there anything as you were looking at across those where like, you know, there's summarizing what you get but then there's also kind of the insight of, huh?, here's places maybe we didn't hear as much as we thought we would or really wanted to. Did you identify any other areas where there might be like blind spots? And these are places were going to be impacted but we haven't really heard from them and we should be thinking about that?

Heather Sagar: I wouldn't say that I heard blind spots I more heard places that folks thought would be useful for us to hit on that I hadn't thought of before. And that's why you do this, right? Like we want to hear from other people so that we can do a better job at our job.

And I think, you know, we heard loud and clear that folks want some of the Magnuson national standard guidelines reviewed and how they think that climate can be incorporated into those. And the importance of a habitat division and restoration and, you know, trying to look at that those efforts from a climate perspective, blue carbon, et cetera, or carbon sequestration rather than just strictly let's put something back the way it was before. And while of course we think about it all the time that in both manners it was nice to see that sort of highlighted by multiple different types of groups not just the NGOs that you thought would focus on that.

Erika Feller: Harlan, have you sorted out your audio? Okay, hearing no Harlan just yet. We're going to - Megan's got her hand up and then (Joe).

Megan Davis: Okay, thank you Erika. Marina and Heather, this is an amazing amount of effort and work and it's really terrific to see the outcome of the process that's in place and ongoing.

I think it's, I think the information that you've been able to gather is also really exciting because it will be helpful for the work that MAFAC is also doing in this area. So very, very great to see this overlap and this great information.

I have a couple of questions, what is the process to be able to go back and report back on the executive order? How do you do that side of the work? And then my second question is, you've stated here that this is helping to shape the regional action plans for FY22-24. And I thought that was a pretty narrow timeframe so I just wanted to have a little bit more input on that as well.

Heather Sagar: Sure. If it's okay Marina I'll start with the first and then kick it to you for the regional action plans.

Marina Cucuzza: That's okay.

Heather Sagar: Yes, so the process for responding I think you leading up to the White House, how do we share that information back? So one of the reasons why Marina and I did reviews of all of the data at the same time and analysis at the same time in two different manners and awesomely came out with the same thing, which was really cool.

We needed to do the analysis very quickly first. And that's the one that I worked on so that we could share that information up the chain with our political appointees at NOAA. And so they shared briefing papers and whatnot on - for the response.

And then this Tech. Memo that everybody is looking at is also our response for the administration on this document. They are not only aware of this effort and we have briefed a number of people in the administration on it, but there are additional efforts in this administration that I think the data will be used for it.

So, for example, one of the key pillars in America the Beautiful is climate change. So this is a great additional effort to focus on for that for America the Beautiful from a fisheries protected resources perspective.

In addition one of the pillars is tribal relationships in America the Beautiful. And we have now a whole tribal section that sort of feeds those two together. So I think there are so many different ways that we can utilize this report. But I do think that Marina is right and these regional action plans are, and so Marina.

Marina Cucuzza: Yes, I'll just comment on the piece on the regional action plan. So that was a low hanging fruit in terms of they are being updated right now. And the regional information is relevant as these plans are being developed. And these - the timeline for that is FY '22 through '24.

And a lot of the regional comments had more of a shorter timeframe as well. So providing those regional comments to the teams from the science centers and the regional offices this is a way for them to read what their constituents were talking about and their priorities related to climate science. So it was a great way to provide that information to them and have it shape and help inform some of their strategies and their objectives that they're including in these plans.

So they all had access to information and we're using it as they're being updated. And it also speaks to one of the things you heard in the public comments was, you know, keeping the public updated on NOAA's climate science efforts.

So the fact that these regional action plans are also going out for public comment in their draft form is another way to provide that update and keep that information flowing and the public comment process and the input we received on the first end is helpful to to shape and guide those plans.

Megan Davis: Thank you, Marina and Heather.

Erika Feller: (Joe)?

(Joe): Thanks Erica. And Marina and Heather really, really well done document. This is a - I'm scanning through as were - as you guys were presenting here. My goodness this thing is really well put together a lot of good sections and reading and nicely summarized too. We really appreciate that. Thank you guys on the good work.

Hey, I was going to ask about MPAs. And Heather you just brought them up in regard to the 30 by 30 America the Beautiful. And Marina earlier you mentioned some of the opposing viewpoints of it. I was just kind of just wondering if you had some grasp of, you know, whether or is it primarily NGO versus fishers, fishing or is, do you know which groups were or MPAs and which were against them.

Marina Cucuzza: Thank you.

Heather Sagar: You know, the banter. You were on the MPA staff.

(Joe): Well I've just got to try read through it and thought maybe you could help me summarize it. If that's the case...

Heather Sagar: Yes.

(Joe): I probably do know the answer.

Heather Sagar: Yes, no I'm totally giving you a hard time. It's great to see you. So I'll start off and then kick it to Marina. So I would say that a lot of people took this as an opportunity to write in on 30 by 30 even though there was no official public comment period out for it.

And so it was your usual suspects right, fishermen and the councils talking about, you know, rightfully so how the US is one of the best managed fisheries in the world and how much money that the industry brings in to the GDP, et cetera, you know, healthy food source, you know, decreasing trade by eating fish that's caught here in the United States and lots of those types of comments.

And then the alternate was more that should not, fisheries management should not count for conservation and MP - per the percent. So it was, as you can see, a very wide range and something the administration is going to have to work on. We have a tribal Webinar coming up that I hope that you're going to join. Marina?

Marina Cucuzza: Thanks Heather, that was really well summarized. I'll just add from a sort of process perspective that we did receive so many comments that focused on 30 by 30 but because that wasn't, you know, part of the executive order we were analyzing we only looked at climate comments within those public comments. And then the comments related to the DOI to be part of that America the Beautiful report.

(Joe): Oh, that's interesting. Thank you very much. Appreciate it.

(Ray): Well, (Joe), hi this is (Ray). So that's really interesting because a lot of those topics, you know, recently in Puerto Rico we had a discussion on that as well. And, you know, recently we just had a failed attempt at proposing a national marine sanctuary in Puerto Rico.

And part - a lot of the conversation was based around 30 by 30. And one of the main reasons was why it was - and it's not being proposed in any states or nominations was because a lot of the funding behind the effort was coming from Pew, by Pew Charitable Trusts.

However, there was kind of an attempt to pretend that this was something that was local. So a lot of the local organizations environmental NGOs joined with the fishing sector to actually raise the flag that this is kind of another attempt of pushing an agenda that's not local.

And so this is - that happened. And so kind of a NGO joining sides with fishers could really raise the flag of what is - what needs to be addressed and what are local needs for conservation and fisheries management. So there's a lot of conversations around that as well that are going to be coming up...

Marina Cucuzza: That's a great example. Thanks for sharing it.

(Ray): Well I mean it was - and then tragically - I mean it was tragic because at the end of the day we did not get - but we didn't, you know, a sanctuary in Puerto Rico would be a great, great effort for fishers, for NGOs for everybody from funding, for protection, for conservation from all aspects it could have been could have been beneficial.

But it's just, you know, wrong time and wrong messaging. But it was something that, you know, it's worth working out because it could have been something very, it could have been very positive.

Marina Cucuzza: I do know that the, and I know we're not talking about 30 by 30 now, but the sanctuaries program will help the government or somebody rewrite their documents if it is something that you guys are still interested in. They will help them figure out how to make it be, you know, more what the local folks want. So that's always an option for you guys.

Raimundo Espinoza: Yes, I mean, it's one of those issues that is kind of tainted a little bit just because there's so much talk about colonialism around it. And so it's how the role of the federal government, the local jurisdiction and especially in an area - of course, there was a national sanctuary section proposed in an area where there's nine Puerto Rican marine protected areas.

So, you know, of course, when you look into the details of the funding that it brings, the protection that it brings, research that it could bring to the law, it's one of these things that is very, very touchy. And, again, it's a real shame because it has kind of tainted the water with a lot of - again, there's a dimension of colonialism in how things are imposed from the top down, you know?

And, again, this leads to a really larger picture of, you know, having that seat at the table. In Puerto Rico, we don't have a vote for anybody to go to Congress. We're not able to

vote for president. So we don't really have a real seat at the table when we're speaking to the federal government.

So it's one of those things that it's really difficult to manage. And that's why I always try to bring it up. We need to try to deal with this from the beginning because, again, sanctuaries are falling off the table for a while now just because, again, it's sure tainted with a lot discussions there.

Erika Feller: Hey, guys, I want to move on.

((Crosstalk))

Erika Feller: Richard has been sitting here patiently with his hand up.

Raimundo Espinoza: Go ahead.

Richard Yamada: Can you hear me now?

Erika Feller: There you go. Yes.

Richard Yamada: Yes. I'm okay. I've just been listening and everybody has been talking about some of the things that I was interested in so I'm fine. Everything I wanted was answered. So thank you.

Erika Feller: Okay. More questions?

Heather Sagar: I just want to say that if anybody reads through the text memo and has specific questions on the content or the comments, you know, feel free to reach out to me. If you're interested in how the analysis and the data processing portion of this went for the tech memo, Marina is the expert on NVivo, which is the software we use. And so either one of us, depending on your question, can help answer anything for you guys.



Marina Cucuzza: Thanks, Heather. Yes, happy to answer any questions you may have. Feel free to email me.

Erika Feller: Heidi, did you have something?

Heidi Lovett: Yes. I just wanted to share that on the website, there's a link to a page that describes the whole process that Heather and Marina were engaged in and from there is the link to the tech report. But I'm happy to share it directly to anybody that may have difficulty accessing it. But it seems like a few of you have already accessed it directly.

Heather Sagar: I think (Frank) put it in the chat for everybody (unintelligible).

((Crosstalk))

Erika Feller: Stefanie, you've got your hand up.

Stefanie Moreland: Thank you for the summary report and the link. I'm just scanning through it.

And particularly in light of the comment that there wasn't as much response from fishing operations as perhaps was expected, I just want to point out that with the council comment, certainly fishing stakeholders were paying attention to those.

And a big theme from our region, and something that is always emphasized, and that's the importance of continuing to resource monitoring and increased monitoring through surveys, assessment work and continuing to evolve the integration of ecosystem considerations into assessments.

I think that that's really critical. It's something that the region that we work in strongly supports from a stakeholder perspective and feel that it's really foundational for our work on adaptation, resilience and climate change.

And so while it's not new, it's more continuing to improve the tools we have. Is it something that can be highlighted as this feedback is brought back in?

Erika Feller: Great. Any other questions from anybody? Yes, Tom.

Tom Fote: Sorry about that. I had to find the mute button. I was thinking about the comments you made about participation. And I remember years ago when (Ben) was doing a hearing and a bunch of us walked in. And he said, well, write your comments down.

And a lot of people that attend those hearings don't - aren't writers, aren't professional writers. They're not like the NGO groups that basically have staff on board that can write and learn how to do that.

And so what they supplied at one point was actually people that would type your comments in and we would get the comments. Now with the pandemic, you can't do any of that.

But we got more comments from that than we did from a lot of the hearings that we basically did online or waiting for the public comment.

It's always a shame when I look at the amount of (unintelligible) there are. When you look at (unintelligible) language of 17 (unintelligible) and we get comments from probably less than .00001% of them. And, you know, it just goes on.

And because most of them don't have the staff, we get from most of the NGOs that have big staffs like (unintelligible). And the comments that their staff put together turns out to all their people to basically comment on that. And so that's why you don't get what you think you get.

Heather Sagar: Yes, Tom, you just nailed it. I think, you know, when I say that I wish that we had had more participation, we did hear from the councils. We heard from the big fishing industry representatives that we hear from frequently. They clearly think it's important.

When we went to all of the council meetings, they had great discussions. And on our calls, you know, it was really - I guess they were the webinars. There was a lot of great input.

And, you know, you've explained exactly why and also people are fishing. And so this is not uncommon that we get a lot more NGO comments than fishery people comments. And so, you know, I just want to see more. That's it.

Tom Fote: Yes. I'll just follow-up on that. You basically have a problem with most of the meetings are during the day. People work during the day, whether it's recreational, things that they basically do. When we have public hearings, I used to always fight, you know, in New Jersey because I was a commissioner.

So when we had the public hearings, I said don't start them until 7 o'clock at night because basically people come home from work. They get some time to eat and then they basically go to a public hearing on that. And sometimes living in New Jersey it takes you an hour to drive from work to the public hearing because of traffic because it's during rush hour.

So we basically looked at doing that. And, you know, I always go with the pandemic, which we were able to do more things virtually. We had more participation.

And just the opposite, I think people are spending so much time behind their computers with their family and friends and doing other things that they're not really communicating or not showing up for public - I can't - even when I have board meetings or general meetings, we don't have any participation at all hardly anymore. It's clearly dropped off as the pandemic went on.

Heather Sagar: Well the good news is that the quality of the comments that we received by the industry was awesome. And so I do feel like there is a good representation of concerns or ways that can be - we can prepare. So I think that's good. I just share that the NGO outweighs it. So, okay, anything else?

Erika Feller: No, I think that was great. Maybe we'll wrap this up and move on to our Subcommittee on Aquaculture presentation - Subcommittee on Aquaculture Economic Development Plan update. Thank you, Marina and Heather. That was great. So with that, we're going to turn it over to David O'Brien and Andy Jermolowicz.

David O'Brien: Great, thank you. It's a pleasure to be here today. Can everybody hear me okay first of all? Okay. That's a thumbs up. Great.

It's a pleasure to be here. We've been to several MAFAC meetings over the past year or so to give their status updates on where we stand on the Aquaculture Economic Development Task Force planning effort.

So it's my pleasure to be here with my co-chair and Andy Jermolowicz, who I see is online as well. We want to give you an update of where we stand in the planning process and in particular to hit some highlights of some listening sessions we held about three weeks ago now with the public.

It was one of numerous ways that we've had to receive public comment but the broadest one and to just give you some flavor of some of those comments and what the next steps are moving forward. With that, please go to the next slide.

Heidi Lovett: I'm trying. Sorry. I'm not sure why it's not moving forward.

David O'Brien: Okay. While we're waiting for the slides to move forward, I can just verbally go through parts of it. So what we're presenting here is actually a slight variation of what we presented, myself and Andy and our task force members.

What we presented to the public - again about three weeks ago we had a series of listening sessions, five in total, where we had a chance to go through the outline of the Economic Development Task Force Plan in more detail than we had in the past.

And just to step back for a moment to remind folks what we're doing and why, under the Subcommittee on Aquaculture, which is an interagency body, that body stood up three task forces to look at different aspects of aquaculture development, one of which is focused on regulatory efficiency and another on science coordination.

Both of those task forces are further ahead than our task force, the third one. And those task forces that we just put out drafted a plan for public comment. The public comment period closed last week.

But the third leg of the stool is an Economic Development Task Force. And we're charged with putting together a group of interagency partners to see what we can do to help support aquaculture economic development.

And as I said earlier this afternoon in the context of another presentation, we recognized from very beginning that there's a lot of overlap between what aquaculture needs and the broader seafood and fisheries need in terms of aquaculture - in terms of seafood development, workforce infrastructure, et cetera. There's a lot of parallel there.

And so while our charge was originally to focus on aquaculture, we planned from the very beginning to have in the preamble to the plan to note the commonalities between aquaculture and the seafood sector and where those synergies can be taken advantage of.

So because we've presented several times to other groups to get feedback on this planning effort, including MAFAC -- I think this is now our third or fourth time coming -- but in every other case, we had a chance to talk to basically seafood practitioners in one way or another, you know, the National Aquaculture Association or their members, different shellfish growers associations.

So these meetings three weeks ago were the first chance we had to cast a much broader net to the general public. So as part of that effort, we wanted to set the stage, which is really where I'm getting at it with this first slide.

This was to help set the stage for the public to get a sense of why we're even talking about aquaculture, why it's important. I won't go through this in any detail. I'll just hit the highlights. I think everyone here knows aquaculture is already more than 50% of the global seafood supply. There is a lot of untested, sustainable aquaculture development and how it meshes as part of the comprehensive seafood competitiveness strategy that we're trying to push forward in this nation.

I had a couple of the main sort of factoids. The seafood trade deficit is about \$17 billion, how we import about 70% of our seafood, et cetera. Next slide, please. And it looks like this is going slow again. I'll just jump ahead. We also wanted to set the stage again with the general public in mind for some of the questions we knew we had received and had received for a long time about the sustainability of aquaculture.

We didn't want to focus on that too much given the context, but we did want to at least hit a key area in the context of climate, which will show up in the next slide in just a moment, just noting that, among other things, aquaculture is a climate smart form of food production. Scrolling by. And, Heidi, just if you can catch up, that's great. If not, I'll do it verbally. There we go. Thank you.

Just noting again, amongst other sort of dimensions of sustainability, just noting that aquaculture is sort of climate smart, certainly in the context of other food systems. And that's sort of a framing we're trying to - or perhaps reframing we're trying to do for aquaculture, actually seafood more broadly as well, that, you know, when looking at global food production, seafood aquaculture fits very well in terms of looking at the rankings of in this case of greenhouse gas emissions per pound being produced.

This is really a way to address the climate issue that we're all facing. It's a tool in the toolbox that we can use in farming more not just fish, but shellfish and seaweed as well.

So with that, I think the next slide is where we talk about specifically the plans. I mentioned this upfront already. The NSTC, which is the National Science and Technology Council, under the White House has stood up these task forces.

I said that a moment ago. And collectively these three plans for regulatory science and economics will comprise - at this point, we're visiting a new National Aquaculture Development Plan. And that is the plan that's essentially been called out, required under the National Aquaculture Act of 1980.

There was a plan produced under that Act back in 1983, but it's never been updated. So this is perhaps a good chance for us to update all three of these plans in the context of a new National Aquaculture Development Plan.

Next slide, please. Now we get to the actual task force development itself, Economic Development Task Force. I'm very pleased by the participation we've had. Certainly NOAA and USDA have been working for a long time, and other federal partners have been working a long time on aquaculture, mostly in the context of regulatory issues and science coordination.

This is the first coordinated effort to really focus on the broader suite of things we can do as federal agencies to focus on economic development. And we have some different partners. We have the Minority Business Development Administration for example. It's been very active. The Economic Development Administration, we've worked with them certainly in the past. But they are strong partners in this effort.

Under USDA we've worked with the sort of research side of USDA for some time, but rural development who - Andy Jermolowicz, who is my co-chair, who is going to speak in just a moment, is from rural development. We worked with them before. The same with Ag Marketing Service. We've only had sort of peripheral engagement with them, but now they're very engaged in this effort. And they'll be speaking, in fact, after the break after our session today.

So lots of enthusiasm and interest amongst federal partners and it's exciting to see. And that was noted by some of the participants over the past month as we've sought public input but particularly the listening sessions three weeks ago.

Next slide, please. So I'm going to hand over to Andy in just a moment. But let me set the stage for him. This is really an update of where we stand. Some changes since we last spoke to the MAFAC back in May. The first three goals have not changed. But just to remind folks, one is to encourage industry investments.

Number two, support infrastructure workforce development. That was brought up just a couple of hours ago in the seafood context broadly. Expanding market opportunities, which gets the National Seafood Council and the work that MAFAC has already done.

And then the fourth one has changed a little bit. This used to be a broader goal or a differently phrased goal focused on social license. We decided after feedback from our stakeholders to narrow it down a little bit in terms of aquaculture communications and literacy.

There's a lot of overlap there, of course. But really the main reason being that the social license comes from in part communications literacy but also from good science and good regulation. It's really an overarching goal of all three things together in a sense. So we decided to reframe that fourth goal.

With that in mind, I'm going to hand it over to Andy to go through some of the objectives under the goals and then we can talk about some of the feedback we got three weeks ago. Andy?

Andy Jermolowicz: Okay. Thank you, David, and good afternoon, everybody. As David just indicated we're just going to relatively quickly go through our four goals and just highlight for you some of the objectives under there.



Our first goal for the economic development is increasing the industry investment and, you know, working there objectively to reduce barriers to entry.

This one will probably have a definite connection with the Regulatory Efficiency Task Force and tying some of these on how some of the recommendations coming out of that will transfer over to this portion of the study. A big piece under this is going to be increasing access to capital. And by that we're really trying to identify ways to, you know, support and increase awareness and interest in the lending and the finance communities in aquaculture.

Another objective is increasing and/or leveraging incentives. And in these cases, we're talking primarily tax incentives. So things like new market tax credits. We have opportunity zones. If they're existing, we are aware of multiple executive orders out there. We do anticipate that there will be some incentives coming out related to climate. There are currently some incentives on the renewable energy, energy efficiency, you know, type activity that we would hope that would transfer to the seafood and aquaculture space.

Another objective is increasing access to federal risk management services. And here we're primarily talking about loan guaranties. Being from rural development, this is something we do frequently and often is where we work with lenders to essentially guaranty a significant portion of a loan to get them more comfortable, you know, coming to the table with the financing for a particular product. We're also talking about again, like through USDA, looking at crop and disaster type insurance products that may be out there.

And lastly under this is where we're looking at, you know, the improvement of economic data, increasing the collection and accessibility of quality data not only for the industry itself investor awareness, but I think a big piece is on the program and policy decision-making that comes through having very solid data.

For goal two, we're looking at supporting the infrastructure and workforce development and objectives there. Clearly our first one will be educating and training a skilled aquaculture workforce. This is going to be looking at training programs across the seafood supply chain, including not only just like, you know, on the boat or on the docks, but including business planning and entrepreneurship, engineering, marine sciences, you know, the STEM type programs, trade management, regulatory compliance, seafood processing and inspection.

Actually we've kind of heard - I think here we may be jumping the gun, but one of the things we're hearing is that actually it is going to be the access to the workforce. The workforce component may be more important to the industries than the capital access.

Again, moving on with objectives, we're looking on the development encouragement, the adoption of new technologies. Again, here we're looking to expand technical assistance to programs like Sea Grant and through USDA and others, the Land Grant Extension Service.

This is something we've heard often through our public engagement, the strong need for these type of technical assistance activities to support the infrastructure of the industry and the workforce. Next, we're looking to increase investment in physical infrastructure. You know, again, here's an opportunity to engage with public-private partnerships. They can make some of these happen.

And lastly, establishing, you know, test bed research and development consortiums, pilots. You know, projects out there to deploy technologies, maximize sustainable production potential and economic performance.

Our third goal, expanding market opportunities for U.S. aquaculture products. I think this is going to be a big one in terms of expanding and growing the sector, the first objective being support new product development.

Again this is going to be the development of innovative value-added food products or packaging, a delivery mechanism, you know, again, like on just direct delivery, you know, direct marketing, say through things like fish markets. Supporting whatever you want to call them, innovation centers, business incubators, business accelerators to provide that type of knowledge and technical assistance on how we can expand.

You know, looking to expand domestic market opportunity. You'll be hearing, as David indicated, from our friends at Ag Marketing Service, taking advantage and supporting the local and regional food market pathways. You'll see there's been a lot of this on the crops and livestock activities, the making the connection for the consumer of where their food is coming from. There is an opportunity here to leverage some of that work in the seafood and aquaculture space. Increasing consumer awareness of seafood products, you know, from, you know, the health and well-being sector. That's a good part of (unintelligible) as an alternative protein source.

And then finally, you know, looking at the international trade and increasing our U.S. portion of the international trade and working with the industry, the federal side here on increasing the competitiveness of U.S. aquaculture products in the world space.

All right. The last one, as Dave indicated, we did narrow it down to - and I think this one is really important. And it's actually I think we're all kind of fired up about this. This is supporting the aquaculture communications and literacy. I think the audience here - you probably are all well attuned to the sector and things that need to be out there.

But I think trying to broaden this to a bigger audience, I think a section like this will be necessary and be productive. And we're looking here again to increase partnerships and engagement when connecting with the general public, you know, working with partners, you know, community health, food safety, product quality, you know, looking at, you know, the positive environmental footprint of seafood versus some of our other protein sources, working with promoting or developing some increased aquaculture literacy.

And from here we're proposing or looking at, you know, supporting K through 12 education with particular focus on high school apprenticeships, exchanges, internships in the industry, you know, partnering with existing organizations out there, whether they be, you know, aquariums or learning institutions that have the expertise, engaging the public on environmental and aquaculture issues.

Getting the industry amped up on some community outreach, again increasing the partnerships. You know, a two way conversation between the aquaculture industry members and providing consistent information about the status of aquaculture.

Increasing the fishing and coastal community awareness of aquaculture through partnerships, getting them on board to supporting tourism, you know, some of the wharf developments. It's an opportunity to educate the public on multiple aspects of the seafood and aquaculture space.

And lastly, we're looking at the interactions with other federal agencies and Congress. Again, we talked earlier about data. But increasing the congressional understanding and support for aquaculture by, you know, communicating aquaculture's role in a safe, secure, high quality and sustainable food supply for the nation and highlighting that value to them and to their constituents.

And also looking at - as David indicated, I think we're both pretty impressed with the breadth of participation we have on this task force. And I think it's going to go a long way in helping us to increase the aquaculture in-reach to agencies in a growing - expanding some of the responsibilities in U.S. aquaculture.

And David, I think that's kind of a quick high level kind of it. We do have - I know somebody was asking about formal comments. We have created this email address here, [aquacultureechodevelopment@usda.gov](mailto:aquacultureechodevelopment@usda.gov). If you have any questions about the Economic Development Task Force or want to offer us some information or suggestions, please use this.

David and I and a few others have access to this. So when something comes in, we are pinged. We're able to look at it. People are using it. So we encourage you, here is an opportunity for you to provide us with your insight.

David O'Brien: Great. Thanks, Andy. Heidi, if you could stop sharing for a moment? I appreciate it. And just a couple other thoughts before I open it up to the thoughts or question from MAFAC.

So we went to a listening session three weeks ago with this outline, the presentation we provided. We went into a little more depth on certain things. But one of the main questions we asked was, are we on the right path basically? What are we missing? What's maybe redundant or whatever it may be?

And as I said, we're still - we have not seen the transcripts yet. So I wanted to go through the transcripts. I know Andy does as well and sort of pore through it with a fine tooth comb kind of all the comments we got. But in broad brushstrokes, there was quite a bit of support for the outline in its current form for the effort in general. I wasn't surprised by that. It was nice confirmation.

And again, we didn't do this in a vacuum. You've gotten feedback along the way for the past over a year now, but still it's good to see there's no major changes requested from anyone to say, hey, you're on the wrong path. Do this, not that. So that was encouraging.

We did get a lot of feedback that I think will feed into where we are now, which is we're kind of pivoting into the drafting phase. We will be handing over these transcripts and other information to our drafting teams, one focusing on each of those goals.

And I think a lot of the comments we received three weeks ago and elsewhere will be very valuable. But again, it's more likely to provide, you know, context in each of those areas, not to fundamentally change the direction.

The other thing I would note that I found -- I was pleasantly surprised -- is what we didn't hear. We didn't hear any opposition. We had 50 to 80 people or so on on each of the five

listening sessions. We had five total, one for each goal and then we had sort of a catch-all at the end for anything we may have missed or if there was anything else people wanted to say.

No one said, don't do this. It's not worth it, whatever it may be. It was all very positive and supportive. I would say we probably heard from the same six or eight people a lot over and over again. But there's another 50 or so listening at any given moment and no one waited and said stop. So I think that was encouraging as well.

A couple other kind of high level takeaways and, Andy, I'll hand it over to you and see if you have anything to add. Again, lots of details here and there, but, you know, one was, you know, let's be sure we support existing efforts that are ongoing, say in states. You know, in workforce development there are state programs underway. No need to recreate any wheels. Let's see what we can do to support those programs.

And that actually gets to one of our overarching strategies. This whole plan was really to maximize the effectiveness of existing federal programs. Like we had a lot of tools out there already working as federal partners with states and others. Let's, you know, make those connections as best we can, make them as effective as possible. We don't need to stand-up a new program or something if we don't have to. I don't think we do.

The one area that is always a little bit - we touched on it in the draft plan, but it was really highlighted to me anyway was as we talked about diversity inclusion, which did come up a number of contexts, yes, we had a veteran come on board and say, don't forget about veterans.

Essentially, there's a lot of opportunity there, some workforce development things we're trying to accomplish. Veterans could be, you know, very helpful in terms and can be valued in terms of trying to get their input and get them engaged in this effort. So I think I took away like we should reach out to the Department of Defense, for example, to see if VA has similar programs or a person, a point of contact we should engage.

But beyond that, I think it was more, you know, providing color around the edges so to speak, really valuable color. I don't want to minimize it. But I was pleased that we should be on the right path. And Andy, I don't know if you had any other additional takeaways from those meetings.

Andy Jermolowicz: No. No, David. I think you did an exceptional job of covering what we heard. And I apologize again. We kind of went through the objectives pretty quickly. So again I may not have covered everything.

And, Dave, I'm glad you brought up the, you know, diversity inclusion, you know, equity pieces. That was something that was brought up. That is something that is included in our outline that we will be addressing.

I think my one takeaway too again is the need on some of the technical assistance or some of the transitional type activities that can be happening, from taking if it's something coming out of a lab to, you know, proof of concept to a commercialization space and having those resources being provided through again, whether it's a development center or an incubator that you know, things that can be rolled out from, you know, government labs that can then be adopted or passed on to industry that are going to lead to some type of efficiency or -- what am I trying to say -- you know, profitability, you know, that are going to look at some.

I do think there's - we heard some demand for kind of this, and maybe even through this, and I think Dave and I have mentioned this, you know, something that may be an appendix or an addendum to it is - I think the community is, you know, in some cases may be, I think I would be, a tad overwhelmed by the number, the size and scope of the federal government and all these different programs that are out there.

So when we talk aquaculture literacy, is there an opportunity for us to create a directory for lack of a better word of a number of the programs that are available, whether it be through NOAA, USDA, Commerce, EPA that can support the people, not the culture space.

David O'Brien: Thanks, Andy. So with that, I think that's all we have. I'm happy to answer any questions or hear any new thoughts people may have.

Erika Feller: So I just want to do - I'm certain people do have questions because I see Jim's hand up. Just so folks are aware. It's 3:45 and we're currently scheduled for a break, but I know you guys are going to have questions.

So if you're okay, I might just steal five minutes from our first session after the break and maybe we can shorten that break to ten minutes. And that means that we can spend about 10 minutes with these guys asking questions.

Is there anybody that that doesn't work for? Speak out now, otherwise that's what we're doing. Okay then that's what we're doing. Okay, Jim has a question and then Pat.

Jim Parsons: Not so much a question, guys. I just want to commend you once again for continuing to stay on this task. It's really important and I think taking it on as the third leg of the stool and recognizing that it's equally as important, especially now that we're identifying there's a serious need for outreach and an extension of what's coming out of the other two tasks is really important.

Thanks for modifying point number four and taking this on as getting information out about what our industry is all about. That's equally important. So just I think NAA, we've submitted you our comments on the plan. More encouragement, basically more than anything, to continue forward. And we just thank you guys for your efforts.

David O'Brien: Thank you.

Erika Feller: And Pat?



Dr. Sullivan: Great. Thanks, Erika. Yes. David, and, thank you very much for the presentation. We, the subgroup of us that had the presentation before, and I just really appreciate seeing it. And I want to echo something that Jim just said from the sort of free range fish side, right?

I think there's a lot of misunderstanding, right? I think there's no reason why these two groups can't be working together. And I really applaud your goal four. Again, as Jim was just saying, I think it's really important, you know, broadly in this political climate to get communication going. And this idea of seeing, you know, the positive aspects of both sides of fisheries, really if you will, is really important in getting folks to actually talk with each other. I know for myself I've learned a lot just being in this MAFAC group.

But also I've been involved - the Gulf of Maine Research Institute is doing a lot now with regard to aquaculture and, you know, thinking about it in terms of shellfish and seaweed and so forth and alternatives for, you know, fishermen to explore in terms of keeping local communities going.

So I again want to just applaud you guys on the communication. Keep up the good work. Don't give up on it. I think getting that part going is critical, especially when we look at some of the legal hurdles, right, I think are there because of misunderstandings. And so if we can kind of get past that I think that would be really great. So that's my two cents. Thanks for the presentation.

David O'Brien: Thank you.

Harlon Pearce: Erika? I didn't know if you saw me.

Erika Feller: Oh, Harlon has audio, but lost his everything else. No, just kidding. Go ahead, Harlon.

Harlon Pearce: I don't know. I think I'm past my technical difficulties. It was probably operator error in the first place. I believe the Gulf is going to be a big, big player in the aquaculture program as we move down the road. I really do. With that in mind and what I've just been

through in the last couple of months, when I started looking at public-private infrastructure programs that you're looking at, they need to be out of harm's way.

I mean, its one thing to have unloading docks or working waterfronts for sure. We really have to have them. But any process that we fully develop has to be out of harm's way. And we clearly see that in Louisiana where we lost five shrimp plants in this last storm that may or may not come back. But the plants that were out of harm's way are running solid and handling all it can handle.

And the other thing that's important, too, is with what's going on with some of these things, like Ida and everything, is that one constant is life is changing.

The workforce development that you're talking about, which should be people in the seafood game now getting on the Coast and people that maybe don't have their boats any longer. People are looking for different ways to do it and have no idea what we're talking about when we talk about aquaculture. I'm sure there are plenty of opportunities for those kind of guys that know what they're doing when it comes to fish and that can move into this program. Don't discount that. And clearly any public-private infrastructure, we need to get it out of harm's way. That's just comments. Thank you.

Erika Feller: Thanks, Harlon. I had just a really quick question. And I was happy to see your presentation is up on the meeting Web site for MAFAC. So if like me you wanted to kind of go back and spend a little bit more time with some of those sides, folks can do that. Did I miss this? What's kind of the timeline for getting the Economic Development Plan together? How do you guys see this rolling out?

Andy Jermolowicz: David, I'm going to let you answer.

David O'Brien: Thanks, Andy. So we're sort of broken into two paths now. The actual outline itself. So following the model of the other two plans, the outline itself will be reviewed most likely at the White House level by LSTP and then go out for public comment and go from there. That could take some time based on past experience. So that's path one.

But in the meantime, in parallel, we are pivoting to getting the drafting teams together. I'll send an email probably this week, Andy, to the (Central GAR)'s team. Okay. We have our teams. They are lined up. We have the outline for goal one start drafting. And I know ideally we have some sort of draft. I don't want to put too tight a timeline on it. It will probably be several months realistically with holidays and all that before we get a draft even internally together.

And maybe I'll leave it at that. I don't want to project too far. We're working ahead on it. Unfortunately it's in addition to everyone else's day job. So we're trying to do what we can with the time we have and encourage our federal partners to devote time to it.

I will say, though, as I mentioned earlier, I've been really pleased - Andy and I both have been really pleased by the amount of attention and enthusiasm behind this. I don't think it'll be hard. It's just a matter of, you know, herding those cats a little bit.

Andy Jermolowicz: Yes. I'll second that. And I think we've identified the king that's itching to getting pens and papers on this. So I think we're hopeful. And, you know, we also recognize it's good timing. I think we're kind of - there's been a lot of change since we started this project. And we have the whole kind of COVID and, you know, looking at things differently. There are some opportunities, I think, investment-wise out there now that probably did not exist before. There's a huge focus at the Department of Agriculture looking at the food supply chain and where various components come in there. I think there's going to be resources out there.

So, you know, again, this report does not preclude anybody from participating, but, you know, we're motivated, you know, based on some of the action we're seeing from the current administration, some of the policy things that are coming around, interest from Congress. You know, we're recognizing that it's a good time to strike.

David O'Brien: I'd add one other thing to that. It is important that we're not - the timing of the plan itself I think is still a bit TBD. We're going to go as quickly as we can. But we are trying to

implement as we go essentially. And in many ways the planning process itself has been really helpful to create and cement these ties among federal agencies. That's already bearing fruit.

I mean, just having, you know, Andy at rural development saying, reaching out to NOAA and I was saying, hey, there's a new grant opportunity out there. Make sure your guys know about it. Things like that and the same with EDA. It's on similar types of work, being able to make those connections.

So I think there's a lot of work that's already underway sort of in the context of economic development while the plan is still being developed.

Erika Feller: Great. Thank you both so much. That was wonderful. We now have a break scheduled. I am proposing that we take a break for 10 minutes. And so we will return promptly at five minutes after the hour. And then Paul will actually pick it up at that point and introduce our session on regional food enterprise centers from USDA. So please stay logged in. Just turn your cameras off. Please don't hang up, especially those of you with audio problems. I'll see you in 10 minutes.

Man: Thank you.

Erika Feller: All right. Paul, why don't you begin?

(Paul): Thank you, everyone. Thanks, everyone. Great to have the opportunity to introduce this next session with our USDA colleagues. I just want to set a little bit of context for this. Picking up from the session that we just had with Andy and David, I really appreciate their coming forward and describing the work that they are doing under the Subcommittee on Aquaculture Economic Development Task Force.

This is a very significant effort of ours, collectively, ours being all the participants in this from the task force through to the subcommittee and one that I'm particularly enthused

about as it's going to add a component to our eventual ability to stitch together a National Aquaculture Development Plan.

This really has long been needed and absolutely appropriate for its time. And it's interesting to have seen, as Andy spoke to a little bit near the end of the comments there, how much our relationship and how rapidly our relationship between Fisheries and USDA has evolved during the course of the pandemic.

We have a long, long history of collaborating for decades under the Subcommittee on Aquaculture, which is co-chaired by NOAA Fisheries and by USDA with my colleague here, Jeff Silverstein from the Agricultural Research Service. And it's kind of a preceding organizational form that has been progressing for years. And, you know, we described that pathway to you really closely.

But we have been involved in a wide range of other engagements with USDA, particularly in the context of the pandemic itself, originally orchestrating the kind of division of labor with coronavirus emergency relief funds to industry in aquaculture, sort of dividing USDA's programs and our programs for getting immediate COVID relief into the end of the sector. We had also collaborated with them in helping them understand the kind of structure and function of the seafood sector with a program that they had to provide compensatory relief to those who have suffered from retaliatory trade with tariffs.

Most recently, we worked with them on a separate Congressional direction to provide COVID-related relief to the processing sector in the seafood industry. Also, during this whole time period, we collaborated very closely at the technical and staff level, to help USDA build out some of the buying programs. They have very substantial buying programs that we desperately needed in multiple pieces of the seafood industry, to generate demand when it had completely fallen out.

As you know, 75% of our fisheries outputs were to the - essentially to the retail food service and restaurant industries. They're looking for alternative sources of demand and

those programs were expanded. These buying programs for military, for schools and other types of public uses, traditionally had been fairly limited in terms of seafood purchases, mostly Pollock, catfish. And those were expanded to different fin fish in different parts of the country, to shrimp.

And we've made a lot of progress in opening up seafood as a way to augment those programs and provide additional sources of demand. And as (Andy) was also indicating, and appropriate to the topic that we have coming up here, the whole experience with this, not just with the seafood sector but with agriculture and food generally during the pandemic has, you know, really kicked off I think a very significant national effort to better understand and address sources of supply chain fragility in the agriculture and seafood worlds.

And that is something that USDA has taken forward in the interagency context and is ensuring a great deal of leadership addressing that big topic. And we have a contribution to make from the vantage point of seafood sector as that conversation evolves. I'm really pleased to have JuliAnna Arnett here today, along with Christina Connell from the Ag Marketing Service. And they are also - JuliAnna is a contributor to the Economic Development Taskforce; is on that taskforce.

Christina also contributed to some of the conversations and activities that they have been undertaking, to talk to us about regional food, enterprise centers, and some of the thinking at USDA, on the structure of supply chains and thinking that is going on in USDA and the federal government broadly, around regionalization initiatives that can have a variety of different benefits, which they will surely describe.

But I just wanted to emphasize that we are very enthused to be broadening our engagement with the USDA, not just our good friends in the agricultural research service that we collaborated with for many, many years, but also with (Andy) in Rural Development; with agricultural marketing service; other pieces of USDA coming together so we can bring our knowledge and our ability to connect with the seafood sector into their discussions about the policy vehicles that they implement and how they

could be extended to this sector in a manner that's equivalent to how those policy instruments are used in land-based ag.

So with that general context, I'll turn it over to JuliAnna. And I really want to thank them both for being available here today, to lay out their views and their description of how USDA is investigating this concept of Regional Food Enterprise Center. Thank you very much to the two of them. And I'll turn it over.

Christina Connell: Great. JuliAnna, do you want to go ahead and introduce yourself and then I'll jump in? Take it away.

JuliAnna Arnett: That sounds good. Hello. Sorry about that. I'm JuliAnna Arnett. I am the local and regional food systems senior marketing specialist over at USDA AMS or Agriculture Marketing Service. While I am located at AMS, what we call it for short, I support interagency or department-wide coordination of local and regional food systems activity across the USDA. And that often involves working, you know, with our fishing community, both wild caught and aquaculture. And so I've been providing a little bit of support for Christina in the development of this concept, but will hand it over to Christina to explain more. Thanks for having me today. I'm really excited to get your input.

Christina Connell: Hi, everyone. My name is Christina Connell. I work with the ag marketing service. The team that I sit on focuses on local and regional food systems, research, and development. And then we have kind of a sister part of that group that focuses on local food grants. So it's our team within AMS and really as kind of leaders within USDA on local and regional food systems.

So the concept that I'm going to share with you all today is really focusing on the small and mid-sized food and farm businesses, providing technical assistance and capital investment to make sure that the regional supply chains can be kind of shored up as we hopefully move out of the pandemic in the next few years. So before I jump into the slides, I just wanted to share too, that this is really still a concept

It is getting legs. I feel relatively confident some version of this will happen. But everything that you see today is still very much a draft, and we're still very much accepting feedback from, you know, today from you all with others. If you have other organizations you think we should connect with we're happy to do that.

And I also want to note that this idea has been kind of bubbling up through a few different pathways. We - AMS has a grant program called the Dairy Business Innovation Initiatives, which is a pretty small program obviously focused on dairy, that gives grants to universities. And then those universities can re-grant to businesses to do research, expansion, startup funding. So that - there is interest on Capitol Hill to expand that program to other types of products.

So that's one place where this came from. Another avenue is that we received a lot of stakeholder feedback from a number of agricultural organizations and again, from several members on the Hill, about the lack of business technical assistance available for producers, but also for that kind of middle of the supply chain operations for processing, distribution, and kind of making sure that all the lanes are connected across the supply chain. So that's what we're trying to address with this concept.

A couple of times when we've given this presentation I haven't offered that context. So hopefully that helps and not - this didn't come out of thin air. But again, still very, very much interested in feedback. So let me - I have about five slides. So let me go ahead and share my screen (unintelligible). All right. So yes, so that's what we're calling it right now, our regional food enterprise centers, regional food business centers, kind of still workshopping that a little bit.

So our goals are to make sure that small food and farm businesses can exist and be part of the supply chain. Oftentimes, these businesses we know are crowded out by larger food businesses. And we want to make sure that there's room for all sizes to compete and exist. So we're thinking of this as a way to foster competition while also supporting businesses of all sizes. Our current proposal is to have seven regional food enterprise centers that could be based at any number of different types of entities. So universities could be



eligible, nonprofit state agencies, even lending institutions perhaps could lead one of these centers. So that is another piece of feedback we've received is that universities are great at some things, but not often at passing money through to other organizations.

But they do have expertise in some areas, whereas a state agency in one region might be really strong, but not in another. So we want to make sure that we're trying out kind of different entities to lead these. And want to make sure that it's open to a variety of different types of organizations to lead. So the centers would be responsible for three main things - the coordination, technical assistance, and investment.

So on that first piece on the coordination, we would enter - we being the Agricultural Marketing Service, would enter into cooperative agreements with seven or more centers. And as kind of baseline activities that the center would be responsible for doing, would be formalizing that regional network of stakeholders, making sure that they have all the right people at the table.

Designing a strategic plan and a corresponding funding plan, to figure out where are the needs in the region, where are the assets, and making sure that they're making investments and decisions based on what's going on in their region. That's one thing. We really want this program to be responsive to regional needs, right, at a national level.

If we just design another grant program we have to make it work for across the, you know, across the country whereas having it regionally driven, we want to have those regional solutions for these shorter supply chains. The centers will be responsible for coordinating back with USDA. That's one of the benefits of doing this as a cooperative agreement, is that USDA - we get to have a, you know, substantial involvement in this network that we're creating and figuring out how to make this sustainable and work for all the stakeholders in that region.

And then they'll of course, be responsible for coordinating with the other centers. We don't want, you know, the Northeast to be getting really great service and have a great innovation, but then the southwest not know about it. So make formalizing that network

of centers as well. The second piece that the centers will be responsible for, is providing technical assistance.

We're thinking this will be, and I should say this is really technical assistance and capacity building. This will largely be done through grants to local organizations, to provide that business technical assistance I was talking about earlier, on topics such as marketing, planning, finance, legal issues, etc. And again, we're focusing on that middle of supply chain. You know, some producers would likely be eligible, but with a focus of that, that middle of supply chain processors distribution-type businesses.

And these grants could also support value chain coordination. So we know that USDA and other parts of the federal government often do technical assistance really well or through a program or provide funding. But oftentimes, those aren't coupled together in a kind of a streamlined pathway. So that's what we're trying to do here, is trying to couple technical assistance and some of that backbone support from those regional centers with some funding.

Just yes, looking at my notes real quick, making sure I'm not - so this is where to - we're thinking these are grants to smaller organizations. So if we would have a regional center based in, you know, a region of seven or eight states then we would have technical assistance providers, you know, five, eight, ten, more organizations in every state providing this one on one small group technical assistance.

You know, somebody came to us with a proposal to create a national training program on meat processing. And we were like well, does that really work? Like the issues are so regionalized and localized that we want to make sure that we can provide technical assistance through these providers in a small group, one-on-one fashion.

So the third piece that the centers would be responsible for, is this investment piece. So that's where I was talking about the coupling of technical assistance and investment. So the centers would partner with lending, probably a lending network, maybe community development finance institutions or other development finance agencies, or perhaps just

other, you know, other lenders in their region, to provide grants, loans, and perhaps other forms of capital, to actually provide that bridge and seed funding to start or expand their business.

So this is the piece that really makes this unique. Obviously, USDA has a lot of different grant programs. But again, they're not necessarily coupled together with the technical assistance or that regional coordination. So we're hoping that this provides kind of a streamlined way to do that and fits into this larger kind of regional strategic plan.

We're really hoping to provide that support beyond the check. Oftentimes, you know, at the federal level we do that. We write a grant and you are, you know, we could have a grant and walk away. We want to be involved and see where this money is going and build on that success. That is a general concept. JuliAnna, what did I miss in that whirlwind overview?

JuliAnna Arnett: The only thing I would add, just for clarification purposes, in the technical assistance when you were mentioning the grants to local organizations, just to help visualize, think about the organizations that are already working on the ground with small and local and regional food producers or enterprises.

So, you know, this could be organizations that are, you know, same for fisheries and for fishermen that are providing technical assistance, helping them find markets, maybe helping them, you know, identify processors or identify small processors, and figure out how these would be financially viable. So funding, while these are going to be regional centers, we're really hoping to use this network to really support those that are already working in this capacity on the ground, and continue to strengthen those organizations as well.

Christina Connell: And one last thing before I open it up for questions and feedback, is just to offer a little bit of scale. Again, you know, this has not been decided yet. And the numbers change on a daily basis, it seems. But we're looking at, you know, a \$400 million to \$600 million investment. So it would be \$50 million, \$70 million per center. So it's a pretty

substantial investment and obviously would love to include all types of products, including fisheries in this work.

JuliAnna Arnett: Great. It looks like (Patrick) has a question.

(Patrick): Sure. Great. Thanks. I appreciate the presentation. So yes, so that was - my first - you answered my first question is whether fisheries would be involved with that or not. And so it sounds like you're planning this to be so. So my other questions are sort of based on that. I would ask, you know, where are the centers likely to be located?

You know, I'm thinking of oceans, right? And then second is just would you consider the fish products to be different somehow than the products that you're used to viewing? I'm thinking in terms of length of time, that it can go without spoiling, and quality assurance and these kinds of things. Can you comment on those two things? Thanks.

((Crosstalk))

JuliAnna Arnett: ...so we don't - oh, go ahead.

Christina Connell: No. Oh, go ahead.

JuliAnna Arnett: I was going to say, for the locations of the office, we are currently thinking, and as Christina mentioned, you know, we're still receiving feedback and things are evolving as we get feedback. But currently, we are thinking of trying to align the regions with the FNS's regional offices. For those of you who may not be familiar with FNS or Food and Nutrition Service at the USDA, this is the agency that administers both SNAP and all the child nutrition programs.

And so really, because one side of the USDA mostly focuses on supply and others focus on demand, really trying to make sure those two are talking. However, we have heard some stakeholder feedback that they may want smaller regions that are more focused as well. So I would say that one we're still gathering input on. Christina, do you want to take

how are we looking at products that may be coming out of the fishing industry vs. traditional land-based ag?

Christina Connell: I'm happy to. But, you know, I don't know that I have a great answer right now. I think it's mainly, you know, we don't have a set model that's going to set, right? So we want that any grants or funding that comes out of the regional center, to meet the needs of the region. And so if that includes fisheries, which it would for probably, you know, four or five of the regions, you know, they would need to offer programming that supports that.

You know, we don't want to create something that's too narrow that wouldn't include different subsets of products. I don't know if that's helpful.

JuliAnna Arnett: And just...

(Patrick): Very - very good.

JuliAnna Arnett: Just...

(Patrick): Yes. Thank you.

JuliAnna Arnett: Just to build off that a tiny bit, you know, when we're talking about potentially seven regional offices, I think - thinking about the organizations that are working more community based or within a state that are really focused on supply chain development, I've been throwing out and, you know, loosely there are organizations like some organizations in Hawaii that are focused on both helping producers build market opportunities, but they also work very closely with the fishing community. So I think again, it will really depend on the focus of the organizations that are involved.

(Patrick): Very good. Thank you.

JuliAnna Arnett: Sure.

Woman: I think that's Stefanie that has the next question.

(Donnie): Hi, this is (Donnie). Can I ask a question? I'm not on video, but I had a question about this program.

Woman: Yes. Sure. Go ahead, (Donnie).

(Donnie): The USDA operates I think four research labs in the country. One is the cold water lab up in Maine that I visited. Also one in Mississippi on catfish. I think there's one on the West Coast, salmon. And I believe there's another one for maybe rainbow trout where they work with the producers and all of the things we mentioned. Is that particular program similar to what you're talking about here? Or is this program a lot broader than what you already have going?

Woman: I think it's, you know, I'll be honest. I don't know tons about the research programs. But from my understanding is that those labs would be pretty focused on research. And where - this program will be more business technical assistance focused.

(Donnie): Okay.

Woman: But I definitely think the point I'm trying to - we should connect with those labs, absolutely.

(Donnie): Yes. I think, I think the one I visited in Maine was associated with a company called Cooks. And they - so they turned it into a billion dollar business, farming Atlantic salmon. But they kind of worked hand-in-hand with them in developing a lot of the technical aspects of it. And I thought it'll be interesting with this big - with the emphasis in aquaculture over here on the Gulf Coast, I'm in Pensacola, Florida, and we're right next to the Sea Grant for Auburn University and also University of Southern Miss Sea Grant, and Florida Sea Grant.

So we're all kind of up here in this area. There's a lot of work being done on creating oyster farms and shellfish, clams, and so forth going on. And so an idea to do something regionally like that and this area, would you be open to that as a project? In other words, shellfish, aquaculture, and all the technical and restoration parts of that, there's really no center for that.

And each, you know, these producers need - there's - I think there are 200 or 300 farmers in Florida now. But they're all kind of small mom and pops. There's no big boy on the block. And they're always - I'm a member of our state association and they're always asking for research and all types of , you know, (brood) stock and equipment, and so forth. I just wanted to make a connection there with you.

Woman: Yes. Absolutely. I mean I think that, you know, that's why we're really excited that Heidi and (Paul) have had us here today, you know, to make this connection with you all. And so if this does get off the ground, whether or not, you know, anyone on the call ends up leading a center, we hope that you all will be partners in the centers that are there. And so it would engage with those and make sure that issues like that are raised and addressed.

(Donnie): Right. Well we talked about one of the big impediments to aquaculture is not having the capital lenders, you know, the USDA and the foreign loan banks and farm credit banks operating very efficiently in providing crop loans, disasters, and so forth. I read a lot of that going on. But yes, I think the opportunity that does exist and I (unintelligible) call the southern region.

But it certainly would encompass at least four states, maybe five states, in the process that our committee in Florida asked me to investigate and head up the insurance piece, which is right now under a (MAPS) program. Some opportunity has arisen to improve upon that. And I'm not sure if it's in connection with what you guys are doing or if it's a different agency, but it seems like you play a very important role.

And in the - in meeting the goals of what we're trying to do with seafood sustainability and aquaculture and those areas, and especially in the shellfish area in our region. So I

appreciate your presentation. It's good to hear that it sounds like a lot of good opportunities coming down. Thank you.

Woman: Thank you.

Woman: Stefanie, do you have a question? Over to you.

(Stefanie Moreland): I do. Thank you. My name is (Stefanie Moreland). I'm with Trident Seafoods, and we're largely dependent on wild capture fisheries in the Alaska region and Pacific Northwest. I appreciate the presentation. I've been hearing a little bit about how USDA may be able to tackle some of the issues that you outlined, and objectives that you're working with.

I certainly am aware that a lot of fisheries stakeholders for a long time, have looked at USDA programs and business support available to land-based agriculture and have really wanted to see more nexus with fisheries, fisheries stakeholders, for that type of support, advocacy, and technical assistance. So I understand some of the background here.

But in agriculture and the way this proposal seems to be framing up, it's to support seafood supply chains in assistance with market access for small and medium sized businesses. We probably won't be considered a large business when it comes to seafood, but there's not a parallel with agriculture. And we don't have like a big four.

And so the interdependence between big in the case of seafood, and small a lot of the very small business and family wild capture fishermen that we depend on and provide infrastructure and make investments in infrastructure in very remote areas to support. We've got an interdependence and there's less of a gap between big and medium in our sector.

And so I'm just wondering if you've given that thought, how to navigate it and how to prevent a program where we're all just sitting on the defense, being concerned that you're actually investing in competition against investments that we're desperately making, to



continue to have a modern and competitive and accessible seafood supply chain domestically.

Woman: Yes. I really appreciate that point. And, you know, acknowledging that seafood is different than other sectors. And, you know, I think it points to how, you know, when I'm - when we're thinking through writing the request for applications and, you know, a lot we're going to leave up to those regional centers to decide how they're going to support, you know, businesses and their supply chains in their region.

And I, you know, I would imagine that in, you know, Pacific Northwest and Alaska, right, seafood is going to be a big - I'm sure in several parts of the country, but will be a big piece of that thinking and there - the strategy that they design, you know, I think this does come in where AMS will have substantial involvement. You know, we can think through how do we - what is the best way to support kind of all businesses, you know, with a focus on small and medium?

But does that make sense for every sector, I guess? You know, I think this design gives us a leeway to have that. And I'm guessing, you know, that when we have a regional center in place in different regions, they're going to be the experts with, you know, a network of stakeholders to design that plan. And so if they know and recognize that, you know, larger businesses in the seafood area - arena, is what is supporting the small businesses, then they're important to support too.

So I guess I don't have like a super clear answer for you. But knowing that, you know, I think this will be a collaborative process as regional centers design what their programming looks like.

(Stefanie Moreland): Great. Thank you. And just as a follow up, I again appreciate USDA learning more about the sector, and collaborating with NOAA on understanding the structure and data that are available on our sector. And there's a lot to do, but I would hope that that energy goes in areas where it's really needed and not in investments that we end up having to

oppose because it's disruptive to long term strategic investments and planning that are being made. Thank you.

Harlon Pearce: Erika, I was raising my hand over here.

Erika Feller: Oh, yes. Harlon, go ahead.

Harlon Pearce: Okay, good. There's something that's going on down here too. Is where saltwater aquaculture we're wanting to put in place to supplement the wild capture fishery in saltwater? In shore and the freshwater fisheries, we've got a freshwater aquaculture program that's beginning to depend on the wild fishery, wild capture fishery to supplement its needs.

So there is a good parallel between what you want to try to do and what's being developed down in the south and then also on the East Coast, with a wild capture freshwater fishery that is under USDA inspection now. But it would need the help that you've been discussing, to move forward into the future. Because a lot of it is smaller businesses trying to find ways to survive and create more.

So it's sort of different than the saltwater side. It's where the farm-raised guys are needing help because they're either short of help or because of COVID or for whatever reason. The wild capture fishery is now taking the place to help support aquaculture in that freshwater program. So I really like what you said and then I - and I think there's a big need for it down where I am, down here in the south.

Woman: Great. Thank you.

Erika Feller: This is Erika. Can I just - it's kind of the same question I asked the last guys. What does the timeline look like for implementing this? Kind of where are you in the process? Is this something that's going to roll out over the next five years or six months, or...

Woman: I wish I had a clear answer. But I - my best guess is that we would be in a position to release a request for applications early in 2022. So we would be selecting centers sometime in the spring/summer. And that this would be - I'm hoping for a four to five year investment. But I've heard as short as two or three years. I think it is a lot of money and a lot of responsibility that we're rolling out. So yes, hopefully, in the next year.

Erika Feller: And so when you guys get to like making grants, are you - I mean are you looking for things that, you know, grant investments that could be like three year awards or you've got kind of a longer window? What - what kind of...

((Crosstalk))

Woman: The actual cooperative agreement that we would use for the regional centers, they would likely be, you know, a little bit longer term, probably three to four years with some kind of performance requirements attached to that, you know, if a center isn't meeting responsibilities or what have you, we could perhaps do, you know, something to change course.

And then as the regional centers are deciding their funding structure and mechanisms again, at our - at the federal level we would probably put some controls in place to say, you know, you have to release 25% of the funding every year or, you know, maybe the first year you're just getting set up and so the second year is when you're going to do a lot of big investment type things. I think those are the pieces that we're thinking through.

Erika Feller: Okay. Great. Thank you.

Woman: Are there other questions? Wow, you all's questions exactly fit the amount of time we had available for you to ask them. So well done. Thank you. Thank you, JuliAnna and Christina. That was a really interesting presentation. Much appreciated

Woman: Thanks so much for having us.

Woman: Thank you.

Woman: We really appreciate it.

Woman: Absolutely. We are next moving onto our public comment period. So Heidi, I'm going to just go ahead and hand that off to you.

Heidi Lovett: Okay. Operator, can you help us announce that we are now open for public comments if any members of the public who are participating are listening in, wish to share comments or questions with (unintelligible) I should say comments, comments to (unintelligible)?

Coordinator: Yes. Absolutely. So if you would like to make a comment, please press star 1 on your phone and record your name. If you'd like to remove yourself from the queue, you can press star 2. But to make a comment, press star 1. It'll take a minute for the - so far no one has queued up for any comment.

Heidi Lovett: Thank you, Operator. And just checking the attendees on the webinar. It does look like it's mostly staff in the audience, not necessarily other members of the public. Different members of our NOAA Fisheries staff. Although I don't see the list of who (unintelligible) over the phone. So Erika, we're ready to move on. The next - last recap in the section.

Erika Feller: Oh gosh. Let me first ask. Jennifer, do you have any kind of well-structured thoughts about recapping today's sessions?

Jennifer: No. I don't have any...

(Eric): I'm putting you on the spot while I get my thoughts together.

Jennifer: Well, okay, you can put me on the spot here. I think today just recapping it, thank you so much for all the presentations this afternoon. I think I was trying to - going through each one of them, trying to think of what we talked about before, what Erica put out in front of you

for thinking about our next steps on resilience and what lenses to apply using that information to get to narrow down our focus of what (MASAC) will be working on in this work plan.

So I just thought it was great to hear from folks from the USDA and to hear about the extent of the comments and best of the comments that we've got from (14008) on climate change. So I think we are well tee'd up for tomorrow's discussion first thing in the morning, when we circle back on this issue.

Erika Feller: That was really good. You just came up with that in minutes. Wow. So similar thinking, I'd be curious to hear from you guys if there's anything you heard this afternoon that has, you know, influenced how you might be thinking about our resilient fisheries and seafood discussion that we're going to have tomorrow.

And I will share with you one thing that has kind of gone through my head, and it's sort of in the form of a question to Jennifer. But it kind of makes me think like in addition to thinking a little bit more clearly about what are the problems we're trying to solve, I'm also kind of realizing that we should be thinking about who it is that we want to be talking to and what they're doing, where our input might potentially be useful.

And I think, you know, for some of these things, I've sort of scribbled notes here and there about, you know, obviously we talked a lot to the Secretary of Commerce. But clearly, NOAA is talking a lot with USDA. And there are some topics under - on our list that I think sort of fall into the space that we've heard about. You know, things that NOAA and USDA are working on together.

So that's just kind of one piece that, you know, I want to go back through that document sometime between now and our happy hour, to think about how that, in my mind, affects how this project goes forward. But I want to hear what other people think.

Woman: Erika, can I just jump in and do my designated federal official responsibilities of reminding you all that your main purpose is advising the Secretary of Commerce. So I think it's -

any comments that you've put forward are directed for the Secretary of Commerce. But certainly we do share those - we would share those with other agencies if it included them. But the primary direction and audience is the Secretary of Commerce and the agencies that fall underneath.

Woman: Stefanie?

Stefanie Moreland: I keep forgetting about the two devices. Excuse me. So I was a presentation today.

They're all wrapped up into I think, the three buckets that were in the slide deck that was distributed by Heidi. I think some of the pieces from USDA of particular relevance, did touch on infrastructure and resilience of the seafood supply chain where there's not overlap there.

There was a nexus with the work that we did and the themes that were touched on when we were working on the National Seafood Council recommendations, in terms of opportunity to provide more promotional and business support to domestic seafood production farmed or wild. I just - I feel like some of the themes that inform USDA objectives aren't particularly new and that there's a lot of overlap with the work that was already on the table from the resilience side of things.

And then lastly, I just feel that we can't lose sight of whenever we're talking about resilience or climate change impacts, which are two big themes from today, that we have to continue to relate it back to NOAA's core function and previews we've gotten of an outlook that's pretty grim when it comes to vessel time, NOAA infrastructure, and ability to continue to fund the science and personnel that's required for monitoring and baseline information related to adaptation and management.

Erika Feller: Pat?

Pat Sullivan: Great. Thanks, Madam Chair. Yes. So this is - these presentations today have been really good. I, you know, I think we heard the aquaculture one before and in subgroups. But I

don't recall hearing anything about - from USDA, so that's new. And that - and the of course, the survey that was on public comment was really interesting too.

What I want to share is thinking about us, effectively Commerce, interacting with these other agencies - Agriculture and Interior. And I'm thinking in particular, with (BOM). But now that we see USDA I think - like with USDA, it's clear like they have a set of experiences that would help us to get involved with. But of course, we have something a little bit different than what they're used to working with.

And so it'll be important to make sure that there's a dialog going there. With regard to Interior and (BOM) and so forth, I'm more worried about that in the sense that my impression is that they don't really fully understand what happens with NOAA Fisheries and Commerce in general. And so in particular, I've seen, you know, requests for proposal come out and not really knowing how to handle any of that.

And one of NOAA Fisheries and NOAA in general's, you know, strength is the research part and how that supports everything else that goes on. And so I'm just - it may be beyond what this particular committee can do something about. But there are clearly a lot of levels of communication that need to take place between the different agencies. And how one navigates that is important, and especially two things - sort of recognizing our own needs, but also recognizing what we contribute; what our strengths are relative to how these other groups operate.

So that's kind of a high level thing for us to be thinking about. But, you know, with the onset of offshore wind and more broadly, it's very clear to me that the sort of gaps are there. I don't know what those are necessarily, with USDA, at this point because we just - this is our first time really interacting with them. Obviously, they have a lot of experience with regard to the supply chain.

But, you know, they may be experiencing climate change in a little bit different manner than we are. For example, can we provide something to them that would be helpful? So

high level, but those are just my thoughts given the presentations that we had today. So, thanks.

Erika Feller: Thanks, Pat. Megan?

Megan Davis: Thanks, Erika. And to follow on from Stefanie and Pat's comments, I also found the presentations really interesting and definitely dovetail into the work plan ideas that we're putting together in the three buckets. And I'm also thinking that there - as we know, not only from these presentations, but from the presentations that we received since May, that there's a lot of momentum and efforts that are moving in NOAA Fisheries.

And I'm just thinking that maybe there are some ways that we can do some very short term support letters of the initiatives that are already in action. So just something that I wanted to throw out, so that we don't wait 12 or 18 months to deliver. And I also know that (Paul) also mentioned that, you know, some of the products that we could do is like a summarization of the topic. So I'm starting to think about, you know, short term and long term sort of products that we could come with. But certainly to support some of the efforts that are already happening within the agency.

Erika Feller: Yes. I think that makes a lot of sense if you think about it. Different ways that we can tackle different problems. It doesn't have to be just kind of one big thing. Other thoughts? Yes, Pat?

Pat Sullivan: Yes. You don't have to call on me. Like I just - I mean I found the synthesis of public comments really interesting. And of course, I think of it from the (SAS) background and so forth; representativeness. And I mean the ideas are really great. And I guess it would be nice to have some guidance as to how we're supposed to use this. I'd be curious how NOAA and NOAA Fisheries plan to use this.

We heard some sort of ideas about where it's likely to go. I mean, is it going to sit on somebody's desk and go oh, there's a good idea, I'll circle the good ideas? Or is this - will this be worked into some kind of integrated strategic plan or - and are we supposed to do



something with this other than, you know, use it as a kind of sounding board for our own ideas?

I'm curious about that because in some sense we're kind of a group that's representative of the stakeholders right here. And I'm curious how we're supposed to view this. It was very interesting. I'm not denying that. I'm just kind of curious how we might use it.

Erika Feller: Jennifer?

Jennifer: I think it's a couple of things, Pat. It's - one, is something to bounce your own ideas off of, to learn more about since you are the representative stakeholder group. I think also in terms of what we're going to do with those comments, they were just synthesized. But we do actually have. - we have not only briefed it up the chain of what has come in, but we kind of have a team across all of NOAA Fisheries and across different line offices from where those comments came in, that we funnel those comments out to those programs that are going to be developing things, such as what Fisheries is doing with the regional action plan.

So that was one little tiny example of how that would feed into that. So if something came in, relevant to research, that the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research is doing, that is being funneled over there. So what that looks like and how that gets integrated into all of those programs, I think is kind of down the line. But there is a framework for distributing those, practically program by program.

But I think also it behooves us to take a look at it from a 10,000 foot level, as to where are those major themes and buckets and what we're hearing from our stakeholders. And weave that into those larger big directional strategic decisions that we're making as an agency. That's how we can see it being used. So that's just my take on it.

Pat Sullivan: Okay. Thanks.

Erika Feller: Well, we are running up on our time for adjournment. So I am delighted that your brains are turning on this because I think that means we will have a very lively and interesting and pithy conversation tomorrow that will yield many good ideas. I would invite you guys - I mean I'm going to be thinking about this tonight and tomorrow morning. If you have, you know, sort of an idea about how to frame up one of these ideas I just want to sort of throw it out like feel free to rough out an outline and bring it tomorrow and give us something to chew on.

I'd be delighted if you want to do that. Just give me a heads up that you think you're going to have something and we can make it part of the discussion. But I think that that just about concludes our business for the day. Not the day's activities, but our business for the day. So I think I'm going to call it. (John) and Heidi, is there any information you need to relay to people?

Heidi Lovett: Well, first, just related to tomorrow it is a hefty chunk of time. It's 90 minutes at the front end of the meeting. And I think what your slides outlined were some of the other things that might help everybody frame this up is like what might you specifically, and any member of the group, like to work on and maybe lead.

And, you know, the capacity of the group as a whole, is where the work will end up getting focused. So there might be things that you might want to focus on, you know, initially, and put other things sort of in a parking lot until a little bit later, once one or two things get done. So it's all, you know, it's the work of the group. So it's just something you all can be thinking about.

Where are you particularly interested? And where would you put your energies if you have some time, to help make that think through and provide recommendations on any of those particular topics? So I just wanted to share that thought. We can officially conclude and then I can share the reminder of what a little optional happy hour that we have set up.

I don't know if there are any other questions about tomorrow. I will just remind people, the phone number and passcode are identical to today. But at the top of the day 2 part of

the agenda that you've been sent and the calendar invite that you might have, does have a different link. And you just need to use that link to get into the meeting for tomorrow.

Erika Feller: The phone number is the same but the link is different.

Heidi Lovett: But the process is the same. So I recommend signing in a little bit early, even if you go back to other work that you might be doing, just get yourself in the queue. Because obviously there's a queue.

Erika Feller: Okay. Great. And so we'll join - we'll get back together at noon to work on resilience stuff. And then our agenda kind of starts up at 2:00 with the budget outlook and administrative update, and then the science update and recreational fisheries for the rest of the afternoon. So I will...

Heidi Lovett: I was just going to say, one last quick thing is that staff are always welcome to participate, particularly in the work sessions, particularly if it's your area of expertise and you have something to share and add.

Erika Feller: Yes. So yes, I think we're done for the day. And so...

Heidi Lovett: Operator, our meeting is officially closing if there are any other attendees or people in listen only mode. And this group is going to stay on for another minute or two.

Coordinator: No problem. So thank you for participating. The call has now ended. You may disconnect.

Heidi Lovett: But don't shut our line down just yet.

Coordinator: No. Not your guys' line. You want to hold for just a moment, I will give you some additional (unintelligible).

Heidi Lovett: Thank you. And thank you, Darius, for all your help today.

END

<b>Members Present:</b>	<b>NOAA/NMFS Staff Present:</b>	<b>Also Present:</b>
<b>Roger Berkowitz</b> , President, Massachusetts Seafood Collaborative and President and CEO, Legal Sea Foods Marketplace	<b>JuliAnna Arnette</b> , Local & Regional Food Systems Senior Marketing Specialist, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)	<b>Karen Abrams</b> , Branch Chief, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Sustainable Stocks & Ecosystems
<b>Janet Coit</b> , Assistant Administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service ( <i>ex officio</i> member of MAFAC)	<b>Christina Conell</b> , Deputy Director, USDA AMS Marketing Services Division	<b>Sahir Advani</b> , University of Maine
<b>Megan Davis, Ph.D.</b> , Chair; Research Professor, Aquaculture, Florida Atlantic University, Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute	<b>Kristine Cherry</b> , Branch Chief, Regulatory and Policy Branch, Office of Aquaculture	<b>Stephanie Bailenson</b> , The Nature Conservancy
<b>David Donaldson</b> , Executive Director, Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission ( <i>ex officio</i> member of MAFAC)	<b>Marina Cucuzza</b> , Climate and Fisheries Specialist, Knauss Marine Policy Fellow	<b>Ellie Bors</b> , Foreign Affairs Specialist, NOAA
<b>Raimundo Espinoza</b> , Environmental Consultant	<b>Paul Doremus</b> , PhD, Deputy Assistant Administrator for Operations, NOAA Fisheries	<b>Helen Chabot</b> , Senior Policy Advisor, NOAA Fisheries
<b>Erika Feller</b> , MAFAC Chair; Director, Marine and Coastal Conservation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	<b>Russ Dunn</b> , National Policy Advisor on Recreational Fisheries, NOAA Fisheries	<b>Kristine Cherry</b> , Branch Chief, Regulatory and Policy Branch, Office of Aquaculture
<b>Randy Fisher</b> , Executive Director, Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission	<b>Andrew Jermolowicz</b> , Speaker; Assistant Deputy Administrator, USDA Rural Development	<b>Kelly Denit</b> , Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NOAA Fisheries
<b>Thomas Fote</b> , Retired, Recreational Fisherman	<b>Heidi Lovett</b> , MAFAC Assistant Designated Federal Officer	<b>Laura Diederick</b> , Lead, External Affairs, Partnerships, and Events, Office of Communications
<b>Robert Jones</b> , Gulf of Mexico Regional Director, Environmental Defense Fund	<b>Jennifer Lukens</b> , MAFAC Designated Federal Officer; Director, Office of Policy	<b>Bob Gill</b> , Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council
<b>Donna Kalez</b> , Owner and Manager, Dana Wharf Sportfishing and Whale Watching	<b>Gabriela McMurtry</b> , Fishery Policy Analyst & Meeting Assistant	<b>Roger Griffiths</b> , Climate Change Coordinator, NOAA Fisheries
<b>Sara McDonald</b> , Ph.D., Director of Conservation, South Carolina Aquarium	<b>David O'Brien</b> , Acting Director, Office of Aquaculture	<b>Mike Hopkins</b> , NOAA Fisheries
<b>Donald McMahon, III</b> , President, Pensacola Bay Oyster Co., LLC, Pensacola Bay Oyster Hatchery, LLC, and TORCH (The Oyster Restoration Company and Hatchery)	<b>Sam Rauch</b> , Deputy Assistant Administrator of Regulatory Programs	<b>Lindsey Kraatz</b> , Senior Science Advisor
<b>Stefanie Moreland</b> , Director of Government Relations and Seafood Sustainability, Trident Seafoods	<b>Heather Sagar</b> , Senior Policy Advisor, Office of Policy, NOAA Fisheries	<b>Catherine Krikstan</b> , ECS
<b>Jim Parsons</b> , General Manager, Cooke Aquaculture Pacific	<b>Darius Thibodeaux</b> , IT Specialist	<b>Patrick Lynch</b> , Chief, Office of Science and Technology
<b>Harlon Pearce</b> , Owner/Operator, Harlon's LA Fish LLC	<b>Darius Thibodeaux</b> , IT Specialist	<b>Sean McNally</b> , Senior Advisor to the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
<b>Kellie Ralston</b> , Vice Chair; Vice President, Conservation and Public Policy, Bonefish and Tarpon Trust	<b>Cisco Werner</b> , Ph.D., Director, Scientific Programs and Chief Science Advisor	<b>Kate Naughten</b> , Director, Office of Communications, NOAA Fisheries
<b>Ervin "Joe" Schumacker</b> , Marine Scientist, Quinault Department of Fisheries, Quinault Indian Nation		<b>Lisa Pfeiffer</b> , Economist, Northwest Fisheries Science Center

<p><b>Patrick Sullivan, Ph.D.</b>, Professor Emeritus, Department of Natural Resources, Cornell University</p>		<p><b>Cristi Reid</b>, NEPA Coordinator, NOAA Fisheries</p>
<p><b>Richard Yamada</b>, Owner, Shelter Lodge</p>		<p><b>Michael Rubino</b>, Senior Advisor for Seafood Strategy, NOAA Fisheries</p>
		<p><b>Sarah Schumann</b>, Fisherman; Owner/Principal Consultant, Shining Seas Fisheries Consulting, LLC.</p>
		<p><b>Sarah Shoffler</b>, National Seafood Strategy Coordinator, Southwest Fisheries Science Center</p>
		<p><b>Regina Spallone</b>, Fishery Management Specialist</p>
		<p><b>Seth Sykora-Bodie</b>, Advisor to the Deputy Assistant of Operations</p>
		<p><b>Shiv Patel</b>, SpinLaunch</p>
		<p><b>Brett Veerhusen</b>, Principal, Ocean Strategies</p>