

Fisheries Information Committee
Major Meeting Outcomes
December 6, 2008
Sheraton Four Points Hotel
Los Angeles, California

1. Throughout their inaugural meeting, Fisheries Information Committee (FIC) and South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (RSG) members in attendance mentioned the challenges of the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) Initiative process and the potential benefits and challenges of the Fisheries Information (FIN) processes. Each FIC/ RSG member and observer in attendance expressed expectations for the FIC. Common themes were:
 - Fair representation of recreational and commercial constituencies' interests throughout the Southern California MLPA Initiative process.
 - Accurately identify the fisheries, including the micro-fisheries.
 - Work together to affect and improve the MLPA Initiative process to achieve an equitable, science-based outcome that 1) addresses ALL goals of the Act, 2) maintains the Southern California Bight biological productivity as mandated in the MLPA, 3) continues to support recreational and commercial fisheries, and 4) minimizes economic impacts by advocating for and ending up with an outcome that benefits the fishing interests' welfare, minimizes fishing opportunity losses, allows the businesses to continue and works for all fishing interests represented on the RSG and FIC.
 - Good communication so fishing interest RSG members can be an effective mouthpiece for the interests represented on the FIC, and information from the RSG reaches FIC constituencies.
 - Educate each other, learn about the FIC/RSG member interests and how the collective knowledge can help the scientific community.
2. FIC provided revisions to and clarifications on the draft Guidance, Ground Rules and Operation Procedures. The revised document will be circulated to the FIC for final approval before the next FIC meeting. Major additions will include:
 - Acknowledgment that Resources Legacy Fund Foundation (RLFF) is the funder for the FIC/FIN meeting process and that the objective of the funded project is to accurately represent the fishing interests involved with FIC/FIN. Disagreements with RLFF on the outcomes or how the contractors/FIC are carrying out their responsibilities under the Ecotrust/RLFF contract may result in early termination of the contracts between Ecotrust and RLFF, and between Ecotrust and California Fisheries Coalition (CFC) and *E J L & Associates*.
 - A confidentiality clause for visitors/observers.
 - FIC/fishing interest RSG members may invite visitors/observers to FIC meetings but will provide the visitor/observer names and interest representation to the CFC coordinators before the pertinent meetings.
 - An addition to the FIC communications paragraph regarding the importance of port/local meetings to the FIC process.
3. FIC provided the following suggestions and feedback to RSG members for the next South Coast RSG meeting and for addressing longer term issues:
 - FIC members will review the MFLA Initiative Southern California Regional Goals and Objectives and provide comments on objectives to fishing interest RSG members for forwarding to the full RSG at the January 13-14, 2009 meeting. It was suggested to focus on the socio-economic related objectives. A few specific comments on objectives for or implementation of goals were provided at the meeting:

- Southern California regional fisheries are distinct and different from those in the north central region. It was recommended that the SAT and full RSG base their decisions and recommendations on the distinct characteristics of the Southern California Bight.
 - For example, Southern California levels of protection (LOPs) should be different from those used for the north central region. Members discussed characteristics of the highly migratory and coastal pelagic fisheries and directed the CFC coordinators to draft more complete comments after the meeting based on members' interests and concerns.
 - The Committee and RSG members present also discussed sea urchin/kelp interactions and questioned whether LOPs considered ecosystem effects or single species. Sea urchin divers attending the meeting commented that uncontrolled urchin grazing can decimate kelp beds. Recreational fishermen noted that healthy kelp beds are important for productive fishing.
 - RSG members will pose to FIC members, if necessary, questions/information requests on the south coast subregional maps.
4. Discussions on the use pattern maps and MarineMap resulted in full consensus of FIC and RSG members in attendance on the following actions:
 - FIC/fishing interest RSG members will forward to the full RSG and Science Advisory Team (SAT) a recommendation that the MLPA Initiative SAT seriously use the EDOM or other bio-economic model for designing the MPAs. The recommendation may be phrased in the form of a compliment to the SAT for using the model.
 - CFC coordinators will draft a letter (on behalf of FIC and as soon as possible) to the MLPA Initiative team (I-Team) regarding 1) the flaws in the draft regional profile and habitat data, for example kelp beds and hard substrates, 2) MPA mapping should not begin until the information is corrected and 3) the need to "fix" the flaws is urgent. It was mentioned that the MLPA Initiative process should look at/consider the whole ecosystem, such as relationships between kelp and urchins, when designating MPAs.
 - FIC/fishing interest RSG members will request that time on the next SAT agenda be allocated for a short presentation (prepared by fishing representatives) on Southern California fisheries and how they are different from the Central California fisheries.
 - FIC/fishing interest RSG members may develop an MPA network proposal to be used by RSG members and possibly be submitted separately to the MLPA Initiative process.
 5. FIC appointed an Advisory Committee to help the Coordinators with meeting planning, document approval and framing of issues. Advisory Committee members are:
 - Louie Zimm, Mike Hansen (Recreational Interests)
 - John Law, Steve Escobar (Commercial Interests)
 6. Next FIC meeting:
 - Date: Saturday, January 10, 2009
 - Time: Begin at 10:00 am
 - Location: in a location central to FIC members; most likely Los Angeles
 - Major discussion items: Possibly Guidance, Ground Rules, Operating Procedures approval (if not completed via email), port maps review and begin MPA option mapping