



Marine Life Management Act (MLMA) Master Plan Amendment Discussion for Interested Stakeholders

Draft Approach to Scaled Management & a Web-based Fisheries Dashboard

Wednesday, February 1, 2017 | 12:00pm-1:30pm PT

Summary of Key Questions and Discussion Topics

On February 1, 2017, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) convened a webinar to continue the discussion of the Marine Life Management Act (MLMA) Master Plan Amendment with interested stakeholders. The goal of the webinar was to share CDFW's initial thinking related to a draft scaled management approach and web-based fisheries dashboard, two key components of a [Draft Amended Framework to MLMA-based Management](#).

Over 45 people participated to learn about CDFW's draft approach to scale management efforts to the needs of a given fishery. A full spectrum of potential management activities was discussed, from Enhanced Status Reports to traditional Fishery Management Plans (FMPs). Stakeholders also reviewed a draft mock-up of a web-based data portal, or Dashboard, as one way to help the state organize and present fisheries information in a user-friendly way.

The following document provides an overview of the discussion topics, key questions, and identified next steps that emerged from the call. This summary is intended to capture high-level details and key themes, rather than a transcript of the discussion.

Materials referenced during the webinar are available online at <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Marine/MLMA/Master-Plan>, including:

- Reference materials for the Draft Approach to Scaled Management & a Web-based Fisheries Dashboard stakeholder discussion include:
 - [Agenda](#)
 - [Presentation slides](#)
 - [Overview of a Draft Amended Framework for MLMA-based Management](#)
- General reference materials for the Master Plan amendment process include:
 - [MLMA Master Plan Amendment Timeline](#)
 - [Information Gathering Projects Overview](#)
 - [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Call participants and other interested stakeholders are invited to share additional feedback and insights on both the draft scaled management approach and web-based fisheries dashboard via an online questionnaire: <https://goo.gl/forms/LrJACU5tsniS8ov82>.

For more information about the MLMA Master Plan Amendment Process, including future opportunities for stakeholder discussions, please visit [CDFW's webpage](#) or contact MLMA@wildlife.ca.gov.



Overview

About the MLMA Master Plan

The MLMA Master Plan for Fisheries (Master Plan) is a planning document that describes how California fisheries are managed. The Master Plan is intended to help focus management effort on the highest priority species and to describe the specific tools and approaches to be applied in achieving the goals of the MLMA. The current Master Plan was developed by CDFW with input from stakeholders and approved by the Fish and Game Commission in 2001.

Draft Management Scaling Component

Fisheries that fall under the scope of the MLMA range widely in complexity, biological characteristics, number of participants, geographic extent, availability of data, management need, and other factors. The envisioned management process is intended to incorporate this variability into the range of approaches to applying MLMA-based management, from expanded and better-structured Enhanced Status Reports to traditional, resource-intensive FMPs. The draft management scaling component of the framework seeks to match the scope and intensity of management effort with the needs and complexity of a fishery.

Draft Web-based Fishery Dashboard

CDFW is exploring options for how information gathered throughout the prioritization and management processes could be housed and regularly updated on a web-based dashboard. The dashboard would be a user interface that organizes and presents information from status reports in a way that is easy to understand. While substantial time and cost may be required upfront to develop the dashboard and its underlying database, once established it should be designed to be relatively simple to maintain and update. The web-based dashboard is envisioned to help promote transparency in fisheries management, foster public engagement, and focus academic research on areas of management relevance.

Discussion

Throughout the webinar, call participants were invited to ask clarifying questions and share their perspectives and feedback on the draft ideas presented. The following aims to capture the discussion topics that emerged from the conversation, which will be considered as CDFW continues to develop and refine a [Draft Amended Framework to MLMA-based Management](#).

General

- Call participants discussed the degree to which CDFW was required to comply with an amended MLMA Master Plan once it was finalized and implementation was underway. This discussion included questions about the degree to which the Master Plan would prescribe specific management actions for a given fishery. CDFW highlighted the importance and need for an amended Master Plan that is flexible, offering guidelines and considerations from which more defined actions may be taken.
- A question was asked by a participant regarding how traditional fishing activities, including subsistence fishing, by California tribes will be considered as part of the amended Master Plan. Concern was expressed about the high costs of fishing licenses limiting tribal access to traditional harvest. CDFW is interested in engaging directly with California tribes to discuss this in greater detail, and will be seeking guidance and direction by the Fish and Game Commission's Tribal Committee on February 7, 2017.



- The relationship between finfish, urchin, abalone, and kelp beds in Northern California was raised as a priority issue, and a participant asked what priority level kelp beds will be assigned. Habitat and ecosystem considerations are included in the framework, as well as part of the ESR in the Master Plan.
- A participant highlighted the importance of considering costs as a core objective of an amended Master Plan. Being mindful of the wide range of tools that can inform fisheries management, including research, data analysis, etc., it will be important to include cost effectiveness as a deciding criteria when deciding on management tools and making management decisions.
 - CDFW shared that there are a number of places within the draft framework where cost effectiveness is considered, including the overarching MLMA objectives that are guiding the amendment process, and the concepts of the scaled management continuum and Dashboard.

Draft Management Scaling Component

Questions asked during the presentation:

- *Does a scaled approach reflect and consider stakeholder's management interests and priorities?*
 - *If not, what information would you like to see included?*
 - *Is there information missing in this draft approach? Additional considerations?*
 - *Other questions, ideas, or concerns?*
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- Overall, call participants expressed broad support for the draft management scaling component. Feedback shared was generally positive, and a few stakeholders stated that they appreciated CDFW is considering a spectrum, or continuum, of management options based on the complexity of a given fishery.
 - A participant suggested the need for and benefits of a work plan to outline how a scaled approach to management would take place. This would help with transparency and stakeholder confidence in management being successfully implemented. Information to include in a work plan could include measurable objectives, staffing and resource considerations, criteria for identifying a fishery high, medium or low risk, and anticipated timelines.
 - CDFW reminded callers that the state is currently undergoing an amendment process to develop a process that will help to prioritize the state's approach to management. This process will be informed by a number of factors, including stakeholder priorities described during webinars and other engagement opportunities like today's call. It is too early in the process to be creating a work plan, which could be revisited once CDFW enters into the implementation phase of applying the amended Master Plan.

Draft Web-based Fishery Dashboard

Questions asked during the presentation:

- *Does a web-based fisheries dashboard address stakeholder's informational needs? If not, is there another way this information can be made available in a transparent way?*
 - *What specific fisheries information would you like to see made available via a dashboard?*
 - *Other questions, ideas, or concerns?*
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- Overall, call participants expressed broad support for the draft web-based Fishery Dashboard concept and mock-ups. Feedback shared was generally positive, and a few stakeholders stated



that they appreciated CDFW is considering an tool that will support increased transparency and information sharing between CDFW and the public on all aspects of fisheries management.

- There was a discussion about what ‘risk level’ on the Dashboard mock-up refers to. A call participant emphasized that it is important CDFW clearly articulate what factors are considered in determining risk level. For example, does risk include only target species, or also consider the ecosystem and bycatch considerations? Also, how might risk scores vary across multiple gear types used in a given fishery?
 - CDFW shared that they are thinking through these types of questions, and considering what metrics may be defined (e.g., risk, sustainability level, etc.).
- Suggestions for specific information stakeholders would like to see integrated into the dashboard include:
 - Temporal considerations
 - Revenue generated by fishing licenses via CDFW’s License and Revenue Branch
 - Connections across state and federally managed fisheries
 - Recreational report card results
 - Possibly a link to the existing harvest reporting system for electronic report cards
 - Related management costs
 - Traditional ecological knowledge (working with tribes)
 - Traditional tribal fisheries (working with tribes)
 - Species specific suggestions:
 - White seabass: hatchery information
 - Sculpin: temporal considerations
 - Kelp forests: connections between kelp die-off, urchins, and impacts to fisheries and habitat

Next Steps

- Call participants and other interested stakeholders are invited to share additional feedback and insights on both the draft scaled management approach and web-based fisheries dashboard via an online questionnaire: <https://goo.gl/forms/LrJACU5tsniS8ov82>.
- Feedback on the webinar experience and the best ways to share updates and products with stakeholders is also welcomed by sending an email to MLMA@wildlife.ca.gov.
- All feedback received from the call, via the questionnaire and email, and follow up discussions with stakeholders will be considered as CDFW continues to fine-tune both the draft scaled management approach and design of the web-based Fisheries Dashboard.
- Over the coming months, CDFW will continue to host “stakeholder discussions” on key components of a [Draft Amended Framework to MLMA-based Management](#) through future webinars, workshops, discussions at the FGC Marine Resources Committee, informal gatherings, and more.
- For more information about the MLMA Master Plan Amendment Process, including future opportunities for stakeholder discussions, please visit [CDFW’s webpage](#) or contact MLMA@wildlife.ca.gov.