Science Board Meeting Report
NMFS Santa Cruz Laboratory rev. 9/9/01
May 8 -10, 2001

Status Report on Fishing Research Vessel - The NMFS Science Board received an update from J.Hotaling (F/S&T) on the production schedule for the new fishing research vessel. The FRV contract was signed on January 31, 2001 with Halter Marine, Inc. (HMI) a wholly owned subsidiary of Friede Goldman Halter Corp. After several months to assemble the financial resources necessary to meet the bonding requirements, HMI posted the required 20% financial security, and NOAA issued a notice to proceed on March 27, 2001. FGH declared Bankruptcy seeking Chapter 11 protection from their creditors on April 16, 2001 and then subsequently filed another 21 bankruptcy notices in other courts for their subsidiaries within the next few days. HMI and NOAA are both proceeding slowly, but with good intent that the contractor will be guided through the process by the court and become financially capable ultimately of performing under the contract. NMFS is working with Halter and has had several technical meetings to begin the design process. HMI has submitted the first production schedule for comment and things are progressing, albeit slowly.

HMI was notified that the contract deliverables were all being measured in the "days after " time frame from March 27th, but that the delivery date remains 36 months after January 31, 2001. No major issues have arisen under the contract to date. There have been a few design issues, such as the construction of the aluminum wheelhouse, and specifications are being worked up to inform the final decision.
ACTION: In light of the above kinds of issues, the Science Board expressed the view that there is a need for regular updates of and involvement by the Science Directors as the production of the new Fishing Research Vessel, and subsequent vessels, proceeds.

Excess Fishing Capacity Measurement Methodology - Experts Workshop - J.Ward (F/S&T) reported on the recent meeting of a group of experts convened to address the excess fishing capacity quantitative methodology. The experts included Jon Sutinen, University of Rhode Island, Bob O'Boyle, Canadian Department of Fisheries, Jim Kirkley, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Lee Anderson, University of Delaware, Cathy Morrison Paul, University of California, Davis, and Rolf Fare, Oregon State University met in Silver Spring, MD. The Alaska Science Center, Northeast Science Center, and Southeast Region sent representatives to the meeting while the Northwest and Northeast Regions and Northeast Center participated in a conference call during the meeting. The objective of the meeting was to determine if existing methods of estimating capacity utilization and its impact on fishing mortality based on short-run definitions provides useful information to fisheries managers or if medium-run measures would provide better information. The experts suggested three current and long term measures of capacity. The current metric provides a measure of capacity utilization based on the actual to potential levels of output by firms in the fishery based on biomass growth, regulatory environment, and fixed factors of production. The long term

measures would provide a measure of capacity utilization that compare actual to a target level measure of capacity determined by fishery managers to be optimal for the fishery based on the same three factors.

The consensus of the group was that (1) both current and long term measures of capacity provide useful information to fishery managers, (2) these assessments of capacity can be developed based on existing definitions of capacity, data collection programs, and capabilities, and (3) NMFS should be encouraged to conduct this type of assessment to meet its domestic obligation of increasing benefits from fishing and preserving fishing communities and its foreign agreements either by tasking its regional economists or by issuing a contract to conduct the assessments.

Action: A short layman's document describing how capacity relates to fishing mortality will be produced by F/ST1 (J.Ward) to advance the discussion and inform constituents on the utility of measuring capacity and defining excess capacity.

Sea Grant Updates

1. Joint NMFS / Sea Grant Graduate Fellowship Program in Population Dynamics and Marine Resource Economics

Of the 11 applications received for the second round of the NMFS / Sea Grant Joint Graduate Fellowship Program in Population Dynamics and Marine Resource Economics, 8 were for Population Dynamics and 3 for Marine Resource Economics. Although it was originally expected that only 4 new fellowships could be awarded this year, the funding for an additional fellowship became available when it was learned that one of the two fellowship recipients from last year would finish a year early and would not require a second year of funding. Therefore, it was decided to award 3 instead of 2 Population Dynamics fellowships.

Applicant/	University/	Major Professor/	NMFS Facility /	NMFS Mentor -
Population Dynamics				
John Walter	College of William & Mary,	VIMS John Hoenig	SEFSC, Beaufort	Douglas Vaughan
NEFSC, Woods Hole				
Paul Rago				
Michael Frisk	University of Maryland	Thomas Miller	SEFSC, Beaufort	Michael Prager
NEFSC, Narragansett				
Harold Pratt				
Ian Stewart	University of Washington	Ray Hilborn	NWFSC, Seattle	Richard Methot
Julie Neer	Louisiana State University		Kenneth Rose SEFSC, Panama City	Enric Cortéés
Bruce Thompson				
John Carlson				
Marine Resource Economics				
Reena Shaw	University of Rhode Island	Jon Sutinen	NEFSC, Woods Hole	Eric Thunberg
Michael Price	University of Maryland	Kenneth McConnell	SEFSC, Beaufort	James Waters

Six new Fellows were added to the Program in the second round of funding. With the 3 remaining Fellows to be carried over from the first round of funding (1 in Marine Resource Economics and 2 in Population Dynamics), there will be a total of 9 Fellows in the Program going into the second year. Consistent with the original plan, it is expected that the Program will increase to a total of 12 Fellows in the third and subsequent years

funded jointly by NMFS and the National Sea Grant Office. Any other Fellows funded in full by individual Centers, such as Julie Neer by the SEFSC this year, will increase the total above 12.

It is worth noting that the Program has been successful in achieving one of its implied goals, i.e., to encourage Fellows, upon completion of their studies, to pursue careers with NMFS. Ron Felthoven, one of the two Marine Resource Economics Fellows from the first year, is completing his Ph.D. a year early and has been employed by the AFSC, where he spent his internship under the mentorship of Joe Terry.

2. Long Island Sound Lobster Disaster Research
The multi-agency collaborative effort to investigate factors responsible for the 1999-2000 mass mortality of lobsters in Western Long Island Sound as well as a serious shell disease affecting lobsters in other areas of the Sound and to the east recently concluded the pre-research phase. This effort involved the NEFSC, the National Sea Grant Office (NSGO), the Connecticut and New York Sea Grant programs, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (CTDEP), the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC), and representatives of the lobster fishing industry. The pre-research phase included the identification of research needs followed by an extensive RFP process to receive, review, evaluate, and select projects for funding.

The spending plan for use of the $6.6 million in emergency funds appropriated by Congress in late June 2000 for research was approved by Congress in early November 2000. An RFP for competitive research projects, to be funded from the pool of $3.5 million (Sea Grant and State of Connecticut) was issued in late September 2000.

Out of the group of fundable projects, the State of Connecticut elected to fund three projects ($629K), while an additional 12 projects were selected for funding through the Connecticut (six projects – $1.152 million) and New York Sea Grant programs (six projects – $1.136 million). Grants to cover the research projects and outreach activities to be funded by the two Sea Grant programs have been submitted to the National Sea Grant Office, and it is expected that the awards will be made available in June/July 2001

3. Sea Grant / American Fisheries Society Fellowship in “Climate and Fisheries”
A 2-day symposium on “Fisheries in a Changing Climate”, to be held 20-21 August 2001 in Phoenix, AZ [http://www.fisheries.org/climate/climate_symposium.htm#agenda], is a highlight event of the American Fisheries Society (AFS) Annual Meeting. The planning process for this symposium has constituted the prime focus of the 18-month collaborative effort involving the AFS, NMFS, the National Sea Grant Office (NSGO), and a number of other government agencies and professional societies. The symposium agenda will include topics such as the short-and long-term effects of climate on fisheries, climate model forecasts and assessments, evidence of climate change in

aquatic systems, and the consequences and adaptations of fisheries to climate change. The slate of invited speakers is now complete (see above website) and includes a number of prominent government (including NMFS) and academic researchers who are experts in climate change and its impacts on fisheries. A number of contributed papers on this topic, although technically not part of the symposium, have been accepted and will be presented in a separate, contributed–paper session. In addition, a moderated forum will be held at the end of the symposium the evening of 21 August 2001 that will involve representatives of the various cosponsoring agencies, resource management bodies, environmental and other constituent groups, political entities, and the scientific community to discuss the main issues and concerns raised during the symposium and consider the next steps in terms of necessary research (and its funding) and political decisions.

4. Symposium on "Effects of Fishing Activities on Benthic Habitats"
Planning for a symposium on "Effects of Fishing Activities on Benthic Habitats: Linking Geology, Biology, Socioeconomics, and Management" is continuing under the guidance of co-conveners Jim Thomas (NMFS) and Peter Barnes (USGS) and a steering committee. It is now expected that the symposium will take place either 12-14 or 19-21 November 2002 at a venue yet to be determined. Cosponsoring agencies/organizations include NMFS (HC), NOS, USGS, OAR (Sea Grant and NURP), American Fisheries Society, and Ecological Society of America, with additional representation on the steering committee from the regional fishery management councils, commercial and recreational fishing interests, and the environmental community. The purpose of the symposium is to review current knowledge on the effects of fishing activities on benthic habitats, review current knowledge on habitat characterization and linkages, understand socioeconomic aspects and interconnections, identify information gaps, discuss knowledge underlying options managers face to mitigate adverse effects, and assess priority research topics and regions. Details such as an overall budget and the specific financial contributions from the cosponsoring agencies/organizations remain to be worked out.

5. Multi-Agency Research Program on Steller Sea Lions
Out of a $43.15 million NOAA FY 2001 appropriation for Steller sea lion research and restoration work (virtually all initially intended for NMFS),$6 million went to OAR, $2 million to NOS, and $2 million to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. In addition, about $5.3 million went to four nonfederal parties (State of Alaska, Alaska Sea Life Center, University
of Alaska, and North Pacific Universities Marine Mammal Research Consortium), with an additional $20 million held in reserve for future allocation to Federal and nonfederal parties.
A major organizational and planning meeting attended by about 50 representatives of all the "endowed parties" was held 24-25 January 2001 at PMEL, Seattle for the purpose of agreeing on a collaborative strategy and identifying proposed research to be conducted by each of the "endowed " parties.

The appropriations bill language specified that the OAR allocation would be used "to study the impact of ocean climate shifts on the North Pacific and Bering Sea fish and marine mammal species composition." Following a panel's evaluations, OAR agreed to fund a PMEL proposal on "Investigating relationships between North Pacific Ocean climate and Steller sea lions" for $3.38 million. Following discussions with the NOS Coastal Ocean Program, it was agreed that OAR and NOS would pool their funds for the external portion of the competition. An RFP was issued through OAR's Cooperative Institute for Arctic Research (CIFAR) located at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks for approximately $4 million. Following review by an expert panel, a total of 16 projects pertaining to the climate regime shift hypothesis and to the predator/prey hypothesis were approved for funding ($3,789,136).

On 21 March 2001, the NMFS Alaska Region issued an RFP in the Federal Register for $15
million of the $20 million originally held in reserve for proposals from both Federal and nonfederal applicants for research into a total of six topical areas: fisheries competition, environmental change, predation, anthropogenic effects, disease, and pollution. These six areas also encompass the climate regime shift and predator/prey topics assigned to OAR and NOS, respectively. The closing date for applications was 23 April 2001, with project starting dates of no earlier than 1 June 2001.

6. NMFS / Sea Grant FY 2003 Initiative in Fisheries Extension/Outreach
A $3 million joint NMFS/OAR (Sea Grant) Fisheries Extension/Outreach proposal was submitted as a Build Sustainable Fisheries (BSF) initiative for FY 2003. This initiative would provide $1 million for NMFS and $2 million for Sea Grant to develop a more comprehensive long-term educational outreach and constituent service than that currently existing within Sea Grant and which is missing within NMFS. Activities would be planned and managed by a coordinating committee in each of the five NMFS regions comprised of NMFS, Sea Grant, and constituent representatives. It would provide funds for two new FTEs (outreach staff) for NMFS per region and would help support existing or new fisheries extension agents in each of the 25 coastal Sea Grant programs. A small national coordinating group involving both NMFS and Sea Grant staff would provide general oversight for the entire program.

Support for a badly-needed outreach capability for NMFS, and linking it with the fisheries extension expertise already residing in the Sea Grant network, remains strong in Congress, with Sen. Gregg and Rep. Sam Farr (D-CA) being two in particular who would be clear advocates. Because of the congressional interest and support, it is conceivable that funding for this could appear a year early in the FY 2002 budget.

7. Aquaculture
NMFS and Sea Grant have had a cooperative relationship in aquaculture for some time. Both agencies, as well as NOS and a number of non-NOAA Federal agencies, have

collaborated in government-wide initiatives in aquaculture. In recent years, NMFS has increasingly partnered with Sea Grant through the efforts of Jim McVey (National Sea Grant Office) and Ed Rhodes (NMFS-SF). Both agencies have benefited from recent Congressional appropriations earmarked for aquaculture. Such funds went to Sea Grant in FY 1999 and to OAR in FY 2000 and FY 2001, with the bulk allocated to competitive research projects and some going to the NMFS Manchester and Milford laboratories.

The aquaculture funds allocated to OAR in FY 2001 are currently supporting a National Marine Aquaculture Initiative which was announced 27 December 2000 in the Federal Register. A total of $5 million per year for two years (the second $5 million subject to availability in FY 2002) was made available for innovative proposals from a broad range of potential applicants, including NMFS and other Federal and nonfederal agencies, in research, demonstration, regulatory issues, education / outreach, financial support, and regional and issue coordination. It is expected that final project selection will occur by about 10 June 2001, with grant starting dates of about 1 September 2001.

The most recent joint NMFS / Sea Grant effort is an FY 2003 BSF initiative to establish NOAA Aquaculture Centers of Excellence in four geographical regions (Northeast, Northwest, Hawaii, and Gulf Coast) that will be located either in NMFS Science Center laboratories or Regional Offices depending on expected efficiencies. A total of $2 million is being requested for this purpose. Additional Centers of Excellence will be established in out-years in the Southwest and Alaska. The Centers, which will each have a full-time NMFS regional aquaculture coordinator, will coordinate NMFS regional aquaculture activities (research, permitting, EFH and ESA consultations that intersect with aquaculture) and provide liaison with other Federal programs
(e.g., Sea Grant, NOS, USDA Regional Aquaculture Centers, APHIS).

International Updates

1. FAO/Rio+10 /Reykjavik Conference

The Reykjavik Conference on Responsible Fisheries in the Marine Ecosystem will be held October 1-4, 2001 in Reykjavik, Iceland. The Conference is being organized jointly by the Government of Iceland and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), with the co-sponsorship of the Government of Norway. The Reykjavik Conference will focus on the need to include ecosystem considerations in fisheries management practices and procedures. Its objectives are to:

- gather and review the best available knowledge on marine ecosystem issues,
- identify means by which ecosystem considerations can be included in fisheries management, and
- identify future challenges and relevant strategies.

The Conference will be conducted in two plenary sessions together with a Scientific Symposium in which overview papers will be presented by invited experts and followed by general discussion and questions from the floor. Proposals on how to meet the challenges of ecosystem management and proceed are expected to be formulated into a

Conference Declaration to be submitted to the 31st Session of the FAO Conference (November 2001) and to the 10th Session of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED+10) in May/June 2002. Current plans are for participation by NOAA Fisheries and Department of State, with the NOAA Fisheries Chief Scientist as head of delegation.

2. FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) Decisions & Follow-up
NMFS hosted an interagency meeting on March 20 to: (1) discuss the results of the February 26-March 2, 2001 Twenty-fourth Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries; (2) review interagency activities completed, or in process, since the end of the COFI meeting; (3) agree on actions leading up to the Twenty-fifth meeting of COFI (Spring of 2003); and (4) form interagency teams with a designated lead. Note: Robin Tuttle coordinates overall for NMFS on FAO. Stetson Tinkham/Colin McIff coordinate for DOS.

MARINE MAMMALS/FISHERIES
Lead: Cathy Campbell, NMFS/PR
Working with: DOS/OA
Action: Campbell will draft a letter to the ADG for Fisheries (I. Nomura) to be signed jointly by NOAA/NMFS and DOS: (1) expressing US concerns about the manner in which the discussion of the Japanese proposal to COFI for an FAO study of the relationship between marine mammals and fisheries was reported out of the COFI drafting committee and included in the final COFI report; and (2) strongly recommending against narrowing the study to address whale and fisheries interactions because of its highly charged political nature and because FAO lacks the staff expertise to study the issue. NMFS will reiterate these points with FAO staff through follow-up contacts. DOS will demarche copies of the letter to key countries and suggest similar letters and contacts by these countries.
Timing: ASAP

ECO-LABELING
Lead: Greg Schneider, NMFS/Fx1
Action: Schneider will follow up with USTR and within NMFS to discuss an evolved US position on ecolabeling
Timing: Prior to the February 2002 meeting of the COFI Subcommittee on Fish Trade

CATCH CERTIFICATION
Lead: Greg Schneider, NMFS/Fx1
Working with: NMFS, Customs, FWS and DOS staff conversant with the catch certification schemes and certificates of origin adopted by the Regional Fisheries Management Organizations and/or CITES.
Staff: NOAA GC -- Joel Labissionniere; Marian MacPherson;
NMFS - - Dale Jones of EN; Dean Swanson, Kim Blankenbeker and Mark Wildman of SF4; Robin Tuttle of ST3; Steve Koplin of ST2; Kim Dawson of NSIL; Pat Donnelly of SWR; and Nancy Daves of F/PR; FWS - - John Field and Sue Lieberman; Customs - -

Leo Wells and Juana Kundak;
DOS - - Stetson Tinkham and Ray Arnaudo.
Action: Schneider will convene a NMFS working group to develop a background paper on the existing schemes. Once the paper is complete, Schneider will convene an interagency group to consider harmonization options, including a possible template. Schneider will also contact FAO staff for the Subcommittee on Fish Trade (Ruckes) for information on if (or when) FAO may be considering the "expert consultation in conjunction with the regional fishery bodies concerned and taking into account the objectives of these certification schemes" noted in the report of COFI 24.
Timing: Prior to the February 2002 meeting of the COFI Subcommittee on Fish Trade. It was agreed that is a medium-term, rather than a near-term exercise. Note: ICCAT and CCAMLR next meet in October-November 2001 timeframe.

AQUACULTURE
Lead: Ed Rhodes, NMFS/SF
Working with: Joint Subcommittee on Aquaculture (Chair, Meryl Broussard of USDA); Linda Chaves NMFS/Fx1; and John Fields, FWS.
Action: Brief the JSA on the action taken by COFI to establish the Subcommittee. Contact FAO staff for information on whether the first meeting of the Subcommittee (to be hosted by China) will be in 2002 or 2003. Work within the JSA to determine U.S. representation to meetings of the Subcommittee. Note: CITES presently has no means by which to deal with maricultured product.
Timing: Contacts with FAO as soon as convenient. Brief JSA at its next meeting.

CITES
Lead: Nancy Daves, NMFS/PR
Working with: Bill Fox, NMFS/ST and Pamela Mace, NMFS/ST; Colin McIFF, DOS; Sue Lieberman and John Field, FWS
Action: Contact FAO staff (Serge Garcia) to coordinate U.S. contribution to the proposed September 2001 meeting in Namibia on listing criteria. Work with Robin Tuttle on delegation preparatory work.

STATUS AND TRENDS
Lead: Mike Sissenwine, NMFS/NEC
Action: Work through the Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research and with FAO staff to plan the FAO Technical Consultation to consider the draft IPOA on Status and Trends Reporting. (Note: Sissenwine chairs the ACFR.)
Timing: As soon as convenient

SUBSIDIES
Lead: Colin McIff, DOS
Working with: John Ward, NMFS/ST2; Matteo Milazzo, NMFS/ST1; Greg Schneider, NMFS/Fx1
Action: Continue work in support of OECD and WTO fisheries trade-related activities.

Coordinate ongoing and planned work in OECD, WTO, COFI Subcommittee on Fish Trade, and LaJolla II Expert Consultation on Reducing Fishing Capacity. Maintain contact with FAO staff on plans for expert and technical consultations.
Timing: Ongoing

IPOA-IUU
Lead: Dave Balton, DOS
Working with: NOAA GC -- Joel Labissionniere; Maggie Hays; Michele Kuruc
NMFS - - Dale Jones and Gene Proulx of EN; Dean Swanson, Kim Blankenbeker and Mark Wildman of SF4; Robin Tuttle of ST3; Steve Koplin of ST2; Kim Dawson of NSIL; Pat Donnelly of SWR; Greg Schneider of FX1; and Nancy Daves of F/PR; FWS - - John Fields and Sue Lieberman; Customs - - Leo Wells and Juana Kundak; DOS - - Stetson Tinkham and Ray Arnaudo
Coast Guard -- Mike Cerne
Action: Convene a meeting of the interagency group to: (1) begin the process of developing a national plan of action; and (2) consider how to best use the IPOA in international settings even before the national plan of action is developed; i.e., as soon as possible.
Timing: Within the next month or so.

MARINE TURTLES
Lead: Barbara Schroeder, NMFS/PR3
Working with: Therese Conant, NMFS/PR3 Dean Swanson, NMFS/ST4; DOS -- Dave Balton, Stetson Tinkam, Melissa Haltuch
Action: Develop proposal for APEC FWG to aid in funding the NMFS sea turtle workshop (to be completed by the end of March). Continue discussions of the scope, sponsorship and funding of an international workshop to address sea turtle bycatch.
Timing: Continuing

2. Arctic Council -
R.Tuttle (F/ST3) reported on an April 23, 2001, meeting regarding the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee (IARPC) Resolution on Bering Sea Assessment. In attendance were: John Calder and Tom Murray of OAR (Arctic Research Office); Don Scavia, Gary Matlock, Jawed Hameedi , and Don Pryor of NOS (Center for Coastal Monitoring and Assessment); and Lamarr Trott, Robin Tuttle and Suzanne Bolton of NMFS (Office of Science and Technology).

The IARPC resolution states that the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee authorizes the establishment of an Interagency Working Group on Bering Sea Assessment and authorizes the working group to develop a coordinated approach to implementation of an integrated assessment for a sustainable Bering Sea.

J.Calder has, for the past year, served as the chair of an IARPC working group to develop an interagency research plan for a Study of Environmental Arctic Change

(SEARCH). The U.S. federal agencies that conduct scientific activities in the Arctic have agreed that greater attention must be given to Arctic environmental processes and their potential impacts on the biosphere, including human social and economic well being. Many of these agencies have joined together to support SEARCH. The SEARCH program will consist of research, monitoring, and analysis activities to track and quantify environmental changes in the Arctic, distinguish causative factors, assess environmental and socioeconomic impacts, provide an analysis of the changes that may be expected in the future, and provide outreach to policy makers and the public. Planning for SEARCH has been completed and agencies with an interest in participating in coordinated research have been asked to consider FY 2003 funding. (Note: OAR is looking at "Zero to very little" as the OAR commitment.)

IARPC is now considering an integrated assessment for the Bering Sea in response to recent findings by the Arctic Research Commission that:
- - there is insufficient integration among key Bering Sea research programs
- - current research does not enable managers to predict ecological responses to management decisions implemented within the Bering Sea region. Suzanne Marcy of EPA's Anchorage Office has volunteered to chair the IARPC working group planning for the assessment. It is IARPC's understanding that should work continue beyond the planning stage, implementation would shift from EPA, probably to NOAA, and possibly also, to Department of the Interior. The shift would not likely occur for several years.

The assessment is described in a scoping paper developed as a three step process including (1) a planning phase involving scientists and managers, (2) development of a scientific conceptual framework for integration, and (3) data analysis and interpretation. The assessment is intended to generate further research planning and implementation. After the assessment is completed, IARPC will forward its recommendations to Congress.

Participation on the working group is voluntary by agency, but NOAA will be responding as a single agency, not by AA. D. Scavia will serve on the working group for NOS. B.Hines will serve for NMFS, however, NMFS reserves the right to drop out of the exercise if it proves to be duplicative of NMFS Bering Sea efforts or otherwise a waste of time.

American Fisheries Society (AFS) Publication of NMFS Documents - Following a presentation at the January/February 2001 meeting of the Science Board by American Fisheries Society Executive Director, G. Rassam, the Science Board agreed to take under advisement the proposal by AFS to take over the publication of the NMFS publications: Marine Fisheries Review and Fisheries Bulletin. The Science Board agreed that more information was needed and that specifications for undertaking responsibilities should be developed by F/ST and then discussions with AFS should be pursued.
ACTION: The Office of S&T (J.Everett) will develop the specifications and constraints to be addressed when considering the publication of NOAA Fisheries' scientific journals and then B.Fox (F/ST) will initiative further discussions with AFS and report back to the

September Science Board meeting.

Advanced Technology Working Group - B.Karp (F/AKC) reported on the work of the Advanced Technology Working Group (ATWG) and restated the recommendations contained in the Working Group memorandum dated March 26, 2001. The Science Board did not agree to any specific mechanism for funding or approving travel related to the ATWG.
ACTION: The Science Board agreed to the following recommendations:
a) the Office of Marine and Aircraft Operations will be encouraged to continue to participate in the work of the ATWG; b) the ATWG will be kept apprised of the activities of the Census of Marine Life program so that opportunities for involvement by NMFS scientists are maximized; c) B.Karp will continue to represent NMFS on the SCOR working group on advanced technologies for observing marine life; d) requests for advice from the ATWG should be channeled through F/ST; and e) support for a website for the ATWG will be provided by F/ST.

Freedom of Information Act - The Alaska Science Center Acting Director, J. Coe, reviewed some of the issues surrounding the activities associated with responding to FOIA requests. The principal problems relate to the heavy workload associated with responding to FOIA requests and concerns about releasing data prior to its synthesis and analysis. The regulations governing the keeping of an administrative record are one area that should be researched in order to determine if new or expanded guidelines are needed, however, the problem of scientific data is part of the larger problem with administrative record-keeping and management of our data bases. The NMFS National Information Management Board (NIMB) will recommend that the Executive Board task F/OMI with studying the nexus between data management/record management/FOIA obligations and other litigation requirements under ESA, NEPA, MMPA etc.
ACTION: The Science Board recommendation that the NIMB review the issue of record-keeping and convey its recommendations to the Executive Board for action by the appropriate office(s) OMI and GCF.

OMI - Science Board Discussion - The Acting Director of the Office of Management and Information, A.Risenhoover, was able to join the Science Board for a telephone conference call to discuss the following issues under the purview of F/OMI:
Budget Restructuring - The new stream-lined budget line organization was reviewed and the change from 76 budget lines to 12 lines that reflect the 3 strategic elements plus enforcement were noted.
ACTION: The Science Board recommended that the budget lines related to the Habitat Conservation element be developed in parallel with the others, i.e., with research and management as the sub-elements.
New Documentation in Support of NOAA Fisheries Budget - The Science Board and OMI Director agreed to the need for documenting the increase in positive outputs or products by NOAA Fisheries that have resulted from the increased funding to the Agency over the last two years. The document should record - “here’s what you got for your

money" - to the Congress and general public.
ACTION: The Science Board recommended that F/OMI take the lead in producing this document and the Science Centers stand ready to respond to this request.
Budget Formulation for Fiscal Year 2003 - The OMI Director reviewed the priorities contained in the current draft budget request for FY03. The Science Board questioned some of the identified priorities and reiterated concerns about how those priorities are derived.
ACTION: The Science Board agreed that in the future the Science Board should devote significant portion of two of its annual meetings to reviewing budget development and execution. The September 2001 Science Board meeting will include identification of priorities for budget formulation as a primary topic.
Training Programs - The OMI Director described the training opportunities that OMI supports - i.e., Advanced Studies/LCDP/Rotational Assignment Program. B.Fox explained on behalf of the Science Board that a more comprehensive suite of training programs is needed to develop the skill sets needed to advance the competencies of the Agency's workforce. Both in-service training and Academic Centers of Excellence should be part of a comprehensive plan to improve and develop NOAA Fisheries' workforce capabilities. The Science Board has discussed the commitment needed at the leadership level of the Agency to do both the baseline workforce assessment and gap analysis that will provide the foundation for designing quality development programs and to establish a viable and productive training agenda for NMFS.
ACTION: The Science Board recommended that the need for an Agency-wide assessment and review of existing training programs be referred to the Executive Board for discussion and that the recommendation that OMI and S&T have joint responsibility for developing a comprehensive approach be also forwarded to the Leadership Council.

Methodologies for Data-Poor Situations Workshop - P.Mace (F/ST) reported on the preparations for the Workshop on Data-Poor Situations scheduled for May 30-31, 2001, at the NOAA Fisheries Alaska Science Center. The objectives for the Workshop are:
1. To discuss and evaluate methods currently being used by Fishery Management Councils, or under development by Councils, SSCs, or NMFS scientists, to characterize status determination criteria in data poor situations; i.e. methods for determining thresholds associated with "overfishing" and "overfished" when MSY-based reference points cannot be estimated explicitly or such estimates are deemed unreliable.
(Note that the interpretation of "data-poor" should be broad in the sense that, even for species for which considerable data exist, there may be considerable uncertainty in the estimation of MSY-based reference points.)
2. To share information on the types of Status Determination Criteria methodologies being employed in different regions and to evaluate their applicability to other species/regions.
3. To augment the range of methods currently available for characterizing SDC, while still satisfying the MSFCMA and the National Standard 1 guidelines; i.e. to enhance flexibility while maintaining scientific validity.

Prior to the workshop, representatives from each Council or region should compile a brief description of methodology or methodologies currently being used or developed for species under that region's jurisdiction. Regional summary documents and other submissions will be circulated to participants within 10 days prior to the workshop.
ACTION: F/ST (B.Fox) will report on the preparations for the Workshop on Methologies for Data-Poor Situations to the Council Chairs meeting, May 23, 2001, in Key West, Florida.

National Stock Assessment Workshop - P.Mace (F/ST) reported that the dates being considered for the NSAW are 12/4-6/2001 and 12/11-13/2001 in Santa Cruz. The possible topics include: overfishing definition, rebuilding plans including the economic considerations and assessment methodologies. The Workshop will be designed with a discussion rather than presentation format with the end-product to be guidelines on the chosen topic.

Stock Assessment Improvement Plan - The Stock Assessment Improvement Plan (SAIP) was reported by P.Mace (F/ST) to be close to completion.
ACTION: Once finalized, the Science Directors should sign-off on the final SAIP because the report provides the research priorities for each Science Center.

NOAA Science Advisory Board Meeting - The NOAA Science Advisory Board (SAB) Meeting, scheduled for June 26-28, 2001, in Santa Cruz, California, will focus, in large part, on fisheries issues. The interest of the NOAA SAB in fisheries issues was raised during the April NOAA SAB meeting when several of the SAB members in response to the Overview of Fisheries Modernization presented by B.Fox, expanded upon some of the constraints under which NOAA Fisheries operates. At its May meeting, the NMFS Science Board discussed possible topics for consideration by the SAB and recommended that F/ST(B.Fox) meet with the SAB Chair and Executive Director to develop an agenda that will serve both SAB's and NOAA Fisheries purposes. Two topics highlighted by the Science Board were: (a) Designing a blueprint for developing effective partnerships with academia for research that is used for regulatory advice; and (b) Utilizing information technology to handle record-keeping and data management in a litigious environment.
ACTION: F/ST (B.Fox/B.Rootes) will meet with the NOAA SAB leadership to offer these topics and to assist in the development of the agenda for the June NOAA SAB meeting.

Recreational Data Workshop - During recent meetings with constituents, the NOAA Fisheries Leadership has made reference to hosting a workshop to look at how data is best collected from recreational fisheries under quota management. The Science Board was informed by F/ST (B.Fox) that preparations for a workshop on this topic will be initiated in the near future and any recommendations for agenda items or deficiencies concerning recreational data collection should be forwarded to F/ST (B.Fox and M.Osborn).

National Research Council Workplan - Ideas and input on future topics for consideration by the National Research Council's Ocean Studies Board/Fisheries Subcommittee were solicited from the Science Board. The Science Board agreed that a new study topic for recommendation to the OSB/Fisheries Subcommittee was *cooperative research.* Some of the questions/issues to be examined include - designing a blueprint for doing it right! What are some of the main design problems, what is realistic to randomize, how to go about setting up a calibration pool of vessels. What are some of the limitations to cooperative research and what are some of the more difficult issues - such as - data confidentiality and data access and how have they been successfully addressed?
ACTION: The Office of S&T (B.Fox) will provide the recommended topic - cooperative research - to the OSB. All Science Directors are invited to attend the July OSB/Fisheries Committee meeting in Woods Hole in July.

Best Scientific Information Available (BSIA)
A presentation on Best Scientific Information Available (BSIA) was prepared by B.Fox and reviewed briefly. The Science Board discussion outlined the need to define clearly the Science Centers' role in decision-making and highlighted that while the Science Center provided scientific advice, the Centers were not the sole source of information.
ACTION: The Science Board agreed that comments on the presentation should be provided to B.Fox.

Center for Independent Experts (CIE)
The list and status of reviews by the CIE was reviewed by the Science Board. Questions were raised by the Science Board concerning which reviews warrant a response and which reviews do not. The Science Board agreed the policy needs to be defined regarding which reviews should be responded to. Questions regarding the publication policy of CIE reviews were also raised and the Science Board agreed that clarification should be sought in the CIE contract language but that no change to the publication policy should be made.

Science Quality Assurance Program
The Science Board received a briefing on the Science Quality Assurance Program (SQAP) by L.Clarke and the results of the SQAP Questionaire.

NMFS/NOS Collaboration Papers
Following the February NMFS Science Board/NOS one-day retreat, papers on possible topics for collaboration between NOS and NMFS scientists were prepared by NMFS/NOS teams. The paper topics were: a)Harmful Algae Blooms; b) Habitat Characterization; c) Fisheries Oceanography; d) Restoration Science; e) Marine Protected Areas; and f) Forensics Science. With the exception of the last topic, the Science Board agreed that the papers were a useful description of possible areas for collaboration. The Forensic Science paper had not been completed.

ACTION: B.Fox will explore with NOS possible next steps to address these topics.