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1 **CARIBBEAN FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**
2 **155TH REGULAR COUNCIL/DAP MEETING**
3 **Verdanza Hotel**
4 **San Juan, Puerto Rico**

5
6 March 17, 2016
7

8 The Caribbean Fishery Management Council convened jointly with
9 the District Advisory Panels at the Verdanza Hotel, San Juan,
10 Puerto Rico, Thursday morning, March 17, 2016, and was called to
11 order at 9:00 o'clock a.m. by Chairman Carlos Farchette.

12 **CALL TO ORDER**
13

14
15 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Good morning. We're going to get started
16 here. We're going to do a roll call. I am going to start on my
17 left with Blanchard. Before you go, this is the 155th Caribbean
18 Fishery Management Council meeting, being held at the Verdanza
19 Hotel, San Juan, Puerto Rico. It's March 17, 2016.
20

21 **TONY BLANCHARD:** Tony Blanchard, St. Thomas, council.
22

23 **MARCOS HANKE:** Marcos Hanke, Vice Chair, Puerto Rico, charter
24 operator.
25

26 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Carlos Farchette, council chair.
27

28 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Miguel Rolon, council staff.
29

30 **IRIS LOWERY:** Iris Lowery, NOAA GC, Southeast Section.
31

32 **BILL ARNOLD:** Bill Arnold, NOAA Fisheries.
33

34 **CARLOS VELASQUEZ:** Carlos Velasquez, council member, commercial
35 sector.
36

37 **LIVIA MONTALVO:** Livia Montalvo, council staff.
38

39 **KATE QUIGLEY:** Kate Quigley, council staff.
40

41 **GREG ENGSTROM:** Greg Engstrom, commercial fisherman, Rincon,
42 Puerto Rico.
43

44 **GARY ROGERS:** Gary Rogers, DAP, Puerto Rico.
45

46 **ROBERTO SILVA:** Roberto Silva, DAP, Puerto Rico.
47

48 **GERSON MARTINEZ:** Gerson Martinez, DAP, St. Croix.

1
2 **CARMEN RIVERA:** Carmen Rivera, DAP, Puerto Rico.
3
4 **MIKE FULLER:** Mike Fuller, DAP, St. Croix.
5
6 **PATRICIA SKOV:** Patricia Skov, DAP, St. Croix.
7
8 **LEDA DUNMIRE:** Leda Dunmire, Pew Charitable Trust.
9
10 **YASMIN VELEZ:** Yasmin Velez, Pew Charitable Trust, DAP, Puerto
11 Rico.
12
13 **JESSE RIVERA:** Jesse Rivera, DAP member, fisherman, Puerto Rico,
14 east coast.
15
16 **ROBERTO REYES:** Roberto Reyes, Puerto Rico, DAP.
17
18 **TOM DALEY:** Tom Daley, DAP panel, St. Croix.
19
20 **CEDRIC TAQUIN:** Cedric Taquin, chef and fisherman in Arecibo,
21 DAP member.
22
23 **GREGORY LEDEE:** Gregory Ledee, commercial fisherman, DAP member.
24
25 **LANCE MAANUM:** Lance Maanum, DAP, St. Thomas, business owner and
26 recreational fisherman.
27
28 **HECTOR BENITEZ:** Hector Benitez, DAP, Puerto Rico, commercial.
29
30 **ISRAEL UMPIERRE:** Israel Umpierre.
31
32 **HELENA ANTOUN:** Helena Antoun, contractor.
33
34 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Thank you. First on the agenda, we have the
35 District Advisory Panel Individual Meeting Recommendations to
36 the Council. Miguel.
37
38 **MIGUEL ROLON:** We will have this joint meeting and the DAP Chair
39 of Puerto Rico is here, because they finished yesterday
40 analyzing with the SSC the species groupings that will be
41 recommended to the council at the June meeting.
42
43 Also, the Puerto Rico component met yesterday evening and you
44 have certain recommendations that you want to give this council
45 at this time. Then we will follow with a discussion of the
46 goals and objectives of the island-based FMPs. Here, we do not
47 pretend for you to select all the goals and objectives at the
48 same time, but just we want to discuss with the council members

1 what this means and where we go from here.

2
3 Then we need to provide guidance to the staff as to the ABC
4 control rule. Yesterday, you saw, during the SSC meeting, the
5 presentation by Dr. Clay Porch. If you remember the slide that
6 had like a roadmap of this is where we are and we will follow
7 with a small committee for the ABC control rule and all of that,
8 but we are going to discuss that too, because the goals and
9 objectives of the fishery and the fishermen, and all of that
10 will be integrated.

11
12 In Other Business, if you have something to say in Other
13 Business now, you can address that to the Chair, for the
14 Adoption of the Agenda. Mr. Chairman, if you open the floor for
15 any other business.

16
17 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

18
19 **ISRAEL UMPIERRE:** I have other business. I just want to set the
20 record straight on the DAP members. I was the Chairman and a
21 DAP member and I was removed from the position.

22
23 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Point taken. We will pick that up under the
24 Administrative Committee meeting for the June council meeting.
25 Any other business? Hearing none --

26
27 **DISTRICT ADVISORY PANEL INDIVIDUAL MEETING RECOMMENDATIONS**
28 **PUERTO RICO**

29
30 **MIGUEL ROLON:** At this time, we want to hear from you regarding
31 the recommendations from the Puerto Rico DAP. Also, if you need
32 any assistance from the members of your group that want to
33 expand on any of the points, you can ask them to do so.

34
35 **NELSON CRESPO:** Good morning, everyone. When the meeting from
36 yesterday finished, we met here in this room, all the DAP panel
37 from Puerto Rico. That is what is coming up of our
38 recommendations.

39
40 In order to effectively provide feedback of the main issues to
41 be discussed during the meetings, we need to receive meeting
42 materials at least one week in advance. This way, we will be
43 able to carefully review documents and provide good input and
44 recommendations as necessary.

45
46 The transition to island-based fishery management plans takes
47 into consideration the socioeconomic, cultural, and ecological
48 differences among Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

1 However, there are differences between regions in Puerto Rico.
2 For example, we may have different names for species in the east
3 and the west coast of Puerto Rico or even catch different
4 species. Sometimes species that are in one area have no
5 commercial value and in others have a lot of commercial value.
6 That's on the east coast in Puerto Rico and an example that
7 Marcos and Carlos Velasquez said yesterday. That needs to be
8 taken into consideration when developing the fishery management
9 plans.

10
11 The most recent data we have on fisheries is very poor data. We
12 recommend that the council use data from 2010 and back twenty
13 years to determine ACLs. Fisheries data in Puerto Rico, from
14 the last few years, is very contaminated. We recommend
15 establishing, as soon as the council can, and we know that you
16 are getting to that, to move to establish an electronic data
17 reporting system and allowing for two to four years of buffer,
18 in order to develop a good management plan. If some of the guys
19 want to add something, now is the moment.

20

21 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Carlos Velasquez.

22

23 **CARLOS VELASQUEZ:** Very quickly, remember one thing, guys. The
24 whole coast in Puerto Rico, west coast, east coast, north coast,
25 and south coast, are all different fisheries with all different
26 types of fishing and different prices of fish and different
27 class of fishing, but I remember -- This is a good point for
28 Nelson. Remember for the focus of different fisheries and types
29 of fishing, all fishing. Thank you.

30

31 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Blanchard.

32

33 **TONY BLANCHARD:** Nelson makes a very good point, but I have a
34 question as to the Puerto Rican panel. You have guys that
35 represent the east and the west coast of Puerto Rico, correct,
36 on the panel. You've got guys that represent the north and the
37 south coast as well? You have a wide spectrum that covers the
38 whole island? Okay.

39

40 The point I'm trying to make here is that Nelson is right. If
41 you go to St. Thomas, there is a certain set of people that will
42 refer to a fish by one name. You go to the other set of guys
43 and they refer to it with a completely different name, and so
44 maybe we need to have the different names associated with that
45 fish to make sure that these guys are all on the same page.

46

47 Like Marcos was saying, maybe on one side of the island the fish
48 does not have any value, but on the other side it does, and so

1 this is the point I'm going to bring to Puerto Rico, the Puerto
2 Rican panel. When you have those kind of issues, you need to
3 make sure that it's clear to the council, so we know exactly
4 what we're looking at and not just part of the overall picture.

5
6 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Roberto Silva.

7
8 **ROBERTO SILVA:** The quantity of the species is too much. Maybe,
9 for example, the groupers -- Many of them, I don't know what
10 kind of grouper it is, but many of them don't have a good
11 commercial value. We need to begin with less species and we
12 need two or three years to improve that model when we've got a
13 good electronic data or another system, because that is the
14 historical problem in Puerto Rico. That's the best scientific
15 data and it's the worst.

16
17 We can hand in year-by-year and ten years and twenty years, but
18 we need to start from the beginning. I don't know -- I am still
19 around the Caribbean Fishery Management for a couple of years
20 and we -- I feel that we are in the same circle and we don't
21 jump ahead. We can't jump ahead until we fix the data and we
22 make a model or something like that. I know we need to improve
23 something, but, right now, we have to call and give the right
24 name to that situation. Thank you.

25
26 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Tom Daley.

27
28 **TOM DALEY:** I am concerned about the species that we have just
29 visited or grouped. Some of those species are already under
30 some sort of regulations, and so my concern is what's going to
31 be done if what we are not doing is not double-jeopardy.

32
33 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Before you go any further with that, we have
34 to wait until they bring the information from upstairs here, so
35 we can discuss what you're discussing now.

36
37 **TOM DALEY:** Yes, but I'm just letting you know that there's a
38 concern. There's a concern. I wouldn't expect that it --

39
40 **MIGUEL ROLON:** It's just that what we are addressing is only the
41 Puerto Rico DAP at this time, because we need to allow the St.
42 Croix and the St. Thomas Chairs to finish what they're doing
43 upstairs. They will be down here. At that time, we will be
44 able to open further discussion of those two.

45
46 **TOM DALEY:** Okay, and there's another area of concern. St.
47 Croix, unlike Puerto Rico or maybe St. Thomas --

48

1 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Daley, we ain't doing St. Croix now. We are
2 doing Puerto Rico right now.

3

4 **TOM DALEY:** Yes, but I'm talking about the closed areas.

5

6 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Only Puerto Rico. You have to talk about
7 Puerto Rico and not St. Croix. Roberto Reyes.

8

9 **ROBERTO REYES:** I have two questions and two concerns. The
10 first one is with hogfish, and we call it capitán in Puerto
11 Rico. They were closed this past season for the commercial
12 fishermen and what I heard was that it was because of the
13 puddingwife and the Spanish hogfish are together with them, with
14 the capitán, with the hogfish.

15

16 I would like to see it separated, to see the information comes
17 from one single species to know the amount of pounds that they
18 got from that species, because you can ask any of the Puerto
19 Rican fishermen here, but normally the puddingwife and the
20 Spanish hogfish is not a species that's hunted and,
21 commercially, it's got no value at all.

22

23 Normally, maybe for the aquarium -- We will have to ask if the
24 aquarium uses them, but it would be like small fish. That's my
25 question. I have another one, if you don't mind, when you
26 finish with this one.

27

28 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Hanke.

29

30 **MARCOS HANKE:** I have a question for you, Roberto, and this is
31 also addressing the same issue with the hogfish. The way I see
32 it, I think the hogfish, the ones you fish with traps, for
33 example, is a different than when you fish with a spear gun,
34 just as an example.

35

36 You can be very precise in what you catch, and probably the
37 target species for you, in terms of hogfish, are the hogfish,
38 the capitán, the one that grows very big. I think the DAP and
39 the council should explore the idea of managing maybe
40 differently, putting the ACLs in maybe differently from the
41 recreational side and the commercial side, for those reasons.
42 The recreational, especially with the harpoon, they can be very
43 selective. There is no bycatch on that in terms of --

44

45 **ROBERTO REYES:** Yes, but it's not closed for the recreational.
46 There is no closure for the recreational.

47

48 **MARCOS HANKE:** I know, but once we establish now the hogfish --

1
2 **ROBERTO REYES:** I'm just fighting for the commercial here.
3
4 **MARCOS HANKE:** I know, but once we go -- Now that we have to
5 redo, we should consider that. I want to hear your opinion
6 about that.
7
8 **ROBERTO REYES:** I agree with that. Actually, that's my next
9 question.
10
11 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Go ahead.
12
13 **ROBERTO REYES:** My next question is that all these laws are
14 going to be implemented to both sides, the recreational and the
15 commercial? It's the same? Is it going to be like that?
16
17 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** That's a good question.
18
19 **ROBERTO REYES:** The question is if that all of these laws in the
20 EEZ are going to be the same for the commercial and the
21 recreational.
22
23 **MIGUEL ROLON:** No, it all depends on the species that we'll be
24 talking about, and that will be further along the line. We will
25 develop the fishery management plans and each sector,
26 recreational and commercial, will be addressed accordingly. As
27 we discussed outside here, some of the species may be allocated
28 to recreational fishing more than commercial fishing, or vice
29 versa.
30
31 There are many of the species that are not as important for the
32 commercial fishery as they are for the recreational, as we all
33 know, and so that will be discussed further.
34
35 Mr. Chairman, some of you asked me whether the DAPs will have
36 another opportunity to discuss this, and yes, you will have an
37 opportunity along the way to discuss each one of these topics.
38 For example, when we get the final -- Not the final, but the
39 final draft list of species that the council is supposed to be
40 addressing, we will have a meeting also. Not a meeting like
41 this, but a separate meeting for each DAP to address the list of
42 species, to address the other actions that we have to take in
43 each FMP.
44
45 **ROBERTO REYES:** My other comment is about also Puerto Rico, one
46 of the species. The parrotfish, commercially, there is not too
47 much interest on it, but, recreationally, especially for the
48 charters, especially for the ones that I do that are

1 spearfishing, there is no bycatch and we need at least that you
2 give us the opportunity for one per boat, even one per boat per
3 week will do, because we have clients that want them, at least
4 trying to get them and not necessarily -- They don't want many
5 of them, but they would like to get at least one.

6
7 I would have liked it to be the bigger ones, but I tried that
8 already and it turned on me, and so I just would like for any of
9 the species and not one from each species, but for any of the
10 species, at least to have the opportunity to take clients to be
11 able to go after one of them and not to be a complete closure
12 for the recreational.

13
14 **MARCOS HANKE:** I think you clarified it, but I want to make
15 sure. Your request includes the three species of parrotfish and
16 the spotlight and the other ones?

17
18 **ROBERTO REYES:** I don't want to split them, because I already
19 tried on the federal for only the three big ones, and it turned
20 on me and those are especially the -- The ones that I wanted are
21 the ones that got closed. The problem is that I split them on a
22 meeting like this and my mother was sick and I had to go midday
23 and what I was trying to do was to be able to take at least from
24 those species, because the three world records in spearfishing
25 have been -- The last three have been from Puerto Rico.

26
27 The two last world records were from midnight parrotfish.
28 Spearfishing world records have been from Puerto Rico, and so I
29 have evidence that it's not that there is a lack of them. If
30 you go to the books, you might not be selling them, because they
31 don't fit in the traps and stuff like that, but then I left.
32 When I split them, you guys took away from me what I only
33 wanted, because there are less of them and there are so many of
34 the smaller ones and I wanted to prohibit all the other ones and
35 then what you prohibited was the ones that I wanted.

36
37 Now, if we are going to do something, I am not even splitting
38 them. I am not even moving for you to -- I just want the
39 opportunity to be able to take clients to have the chance to go
40 after one fish as spearfishing. There is not going to be any
41 bycatch spearfishing.

42
43 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** I believe that -- I might be wrong, but there
44 is a bag limit for parrotfish in the EEZ for recreational
45 harvest, but not the three species that are prohibited, but the
46 other species. I think there is a bag limit on recreational.
47 Bill.

48

1 **BILL ARNOLD:** We manage ten species of parrotfish. Three of
2 them, midnight, blue, and rainbow, are prohibited harvest. The
3 other seven, they are accessible by both the commercial and the
4 recreational fisheries. They do have limits, but they are --
5 You are allowed to catch them.

6
7 **ROBERTO REYES:** They were talking about prohibiting it
8 completely. No? If that's the case --

9
10 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Let's clarify this. Some of the species that are
11 prohibited are not prohibited because of socioeconomic reasons.
12 They are prohibited because of biological reasons, and some of
13 them you cannot allow them to fish for. You may call it a
14 record, but other people would call it killing the mother of the
15 big blue parrotfishes.

16
17 All of this -- The point is that we don't need to continue
18 discussing all these topics at this time, but I thank Roberto
19 for bringing it up, because at the next DAP meetings those
20 issues will be discussed, but I don't want anybody leaving here
21 thinking that if you have a prohibited species that -- That the
22 rationale for not allowing to fish for those species is very
23 strong, from the point of view of biology, that you will be
24 allowed a bag limit to kill one. It's like the Japanese having
25 an allotment to kill the whales when they are not supposed to
26 kill anything.

27
28 The point is that it's in the open and we have to include this
29 in the record. For the next meetings during 2016, all of this
30 will have to be re-addressed and reaffirmed, but I don't want
31 anybody to leave here without those questions being answered by
32 us in terms of the process that we are going to follow.

33
34 **ROBERTO REYES:** Can I make just a quick comment? The idea that
35 I had of being allowed to get the big one and not the small ones
36 is because if you want the grazers, if you want the most of them
37 to be in contact with the corals, it's the other species which
38 is much more than these three species. Actually, what I wanted
39 was two of them, two of the bigger ones, the rainbow and the
40 midnight. That's it.

41
42 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Blanchard and then Velasquez.

43
44 **TONY BLANCHARD:** Let me ask this question to the council,
45 because I need some verification from Miguel. Does it have any
46 regulations on these three parrotfish in state waters? Really,
47 Roberto, the only place we're talking about is the EEZ waters.
48 You understand that, right?

1
2 **ROBERTO REYES:** Yes, I know.
3
4 **TONY BLANCHARD:** Okay, and so that's the point I'm trying to
5 bring across. The other part of it, where he was talking about
6 the hogfish, the Spanish hogfish, repeat the question that was
7 asked earlier, because I forgot what you asked.
8
9 **ROBERTO REYES:** The question was that they closed -- For the
10 commercial, they closed the fishery for all hogfish. When I
11 asked about how many they got from what we call capitán, the big
12 one, they told me that probably it was because -- They closed
13 the species because of the puddingwife, which is a -- Nobody
14 gets them here and the Spanish hogfish, which is like half blue
15 and half yellow.
16
17 They closed the fisheries to you guys because of supposedly
18 there is too many of the smaller species being taken and then
19 sold. What I was asking is they should split the big hogfish
20 and the other and put them in a different category, so that we
21 know exactly what's going on with how many pounds you get of
22 each species. That was the concern.
23
24 **TONY BLANCHARD:** Okay, and so let me pose this question to
25 Marcos, since you represent Puerto Rico. Would that be
26 workable?
27
28 **MARCOS HANKE:** Could you ask that again?
29
30 **TONY BLANCHARD:** Would separating the two different species of
31 hogfish, two groups, would that be possible for Puerto Rico to
32 work with?
33
34 **MARCOS HANKE:** This is what I suggest, yes.
35
36 **TONY BLANCHARD:** Okay.
37
38 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Just for the record, Marcos doesn't represent
39 Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico is not here today, but yes, they can
40 do that. If they have a rationale for reviewing the form that
41 they used to split the species and all that, they will do it.
42
43 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** I have Velasquez and then Roberto Silva.
44
45 **CARLOS VELASQUEZ:** Robert, for you, is it for the commercial
46 sector or the recreational sector for the parrotfish?
47
48 **ROBERTO REYES:** I was asking -- Since Puerto Ricans don't

1 actually sell -- They are not selling most of the parrotfish,
2 and I'm just talking about the recreational in the parrotfish,
3 because of -- If you talk about hogfish, they were closed for
4 only seven pounds. I mean it's crazy, I think, but parrotfish,
5 recreational.

6
7 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Silva.

8
9 **ROBERTO SILVA:** We tried to configure many ideas on the road in
10 these meetings. I am suggesting to the Caribbean Fishery
11 Management Council to maybe prepare our meeting before one week
12 before these big meetings to prepare to be all in -- Maybe in
13 the council and to get a meeting with the DAP of Puerto Rico to
14 prepare a better position on that. We are clarified on that
15 situation, because we don't have any data before, and the first
16 time we see all the data is on the road here. We can make a
17 better job if we got the data before.

18
19 **MIGUEL ROLON:** You keep forgetting the reason why we had this
20 meeting. The first was for the DAP people to see how the SSC
21 works. We were able to have the benefit of the Chair of the SSC
22 asking the questions to the DAP Chairs about the lists of
23 species that we have, but you still have a chance, in several
24 meetings, to do what Roberto is asking. You will have a meeting
25 of each of the DAPs where we will have the information and we
26 will discuss this.

27
28 This is not the last time that you will see this list, and this
29 is not the day that we are going to definitely adopt the list of
30 species. You will have an opportunity to react to the council
31 proposal and the list of species, and rest assured that we will
32 take that very seriously. You will have the information in
33 front of you and you will have an opportunity then to express
34 your views on each one of the items that we have.

35
36 There are certain things that you can jump up and down until you
37 turn blue and they won't be changed. The way that we collect
38 the statistics, there are certain things that have to be kept
39 that way because the law says so and all of that, but, still,
40 there is room for improvement.

41
42 Actually, at the next DAP meeting, Roberto suggested to talk
43 about electronic reporting and see what we have. Actually, I
44 thought we were going to include that in Other Business, but
45 when we have time here, we can start talking seriously about the
46 possibility of moving ahead with an electronic data collection
47 system.

48

1 Nelson, do you have any other recommendations that you think was
2 not included from your meeting yesterday? Also, I would like to
3 hear from your group if you have recommendations as to what
4 agenda items you would like to see at your next DAP meeting.
5 The same is true for the other two groups.

6
7 **NELSON CRESPO:** At the moment, no other recommendations, but I
8 support strongly what Roberto Silva says. We have to discuss
9 and we have to move to the electronic data reporting. That's
10 the key to have better management here.

11
12 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Cedric.

13
14 **CEDRIC TAQUIN:** Just adding to this electronic data, I've been
15 thinking for a while, and I wanted to add this really fast,
16 about how it would probably be important to also get data from,
17 for example, my side of this, which is being a restaurant and a
18 fish buyer.

19
20 Fishermen report fish quantities, but I think we should also get
21 a small sample or some sample, at some scale, in key places on
22 the island, using key restaurants, using whatever, where people
23 would, either anonymously or however, report the amounts of fish
24 they're buying and who they might be buying it for, to kind of
25 get a sample of whether it's coming from a recreational or
26 whether it's coming from a commercial or whether it's being
27 imported.

28
29 I think there's a lot of misinformation, and we're trying to
30 work a lot with all this hard information to get, but it would
31 be interesting to see what the other people, which I would say
32 is the buyers, are saying about what's going in the market. How
33 much fish are they buying and when are they buying it and from
34 who are they buying it? This would be interesting to combine
35 these two, obviously after a year or two years or three years,
36 down the line, to see what's really going on in the market with
37 the fish here. That would be it. Thank you.

38
39 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Cedric, before you go, just for the record,
40 because we're going to have transcription, could you state your
41 name again and where you're from?

42
43 **CEDRIC TAQUIN:** Cedric Taquin, and I'm from Arecibo, Puerto
44 Rico.

45
46 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Raymundo.

47
48 **RAYMUNDO ESPINOZA:** Good morning, everybody. Raymundo Espinoza

1 with the Nature Conservancy. It's really great for us to hear
2 this conversation in moving towards further support from the
3 sector on electronic reporting and monitoring. We are currently
4 partnered with Point 97, an Ecotrust company, to really promote
5 and further expand that in Puerto Rico.

6
7 They have also started working with it in the USVI as well in
8 the past year, and they believe they have about twenty fishermen
9 in the USVI that they're working with in doing the pilot. In
10 Puerto Rico, we were only able to start with four, until we ran
11 out of funding. Right now, we're currently in the process of
12 getting more funding to really support the whole sector in
13 moving towards that possibility of electronic reporting and
14 monitoring.

15
16 It was really great to see, from the fishermen's side, that
17 there is an interest and that there is acceptance of moving in
18 that direction and the recognition of how this could improve
19 management, both from the fishermen point of view but also from
20 the agency's point of view.

21
22 On that note, hopefully we should be getting that funding coming
23 online, working in partnership with the Department of Natural
24 Resources, in October of this year. In October of this year, it
25 should start to pick up once again. Of course, this is local
26 landings, and so it's working with the local agency. We've been
27 working with Dr. Garcia from the DNER and with the Secretary
28 Guerrero on this effort, and so this has local government
29 acceptance as well.

30
31 Cedric, one of the points that you bring is traceability. The
32 aspect of traceability is, of course, crucial to see really what
33 the market is and what seafood in Puerto Rico is really -- Where
34 it's going and where it's not. We keep hearing parrotfish are
35 really not on the market here, but then we go to the supermarket
36 and we see them there and they're sold out all the time, and so
37 it's really interesting to see how the catch data and then the
38 market data and then compare that.

39
40 At the Conservancy, we have several aspects that we've been
41 working with in California with the rockfish, and especially
42 with the data monitoring, but also in South American, in Chile
43 and in Peru, with something called shell Catch.

44
45 Shell Catch is an effort that does exactly what Cedric says.
46 It's from the fishermen, but then it also is to the seller, the
47 wholesaler, as well. We can actually see what restaurant it's
48 going to or what final consumer it's going to as well.

1
2 That really helps fishermen as well to plan part of their catch,
3 saying this month is really big for this seafood, and many of
4 you already know this information. It's part of your industry,
5 part of your knowledge, but it's really great to be able to
6 quantify that and analyze that to see how we compare that with
7 management regulations that benefit both the environmental
8 sector as well as the fishing community.

9
10 This is something that we're really working towards promoting
11 further, specifically in Puerto Rico in the next couple of
12 years, and in the USVI, we're also working with that, with more
13 from the sustainable fisheries sector, and, on the market side,
14 with restaurant specifically. Some of you in the USVI will know
15 the Reef Responsible campaign that Louis from the Conservancy
16 has been leading on that side from us and working with the NOAA
17 Fisheries liaison, Lia Ortiz, as well.

18
19 It's something that -- It's good to see that the whole sector,
20 both management and both the fisheries, commercial fisheries
21 sector as well as the NGOs locally, collaborating and moving
22 towards one direction, and so it's really good to see the
23 communication.

24
25 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Raymundo, what is the schedule of the -- Your
26 organization is working on the electronic data collection
27 system? What is the schedule of implementation and what type of
28 electronic collection system? The reason I'm asking you is I've
29 been asked by many of the fishers, and, actually, some of them
30 are here, to see if we can put together a webpage where they can
31 upload their information and also see the grouping, but I don't
32 want to go over what you're already doing, so we don't reinvent
33 the wheel. Can you address that?

34
35 **RAYMUNDO ESPINOZA:** Yes, I can. The pilot that's begun to be
36 implemented is called Digital Deck. This is something that
37 Point 97 developed and they have begun to run with four
38 fishermen here.

39
40 They have begun to put the fisheries statistics forms that
41 fishermen have to fill out now on app for I believe both Android
42 and Apple and we're also putting it to be a web platform, so
43 that folks that don't have cell phones can actually do it at
44 home from a computer from the internet. We know a lot of folks
45 get assistance from statistics from other family members, and so
46 we want to make sure that this is accessible to everybody.

47
48 We're at that point right now, and it's not widespread, like I

1 said. We're making sure that we're working with Point 97 to get
2 all the bugs out of the system to a point that we can actually
3 expand it to more than four fishermen.

4
5 In October, when hopefully this funding comes online, we are
6 planning -- The idea of the proposal is to go online and not
7 just with four fishermen, but try to tackle a whole sector of a
8 fishery, a whole fishery. Let's say all of the folks working
9 with conch and lobster, and so let's get everybody in conch and
10 lobster participating or all the folks working with the special
11 license of queen snapper in Puerto Rico.

12
13 We will get all of them participating, because they already have
14 certain regulations, certain special licenses, that they have to
15 comply with. This is a special sector that would be a little
16 bit easier to reach out to, since it's already been identified.
17 There's about maybe fifty-seven or sixty-three licenses, I
18 think.

19
20 This is something that we can already identify and get that
21 whole sector participating, to see how the platform, how Digital
22 Deck, functions with a whole sector of a fishery. This is the
23 idea.

24
25 The roadmap would be four years until we would be able to get
26 all of the fisheries sectors in all of Puerto Rico online being
27 able to report electronically, but the first year would be just
28 one sector of the fishery, to see how that functions. Right
29 now, the folks that have all the technical data is Point 97 and
30 Charles Steinbeck is leading that effort. Many of you might
31 know him. He's been out to the field. Unfortunately, Dan
32 Crowder, that's been also the person, he left Point 97, and so
33 they are replacing that position shortly, and that's the person
34 that goes out in the field.

35
36 Miguel, specifically, I think we need to probably invite Point
37 97 to present for the DAPs as well as for the council, to see an
38 update of where everything is at, to make sure that we align
39 all the other efforts, because, again, this is one electronic
40 monitoring platform. There is many out there, and so what we
41 want to do, at least from the point of view of the Conservancy,
42 is support the one that's going to have the most success on the
43 ground and it's going to facilitate fishermen participation,
44 and, up until now, the Digital Deck seems to be the one that
45 would work in Puerto Rico and the USVI.

46
47 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Mr. Chairman, this is an interesting, long topic.
48 We don't have the time for it today, but I propose that between

1 here and the August meeting that the staff will meet with
2 Raymundo and Puerto Rico and others and also the DAP, and so we
3 will have a full report and presentation. We already have a
4 presentation from Point 97 when they started, and so we know
5 what you're doing.

6
7 For the August meeting, between here and August, not the June
8 meeting, we would like to bring to your attention a full list of
9 updates on electronic reporting and some alternatives that
10 Raymundo and other technical people from other agencies will be
11 talking about, in addition to the effort by the National Marine
12 Fisheries Service.

13
14 The National Marine Fisheries Service is moving toward
15 electronic reporting and electronic monitoring as fast as they
16 can for the whole nation, and we will be able to bring to your
17 August meeting more information for you to discuss.

18
19 **ROBERTO SILVA:** The electronic data maybe can help us in the
20 ACLs, because we are offset, completely offset, by the focus on
21 -- Right now, I use the same numbers of 327,000 pounds of
22 lobsters for Puerto Rico and it doesn't make sense. 400
23 fishermen, full-time, two times a week, in one year, you just
24 can't catch 7.8 pounds of lobster per day. It doesn't make
25 sense.

26
27 Many of the ACLs right now have to be reevaluated, and maybe the
28 electronic data can help us to maybe handle the ACLs in Puerto
29 Rico. I am a commercial fisherman full-time for lobster and I
30 know we caught a lot more than 327,000 pounds a year, believe
31 me, and it's stable and vibrant and in good condition. I hope
32 one day -- I work a lot on that and I say the same every time.
33 Thank you.

34
35 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Nelson.

36
37 **NELSON CRESPO:** I just want to add that on the west coast of
38 Puerto Rico that we had a really good lobster season this year,
39 huge season.

40
41 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Okay. We are going to move forward here,
42 because our time is limited, and so we're going to go to the
43 Review of Goals and Objectives for the Island-Based Fishery
44 Management Plans. Its going to be run by Bill.

45
46 **REVIEW GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE IBFMPs**

47
48 **BILL ARNOLD:** I am happy to talk about it. I'm not going to run

1 it. The council establishes their goals and objectives and not
2 me, but, as part of developing the new fishery management plans,
3 you should have included in each of those three fishery
4 management plans a set of goals and objectives that you use to
5 guide how the management plans are structured and what you hope
6 to get out of these management plans.

7
8 This can be a wide range of things. I prepared a very tentative
9 draft list for use by the council as a start point of fourteen
10 different objectives that could be included in these management
11 plans, but those are just suggestions and the council, the seven
12 member of this council, really it's their responsibility to
13 determine what they want those goals and objectives to be in
14 relation to the species that are being managed, the level at
15 which those species are allowed to be caught, any management
16 constraints on the harvest of those species, for both the
17 commercial and the recreational sectors.

18
19 Basically, it's just what their vision is of how commercial and
20 recreational fisheries should operate in federal waters
21 surrounding each of Puerto Rico, St. Thomas/St. John, and St.
22 Croix. That's what these goals and objectives are all about.

23
24 As I've said many times, at almost every meeting I attend, all
25 of this stuff is intertwined. Your goals and objectives will
26 influence your ABC control rule, your level of reduction from
27 your maximum sustainable yield, how much do you want to reduce
28 to identify and operate at optimum yield, which can be equal to
29 your maximum sustainable yield or it can be lower.

30
31 You really need to start thinking about these goals and
32 objectives. What I would like to see at this meeting is for
33 everybody to become familiar with the concept of goals and
34 objectives and to start thinking about what they want those
35 goals and objectives to be, so that when we come back at the
36 June council meeting that everyone will not be surprised, but
37 will be fully ready and fully educated to either develop or put
38 their stamp of approval on the list of goals and objectives that
39 the council wants to implement for each of these fishery
40 management plans.

41
42 I would emphasize that those goals and objectives do not need to
43 be the same for each fishery management plan. Puerto Rico's
44 goals and objectives may differ from St. Croix's goals and
45 objectives, and that's okay.

46
47 That's why we're separating into island-based fishery management
48 plans, so that we can manage St. Croix fisheries in federal

1 waters in the best way possible for the people of St. Croix and
2 the resources that they depend upon, and that may be different
3 from how St. Thomas and St. John needs to manage their fisheries
4 to achieve those or other goals and objectives.

5
6 This is a really important part of the process, and it's time to
7 start addressing it. We've identified the species and species
8 groups, really the species and we're working on species groups,
9 but we have identified at least a tentative list of species that
10 the council intends to manage in federal waters around each of
11 these islands.

12
13 Now that we know what we're going to manage in general, and
14 there is still a process that has to take place before that's
15 finalized, but at least we have general concepts in place that
16 can guide how each fishery is managed and what the goals and
17 objectives for those fisheries are. That's where we are on
18 this. Again, I emphasize that this is a very important
19 responsibility of the council to develop these goals and
20 objectives.

21
22 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Miguel.

23
24 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Mr. Chairman, goals and objectives are something
25 that -- I've been working for around forty years, and that has
26 always confused me. What is goal and what is an objective?
27 Here, probably what we're doing is introducing the concept for
28 you to be prepared for the June meeting.

29
30 For example, the goal could be the same for the entire U.S.
31 Caribbean, which is management of the marine resources, fishery
32 resources, around the U.S. Caribbean the best way possible,
33 using the best available information, all these motherhood and
34 apple pie kinds of things.

35
36 Also, you can have in the goals items that can be different for
37 Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, St. Croix Virgin Islands and
38 St. Thomas/St. John. In general, when you look at the goals and
39 objectives, they are kind of an umbrella that will cover your
40 final goal, which is the management of the species under the
41 Magnuson Act.

42
43 The objective though, you have to pay more attention as to what
44 you want to do, because the objective has to be measurable. If
45 you have an objective, for example, that will be to increase the
46 availability of a particular fish for the recreational and the
47 commercial sector, then your objective is that one, but you have
48 to also say how you're going to do it, and so your objectives

1 will be followed by some metrics. For example, if you have a
2 particular fish, your objective is to increase the availability
3 of that fish for Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and St.
4 Croix, because it's common to the three of them, then you will
5 have size limits and you will have closed seasons or whatever.
6 Then you can measure, at the end -- You start with a baseline of
7 saying the scientists will use length frequency analysis and say
8 this is the status of the fishery, similar to what you saw
9 yesterday in the discussion with the SSC, or you can say there
10 are more larger parental animals, the parental stocks are
11 larger.

12
13 Those are things that you can measure, and then you also have to
14 address, at that time, which species, which fisheries, you want
15 to see under each one of the objectives.

16
17 For some people, it's kind of a chicken-and-egg thing. Tell me
18 the fishery and I will tell you the objectives, but that's not
19 the way it works. Right now, you have an indication of where
20 you can go with a grouping of species. With the discussion of
21 the last two days and the reports that will be brought to the
22 council this morning by Julian and Eddie, you will see more or
23 less what is the composition of the species for each one of the
24 island groups that we are going to manage.

25
26 I will ask Bill here of just one or two examples of possible
27 goals and possible objectives, so we can discuss it, so by the
28 time that you have the opportunity in June, you will have it.
29 Also, we discussed with Yasmin to prepare a document that will
30 be distributed and so, between here and June, you will have a
31 list of objectives, but the objectives also address common
32 grounds that National Marine Fisheries Service would like to --
33 Not common grounds, but certain items in the goals and
34 objectives will have to follow the directives of the National
35 Marine Fisheries Service in the implementation of MSA.

36
37 For example, we are going to be discussing ecosystem-based
38 management and we are going to discuss endangered species. All
39 the species that you have a responsibility for will be part of
40 these discussions. Do you have any --

41
42 **BILL ARNOLD:** Of course I do, Miguel. Here is a good example of
43 how this could operate. You saw yesterday a presentation by
44 Clay Porch from the Southeast Fisheries Science Center on the
45 various models, data-limited models, that can be applied, fifty-
46 seven different models that can be applied, to determine what --
47 To assess the state of a particular fishery, a particular
48 species.

1
2 You could say, as an objective, that our objective is to
3 maximize that yield while not exceeding, and this is just an
4 example, while not exceeding a 40 percent chance of overfishing
5 the resource.

6
7 Now, you have isolated -- You have reduced the number of models
8 that you can consider within that objective, because a whole
9 bunch of these models have a likelihood of exceeding overfishing
10 of greater than 40 percent, and so you can just throw them right
11 out. That is how an objective relates to a specific development
12 of the models that are used to determine what a suitable catch
13 rate is for these species.

14
15 Another objective could be want to ensure that the grazing
16 capacity of the reef is maintained, and so, to do that, one of
17 the SSC obligations is to establish the acceptable biological
18 catch. As you saw in Clay's report, you start out with this
19 maximum sustained yield and then you work through these other
20 parameters to get down to that acceptable biological catch.

21
22 You're reducing, or not -- You can make your acceptable
23 biological catch equal to the maximum sustainable yield or you
24 can make it less. You're generally not going to make it more
25 than the maximum sustainable yield. That's going to lead to
26 trouble with the resource.

27
28 You say, okay, for lobster, lobster don't contribute to grazing
29 in the reef, and so we don't need to consider them within the
30 context of the grazing capacity on the reef. Parrotfish do
31 contribute to the grazing capacity on the reef and so we may
32 want to be more careful with them.

33
34 That objective provides guidance to the SSC as to how they
35 reduce from the maximum sustainable yield to get to that
36 acceptable biological catch, and so that's why I say these
37 things interact. You have models that can develop harvest
38 targets, and you have scientific information that goes into
39 influencing how you develop those targets, and you have
40 objectives that guide how that scientific information is applied
41 and how these fisheries are managed.

42
43 That's why it's imperative to get started on the council clearly
44 establishing what their goals and objectives are, so that the
45 SSC can use those as guidance. Now, the SSC is going to move
46 forward with developing models and developing scenarios for
47 establishing these ABCs, but those will just be alternatives.
48 They should provide alternative routes to get to their ABC so

1 that those can be considered by the council within the context
2 of their goals and objectives, because remember the council can
3 or cannot accept the SSC's recommendations for acceptable
4 biological catch.

5
6 They should not exceed that level, but they could go below it,
7 and they also have authority themselves to reduce to the ACL,
8 which is the critical parameter that the fishermen are most
9 interested in, what are you going to be allowed to catch in a
10 single year, how much of a particular species or species group,
11 before we have to apply accountability measures to reign in that
12 catch.

13
14 It's a complex process, but it's a very commonsense process,
15 and, once you get familiar with it, it's relatively easy to
16 understand how and why these very important decisions are being
17 made with respect to your livelihoods.

18
19 **MIGUEL ROLON:** What would be a goal in that example, Bill? You
20 discussed the objectives, but that would be under which goal?

21
22 **BILL ARNOLD:** To me, the goal is the overarching guiding
23 principle of fisheries management in federal waters in the U.S.
24 Caribbean, and I could come up with a lot of goals, but it
25 seems, to me, the goal is to maintain the health of the
26 resources and the communities that are dependent upon that
27 resource, the fishing communities.

28
29 I think that is one possible goal, but I just feel like I'm
30 putting words in your mouths, but it seems reasonable that --
31 Without the resource, you've got nothing, and so you need to
32 protect that resource, and, by protecting that resource, you are
33 going to protect, and to the maximum level possible, benefit
34 these fishing communities.

35
36 As I've said many, many times, I work for the Department of
37 Commerce. Our job is not to put people out of business. Our
38 job is to maximize business opportunities in a sustainable
39 manner, and so the one thing we have to consider every day in
40 our fisheries management is how do we ensure not just that the
41 fishermen and these businesses are doing as well as possible,
42 but they're going to do as well as possible into the foreseeable
43 future. That's the sustainable component of that.

44
45 Obviously if we just wanted to do the best we could in a single
46 year and not worry about the next year, then the idea would be
47 to get out there and kill everything you can and let's go after
48 it.

1
2 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Okay, I've got Roberto Silva, but, before I
3 go there, these fourteen objectives that were sent, are we
4 supposed to discuss each one of these with the council or --
5
6 **BILL ARNOLD:** You should do as you wish with those. If you wish
7 to throw them away, you may, Carlos. They're just suggestions.
8
9 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** No, I like these. That's why I want to know
10 what we've got to do.
11
12 **BILL ARNOLD:** I would say, Carlos, they're developed based upon
13 the Magnuson-Stevens Act and the National Standards that are
14 developed from that act, and that's the guidance that I used in
15 developing my fourteen points.
16
17 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** I really like them. That's why I know what
18 we're going to do with them, but, Silva.
19
20 **ROBERTO SILVA:** I completely agree with Mr. Bill Arnold. We
21 have to create something. My problem always is the numbers.
22 The numbers we use right now is completely offset. Right now, I
23 get afraid. If we start to collect good data and we got 327,000
24 pounds per year on lobster and when we've got good data, we rise
25 to 600,000, at the end, where are our position? Maybe closed
26 for two years or what? Do you know?
27
28 How is the weight in that model when you start collecting good
29 data, good numbers, and it's completely big numbers. I don't
30 know how to -- We get afraid on that, and I completely agree
31 that we have to establish something to manage the --
32
33 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Mr. Chairman, what we are discussing at this time
34 now is general goals and objectives so the council can
35 understand what the hell we're talking about. We have a
36 document that was sent to us by the Pew Charitable Fund and I
37 have an idea of -- One goal could be to maintain the long-term
38 sustainable use of the coral reefs. We are going to distribute
39 this, or they are going to distribute this so you have an idea.
40
41 This is not the document that will be your goals and objectives,
42 but it will give you an idea of how this is written. You will
43 have also the fourteen points that was mentioned by Bill Arnold
44 and then you will be able to compare notes. By the time that we
45 meet in June, you will have a better grasp of what is goals and
46 objectives, what is it that we mean by -- What is the meaning of
47 reviewing the goals and objectives for each FMP.
48

1 It's not a trivial exercise, because the objectives, as I said,
2 have to be measurable. For example, your goal could be, in the
3 minds of any fisherman, is how much I can get under the Act that
4 I can take home.

5
6 That means that the overall benefits is to maximize the economic
7 return to the fishers, maximize the opportunity for recreational
8 fishermen to enjoy the resource. That could be a goal, but your
9 objectives have to address which species we fish for commercial
10 fisheries and which species we fish for recreational fisheries
11 and how can we achieve those goals.

12
13 The example that was brought by Bill addresses the issue of how
14 risky you can be under the Act. Then if you tell the SSC, from
15 what you heard yesterday, that you want 40 percent risk of going
16 over the maximum allowable catch of the ACL that you have, then
17 the staff has to tell the group that is working with this that
18 this is what the council wants and this is what we need to
19 present to them.

20
21 It will be very difficult for you to pick those numbers, because
22 yesterday, when you were hearing Clay Porch talk, you tend to
23 think that I understand that, I understand that slide, and then
24 the next one comes and you say, I forgot about the first one.
25 You have to take this home and digest it a little bit more.

26
27 We do not pretend that everybody will come out of this meeting
28 being the expert like Clay Porch is, but at least you will be
29 able to come out of this meeting with a broader idea of what we
30 mean when we say the objectives for this particular fishery are
31 to reduce the possibility of overfishing by 40 percent, or
32 accept 40 percent as your risk of going over that particular
33 fishery.

34
35 Until you see those documents in front of you, and actually
36 before the council meeting we will send it to you, you will have
37 an idea of what this is all about.

38
39 If I may, Mr. Chairman, following the example here, I would like
40 to ask Yasmin to introduce the topic to the group, so we can
41 distribute your document to everybody. As I said, it's just an
42 example of a list of goals and objectives that you can adopt.
43 It's not the list of objectives that you will be having.

44
45 **YASMIN VELEZ:** Thank you for the opportunity. To me, this is
46 great news that we're discussing this topic. As you may all
47 remember, this has been an important issue for Pew for a couple
48 of years now. We have been asking the council to consider

1 including goals and objectives in this IBFMPs. The reason is
2 basically because the transition from species-based to island-
3 based management really entails a significant change in how you
4 manage things, and that is inherently ecosystem-based. As we
5 all know, the reason for this change --

6
7 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Can you introduce the topic of goals and
8 objectives, the document that you have, and let them discuss it
9 a little bit?

10
11 **YASMIN VELEZ:** Yes, but can I do an introduction? The point is
12 that you are discussing this because you recognize that there
13 are significant differences between the islands, socioeconomic,
14 cultural, biological, as you have been discussing for a couple
15 of days.

16
17 What we did is we just analyzed what could be possible goals and
18 objectives for these new IBFMPs. We developed a draft that is
19 purely for discussion, as Bill mentioned for the goals and
20 objectives that he developed, and so we shared that document
21 with Miguel Rolon and Carlos Farchette. It's just for the
22 council to have an idea of what could be possible goals and
23 objectives for these new IBFMPs. This does not mean that this
24 is written in stone and that should be the version, but it's
25 just a document to develop the goals and objectives for the
26 region.

27
28 We really look forward to just helping and being a resource on
29 that process. If we are permitted, I would also like to extend
30 sharing that document with the DAP members, in order for them to
31 see the document and understand it. They are written in English
32 and Spanish, and so you will have the opportunity to just read
33 them with time and then comment on them and give recommendations
34 to the council, as it should be.

35
36 I have some copies here. I don't think it will be enough for
37 all the people in the room, but I can share with you, if you
38 want to, some of the copies so you can see and have an idea of
39 what we've come up with.

40
41 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Thank you, Yasmin. If you want to, we can make
42 copies in the business room and make copies so that people can
43 take it, but we are going to distribute it to each council
44 member. I am doing it right now via email.

45
46 What Yasmin is telling you is that her organization is trying to
47 help in the process and not that they mean to push for any
48 particular agenda, but it's just that, working together, we can

1 develop these goals and objectives in a better way. As I said,
2 I've been doing this for thirty-five years. Every time that we
3 meet, people define goals different from objectives and it's a
4 mess. Sometimes we mix them together.

5
6 With this example, you can see how these documents are
7 developed. For the June meeting, we will have the opportunity
8 of having in front of you the document that Bill addressed, and
9 so you have fourteen or fifteen or whatever number of items that
10 you should be addressing.

11
12 I intend to have a meeting between here and August, if not
13 sooner, of the DAPs, so that the DAP Puerto Rico can take a look
14 at the two or three agenda items that we will have for the June
15 meeting. The same will go for the St. Thomas/St. John and St.
16 Croix DAPs.

17
18 Pew Charitable Trust is a member of the three DAPs, and so they
19 will have an opportunity there to explain to the group what this
20 is all about. Is there anything else, Yasmin, at this time?

21
22 **YASMIN VELEZ:** Do you want me to read a couple of them?

23
24 **MIGUEL ROLON:** No, we can just distribute it.

25
26 **YASMIN VELEZ:** So that will be it. If there are any questions,
27 just let me know.

28
29 **MIGUEL ROLON:** If you have a chance and you look at it before
30 here and noon and the break, talk to Yasmin about it. Mr.
31 Chairman, the question is we need to hear from the council
32 members at this time, the council members, of do you have a
33 clear understanding of what are the next steps for the goals and
34 objectives?

35
36 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Marcos Hanke.

37
38 **MARCOS HANKE:** Addressing your question, the question is for
39 Bill, just to use as an exercise of brainstorming and
40 understanding this better. For example, you refer, as a goal,
41 to protect the grazers as a goal. For example, we are going to
42 get into the discussion of fine-tuning or changing things like
43 I'm going to say now on the goals.

44
45 For example, emphasize the protection or the management of the
46 species with ecological importance. That will include the
47 grazers along with others that are not grazers. This is the
48 kind of language that we have to address on the goals or to make

1 broader or to make narrower or how do you see that? I think
2 that's an important clarification.

3

4 **BILL ARNOLD:** The way I would explain this is protecting grazers
5 would not be a goal. A goal might be to protect the ecosystem
6 integrity of the coral reef system.

7

8 **MARCOS HANKE:** Which is ecological importance.

9

10 **BILL ARNOLD:** Yes, and so then, in one objective, one objective
11 under that goal, might be maintain grazing capacity. Another
12 objective might be to ensure the health of top-level predators.
13 That could be another thing.

14

15 Each of these different components contributes to that goal of
16 maintaining the health of the ecosystem. That's the way I would
17 look at it. The goal is sort of an overarching desire and the
18 objectives are the specific pathways you are going to follow to
19 achieve that overarching goal.

20

21 **MARCOS HANKE:** Yes, but the way I see it, and this is where I
22 want the discussion to go around, is different on the goal, on
23 the broader part, to say we're going to protect or to manage
24 fishes or the fishery that is of ecological importance and leave
25 it like that or it's different than saying we're going to
26 protect the species declared by the council and the SSC of
27 ecological importance.

28

29 Those are two different things. One is way broader and you can
30 interpret them many, many different ways. The other one is a
31 little more precise and gives more of the intention of the
32 council. What do you have to comment on that?

33

34 **BILL ARNOLD:** That's one of the challenges that the council has
35 to address, is defining first the goal or goals that they think
36 best captures what they're trying to achieve with fisheries
37 management in Caribbean federal waters. You could, for example,
38 say maximize harvest within the context of ecosystem health or
39 something like this. There a lot of ways you can phrase your
40 goals.

41

42 **MARCOS HANKE:** I understand.

43

44 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** A lot of those answers are in those fourteen
45 topics. Blanchard.

46

47 **TONY BLANCHARD:** I am going to try to put it out there in
48 layman's terms for Marcos. It's like planning a trip to Spain.

1 That's the goal, you want to get to Spain, but now you need to
2 figure out how you're going to get to Spain. That's the
3 objectives.

4
5 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** I still say the goal is in the document. We
6 will do a quick five minutes. I think we're going to get this
7 document up on the screen.

8
9 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

10
11 **MIGUEL ROLON:** What we are finishing doing is the Caribbean
12 Fishery Management Council goals and objectives for this area.
13 Given that the objectives may impact your fisheries in different
14 ways, we will prepare a draft document for your perusal that we
15 are going to distribute to every DAP group as well as the
16 council.

17
18 If you look at the overarching goal of Puerto Rico's fishery
19 management plan, it's to ensure the continued health of the
20 fishery resources in the Exclusive Economic Zone, et cetera.
21 Then when you look at the objectives in order to achieve that
22 goal, the following objectives are defined. Then your task as a
23 council member will be to look at those objectives under the
24 umbrella of the goal for Puerto Rico and see if they make any
25 sense for you as a council member.

26
27 I will cut and paste from the document that has been distributed
28 by Yasmin, because they organized it differently, but also have
29 a good start there that we can put together. We will send it to
30 each one of you sitting around the table as council members and
31 the DAP Chairs and the DAP members. The DAP Chairs will collect
32 the comments from their groups and they will present that at the
33 next meeting in June.

34
35 In June, we would like to get out of that meeting with a
36 document approved by the council for public hearings that will
37 include the goals and objectives of each one of the management
38 plans.

39
40 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Blanchard.

41
42 **TONY BLANCHARD:** I've just got a question for you here, Miguel.
43 Seeing that the DAP is dealing with the fish species, are they
44 also going to come up with the goals and objectives, or that's
45 up to us?

46
47 **MIGUEL ROLON:** No, the goals and objectives is the council, but
48 we want to share it with the DAPs so they can contribute to the

1 discussion, because -- Mike Fuller and I were talking before and
2 the practicalities of the objectives are of interest to
3 everybody, commercial and recreational fishermen, and so, before
4 you approve an objective, you want to know what is going to
5 happen to that fishery if we adopt this objective. That will be
6 the task not only of the council, but of the DAP members and the
7 general public also.

8
9 This is an excerpt from the document that was distributed by
10 Yasmin. As you can see, they have an example of goals and
11 objectives. Goal Number 1 is to maintain long-term sustainable
12 use of coral reef, et cetera. Then, to achieve those four
13 goals, these are the objectives that you have.

14
15 In essence, it's the same as the one that you saw with the
16 fourteen objectives. It's just a matter of how you structure
17 those objectives, but the council has to approve this as your
18 document that will be taken to public hearings and you would
19 like to hear from each one of your advisory bodies. That
20 includes the SSC, of course, and the three DAPs.

21
22 As I said before, it's kind of an innocent document, but it's
23 the core of your document and it's the core of your management
24 plans. In order for you to have a clear picture as to why you
25 have a management plan and where you want to go with that
26 management plan, your goals and objectives have to be very, very
27 clear.

28
29 Some of these objectives will have mathematical consequences,
30 like the one that was mentioned by Bill. If you accept 40
31 percent of a particular fishery as your risk of not being at the
32 stage of overfishing or beyond the ABC, then your objective has
33 to be clear as to that point.

34
35 Mr. Chairman, probably at this time we would like to open it to
36 the council members, to ask you if you are clear in terms of
37 what we intend to do and the schedule of events until June.

38
39 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Marcos.

40
41 **MARCOS HANKE:** From my part, I'm very clear. I am expecting
42 between all the fishing communities and the council members to
43 communicate among each other and to support us on this task,
44 because we are dealing with terminology and definitions that can
45 look innocent, but they are not. We need to be very careful
46 with it.

47
48 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Velasquez.

1
2 **CARLOS VELASQUEZ:** (Mr. Velasquez's comments were in Spanish and
3 were not transcribed.)
4

5 **MIGUEL ROLON:** (Mr. Rolon's comments were in Spanish and were
6 not transcribed.)
7

8 What we would like to do then, at this time, is to, as a
9 council, to trust the staff to put together this document. It
10 will be distributed electronically to all members of the DAPs
11 and all members of the council and all members of the SSC, so
12 they will have ample opportunity to discuss it with their peers.
13 Then they can bring to the attention of the council at the June
14 meeting all of those concerns.
15

16 As I said, I thank Carlos for bringing this up at another time,
17 but this is the kind of reality check that we want from you,
18 especially from the DAPs, about the things that we can do.
19

20 The SSC will have to also look at it, because we if have an
21 objective that is not supported by any science, then it's no
22 good to have an objective like that. Mr. Chairman, you can go
23 into the other discussion if you want, because we have the
24 Chairmen of the two groups here, and so we can hear the report
25 from them.
26

27 At this time, again, for the council members, we all understand
28 what we are going to do with the goals and objectives? The
29 staff is going to circulate this information to you.
30

31 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** We went through Puerto Rico already and now
32 we're going to start with Julian Magras from St. Thomas/St.
33 John.
34

35 **DISTRICT ADVISORY PANEL INDIVIDUAL MEETING RECOMMENDATIONS**
36 **ST. THOMAS/ST. JOHN**
37

38 **JULIAN MAGRAS:** What took place upstairs is pretty much took
39 place with Puerto Rico yesterday on the screen, where we went
40 over the list of species and we -- To start off, we extracted
41 all the species that were not federally deemed to collect
42 information on presently, and, also, with what the DAP committee
43 did for St. Thomas/St. John, the species that we decided were
44 not important or the scientists determined they were not
45 biologically or ecologically important and removed those species
46 from the group.
47

48 With that said, we came up with the units that would be kept and

1 looked at. For St. Thomas/St. John, what we did was we kept all
2 four snapper units and some of them are smaller after the
3 extractions were taken out. We're going to keep the four
4 snapper units.

5
6 The same with the grouper units. In the grouper units, we made
7 a change in the grouper unit, where we added the yellowmouth
8 grouper into the group with the yellowfin and the red grouper
9 and the black grouper. Those are all together, and we have the
10 coney and the red hind that are going to be in one group by
11 themselves. We decided not to separate them out and we decided
12 to keep them that way.

13
14 As far as the grunts, the scientists decided that we needed to
15 take out the margate separate and the blue-striped and the white
16 grunt and keep those in two separate units, and so that decision
17 was also made, which I don't think we see a problem with that.

18
19 They kept the misty grouper by itself. There is some discussion
20 that is still going on of should the misty grouper go in with
21 the deepwater snappers, but, for right now, in St. Thomas/St.
22 John, we kept them separate in the reporting.

23
24 Of course, the parrotfish, we kept all the parrotfish, the seven
25 parrotfish, in one unit. We are collecting data for three of
26 them presently. The reason why they're only seeing data for
27 three of them presently is because of the new reporting system,
28 but I also put on the record that there has been a lot of
29 discussion about improving the port sampling and actually, for
30 parrotfish, Fish and Wildlife is already doing a study on
31 parrotfish, and so there's a lot of information out there on
32 parrotfish.

33
34 Since the new Director Gomez came onboard, the port sampling has
35 started back and we are moving. We are getting a lot of port
36 sampling done, and we're going to be doing more here coming up
37 soon. They're reaching out to try and get more funding and
38 everything, so we can do more port sampling and collect more
39 data, which is the real data that's needed for the process
40 that's taking place.

41
42 In St. Thomas/St. John, the fishermen are well-engaged with port
43 sampling. We like to do port sampling, and all we have to do is
44 make a telephone call and we move forward with that port
45 sampling. They try to accommodate us and not we are trying to
46 accommodate their schedule.

47
48 The way it was at one period of time, it was from eight to five.

1 If we call them and say, listen, we need a port sampling done at
2 midnight for yellowtail snapper, we can call on them and they're
3 there. We can call on them on a Saturday or Sunday. It doesn't
4 matter. Once they know in advance that we want this sampling to
5 be done, they accommodate us, which is very good and very
6 important for what's taking place.

7
8 The scientists were happy to hear that, and they're going to be
9 looking at what's there already, but they also realize that the
10 information that's being gathered through the catch reports is
11 only limited to what's on the catch report and only a few
12 fishermen actually write in where it says "other", and so you're
13 not capturing a lot of information from the other species.

14
15 Through some discussions earlier today, we're also looking at
16 hopefully, in the near future, to change the catch reporting
17 form once again, where we can capture, now that we have these
18 key units with the key species, capture the information for
19 these species as much as possible. That's the goal.

20
21 If we have these small units, which finally we have the units
22 that you can look at in a smaller number, the chances of the
23 fishermen cooperating to give you information on all of those
24 unit species is great, because the number is not the way it was
25 at one point five years ago, where they wanted to get numbers at
26 thirty-three species, which we fought them down and got them,
27 through a lot of meetings and discussions and arguments, we got
28 them down to the smaller format that we are using.

29
30 Now that that has changed, the fishermen also realize that we
31 need to provide data for the species that are missing, so we
32 don't end up with a closure or a lot of uncertainty because
33 there is no information for that species. That's what we're
34 going to be working at here very soon.

35
36 As far as the rest of the groups, we kept the lobster as is and
37 we kept the conch as is. There was some discussion about sea
38 cucumbers and urchins and we had a lot of discussion back and
39 forth on that, but it was on the table because one of the
40 commercial fishers in St. Thomas wanted to leave it there as
41 maybe a viable fishery for the future, even though others have
42 concerns about it for St. Thomas/St. John.

43
44 It was put on the table and we put it out as discussion, where
45 we will hear input from the council at the June meeting and from
46 the scientists and their take on should we have an ACL or should
47 we not have an ACL. We left it to them. We gave our
48 suggestions on what we thought about it. Of course, we kept the

1 corals at zero ACL.

2
3 Pretty much, that was the report. It was good collaboration
4 with the scientists. It was a great opportunity from the being
5 offered the opportunity with the members of the DAP to sit with
6 the SSC. You don't normally see that, but it not only gave the
7 SSC a lot more information on what's going on from the
8 commercial and the recreational and the diving side of it, but
9 it actually got them to understand how we actually operate and
10 what goes on within the sector.

11
12 Not only that, but NOAA Fisheries and their group, they got to
13 see also, through some of the presentations, that they were
14 actually missing -- They were actually missing stuff that could
15 have been plugged into some of the equations and the clusters
16 that could have made that outcome different.

17
18 I give a lot of thanks to Miguel and the group, the Caribbean
19 Fishery Management Council, and to Dr. Appeldoorn. He did an
20 excellent job running this meeting, and I appreciate and look
21 forward to continue working with you guys.

22
23 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Thank you, Julian. Edward Schuster.

24
25 **ST. CROIX**

26
27 **EDWARD SCHUSTER:** Yesterday afternoon, after Puerto Rico went
28 through a lengthy discussion about their grouping for their
29 species, we did a sit-down in the afternoon, the DAP members,
30 Gerson, Daley, Virdin Brown, and myself. We sat down and we
31 discussed with Graciela and put in our opinions.

32
33 We kept the Snapper Unit 1 together and the Snapper Unit 2
34 together and added the misty grouper, because of the depths that
35 the queen is caught and the misty is also caught. We separated
36 yellowtail and mutton snapper and schoolmaster was separated and
37 not lumped into a group.

38
39 As for the parrotfish, the three major parrotfish were set at a
40 zero ACL, which they are a prohibited species, which would be
41 the blue, the midnight, and the rainbow. All the other species
42 were kept together, due to the fact that we have a 240,000-pound
43 annual catch limit, with also a size limit of one of the species
44 being an eight and all the others being a nine-inch.

45
46 I am not going down in the chronological order here, because I
47 don't have any reference on there, but the corals were set at a
48 zero ACL. The sea cucumbers is also up for discussion, but, for

1 right now, the sea urchins and -- The sea urchins are actually a
2 no harvest, as it is in the EEZ, but they're looking to have
3 discussion in terms of the SSC to discuss that.

4
5 The groupers were kept together, except for the misty that was
6 put with the queen snapper in Snapper Unit 2. We stressed the
7 importance of port sampling, which, thanks to Director Gomez,
8 this has been happening, and we hope that it continues to grab
9 some of the information, especially for the surgeonfish.

10
11 There was a slight discrepancy in terms of if they were actually
12 -- If fishers actually knew which was what, but we stressed, and
13 we meaning St. Thomas and St. Croix, we stressed the fact that
14 all the surgeonfish were lumped together as surgeonfish, but
15 they led us to know that the ocean and the blue was the
16 difference, and it was identified by a white ribbon around its
17 tail, and that would be the ocean, but we let them know that
18 they all are lumped or recorded as doctor fish.

19
20 The grunts were kept together and also the porgies that we have
21 were kept together also on our list. That basically concludes
22 what happened in the upstairs.

23
24 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Julian.

25
26 **JULIAN MAGRAS:** I just wanted to add that I did forget to
27 mention that we did have discussion about the dolphin, mahi-
28 mahi, and we discussed that -- It was brought up at the last
29 council meeting, and we also discussed that we are looking at
30 having conversation about having a bag limit for recreational
31 and a size limit for commercial, and so it was mentioned.

32
33 There is going to be some discussions, and, listening to the
34 scientists talk back and forth amongst themselves, you're
35 hearing it's going to come up at the next council meeting, where
36 there is going to have to have something that's going to come
37 out of this.

38
39 What I would recommend to all the DAPs is talk with your
40 members. If you don't have anything in place as yet, come up
41 with something that, in the event this comes on the table, which
42 the possibility is very high, that you have something that you
43 want to present.

44
45 It's better to have something to give the council to work with
46 than they give you something that you can't work with, and so my
47 advice is to just go back to all your members, because you have
48 your recreational and you have your commercial and you have your

1 environmentalists and everybody is there, and have conversations
2 of what you think would be the best for the fishery, as a group,
3 because you're speaking for a group, and have something prepared
4 and ready to present, if needed, for the June council meeting.

5
6 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Thank you, Julian. Bill.

7
8 **BILL ARNOLD:** A couple of comments and then a question. The
9 first comment is I do think that Richard did a great job pulling
10 this thing together. He deserves a lot of credit, because this
11 was a tough, tough job.

12
13 The second is just a minor comment on the distinction between a
14 prohibited species and a species for which an ACL of zero is
15 assigned. A prohibited species, you're not allowed to harvest
16 it or possess it or land it, et cetera, et cetera. A species
17 with an ACL equals zero, you can land it. It will drive you
18 over the ACL and accountability measures will need to be
19 applied, but it's not illegal to have it in your boat, and so
20 that's a big difference.

21
22 Nassau grouper is a prohibited species. If you're caught with
23 it, you're in trouble. I can't think of a species with an ACL,
24 but really, I think most of these ACL equals zero is we're
25 talking about prohibited harvest. Corals is prohibited harvest.
26 You don't want to exceed the ACL. You don't want people down
27 there chipping off coral, et cetera, et cetera.

28
29 Then the question is when I went through the two lists, the two
30 USVI lists, I saw differences. Not many, but some differences
31 between the way the SSC would group it -- There was an SSC
32 column and then there was a DAP column. Maybe I'm not
33 interpreting this correctly, but it looked like, in a few
34 instances, there were differences. Were those differences
35 resolved or are we just using those as different approaches or
36 how should we interpret that?

37
38 **JULIAN MAGRAS:** Like I said, after you did the abstracts out and
39 you took everything out that didn't need to be in there, we, for
40 St. Thomas/St. John, we pretty much kept everything the same as
41 it is right now. The only thing that the scientific committee
42 changed for us was they pulled out the margate. They kept
43 everything else as is in how the units are grouped together.
44 They separated out the margate.

45
46 There are some discussions about one of the porgies and does it
47 actually need to be in there, but they left it for further
48 discussion, but, as far as all the units for St. Thomas/St.

1 John, they kept them the same way and just moved, because it was
2 new, the yellowmouth grouper, moved that in with the yellowfin
3 grouper, because they had guidance from the University of the
4 Virgin Islands that when they are doing their surveys on the
5 yellowfin grouper that that's when it's normally seen, with that
6 group of species. Otherwise than that, there was not much
7 changes or breakouts in St. Thomas/St. John.

8
9 **BILL ARNOLD:** So which one do we use, the DAP column or the SSC
10 column?

11
12 **JULIAN MAGRAS:** When you say the DAP or the SSC, the one we just
13 created would be considered the SSC? Am I correct?

14
15 **BILL ARNOLD:** You have to tell me. I can't tell you.

16
17 **JULIAN MAGRAS:** I would think that's -- We presented it to them
18 as what and went over it with them, and so I would think it's
19 their column, because they were the ones that was going on. We
20 presented to them and then they were going through it, and, like
21 I said, the only change that they made for St. Thomas/St. John
22 was really the yellowmouth and the margate. I would say from
23 our committee, DAP St. Thomas/St. John, we move forward with the
24 changes that the SSC just made.

25
26 **BILL ARNOLD:** Okay, and so I'm pretty sure I'm clear, but, just
27 to make sure, we will have a margate group that the margate is
28 in and then we will have a grunts group that has white grunt and
29 blue-striped grunt?

30
31 **JULIAN MAGRAS:** That is correct.

32
33 **BILL ARNOLD:** Yellowmouth will be in Unit 4 and not in Unit 5?

34
35 **JULIAN MAGRAS:** Correct.

36
37 **BILL ARNOLD:** Thanks. I just wanted to make sure I was clear on
38 that, Julian.

39
40 **JULIAN MAGRAS:** First of all, those species had four criteria
41 that got them on the list. It was ecological importance,
42 biological importance, economic importance, and there was one
43 more. Was it the vulnerability?

44
45 **MIGUEL ROLON:** It doesn't matter. With one, they will be in.

46
47 **JULIAN MAGRAS:** Right, but I'm just trying to list it, just to
48 give you -- We went through and you will see it. I mean I wish

1 there was something up here on the screen we could refer to.
2 You're looking at the copy that you got emailed to you, but it
3 was a column that said "SSC Recommendations" and "DAP
4 Recommendations".

5
6 Then there should be a column there, after all of the
7 recommendations, and, I'm assuming with the changes that were
8 made by the DAPs, that would be the column that would indicate
9 that that's the reference they're going back to.

10
11 Some species were removed and added, due to the fact that there
12 is current information being collected on it, and the other
13 species that were removed were because of either it being
14 ciguatoxic in the area or not necessarily a targeted species,
15 and it didn't meet the biological and the ecological importance.

16
17 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Miguel.

18
19 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Just, again, for the process, what we have done
20 in the last two days is that the SSC had a chance to examine the
21 list of species from the point of view of science and from the
22 point of view of the practical aspects of that list when they
23 consulted with the three Chairs of the DAP panel, which at the
24 same time consulted with the members.

25
26 For the June meeting, you will have not those three columns, but
27 you will have a list of the species that will be considered for
28 each one of the management plans. If there is any discrepancy,
29 significant discrepancy, between any of the DAPs on one
30 particular species, we have to bring it for discussion, because
31 remember what we are doing is preparing a document that will be
32 taken to public hearings in due time, and that's why Bill was
33 asking the question.

34
35 It is clear, Mr. Chairman, that for the June meeting you will
36 have a clean list, resulting from these two-and-a-half days of
37 meeting, of the species that you will be including in each one
38 of the management units of the plans that we have for Puerto
39 Rico, St. Croix, and the Virgin Islands. Do you want to say
40 something on St. Croix specifically?

41
42 **TOM DALEY:** Many of the species that were dealt with are already
43 under some sort of regulations. I am asking, especially like
44 the mutton snapper, is there anything that can be done or will
45 be done about that? Now, during the season, I think it's three
46 months, mutton snapper is closed throughout the island, from the
47 shoreline all the way out, though, in the opinion, in our
48 opinion, it should not be, because of the amount of mutton

1 snapper that is there. We are now putting a number on the ACLs.
2 I am asking if, now that you have it all, if it isn't a double-
3 jeopardy.

4

5 **MIGUEL ROLON:** I am not following your question.

6

7 **BILL ARNOLD:** There is a management measure in place for mutton
8 snapper in St. Croix and other areas, Tom, and that's what
9 you're talking about.

10

11 **TOM DALEY:** Yes.

12

13 **BILL ARNOLD:** That is we would not have management measures in
14 federal waters unless that species was managed. The first
15 criterion that the council established for choosing species for
16 management was are they already somehow managed, and mutton
17 snapper was one that was.

18

19 Because of that, it is proposed for continued management, and so
20 the mutton snapper, if all things move forward and what we're
21 talking about actually comes to pass, mutton snapper would
22 continue to be federally managed.

23

24 Now, you're talking about a separate issue. If we're going to
25 continue to manage mutton snapper, how are we going to do it?
26 One of our management measures is a three-month closure to
27 fishing of mutton snapper. As a separate exercise, really after
28 we've got these new fishery management plans in place, do we
29 need to reevaluate that closure and either expand it, probably
30 not, shorten it, get rid of it, reduce the spatial scope of it,
31 or anything else. That is a management measure you would use to
32 address the need to properly manage mutton snapper, and so
33 you're talking about two separate issues here, really.

34

35 **TOM DALEY:** Okay. I may still ask that or bring a little light
36 to it. It may not be a question, but lionfish. Lionfish is
37 also a problem, and, with the amount of closed areas in St.
38 Croix on a limited shelf. I am asking if there is any plans to
39 reopen some of those areas that are closed in order to balance -
40 - That nature can then balance itself and some of those lionfish
41 can be caught.

42

43 We recently had an incident where, in one of these closed areas,
44 which is multipurpose use -- In other words, baiters are going
45 in there. We had a shark attack and it took off a leg and
46 whatever. The real story isn't known on it yet, but it's clear
47 evidence that closed areas and multipurpose use are also
48 dangerous. I am asking, now that we are putting every species

1 now under some sort of an ACL thing, if some of those areas that
2 are closed could be reopened or considered.

3
4 **BILL ARNOLD:** There are several aspects to that question, Tom,
5 and they're all valid in their own right. First, lionfish.
6 Lionfish is a tricky issue, because if you just open the area up
7 to all fishing, then you may reduce the lionfish population, but
8 you could have severe impacts to some of the other species that
9 are being protected in that area, and so that's not necessarily
10 the best approach. You might come up with some management
11 measure that allows you to attack lionfish and, okay, that's one
12 thing.

13
14 The second thing is getting bit by a shark. Surfers on the east
15 coast of Florida get bit by sharks all the time and those areas
16 are wide open. It's just a matter of being in the wrong place
17 at the wrong time. That doesn't really make the closed area
18 dangerous. The question would be could that same thing have
19 happened in an open area? Likely, it could have been.

20
21 The third thing is just the management of the managed areas, the
22 closed areas. I do think -- The fishermen have complained, and
23 rightfully so, that we close these areas and then we don't
24 follow up with evaluations.

25
26 From our point of view, the evaluations are extremely expensive
27 and we don't necessarily have the budget to do it, but that
28 doesn't mean that our evaluation of the value and functionality
29 of these closed areas doesn't need to be considered, and we are
30 sensitive to that.

31
32 Whether we're fully addressing it or not, we're certainly
33 sensitive to the need to understand how a closure is functioning
34 relative to the goals that were set for that closure in the
35 first place.

36
37 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Schuster, and then we're going to move
38 forward, because we have limited time and we want to get the ABC
39 stuff out.

40
41 **EDWARD SCHUSTER:** This will be a short comment. We've gone too
42 far to revisit reopening spawning aggregations. Consider having
43 a permitting application to allow science or research just to do
44 an evaluation of these aggregations, but opening them up to
45 fishing is not the answer and it's not the balance.

46
47 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Okay, and moving forward to ABC Control Rule.
48 Miguel.

1
2 **DISCUSSION OF ABC CONTROL RULE**
3

4 **MIGUEL ROLON:** From the presentation by Dr. Clay Porch, you have
5 seen the definition of an ABC control rule and you have seen the
6 roadmap that I mentioned before. If we follow that, and if the
7 council concurs, then between here and June, the SSC and the
8 staff has to put together a small group of scientists that could
9 address this part of the process, which is to develop a draft
10 ABC control document, where we are going to include all the
11 elements that were discussed during the prior two days by the
12 SSC.
13

14 Again, that would involve a lot of thinking about the models
15 that we use, the models that we reject, and, in essence, you can
16 have a document that will give you kind of a toolbox and,
17 instead of using only one model for all of the species that we
18 have under management, you can have a series of models that can
19 be adapted to that particular fishery.
20

21 At the meeting in June, we expect to have that document for
22 discussion at the council meeting. Remember, we are preparing
23 these documents that later will be taken to the public, and so
24 we're preparing parts of the document that will be taken to
25 public hearings hopefully during 2016. At this time, Mr.
26 Chairman, do you have any questions regarding the process
27 between here and June on the ABC control rules?
28

29 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Jesse.
30

31 **JESSE RIVERA:** (Mr. Rivera's comments were in Spanish and were
32 not transcribed.)
33

34 **MIGUEL ROLON:** (Mr. Rolon's comments were in Spanish and were
35 not transcribed.)
36

37 **JESSE RIVERA:** (Mr. Rivera's comments were in Spanish and were
38 not transcribed.)
39

40 **MIGUEL ROLON:** (Mr. Rolon's comments were in Spanish and were
41 not transcribed.)
42

43 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Silva, and then I need to make a comment on
44 this ABC.
45

46 **ROBERTO SILVA:** (Mr. Silva's comments were in Spanish and were
47 not transcribed.)
48

1 **MIGUEL ROLON:** (Mr. Rolon's comments were in Spanish and were
2 not transcribed.)

3
4 We are going to write a letter to the Secretary, because that's
5 going to happen again. In English, for those people who are
6 listening in, Puerto Rico is supposed to be sitting at this
7 table and paying attention to what the council is saying and
8 paying attention to what the constituents are saying and the
9 scientists, because they are responsible for collecting the
10 data.

11
12 They are responsible for having agents in the field, and so
13 these issues that we are discussing today will not be discussed
14 ten years from now. I won't be around. Probably, if I get a
15 letter tomorrow, I won't be around next week, but, anyway, this
16 is a serious matter.

17
18 We are affecting the fisheries of the islands of Puerto Rico and
19 the Virgin Islands and it's imperative that we have
20 representation of the local governments here. It's also by law.
21 MSA was not designed on thin air. I am going to write a letter
22 to the Secretary so this won't happen again.

23
24 The last time this happened, I wrote a letter to the Governors
25 of the Virgin Islands and the Governor of Puerto Rico, because
26 at that meeting we didn't have representation from any of the two
27 governments, and the two Governors reacted in a very interesting
28 way, but, anyway, I've got to get this off my chest, because
29 this is very irresponsible not to have representation of the
30 agencies that collect the information, of the agencies that are
31 responsible for managing the fishery within their area of
32 jurisdiction. We are not given any importance, by not being
33 here, to the fisheries and the fishers of this area. Thank you,
34 Mr. Chairman.

35
36 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Thank you, Miguel. In dealing with the ABC
37 control rules, we got read-ahead documents from Bill, and so I
38 don't know if anybody had a chance to look at this and whether
39 or not what we're going to do is look at these different tiers
40 or conditions of use, particularly looking at 3 and 3b, where
41 there is no assessment available, but landings data exists. Are
42 we supposed to be looking at these documents and seeing what
43 would fit us? Is that part of what these read-ahead documents
44 were for, to see if we can use them under a control rule?

45
46 **BILL ARNOLD:** The reason I sent them to the council, Carlos, is
47 just as a template for what these ABC control rules will look
48 like. It's really a scientific process. I would anticipate it

1 will be, at least initially, driven by the Southeast Fisheries
2 Science Center and the council's Scientific and Statistical
3 Committee, and they will bring you -- As I said earlier today,
4 that should be influenced by your goals and objectives, the
5 council's goals and objectives, and what they should bring you
6 is an ABC control rule that includes some alternative
7 approaches.

8
9 For example, if you're going to focus on maximizing yield, you
10 might use this model and they might have that in there as one
11 option, one tier. You might have, okay, we want to maintain
12 ecosystem integrity and you could take a different approach for
13 that.

14
15 You could have that we're going to reduce from MSY to OY to ABC,
16 and these are the options for doing that, the alternatives, and
17 then that gives the council alternatives to choose from, and the
18 public alternatives to choose from, in devising a final ABC
19 control rule that will be applied to determining what that
20 acceptable biological catch is and, ultimately, what that annual
21 catch limit is.

22
23 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Another question. So each of those units
24 that these guys just separated species into would have a control
25 rule? Like, for example, lobster, we feel that they're healthy
26 and so they could be equal to instead of having that percentage
27 reduction?

28
29 **BILL ARNOLD:** As we did with the 2010 and 2011 Caribbean ACL
30 Amendments, we basically had one preferred alternative and,
31 within that, there were different options sub-alternatives, and
32 one sub-alternative might have been chosen for surgeonfish and
33 angelfish, for example, and another for spiny lobster. You had
34 a 10 percent reduction for spiny lobster and you had a 25
35 percent reduction for surgeonfish. These are options within
36 that.

37
38 Really, and it's up to the SSC and the Science Center and not
39 me, but I would envision one control rule that covers the entire
40 thing, but alternatives within that control rule that may apply
41 to different groups of species, and it doesn't have to be for
42 each species or species group. You could be lumping them, like
43 we lumped squirrelfish and jacks and all those things and said
44 all these guys get a 10 percent reduction and then we had
45 aquarium trade species and they had a different preferred
46 alternative, et cetera, et cetera.

47
48 What you want to do is build an ABC control rule, at least in my

1 mind, that has some flexibility to adapt to the various species
2 groups and what their specific needs are, and you could have a
3 single ABC control rule for the U.S. Caribbean, but that is
4 flexible enough to adapt to the needs of St. Croix and the
5 separate needs of St. Thomas/St. John and the separate needs of
6 Puerto Rico.

7

8 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Miguel.

9

10 **MIGUEL ROLON:** I need your help here again, Bill. In order to
11 have these two documents prepared, you have to have goals and
12 objectives first and then the ABC control rule. If we are going
13 to have -- If we finish the goals and objectives in June, then
14 the ABC control rule can be developed by the scientists between
15 June and August, or can we work them parallel?

16

17 **BILL ARNOLD:** You can work them parallel, because there's going
18 to be alternative approaches, or at least potential -- Some
19 components of this ABC control rule is going to be composed of
20 alternative approaches.

21

22 What alternative you choose is going to be guided by your goals
23 and objectives, but you can go ahead and develop an ABC control
24 rule with alternatives in it and then, as your goals and
25 objectives become clearer, that's going to decide how you choose
26 among those alternatives, but I would not wait on the goals and
27 objectives to develop your ABC control rule, because there is
28 many things that can be done to develop that ABC control rule
29 now without knowing exactly what those goals and objectives are
30 going to be. You're kind of building them up, and ultimately
31 they will merge into a document that is influenced -- This one
32 influences that one, but I would not wait. You don't need to
33 wait.

34

35 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Mr. Chairman, I propose that the council instruct
36 the staff to put together the team of scientists, a small team,
37 as Dr. Clay Porch said, a small team of scientists to work on
38 the alternatives for the control rules and then present their
39 findings or the draft document by the June meeting.

40

41 At the same time, the staff will work on the goals and
42 objectives, and, as I said before, we will prepare this draft
43 that is going to be circulated among the council members and the
44 committees and panels that we have. By June, you will have in
45 front of you the two documents so you can discuss it.

46

47 When I say June, I intend to send the documents thirty days
48 before June, because I want to give -- We need to have ample

1 time for discussion before the meeting, so you will be able to
2 receive the documents ahead of time, and so that will conclude
3 this part of the agenda. If you all agree, then this is the
4 process that we will follow.

5
6 We will prepare the draft goals and objectives and we will have
7 a committee of scientists looking at ABC control rule
8 alternatives that will be presented at the June meeting.

9
10 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Okay, and so I guess we're good with that.
11 Iris.

12
13 **IRIS LOWERY:** I would just suggest that the council actually
14 take action on that. If that's something that you would like to
15 instruct staff to do, that you take action on that issue with a
16 motion.

17
18 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Can you help us with two or three lines for the
19 motion?

20
21 **IRIS LOWERY:** As Bill suggested, I think there should be two
22 motions, one for the control rule and one for the goals and
23 objectives. I guess the first motion could be to request that
24 the SSC form a committee to draft ABC control rule alternatives.
25 Then I guess the second motion would be to request that council
26 staff create a draft goals and objectives document by the June
27 council meeting for both of those. I think that both of those,
28 it seems like the intent is to have those completed by the June
29 council meeting.

30
31 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Presented at the June council meeting, yes. Mr.
32 Chairman, we need a "so I move" and a second for the first one.

33
34 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Blanchard.

35
36 **TONY BLANCHARD:** Second.

37
38 **MARCOS HANKE:** I move.

39
40 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** The first motion is to request the SSC form a
41 committee to draft ABC control rule alternatives. It's moved by
42 Hanke and seconded by Blanchard. **All in favor say aye; any**
43 **nays; any abstentions. Hearing none, the motion carries with**
44 **one absent.** The next motion is --

45
46 **MARCOS HANKE:** I would like to move the language on the screen,
47 to request the CFMC staff to create a draft goals and objectives
48 document.

1
2 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Do we have a second?
3
4 **TONY BLANCHARD:** Second.
5
6 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Okay. The motion is to request that the CFMC
7 staff crate a draft goals and objectives document. I think that
8 these two -- Didn't we want to have this by the June council
9 meeting?
10
11 **MIGUEL ROLON:** That's understood.
12
13 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** That's moved by Hanke and seconded by
14 Blanchard. **All in favor say aye; any abstentions; any nays.**
15 **Hearing none, the motion carries with one absent.**
16
17 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Okay. That was all on the agenda except for
18 Other Business. Do we have something on that? Then that's it.
19 That concludes our 155th council meeting. It's noon, March 17.
20 Meeting adjourned. Thank you very much. You all have a safe
21 flight home.
22
23 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on March 17, 2016.)
24
25 - - -