

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1  
2  
3 Table of Contents ..... 1  
4  
5 Table of Motions ..... 3  
6  
7 Call to Order and Roll Call ..... 3  
8  
9 Approval of Agenda ..... 4  
10  
11 Five-Year Strategic Plan ..... 5  
12  
13 Other Business ..... 42  
14     Approval of 170<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting Verbatim Transcriptions 42  
15     IBFMP Update ..... 43  
16     Discussion of Zoom Meeting Platform ..... 46  
17     Outreach and Education for Marine Reserves ..... 46  
18     Discussion of October Meeting ..... 48  
19  
20 Executive Order on Promoting American Seafood Competitiveness and  
21 Economic Growth ..... 50  
22  
23 Next Meeting ..... 65  
24  
25 Adjournment ..... 68  
26

27                   - - -  
28

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6

PAGE

TABLE OF MOTIONS

- - -

1 **CARIBBEAN FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**  
2 **171<sup>ST</sup> REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**  
3 **Webinar**

4  
5 SEPTEMBER 25, 2020  
6

7 The Caribbean Fishery Management Council convened via webinar on  
8 Friday morning, September 25, 2020, and was called to order at  
9 9:00 o'clock a.m. by Chairman Marcos Hanke.

10  
11 **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**  
12

13 **MARCOS HANKE:** Good morning, everyone. It's 9:02 a.m. on September  
14 25, and it's Friday, and it's 2020, and we're going to start the  
15 meeting. I am Marcos Hanke, and I'm the Chairman of the Caribbean  
16 Council. Good morning, everyone. Before we start, just a reminder  
17 to ask for a turn to speak using the chat, with the emoji or raise  
18 your hand for a turn to speak, and be to the point, very brief,  
19 because it's a virtual meeting, and that's very helpful to  
20 everybody.

21  
22 If the system crashes, we have a secondary option of Google Meet,  
23 and I will instruct you. If we need to change to Google Meet, we  
24 will wait for ten minutes, and then we will change to the other  
25 platform, but, otherwise, we're going to stay on this platform,  
26 and we're going to start now with the roll call. Natalia, can you  
27 help me?  
28

29 **NATALIA PERDOMO:** Good morning.  
30

31 **MIGUEL ROLON:** For the record, what we are going to do from now on  
32 is that Natalia will read the names that are on the list of  
33 attendees, and that will save time, and then those people who are  
34 on the phone, that we cannot identify, Natalia will give time for  
35 them to identify themselves. Go ahead, Natalia.  
36

37 **NATALIA PERDOMO:** Thank you. Good morning, everyone. On my list,  
38 I have Graciela Garcia-Moliner, Liajay Rivera, Miguel Rolon, Clay  
39 Porch, Jack McGovern, Roy Crabtree, Alida Ortiz, Bill Cordero,  
40 Carlos Farchette, Christina Olan, Damaris Delgado, Edward  
41 Schuster, Jocelyn D'Ambrosio, John Walter, Julian Magras, Marcos  
42 Hanke, María de los Irizarry, Maria Lopez, Michelle Duval, Miguel  
43 Borges, Nelson Crespo, Nicole Angeli, Ricardo Lopez, Richard  
44 Appeldoorn, Robert Copeland, Sarah Stephenson, Wilson Santiago. I  
45 think that's it.  
46

47 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you very much. We are going to --  
48

1 **NATALIA PERDOMO:** I'm sorry. I am seeing Adyan Rios.

2  
3 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you very much, Natalia.

4  
5 **TONY BLANCHARD:** Tony Blanchard.

6  
7 **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

8  
9 **MARCOS HANKE:** Yes, and I was going to say that Tony Blanchard is  
10 with Julian Magras, and they are together on the same computer, as  
11 I understand. Thank you very much to Julian for the support and  
12 for Tony to be there. We will keep going on.

13  
14 We are going to have an approval for the agenda now, and the agenda  
15 has us from 9:00 to 12:00 a.m. with the five-year strategic plan,  
16 and then we'll have a lunchbreak from 12:00 to 10:00. From 1:00  
17 to 2:30 will be the E.O. 13921 discussion, and then we'll have  
18 Other Business. For Other Business, I want to recommend to include  
19 a brief discussion on the approval of the 170<sup>th</sup> verbatim  
20 transcriptions from the last meeting.

21  
22 It's posted on the webpage of the council, and an IBFMP  
23 announcement, with some brief details made by Maria Lopez, and the  
24 status of the use of the Zoom meetings by Miguel Rolon, and the  
25 virtual education for the marine reserves. Miguel Rolon is going  
26 to do that too, and, also, the last item I want to add to the Other  
27 Business is the meeting on October 7 between the Outreach and  
28 Education Panel and the DAPs and the officers. We are going to  
29 discuss that at the end of the meeting. Any comment?

30  
31 **MIGUEL ROLON:** For the record, lunch is from 12:00 to 1:00 and not  
32 from 12:00 to 10:00.

33  
34 **MARCOS HANKE:** Okay. Thank you. I would like a motion to approve  
35 the agenda, or any comment.

36  
37 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Motion to approve the agenda as read.

38  
39 **TONY BLANCHARD:** Second.

40  
41 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you very much to all. All in favor, say aye.

42  
43 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Marcos, because we don't have a -- It's better to  
44 say any opposition and the motion carries.

45  
46 **MARCOS HANKE:** Okay. Is there any opposition? Hearing none, the  
47 motion carries. We are going to pass to the first presentation,  
48 but, before that, like I said before, we are happy to announce

1 that the island-based FMP was approved, and we're going to have  
2 more details in Other Business later on in the meeting, but  
3 congratulations to all that have worked so hard for this to be a  
4 reality. We're going to start now with Michelle Duval and the  
5 Five-Year Strategic Plan Presentation.

6  
7 **ROY CRABTREE:** Marcos, could I say just one thing first?

8  
9 **MARCOS HANKE:** Yes.

10  
11 **ROY CRABTREE:** Sorry to interrupt, but I wanted to thank all of  
12 you for the beautiful retirement gift that you sent me after the  
13 last meeting, the coral reef in a glass container. It did arrive,  
14 and I got it, and I thank you all very much, and I will think about  
15 my times in the U.S. Caribbean when I look at that, and so thank  
16 you very much.

17  
18 **MARCOS HANKE:** You are more than welcome. Go ahead, Miguel.

19  
20 **MIGUEL ROLON:** I was just saying that Diana now can be happier,  
21 because we were wondering if you got it intact, and so I'm glad  
22 that it's there in your home. Thank you for all the work that you  
23 have done with us, Roy, and I know that you will be accompanying  
24 us during the December meeting, but we just wanted to take this  
25 opportunity.

26  
27 I have been in the council for forty or more years, as a council  
28 member and staff, and you are probably one of the best RAs that we  
29 have ever had. You not only have a marine background, but the  
30 interest of helping the Southeast Region, and, in our case, helping  
31 move Caribbean programs into these plans, and, for that, we are  
32 really grateful. Thank you.

33  
34 **MARCOS HANKE:** Yes, and now we're going to start then, and thank  
35 you very much, Roy, again, with Michelle Duval.

36  
37 **FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN**

38  
39 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to thank  
40 everybody today for allowing me the opportunity to lead you through  
41 a discussion on strategic planning and to give you a little bit of  
42 an update on where we are.

43  
44 It seems like we've been doing this for a while, and so I just  
45 thought that I would give a little process update first. We  
46 launched an online survey in March of this year, and, once the  
47 impacts of the pandemic became clear, we extended that through the  
48 end of July, and I provided updates to the DAPs, the Outreach and

1 Education Advisory Panel, as well as you all, on survey  
2 participation, and, shortly after that, we ran into some problems  
3 with the Paperwork Reduction Act.

4  
5 That required us to sort of shift our approach a little bit to  
6 develop an alternative that is really more discussion-based, and  
7 so we launched this approach in August, and the Outreach and  
8 Education Advisory Panel and the District Advisory Panels  
9 participated in this alternative approach, and now, here in  
10 September, it's the council's turn to do so.

11  
12 The way this alternative approach is organized is we organized  
13 things around four different discussion themes of resource health;  
14 social, cultural, and economic concerns; management and  
15 operational issues; and communication and outreach.

16  
17 The goal of these discussions was to have the DAPs and the O&E AP  
18 provide us with their priorities that they think the council should  
19 focus on under each one of these discussion themes, and so we had  
20 a number of different topics under each theme, and I just wanted  
21 to note that those topics really came from the public input that  
22 was received through the development of the island-based FMPs,  
23 and, as we went through this process with the District Advisory  
24 Panels, they provided some suggestions and modifications to the  
25 topics under the different themes, to make them clearer, and so I  
26 will try to point those out as we go through this.

27  
28 The other thing, before we get started, is this is about  
29 priorities, and so, while there are a lot of different topics under  
30 each one of these themes, it doesn't -- The intent of this exercise  
31 is to really try to determine what to tackle first, when it comes  
32 to these different types of topics, and it doesn't mean that none  
33 of them are important or that ones that don't rise to the top as  
34 being priorities are not important or that they won't be addressed  
35 in the future, but it's just that we have to start somewhere, and  
36 the council can't do everything all at once.

37  
38 The way I'm going to approach this is that, first, I'm just going  
39 to walk everybody through the different topics under each one of  
40 the four themes, and then we'll go back to the top, and what we  
41 would really like to do is get your input on what do you think are  
42 really sort of the top-five priorities that the council should be  
43 focusing on as we move forward with development of the strategic  
44 plan, and so I'm going to start with the first topic, which is  
45 really resource health.

46  
47 One of the things I want to note is there are a number of different  
48 discussion topics under here, and one of the things that the

1 District Advisory Panels noted is that, you know, there really is  
2 kind of a lot of overlap with many of these topics, and so, for  
3 example, sedimentation and erosion is really a form of pollution,  
4 but pollution also includes things such as marine debris, plastics,  
5 nutrient pollution, and things like that.

6  
7 One of the other additions that I would like to point out on this  
8 list of topics is that the DAPs had a discussion about the fact  
9 that habitat loss and destruction, for example, is integrally  
10 linked to habitat creation and rehabilitation. I think one of the  
11 other things that came up during the DAP discussions is that  
12 enforcement is also linked to, or is key to, many of these resource  
13 health topics, such as enforcement of coastal development  
14 regulations or regulations that are related to erosion and  
15 sedimentation or illegal fishing, which impacts resource health.

16  
17 You can see we have, just very quickly, invasive species; climate  
18 change; erosion and sedimentation; coastal development; natural  
19 disasters; this topic of habitat loss/destruction and  
20 creation/rehabilitation; enforcement; pollution; bycatch and  
21 discard mortality; abundance of bait fish or forage; lack of  
22 biological or ecosystem information, as well as data mining. That  
23 was one of the things that I meant to note earlier, just that data  
24 mining is one opportunity to try to address lack of information,  
25 and that there are many different datasets out there, and we can  
26 try to be wise with resources by mining those different datasets  
27 for additional information. Then the last few topics are  
28 overfishing and illegal fishing.

29  
30 The next theme that we discussed was social, cultural, and economic  
31 concerns, and there's a pretty large list of topics here. The  
32 first one is closed seasons and stock assessments for the species  
33 that are impacted by those closed seasons, and so, for example,  
34 the snappers for which there is a closed season, and then also  
35 evaluation of the current area and season closures that the council  
36 has in place, to make sure that they're actually effective, or  
37 that they're meeting their intended goal, and so this was a topic  
38 that was originally two different topics, and the DAPs decided  
39 that these things are really very closely linked, and so it was  
40 better to incorporate them all together as one.

41  
42 Increasing costs, and so increasing costs of just engaging in  
43 fishing activities, and so cost of gear, cost of fuel, cost of  
44 bait, things like that. Competition with foreign fishermen,  
45 recreational and commercial user conflicts, displacement of  
46 fishing communities, through such things as coastal development.  
47 Then the ability to support a family through fishing activities.

48

1 Illegal or unlicensed commercial fishers; a lack of new entrants  
2 into the fishery; a lack of social and economic data; excess gear,  
3 such as perhaps too many hooks or too many traps, et cetera.  
4 Market instability, and so this was another one of the topics where  
5 the DAPs had some discussion, in that, given the reality of the  
6 pandemic right now, that people are seeking out new ways to  
7 virtually advertise their products, through things such as social  
8 media, in order to try to bring some additional stability to the  
9 market, and that part of this should be about prioritizing use of  
10 locally-caught seafood.

11  
12 The last few topics are infrastructure needs, and so this includes  
13 not only sufficient boat ramps and landing sites, but also market  
14 sites, and those things tend to be two different places. The place  
15 where fishermen come in and land are not always the places where  
16 the fish are marketed, and then, finally, inadequate enforcement  
17 and excess fishing capacity.

18  
19 The next theme of discussion was management and operational issues,  
20 and so we have a list of topics here. The first includes accurate  
21 and timely commercial and recreational catch data, and one of the  
22 things that came up in discussion with the DAPs was mandatory  
23 reporting for all sectors.

24  
25 Enforcement of existing regulations. Then involving fishers in  
26 data collection, whether that is fishery-dependent data collection  
27 and different ways to do that or collection of fishery-independent  
28 data, through cooperative efforts. Regulatory consistency, and so  
29 this refers to regulatory consistency between federal and  
30 territorial regulations, and there was some conversation among the  
31 DAPs that there might be instances where such compatibility is  
32 feasible and instances in which it is not, and so we just wanted  
33 to make sure to clarify that.

34  
35 Then having clear management objectives addressing bycatch and  
36 regulatory discards. Gear limits, and so a limit on the total  
37 amount of gear that someone might be allowed to have. Ensuring  
38 cost-effective data collection technology, and so any electronic  
39 reporting of -- Technologies that are used need to be cost  
40 effective. Then balancing commercial and recreational concerns  
41 and incorporation of climate change impacts to the management  
42 program. Consideration of a federal permit program, and then  
43 territorial licensing requirements, and so there was some  
44 discussion about the territorial licensing requirements for  
45 fishers, and, for example, one of the things that came up here was  
46 considering a recreational licensing requirement, in order to  
47 improve reporting.

48



1 The last set of topics that we talked about had to do with  
2 communication and outreach, and we started with a slightly smaller  
3 list, and then, through the DAP discussions, we added a couple of  
4 things, and so this was not a list where we asked folks to name  
5 their top priorities.

6  
7 It was recognized that all of these efforts, all communication and  
8 outreach efforts, were important, and so what we were asking folks  
9 for was do we have a complete enough list here, are there  
10 additional things in this list of communication and outreach  
11 priorities that you would like to see more detail on, or that the  
12 council should focus on a little bit more, and so one of the first  
13 things was frequency of communication, and so alerts and reminders  
14 of scoping meetings and council meetings. Should that be more  
15 frequent, or should it be less frequent?

16  
17 The variety of tools used in communication, you know, different  
18 stakeholder groups prefer different types of communication, such  
19 as email, use of the website, social media, paper, text message  
20 alerts. Are there other tools that the council should be  
21 considering?

22  
23 Educational resources, for example, information that is easily  
24 understood on science and stock assessment, information on  
25 business planning for commercial and for-hire fishers, information  
26 about restaurant choices that promote local seafood, some of these  
27 things that the council is already engaged in, and, also, including  
28 other jurisdictions and agencies, such as the Coast Guard or the  
29 National Park Service, that also have marine interest, and they  
30 have educational materials that would be helpful.

31  
32 Improving general public awareness of fisheries issues. expanding  
33 communication to other groups, and sort of maybe perhaps non-  
34 traditional groups, such as divers or dive shop owners, in order  
35 to increase awareness of fisheries issues.

36  
37 Having regular in-person outreach workshops on important topics.  
38 Obviously, this is something that's very challenging to do right  
39 now, but this was a suggestion that was brought forward by the  
40 DAPs, and the Chair specifically, that, in order to involve more  
41 people in the process, it would be great to have -- To pick your  
42 time wisely, in between weather and fishing activities, and have  
43 an in-person workshop on a topic that's really important to  
44 fishers, and that can help generate future interest and future  
45 attendance at council meetings and in the council process.

46  
47 This next one, clarity and simplicity of presentations, is very  
48 important. There are a lot of acronyms, and there is a lot of

1 jargon in the fisheries management process, and so, in order to  
2 make sure that people feel comfortable in this process, and that  
3 they want to come back, it's very important to increase the clarity  
4 and simplicity of presentations.

5  
6 Then, finally, this was something that was added through the DAP  
7 discussions, was to expand the role of fishery liaisons beyond  
8 participation on the Outreach & Education Advisory Panel and that  
9 this will help increase the liaison understanding of fisheries  
10 issues, and it will also increase public understanding of the role  
11 of liaisons. One example that was provided is having the liaisons  
12 give a presentation of each island's activities at future council  
13 meetings.

14  
15 That was a list of different discussion topics under each one of  
16 these four themes, and so, like I said, we're going to go back,  
17 and what we would really like here is to have input from around  
18 the council table about what you all believe are the top priorities  
19 within each of those four areas, but, before we did that, I did  
20 just want to quickly outline the next steps in the process.

21  
22 One of the things that we're going to do next week is we're going  
23 to be launching an online comment form that we're going to have  
24 open through the end of October, and so the DAP members were  
25 diligent in going out and talking to fishers in their areas, on  
26 their islands, to gather input, but we wanted to make sure that  
27 anybody, any member of the public, who was not able to attend one  
28 of these public discussions still had another opportunity to  
29 provide input on what they thought priorities would be for the  
30 council under each one of these areas.

31  
32 Once that is completed, we're working on analysis and a summary of  
33 all the input and report preparation, and then the plan is to give  
34 a presentation to you all at your December meeting on all the input  
35 that's been gathered and the results from that and then start  
36 drafting a strategic plan in early next year.

37  
38 With that, we're going to -- I would be happy to take any questions,  
39 and then we can move back into council input and discussion on  
40 these four themes, and so thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and  
41 I will turn things back over to you.

42  
43 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you very much, Michelle. That was a great  
44 presentation. It was very clear and very simple and easy to  
45 follow. Are there any general comments or questions about the  
46 presentation? Then we will go around the table to have the input  
47 of each member of the council.

1 Hearing none, Michelle, how do you want to go about this? Do you  
2 want to start around the council members, to have their comments  
3 on any specific -- Is there any slide that you want to keep it up,  
4 to facilitate the discussion?

5  
6 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that would be  
7 best, if we could go around the council table, and we'll keep this  
8 slide up here and ask folks, of these resource health topics, what  
9 do you think are the top-five that the council should consider  
10 focusing on in the development of its strategic plan, and so that's  
11 the information we're looking for from everybody.

12  
13 **MARCOS HANKE:** One question. Do you want any kind of  
14 prioritization, for them to go from 1 to 5 or something like that,  
15 or in general?

16  
17 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** Just in general, and we don't need people to say  
18 this is Number 1 and this is Number 2. What we're really looking  
19 for is really just are there five of these that you think are the  
20 most important, and we're not asking for any ratings or any  
21 rankings.

22  
23 **MARCOS HANKE:** Perfect. Let's go around the table with the council  
24 members first, and let me see who is on my list. First is Carlos  
25 Farchette.

26  
27 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Good morning. I do have a printout of this,  
28 but I don't have it in front of me. Go to someone else right now,  
29 so I can get that printout, and I need to review something here,  
30 but I do have something to talk about when it comes to health, but  
31 I will do it. I need to get my print-out.

32  
33 **MARCOS HANKE:** Okay. No problem, Carlos. Thank you. Go ahead,  
34 Miguel.

35  
36 **MIGUEL ROLON:** In order to structure the discussion, we are going  
37 to go one-by-one, and so what we need to know is, out of this  
38 resource health topic that we have here, which are the top-five,  
39 and would you like to add anything to it, which are some that you  
40 can combine, and we need that from each council member.

41  
42 Then we will continue the same thing until we call the fourth one,  
43 and try not to mix outreach and education and socioeconomics and  
44 all that. Wait until we have the slide that Dr. Duval is going to  
45 present to you, and so, the first time around, we need to hear  
46 from the council members, the same way that we did with the other  
47 groups, are which are the top five that you have for the health  
48 resources, and then Diana and I will help Dr. Duval by tallying

1 this up.  
2  
3 I believe that, yes, you should say that my Number 1 is this, and  
4 my Number 2 is this one, because that's the way we are going to  
5 tally these up. You can start with yourself, if you want to, as  
6 an example.  
7  
8 **MARCOS HANKE:** Yes, and I will start with myself. I have here  
9 Number 1 is erosion and sedimentation. Number 2 is habitat loss  
10 and destruction. Number 3 is bycatch and discards. Number 4 is  
11 pollution, and Number 5 is lack of biological and ecosystem  
12 information and data mining.  
13  
14 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Are there any comments that you may have on this  
15 slide, general comments?  
16  
17 **MARCOS HANKE:** If I have any general comments?  
18  
19 **MIGUEL ROLON:** That you may have, yes. If not, that's okay, and  
20 we'll go to the next one.  
21  
22 **MARCOS HANKE:** No, I don't have any general comments right now,  
23 and I was not ready to comment specifically on each of them. I  
24 just have the list, and, when I filled out my form, I put my  
25 comments on the form, when I had a little more time.  
26  
27 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** Mr. Chairman, I am just seeing, in the chat, a  
28 question from Damaris of if I could just repeat what the different  
29 topics are on the screen, and so I'm just going to quickly do that  
30 before we move on to the next person, if that's okay.  
31  
32 **MARCOS HANKE:** Yes.  
33  
34 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** Thank you. They are invasive species, climate  
35 change, erosion and sedimentation, coastal development, natural  
36 disasters, habitat loss/destruction and creation/rehabilitation,  
37 enforcement, pollution, bycatch and discard mortality, abundance  
38 of baitfish or forage, lack of biological or ecosystem information  
39 and data mining, overfishing, and illegal fishing. Thank you.  
40  
41 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Michelle. Let's go to -- Vanessa, are  
42 you ready to comment?  
43  
44 **VANESSA RAMIREZ:** Okay. Thank you. I have here overfishing,  
45 illegal fishing, habitat loss, coastal development, and  
46 enforcement.  
47  
48 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Can you repeat that slowly?

1  
2 **VANESSA RAMIREZ:** Overfishing, illegal fishing, habitat loss,  
3 coastal development, and enforcement.  
4  
5 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Thank you, Vanessa.  
6  
7 **MARCOS HANKE:** Carlos.  
8  
9 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have as my Number 1 is  
10 erosion and sedimentation, pollution, abundance of baitfish and  
11 forage fish, enforcement, illegal fishing.  
12  
13 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Carlos. Tony, are you ready?  
14  
15 **TONY BLANCHARD:** What I have here at the top of list is climate  
16 change, and then it's coastal development. Then I have habitat  
17 loss or destruction. Then I have lack of biological or ecosystem  
18 information and data mining. At the end of my list, I have invasive  
19 species.  
20  
21 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Tony. The representative of the Virgin  
22 Islands.  
23  
24 **NICOLE ANGELI:** The top five that we have are habitat  
25 loss/destruction and creation/rehabilitation. Then second is  
26 enforcement. Third is climate change. Fourth is pollution, and  
27 fifth is lack of biological or ecosystem information and data  
28 mining.  
29  
30 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you. Puerto Rico DNR.  
31  
32 **DAMARIS DELGADO:** Good morning. We have pollution, habitat  
33 loss/destruction, overfishing, lack of data and data mining, and  
34 illegal fishing.  
35  
36 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Damaris. Who am I missing?  
37  
38 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** I think you're missing Dr. Crabtree, maybe.  
39  
40 **MARCOS HANKE:** Yes. Dr. Crabtree, go ahead.  
41  
42 **ROY CRABTREE:** On my list, I have lack of timely information as  
43 Number 1. Number 2 is overfishing, Number 3 is enforcement, Number  
44 4 is habitat loss, and Number 5 is illegal fishing.  
45  
46 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Roy. Michelle, we are done with the  
47 council members, correct?  
48

1 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** I think so, Mr. Chairman, but I do believe that  
2 Mr. Blanchard may have just a comment, before we move on.

3

4 **MARCOS HANKE:** Go ahead, Tony.

5

6 **TONY BLANCHARD:** I would just like to make a comment that I am not  
7 saying that everybody's list is wrong, but I just think they look  
8 at it in a different way. I think, for the majority of us here,  
9 we put enforcement on the list, but, really, without the lack of  
10 addressing the climate change, the coastal development and habitat  
11 loss, the lack of biological information, and the invasive species,  
12 the overfishing and illegal fishing, and the lack of enforcement  
13 isn't going to do a thing, and we don't even have to worry about  
14 that. That was my comment.

15

16 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Tony. I heard you a little broken, but  
17 I was able to hear you good enough. Roy, do you have a comment?

18

19 **ROY CRABTREE:** There are some things on the list that I think are  
20 extremely important. Climate change -- If you asked me what's the  
21 biggest issue we're facing as natural resource managers, I would  
22 say climate change, but the reason I didn't put it as one of my  
23 priorities is it's more of a global, worldwide problem, and it's  
24 not clear to me what the council would be able to do to address  
25 that.

26

27 Likewise, some things like coastal development and those kinds of  
28 things, and, some of them, it's hard for me to see how they fall  
29 within our realm, so to speak, and so I didn't put some of those  
30 on my list, and I tried to focus on things that are more directly  
31 related to our authority and our ability to have some impact on  
32 them.

33

34 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you for your comments. I was on the same  
35 line of thought when I recommended mine. Does anybody else want  
36 to make a comment or an observation? I don't see anybody on the  
37 chat for now. Michelle, do you have what you need from this part?

38

39 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** I think so, Mr. Chairman. It's really helpful to  
40 hear these comments about the council focusing its priorities on  
41 things that are more directly within its purview, and, again, I  
42 just wanted to make sure that everyone knew that these topics were  
43 taken directly from the public input that was contained in the  
44 island-based FMPs.

45

46 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you very much. What is the next topic, or  
47 slide, to cover?

48

1 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** I think I see Dr. Appeldoorn would like a turn to  
2 speak.

3

4 **MARCOS HANKE:** We are going to pass now to Richard.

5

6 **RICHARD APPELDOORN:** Thank you. This is kind of following-up on  
7 Tony's comment and Roy's response. I think every issue that's  
8 listed here has a place in the ecosystem conceptual model that  
9 we've been developing in the SSC, and I'm willing to bet the DAPs  
10 have something very similar as well, and a lot of these things are  
11 interrelated. Climate change is certainly driving natural  
12 disasters, for example, and coastal development drives erosion and  
13 sedimentation and pollution, et cetera. By prioritizing one,  
14 you're sort of automatically bringing in some of these other things  
15 that later feed into them or result from it.

16

17 The other aspect was that, just hearing the diversity of responses,  
18 that it was very similar to what we experienced in the SSC when we  
19 were trying to prioritize the connections between our sub-models.  
20 There was a lot of diversity among how people viewed things, which  
21 drove how they responded, and there was a lot of diversity, even  
22 if they were viewing things the same, as to what their priorities  
23 were, and so this gives you, as this gets developed, analysis of  
24 what are the important issues, but you'll also get kind of what's  
25 the diversity of issues that are being highlighted, without ruling  
26 out anything that wasn't mentioned, because, as Roy mentioned, all  
27 of these things are important, but it's just where are you going  
28 to put your money. Thank you.

29

30 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you for your observation and comments.  
31 Michelle, do we want to go through the DAP chairs now, on the same  
32 topic, and we already heard about -- Go ahead, Miguel.

33

34 **MIGUEL ROLON:** No, and the DAPs already did all that. This is for  
35 the council members only at this time, and comments that we may  
36 have from each one of them, but, at the end of the presentation,  
37 Michelle will address that, and we will ask each one of the chairs  
38 to contribute.

39

40 **MARCOS HANKE:** Okay. Perfect.

41

42 **MIGUEL ROLON:** They already did all of this, and they have a  
43 report.

44

45 **MARCOS HANKE:** Okay. What is the next step that you need from us,  
46 Michelle?

47

48 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** Next, Mr. Chairman, we'll go on to social,

1 economic, cultural, and economic concerns, and so we would like to  
2 do a similar thing, is ask folks if they could provide what they  
3 think the top five priorities should be under this particular  
4 discussion theme.

5  
6 Again, if there are any additional comments that folks have with  
7 regard to the list of topics here, and any additional thoughts  
8 they want to provide with regard to why folks have selected certain  
9 topics as priorities, versus not, and so we'll just embark on the  
10 same process that we just did for the last theme area. Thank you.

11  
12 **MARCOS HANKE:** Okay. I will start, as an example, and let's follow  
13 the same order.

14  
15 **MIGUEL ROLON:** For the record, I believe that Damaris asked for  
16 Dr. Duval to read the list. I will read it for everybody, because  
17 some people apparently are on the phone. I believe that probably  
18 Michelle Duval should read it for the record, so everybody that is  
19 on the phone can then hear what we have on the slide. Michelle,  
20 can you read them?

21  
22 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** Yes. Absolutely, Miguel. The first topic under  
23 here is closed seasons and stock assessments for those impacted  
24 species. In other words, the species for which the closed season  
25 has been established. Then evaluation of area and season closures,  
26 to make sure that they are -- To see what impact they're having  
27 and whether they're meeting their intended goals.

28  
29 The next topic is increasing costs, and so the increasing costs of  
30 fishing, the bait, fuel, gear, ice. Competition with foreign  
31 fishermen, recreational and commercial user conflicts,  
32 displacement of fishing communities, the ability to support a  
33 family through the income from fishing, illegal and unlicensed  
34 commercial fishers, lack of new entrants into the fishery, lack of  
35 social and economic data, excess gear, market instability, and,  
36 again, this includes things like new ways to try to virtually  
37 advertise a product to create some stability and prioritizing  
38 locally-caught seafood. Then infrastructure needs, such as  
39 landing sites and market sites. Also, inadequate enforcement and  
40 excess fishing capacity.

41  
42 **MARCOS HANKE:** Tony, go ahead.

43  
44 **TONY BLANCHARD:** Marcos, can she bring it up on the screen, because  
45 we just started the computer, and I can't see the list.

46  
47 **MIGUEL ROLON:** It's on the screen.

48



1 **MARCOS HANKE:** It's on the screen right now.  
2  
3 **TONY BLANCHARD:** It is? I am probably looking at the wrong screen,  
4 because I am seeing you on the phone.  
5  
6 **MIGUEL ROLON:** You need to have a screen on the computer to see  
7 it, and you don't want to start your camera.  
8  
9 **MARCOS HANKE:** Tony, I am going to take a screenshot of the list  
10 and send it to you over the phone. Okay?  
11  
12 **TONY BLANCHARD:** Okay. Thanks.  
13  
14 **GRACIELA GARCIA-MOLINER:** Mr. Chair, if I may, he might have to  
15 close the area where all the pictures are, so that he can open up  
16 the slide.  
17  
18 **MARCOS HANKE:** Okay. Let's start with Carlos Farchette. I have  
19 already sent the image to Tony Blanchard.  
20  
21 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Actually, if Tony has an  
22 iPhone, and he takes his finger and swipes his screen to the right,  
23 it will bring up the screen. If you swipe it to the left, it will  
24 bring up your face.  
25  
26 Anyway, for my Number 1, I have closed seasons and stock  
27 assessments for impacted species and evaluation of area and season  
28 closures. Then I have recreational and commercial user conflicts.  
29 Then lack of new entrants into the fishery. Number 4 is  
30 infrastructure needs, the landing and market sites, and Number 5  
31 is inadequate enforcement.  
32  
33 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Carlos.  
34  
35 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Mr. Chairman, notice that we have compressed closed  
36 seasons and stock assessments and seasonal and closed areas into  
37 one, and it was separate at the beginning, and so, just for the  
38 record, that's all we have in one.  
39  
40 **MARCOS HANKE:** Okay. Thank you. Vanessa.  
41  
42 **VANESSA RAMIREZ:** Marcos, thanks. Practically, we have the same  
43 three in the order, the closed seasons and stock assessment and  
44 recreational and commercial user conflicts and lack of new  
45 entrants. Then, also, I have competition with foreign fishermen  
46 and inadequate enforcement. Thanks.  
47  
48 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Vanessa. Tony, are you ready to make

1 your comments? I cannot hear Tony for now. Puerto Rico. Damaris,  
2 can you hear me? Let's go to the Virgin Islands.  
3  
4 **NICOLE ANGELI:** We would have recreational and commercial user  
5 conflicts, ability to support a family, lack of social and economic  
6 data, illegal and unlicensed commercial fishers, and  
7 infrastructure needs.  
8  
9 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you very much. Roy Crabtree.  
10  
11 **ROY CRABTREE:** Number 1 I would say is closed seasons and stock  
12 assessments for impacted species and evaluation of area and season  
13 closures. Number 2 is the illegal fishers, and Number 3 is lack  
14 of social and economic data. Number 4 is infrastructure needs,  
15 and Number 5 is the enforcement.  
16  
17 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you. Let's try again Tony Blanchard.  
18  
19 **TONY BLANCHARD:** What I have here is the ability to support the  
20 family, the increasing costs, the recreational and commercial user  
21 conflicts, the seasonal closures, and give me a minute here. The  
22 illegal and unlicensed commercial issues.  
23  
24 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Tony. Puerto Rico. Damaris, are you  
25 there? Ricardo, can you hear me? We cannot get in touch with  
26 Damaris. She had another meeting to attend. She wrote me that  
27 you could represent her. Ricardo, can you hear us?  
28  
29 **RICARDO LOPEZ:** Yes, I can hear you clearly.  
30  
31 **MARCOS HANKE:** Okay. Thank you. I cannot get in touch with  
32 Damaris, and can you support us on this topic, to choose the DNR  
33 priorities?  
34  
35 **RICARDO LOPEZ:** I will try. I was having a lot of problems to  
36 hear, to connect to the meeting until right now. If you can give  
37 me a little briefing of that, I will try to help.  
38  
39 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Ricardo, what we are doing today is that Dr. Duval  
40 is presenting four groups of topics that we would like to hear the  
41 top five, according to your opinion, personal opinion, and it  
42 doesn't necessarily have to be the position of the Department of  
43 Natural Resources, but, based on your professional opinion, what  
44 are the top-five topics that we would like to include in our five-  
45 year strategic plan, and it doesn't mean that the rest of the list  
46 will be scrapped away. What we are looking for here are the  
47 priorities, according to the best opinion that we can get,  
48 professional opinion, from all involved.

1  
2 At this time, if you can see the slide, you have several under  
3 social and cultural and economic concerns, and we have several  
4 topics, and you may take your time and jot them down, according to  
5 your best professional opinion, what are the top five that should  
6 be included in the strategic plan. Again, it doesn't mean that  
7 the others will be eliminated, but it's just that we will pay more  
8 attention in the writing of the five-year strategic plan of those  
9 topics that come on top.

10  
11 To give you an idea, from the people that already talked, we have  
12 the closed season and assessments is number one, and it's the top  
13 priority, and recreational and commercial uses is also a top  
14 priority, followed by illegal and unlicensed fishing,  
15 infrastructure needs, and inadequate enforcement. That's what we  
16 are looking for at this time.

17  
18 Damaris called me last night and said that she had another meeting  
19 to attend, and, because we don't have to vote on any of this, that  
20 you will be able then to represent her and, at this time, if you're  
21 ready, now or before we finish, you can give us your top five, or  
22 you can pass on this at this time, and then we'll go to the next  
23 one, and, when you're ready, you can give us -- We can go back  
24 again, and you can give us your top five. It's up to you.

25  
26 **RICARDO LOPEZ:** I am ready. I am ready. I agree with the top  
27 five that you already mentioned, except that I will put inadequate  
28 enforcement as number one.

29  
30 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Ricardo, just tell me your top five, without  
31 agreeing with anybody, but just the top five.

32  
33 **RICARDO LOPEZ:** Inadequate enforcement as Number 1.

34  
35 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Okay.

36  
37 **RICARDO LOPEZ:** Closed seasons and stock assessments for impacted  
38 species and evaluation of area and season closures as Number 2.

39  
40 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Go ahead, please.

41  
42 **RICARDO LOPEZ:** Illegal and unlicensed commercial fishers as Number  
43 3. Then infrastructure needs as Number 4. Recreational and  
44 commercial user conflicts as Number 5.

45  
46 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Thank you very much, Ricardo.

47  
48 **RICARDO LOPEZ:** Thanks to you.

1  
2 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you very much, Ricardo. Now my priorities  
3 are closed season and evaluation, increasing costs,  
4 infrastructure, recreational and commercial fishermen conflicts,  
5 inadequate enforcement. Those are my five.  
6  
7 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** Thank you, Marcos. Were there any comments that  
8 folks wanted to offer on this particular theme of social, cultural,  
9 and economic concerns before we move on to the next section?  
10  
11 **MARCOS HANKE:** I want to make a comment about what Miguel said in  
12 the two parts that are put together there, in terms of the stock  
13 assessment and the evaluation of the closed areas. For me, I chose  
14 that and gave more weight because of the evaluation of the closed  
15 areas, and that's just a comment. Anybody else? Richard. Maybe  
16 that was on the chat only. I don't hear anybody asking for a turn  
17 to speak, and I think -- Miguel, are we ready to pass to another  
18 topic?  
19  
20 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Yes, and Michelle is.  
21  
22 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** Okay. Now we're moving on to the management and  
23 operational issues. I will just go ahead and run through these  
24 again, for anybody who might just be on the phone, so that you can  
25 hear them again.  
26  
27 The first one is accurate and timely commercial and recreational  
28 catch data, and so mandatory reporting for all sectors.  
29 Enforcement of existing regulations, fisher involvement in data  
30 collection, regulatory consistency, and so this is federal and  
31 territorial regulatory consistency, where such compatibility is  
32 feasible.  
33  
34 Clear management objectives, bycatch and regulatory discards, gear  
35 limits, cost effective data collection technology, balancing  
36 commercial and recreational concerns, incorporation of climate  
37 change into management, federal permit program, territorial  
38 licensing requirements. For example, consider recreational  
39 licensing requirement to improve reporting. That's it.  
40  
41 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you very much. Carlos Farchette.  
42  
43 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have Number 1 is  
44 accurate and timely commercial and recreational catch data. Next,  
45 I have regulatory consistency, federal and territorial, where such  
46 compatibility is feasible. Number 3 is enforcement of existing  
47 regulations. Number 4 is balancing commercial and recreational  
48 concerns. Number 5 is territorial licensing requirements.

1  
2 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Carlos. Vanessa.  
3  
4 **VANESSA RAMIREZ:** Thank you, Marcos. Accurate and timely  
5 commercial and recreational catch data, regulatory consistency in  
6 federal and territorial, territorial licensing requirements,  
7 balancing commercial and recreational concerns.  
8  
9 **MIGUEL ROLON:** That was four. Can you repeat it again?  
10  
11 **VANESSA RAMIREZ:** I have accurate and timely commercial and  
12 recreational catch data, regulatory consistency, territorial  
13 license requirements, balancing commercial and recreational  
14 concerns, federal permit program.  
15  
16 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Vanessa. The next one in line is Tony  
17 Blanchard.  
18  
19 **TONY BLANCHARD:** What I have is the accurate and timely commercial  
20 and rec data, the enforcement of the existing regulations, the  
21 balancing of the commercial and the rec concerns, the gear limits,  
22 and to the end of the list is incorporating climate change into  
23 management.  
24  
25 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Tony. We have DNR. Ricardo.  
26  
27 **RICARDO LOPEZ:** If it's my turn, Number 1 is enforcement of  
28 existing regulations. Number 2 is balancing commercial and  
29 recreational concerns. That takes me to territorial licensing as  
30 Number 3. Accurate and timely commercial and recreational catch  
31 data is Number 4.  
32  
33 **MARCOS HANKE:** Number 5?  
34  
35 **RICARDO LOPEZ:** It will be climate change, incorporation of climate  
36 change.  
37  
38 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you. Nicole and the Virgin Islands.  
39  
40 **NICOLE ANGELI:** Thank you. Fisher involvement in data collection,  
41 regulatory consistency, territorial licensing requirements,  
42 balancing commercial and recreational concerns, and accurate and  
43 timely commercial and recreational catch data.  
44  
45 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Nicole. Roy Crabtree.  
46  
47 **ROY CRABTREE:** Okay. I had the accurate and timely commercial and  
48 recreational catch data as Number 1. Regulatory consistency,

1 federal and territorial, is Number 2. The federal permit program  
2 is Number 3. Territorial licensing and collection of bycatch data  
3 and enforcement of existing regulations.

4  
5 **MARCOS HANKE:** Okay. Thank you very much. I have accurate and  
6 timely data, enforcement, regulatory consistency, federal permit,  
7 and balancing commercial and recreational sectors.

8  
9 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Thank you, Marcos.

10  
11 **MARCOS HANKE:** Michelle, we're ready to go to another topic, unless  
12 anybody on the group wants to make a comment before we move on.  
13 Okay. Next topic, Michelle.

14  
15 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** Okay. The next topic is communication and  
16 outreach, and so this one is a little bit different. All of these  
17 issues are important, and the frequency of communication and having  
18 alerts and reminders of scoping meetings and council meetings and  
19 advisory panel meetings, and the variety of tools that are used in  
20 communication. Then educational resources, and all of these are  
21 important topics.

22  
23 What we're really looking for here is are there things that we are  
24 missing, or do you have input on how frequently the council should  
25 be communicating with fishers or with other stakeholders or with  
26 the general public? Do you have any input on the variety of tools  
27 that should be used in communication and which tools are  
28 preferable? Are there tools that we're missing, such as radio or  
29 newspapers?

30  
31 Are there different types of educational resources that the council  
32 -- That it would be helpful for the council to either develop or  
33 reach out to other partners to provide links to that, and are there  
34 other ways to improve general public awareness of fisheries issues?  
35 Are there other groups that the council should be expanding its  
36 communication to? Are there certain topics that would be ideal  
37 for in-person outreach workshops? Do you have suggestions for how  
38 to improve the clarity and simplicity of presentations?

39  
40 In terms of expanding the role of the fishery liaisons, beyond  
41 participation on the O&E AP, are there different things that the  
42 liaisons could do to help increase public understanding of  
43 fisheries issues? We're really looking -- We're not necessarily  
44 looking for top priorities, because these are all important, but  
45 we're looking for additional things that the council should be  
46 focusing on, in terms of these different topics.

47  
48 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you. I have one comment that I'm going to do

1 at the end. Carlos Farchette.

2  
3 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do have a comment,  
4 when it comes to the section of improving general public awareness  
5 of fisheries issues and expanding the role of the liaisons. I  
6 want to make it perfectly clear that I'm only speaking for the St.  
7 Croix commercial sector, or the St. Croix sector, and I believe  
8 that workshops for the general public can be done in a meeting  
9 room, when it comes to the recreational user, or just the general  
10 public.

11  
12 However, when it comes to the commercial fishing sector, commercial  
13 fishermen really don't like to take the time to go out and meet at  
14 hotels or meeting rooms, and I think it would be more successful  
15 if the liaison and persons like the Fish and Wildlife staff, or  
16 even enforcement officers, because I always believe in education  
17 first and enforcement after, and I think that that type of outreach  
18 should be done at the sites where the fishermen sell their produce.

19  
20 We need to be able to stop by those guys where they're selling, in  
21 the afternoon, around -- It's guaranteed for one o'clock, and we  
22 could have a chat with them. I do that quite often, and I think  
23 I get to the fishermen a lot better than trying to get them into  
24 a meeting room. That has never been very successful. That's my  
25 comment.

26  
27 **MARCOS HANKE:** Very valuable point. Thank you very much, Carlos.  
28 Do you have anything else, Carlos, before I move on?

29  
30 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** No, and that would be it. I just believe that  
31 reaching out to those guys where they're at in the street is better  
32 than trying to get them in a meeting room.

33  
34 **MARCOS HANKE:** Or maybe creating some tools for you to distribute  
35 or give to them as education materials that are appropriate for  
36 what you're saying. Anyway, we will keep going.

37  
38 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** I agree with you, Mr. Chair, but they need to  
39 explain whatever they're going to be handing to them, and just  
40 don't come by and hand it to them and say to take a look at this.  
41 Have a chat.

42  
43 **MARCOS HANKE:** I agree. Vanessa.

44  
45 **VANESSA RAMIREZ:** Thank you, Marcos. Well, my comments are going  
46 to be practically on the resource. As Carlos says, we need to  
47 start practically giving that resource directly to especially the  
48 commercial fishermen, because they usually don't like to be, as he

1 says, in these meetings or these things that take a long time, and  
2 so we should start with practically putting, or using, those tools  
3 that we already have, like the ones that they like to use, like  
4 Facebook or YouTube, just to make them more conscious about the  
5 things that are happening. Also, we need to improve our public  
6 awareness, so that -- (Part of Ms. Ramirez's comment is not audible  
7 on the recording.)  
8

9 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Vanessa.  
10

11 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Marcos, before they go, on behalf of a couple of  
12 fishermen that we discussed these issues with, and among them were  
13 Julian and Ruth and Tony that are here, the improving general  
14 public awareness of fishery issues, we would like to emphasize  
15 fisheries such as island-based FMPs and marine reserves. We would  
16 like to make sure that the strategic plan will include those two  
17 issues as top priorities.  
18

19 As Michelle said, this is not prioritizing this list, but it's  
20 just to make it clear. The other thing is that they have found  
21 that the viability of tools used in communication -- It used to be  
22 newsletters and paper, and it used to be radio, and now the top  
23 one, according to Julian and Tony and Ruth, is the social networks,  
24 and so we are improving our social network capacity, and this will  
25 be also included in the five-year strategic plan. Thank you, Mr.  
26 Chairman, and I believe that you have Julian who would like to  
27 speak.  
28

29 **MARCOS HANKE:** Julian Magras, a follow-up.  
30

31 **JULIAN MAGRAS:** Good morning, everyone. Just to follow-up a little  
32 bit on what Miguel just said, yes, the social network seems to  
33 reach out a lot more to the local fishers, and especially the  
34 younger ones, and not only that, but people are following what's  
35 going on, and the message is getting back out to a lot of the  
36 fishers, but I wanted to touch a little bit on the importance,  
37 number one, as Miguel said, of including the information on the  
38 seasonal closures and actually looking at the Grammanik Bank and  
39 the MCD, to ensure that we can actually see what's going on in  
40 those areas. That is very, very important that that's included.  
41

42 Also, to touch on what Carlos said earlier, with using the  
43 liaisons, I think that's a very good idea, to use the liaisons to  
44 go out to the different markets and speak to the fishers, but I  
45 think what is more important is that person should not go to the  
46 markets by themselves.  
47

48 They should have either a representative from the Outreach &



1 Education Committee with them or someone from the District Advisory  
2 Panels, due to the fact that fishers know that we are involved in  
3 all of these meetings, and we are the ones with most of the  
4 information, because the liaison representatives do not get on  
5 these other meetings to understand what's actually taking place,  
6 and so them carrying the information to the fishers -- They don't  
7 have it, but I think using them to go to the markets is a very  
8 good idea, but you need to have someone that actually has the  
9 information from the different meetings, the SSC and the District  
10 Advisory Panel and the Outreach & Education Committee, all of these  
11 different groups. Use someone to go with that individual to the  
12 markets. Thank you.

13

14 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Julian. Tony Blanchard.

15

16 **TONY BLANCHARD:** Just to back what Julian and Carlos said, I  
17 believe that the liaison is supposed to be more involved in this,  
18 and the -- They know what they're talking about to bring the  
19 information and to be clear on what they're bringing to the people  
20 that they are bringing it to.

21

22 Just like Carlos said, I don't believe that handing them a pamphlet  
23 and going the other way is going to cut it, and I do believe, like  
24 Mr. Magras said, that we need somebody from one of those committees  
25 to be with that individual to basically be as a backup, but, in my  
26 opinion, the liaison's job is to bring forward that information,  
27 to be like a translator, and so I think they should be up-to-speed  
28 with what is going on themselves.

29

30 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Tony. Miguel, did you want to follow-  
31 up on something?

32

33 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Just one point, and I was talking to Julian and  
34 other people in the past, and Tony, and we followed the  
35 recommendations that they made, and so, on this topic, we are going  
36 to have a meeting on October 7, and the morning will be dedicated  
37 to the DAP St. Thomas, and hopefully the officials from the local  
38 government will attend, to talk about the model for the ecosystem,  
39 the ecosystem model.

40

41 Then, in the afternoon, we will have a meeting with the liaison  
42 officers, all of them, and we will have all the DAP members, chairs  
43 and members, and the O&E AP, just to follow exactly what Julian is  
44 addressing, and the others, which is to enhance the role of the  
45 liaison officer, to explain what the liaison officer is supposed  
46 to do, and also to offer them tips on how to improve their  
47 communication.

48

1 I believe what Julian mentioned has been very important in the  
2 past, and, for example, in the case of Puerto Rico, the liaison  
3 officer is also the port agent, and so we have a combination of  
4 two responsibilities in one, but, in the Virgin Islands, the two  
5 liaison officers will be at the meeting on October 7.

6  
7 In addition, we will have a presentation by Dr. Alida Ortiz on  
8 communication strategies and so forth, and we will have Yasmin  
9 from the Pew Charitable Trusts giving a presentation of the  
10 outreach and education model that they have in their organization.  
11 I believe that this discussion is really tied to the one that we  
12 are going to have on October 7, following the recommendation of  
13 several people.

14

15 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Miguel. Carlos Farchette.

16

17 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to mention  
18 that I wholeheartedly agree with the comments from Julian and Tony  
19 Blanchard. It's important to have whether it be a DAP member or  
20 an FAC member or a Fish and Wildlife staff accompanying that  
21 liaison when they go to speak to the fishermen.

22

23 Those people know the fishermen a lot more, and the liaisons are  
24 new to this, and it's going to take a while for them to be brought  
25 up to speed. Training is not going to happen in just one day, and  
26 it's going to take a little while and be a little repetitive, but  
27 I just wanted to make that comment, that I do agree that somebody  
28 needs to accompany them, and they will feel a lot more comfortable  
29 and get to know the fishermen a lot better. Thank you.

30

31 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Carlos. We have DNR Puerto Rico next in  
32 line. I am sorry, Ricardo. Tony Blanchard already spoke on the  
33 follow-up, but I don't know if you want to say anything else, Tony.

34

35 **TONY BLANCHARD:** No, and I'm good for now, Marcos.

36

37 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you. Ricardo, DNR Puerto Rico.

38

39 **RICARDO LOPEZ:** As he explained, it's different in Puerto Rico.  
40 Our two liaisons, the last one and the present one, they are doing  
41 very well with the fishermen, and they can manage everything with  
42 the fishermen, and they have a good standing with the fishermen,  
43 and so I guess that the difference in the USVI will be taken care  
44 of, as they say, by the person from DPNR and Fish and Wildlife,  
45 and so I agree with them that we need to manage that, and that's  
46 all I have to say.

47

48 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you. Nicole.

1  
2 **NICOLE ANGELI:** Thank you. Thank you for the opportunity to have  
3 fishery liaisons. I think that we've seen great work from them in  
4 identifying program needs, and, when we do expand communications,  
5 we would do that, and so I just wanted that to be on the record,  
6 that we would work very closely with the FACs. They are currently  
7 on the FACs, and they will be meeting fishers and working within  
8 the groups. Are we doing the top five as well?  
9  
10 **MARCOS HANKE:** No, and just comments about the topics that are on  
11 the screen.  
12  
13 **NICOLE ANGELI:** That was all I had for that.  
14  
15 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Nicole. Roy Crabtree, and I have Ed  
16 Schuster for a comment.  
17  
18 **JACK MCGOVERN:** Roy had to step away, and Maria might have a couple  
19 of comments, but a couple of things that I think is important has  
20 to do with the educational resources, and MREP in the Caribbean I  
21 think is really important in educating the fishers, and another  
22 thing on here that I think is important is the clarity and  
23 simplicity of presentations. As Michelle said, there's a lot of  
24 jargon, and I think it's important to make presentations easier to  
25 understand that go to the council, and Maria might have a couple  
26 of things as well to say.  
27  
28 **MARCOS HANKE:** Maria Lopez.  
29  
30 **MARIA LOPEZ:** Good morning. I agree with Jack, and I would also  
31 like to extend our support for the role of the fishery liaisons.  
32 We believe that that role is very, very important, and we also  
33 think that, whenever possible, those regular in-person outreach  
34 workshops are really, really important, and this is also what MREP  
35 comes to. I know that, right now, this is not possible, but, once  
36 we're able to resume life as we knew it, I think this is something  
37 that we can definitely support and continue doing. Thank you.  
38  
39 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Maria. A follow-up by -- I have here  
40 Edward Schuster.  
41  
42 **EDWARD SCHUSTER:** Good morning. I just wanted to make a comment  
43 about the liaison, and it's a very good gesture that we're coming  
44 forward to. What I have experienced in the past in these meetings  
45 with fishers that attend the meeting is they are afraid of the  
46 mic, that it's going to eat them up or something, and they don't  
47 want to ask questions, and they feel like they get embarrassed by  
48 asking a question.

1  
2 With what Julian said, having the liaison person go to these  
3 fishers on a one-to-one basis, and it doesn't have to be the  
4 chairman, but it would have to be somebody that is very  
5 knowledgeable about what's going on from the DAP section to attend,  
6 or assist, or accompany, the liaison person to go to the fishers  
7 and familiarize them with the fishermen, to get the message across,  
8 because, without their involvement -- If we're not there -- We  
9 need to join that bridge back that has been broken, and that's my  
10 comment.

11  
12 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you very much, Ed. We have now my comments,  
13 and I have experience with communicating with a group of fishermen  
14 using WhatsApp, and a lot of the fishing associations and fishing  
15 groups have their own group of WhatsApp, and that is used like a  
16 newspaper, and you can program the WhatsApp not to be interactive,  
17 and just to post information, and people have very quick access.  
18 My point is that fishermen, in Puerto Rico at least, they use the  
19 WhatsApp app a lot, and anyway that we can include the WhatsApp  
20 communication, and I think it's something that we can add, and  
21 that's the only comment that I have. We are ready to go to the  
22 next topic, Michelle.

23  
24 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and so the next part is  
25 really I'm going to just review the feedback that we received from  
26 the DAPs on each of these four theme areas, and so I'm going to go  
27 through that and then turn to each of the DAP chairs for any  
28 additional input or comments that they want to make about the  
29 discussion that they all had.

30  
31 I will just remind folks that, again, one of our next steps, next  
32 week, is to launch an online comment form, and we will also have  
33 paper versions of this form, if people -- If anybody sitting around  
34 the table knows of other stakeholders who would like to provide  
35 their thoughts on the topics under these four themes and hasn't  
36 had the chance to do so.

37  
38 We've gone through council input and discussion, and I do just  
39 ask, if folks have any additional comments, if they can get them  
40 in to me by the end of October, that would be great, and so that  
41 will give me a month to incorporate that into the report that I  
42 will present to you in December.

43  
44 Now I just want to run through the DAP and the O&E AP input, and  
45 so we're going to start with St. Thomas/St. John, and so what you  
46 see up here on the screen, under resource health, these were just  
47 the -- These were just the topics that rose to the top as kind of  
48 the top five, and the St. Thomas/St. John DAP was the first DAP to

1 go through this approach, and so I really want to thank Julian for  
2 his leadership, and all of the members of the St. Thomas/St. John  
3 DAP, because they made a lot of great contributions to the list of  
4 topics, to make them clear for the other DAPs when they went  
5 through this, and so this is where there was a lot of conversation  
6 about the overlap in some of these topics with regard to resource  
7 health and the relationship to enforcement and how pollution  
8 encompasses a lot of different things.

9  
10 There were several folks on the DAP who commented that they would  
11 like to see climate change addressed in some capacity, and that  
12 also was a component under management and operational issues. I  
13 think another -- Just to read these off, habitat loss and  
14 destruction and creation and rehabilitation, lack of biological or  
15 ecosystem information, erosion and sedimentation, endorsement, and  
16 coastal development were sort of the priority areas that came out  
17 under resource health.

18  
19 For social, cultural, and economic concerns, the closed seasons  
20 and stock assessments for the impacted species and evaluation of  
21 those closures was very popular. Inadequate enforcement, and then  
22 infrastructure needs, the landing and market sites, and there was  
23 a lot of conversation about how the landing sites and market sites  
24 are not the same thing, as well as illegal, unlicensed commercial  
25 fishers and lack of social and economic data.

26  
27 Then, just for the management and operational issues, having the  
28 accurate and timely commercial and recreational catch information,  
29 and there was some discussion of having mandatory reporting for  
30 everyone or a discussion about how reporting is voluntary, and,  
31 even though we ask for things, sometimes there is a lack of  
32 timeliness in the reporting of data. Enforcement of existing  
33 regulations, having fishers involved in data collection, a focus  
34 on territorial licensing requirements, and, for example, this was  
35 where it was raised for having a requirement for recreational  
36 reporting, in order to improve the catch data, and then, finally,  
37 incorporation of climate change into management.

38  
39 Then, under communication and outreach, and you've heard some  
40 additional feedback from Julian on this, but, again, all topics  
41 were important, and I think everyone agreed that more education  
42 and outreach was needed. This DAP really discussed significantly  
43 expanding the role of the fishery liaisons, as well as talking  
44 about the clarity and simplicity of presentations and that  
45 fishermen, fishers, really would like to understand what these  
46 things mean, but seeing an equation on a screen really does not  
47 help in that regard, and so it's important not just for the fishers  
48 but also for the public and tourists to understand these issues,

1 by having clear, simple language.

2  
3 There was a lot of discussion about how the tools used for  
4 communication and outreach are generational, and you all just spoke  
5 about this a little bit earlier, the expansion of social media  
6 versus the daily news or the radio that older generations still  
7 prefer, like the paper, the daily news, or the radio, whereas the  
8 younger generation relies more on social media.

9  
10 Having meeting reminders was a great thing, and Julian described  
11 how he reminds his members of an upcoming DAP meeting, using text  
12 messaging or WhatsApp, and he creates a group, and he makes sure  
13 to follow-up, so that everybody knows when a meeting is coming up.  
14 We also discussed having a newsletter or a summary of council  
15 meetings that could be distributed or get back to the fishers, and  
16 Miguel might want to make a few comments about this.

17  
18 He suggested preparing a quarterly newsletter and reading this out  
19 to fishers, where we could set up like a webinar to communicate to  
20 fishers what's happened after the meeting, and then, finally, there  
21 was some discussion of youth outreach, just to try to build the  
22 next generation and get folks interested in fishing. Mr. Chairman,  
23 I just want to turn to Julian Magras, to just ask him to just  
24 provide any additional input from the DAP discussion. Thank you.

25  
26 **MARCOS HANKE:** Julian.

27  
28 **JULIAN MAGRAS:** I thought it was a very good meeting, and I thought  
29 the discussion went well, and the members were all pleased with  
30 the topics that were brought forward. I think how this was carried  
31 out was excellent, and I was glad to see that the council did the  
32 same thing this morning and let the members pick their five topics,  
33 because everyone has their own opinion and looks at different  
34 topics, and I think it was done the right way, and I think the  
35 outcome, once everything is combined together, should be great.

36  
37 A lot of different stuff stands out, and you've got the data that  
38 stands out, and enforcement stands out, and seasonal closures stand  
39 out, and so I'm looking forward to the final draft of this work  
40 that we are doing, to ensure that everyone's issues, or concerns,  
41 is captured, and hopefully, during the five-year plan, everything  
42 will be accomplished. Thank you.

43  
44 **MARCOS HANKE:** Michelle.

45  
46 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** Thank you, and thank you, Julian. I really  
47 appreciate that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Now we're going to  
48 move on to the St. Croix District Advisory Panel, and so they had

1 a lot of similar comments as the St. Thomas/St. John DAP, with  
2 regard to how a lot of these resource health topics overlap, and,  
3 in particular, how things like erosion and sedimentation -- They  
4 end up impacting habitat loss, and there was some discussion of  
5 things like fish aggregating devices, to take pressure off of  
6 inshore habitats, as part of habitat creation, and also discussion  
7 of how illegal fishing and overfishing are all related to  
8 enforcement, and that enforcement, in some ways, could almost be  
9 like the number-one problem for everything, just given that there  
10 are often regulations on the books for these issues.

11  
12 For resource health, the top-five topics that came out were habitat  
13 loss and destruction and creation and rehabilitation. Then  
14 enforcement, illegal fishing, erosion and sedimentation, climate  
15 change. I will say that pollution was sort of a close runner-up.

16  
17 Then, with regard to the social, cultural, and economic concerns,  
18 the topics that came forward were illegal and unlicensed commercial  
19 fishers, the closed seasons and stock assessments for the species  
20 that are impacted by those closed seasons and evaluation of the  
21 area and season closures, to see how they're working. The lack of  
22 social and economic data, recreational and commercial user  
23 conflicts, and inadequate enforcement.

24  
25 I think there was definitely some additional conversation about  
26 the lack of enforcement and the availability of enforcement and is  
27 enforcement there, and there was also some conversation of updating  
28 the commercial fisheries licensing program and trying to  
29 streamline renewal of licenses, sharing of data with fishers, and  
30 ensuring that there's like a -- Well, I will go to the next slide  
31 for that, but I'm trying to think. I'm just looking through my  
32 notes, to make sure I'm not missing some of the other comments.

33  
34 Now on to management and operational issues, and the accurate and  
35 timely commercial and recreational catch data, enforcement of  
36 existing regulations, fishermen involvement in data collection,  
37 territorial licensing requirements and streamlining those  
38 requirements, updating that program, and balancing commercial and  
39 recreational concerns. Those were sort of the top-five issues  
40 that came forward.

41  
42 As I have noted before, I think one of the things about fisher  
43 involvement in data collection is not only involving the fishers,  
44 but also sharing that information, so that fishers and scientists  
45 can understand one another.

46  
47 Communication and outreach was a very similar conversation as to  
48 the St. Thomas/St. John DAP. Again, everyone agreed that these

1 were all really important topics and that any additional outreach  
2 and education that could be conducted is going to be helpful.

3  
4 There was quite a bit of conversation about the clarity and  
5 simplicity of presentations and how that is very important for  
6 fishers and the general public, just as the St. Thomas/St. John  
7 DAP did, and, again, the generational use of tools and the same  
8 agreement that the younger generation is gravitating towards the  
9 use of social media, whereas the older generation still prefers  
10 newspapers and hard-copy type of information.

11  
12 The frequency of communication was also something that came up,  
13 that, the more frequent we can make our communication, or the  
14 council can make its communication, the more people are going to  
15 get involved, and there was a lot of support for the in-person  
16 outreach workshops, and, obviously, that's a little bit  
17 challenging right now, but there was a lot of support for the idea  
18 of actually going to where the fishers are and helping them to  
19 understand specific issues.

20  
21 Then, finally, there was discussion of outreach to some of these  
22 non-traditional groups, like divers, and even potentially youth  
23 organizations and things like podcasts that could also be used to  
24 reach out to non-traditional groups. I am checking my notes to  
25 see if there is any other things that I wanted to flag for you  
26 all, but I am going to turn things over to the DAP Chair, Edward  
27 Schuster, to contribute to the discussion. Thank you.

28  
29 **EDWARD SCHUSTER:** This was very interesting, and the whole group  
30 came to a level of priorities with this. The resource health, if  
31 you don't have a healthy habitat for juveniles and the whole  
32 recruitment, our fishery goes down. Enforcement and illegal  
33 fishing, and illegal fishers don't abide by regulations, and then  
34 it all works in hand with erosion and sedimentation, and also  
35 climate change and hurricanes. They destroy our habitats.

36  
37 The social and cultural and the economic concerns, and illegal and  
38 unlicensed commercial fishers, those are the ones that are just  
39 there for reaping everything that they can get for their own  
40 benefit, and they are not concerned about the resources and to  
41 restock the species in a sustainable way.

42  
43 Closed seasons, stock assessments for impacted species, that was  
44 one of the concerns, major concerns, throughout the group. If you  
45 don't obey the closed seasons, or even go in to evaluate them,  
46 you're -- To really see what's there and what's not working, and  
47 maybe it needs to be expanded or shortened or whatever, or even  
48 moved to a different location, and maybe that location has been



1 abandoned by the species, for whatever reason, and so you need to  
2 go back and reassess them whatever, every five years or three years  
3 or whatever.

4  
5 The lack of social and economic data, if it's not there, you don't  
6 know where we're going in the fisheries. The recreational and  
7 commercial user conflicts, that has always been a problem.  
8 Recreational users go out and they catch what they don't need, or  
9 what they can't consume, and then they sell it. It comes into the  
10 market, and, the commercial fishers, they have that uphill battle,  
11 constantly.

12  
13 Then, as everything else, you can make rules and regulations until  
14 your ears are falling off, but, if there's nobody there to enforce  
15 these regulations, people are going to break rules all the time.

16  
17 Under management and operational issues, due to the fact that we  
18 have ACLs, it's always good to know exactly where we are, in terms  
19 of the harvesting level. Accurate and timely commercial and  
20 recreational catch data, that's needed, and, if we can have that,  
21 along with the local agencies, to validate what the fishers are  
22 catching, that would be perfect, because the fishers don't have it  
23 at-sea, but, if you have that e-reporting form, maybe some of them  
24 might use it, and that might help to have adequate data, but, if  
25 you can have the local agencies to validate the forms that are  
26 being filled out by the fishers, and that same data is being port  
27 sampled, and you would actually have more of an accurate data.

28  
29 Enforcement of existing regulations, again, the same thing. You  
30 need that constant policing there of the lawbreakers. Fisher  
31 involvement in the data collection, that's needed major. That  
32 bridge has been broken, or semi-broken, in some instances, but you  
33 need to have that gap rebuilt.

34  
35 Territorial licensing requirements, that's a need. There's a  
36 moratorium right now, but we're trying to bring that back within  
37 our local advisory panel, but I am seeing commercial and  
38 recreational concerns, and the balance is needed, so everybody has  
39 a fair share, and that's it, in a nutshell.

40  
41 Communication and outreach, all topics are important, and more  
42 education and outreach is needed, and that's for sure, because the  
43 attendees will know, but the non-attendees won't know, and some of  
44 the new regulations, or the new ideas coming forward, especially  
45 now that we're going to island-based fishery management, and we  
46 need this outreach, so that they can be aware of the change and  
47 the reason for the change. Once this is brought forward, I think  
48 you will have more fishers in compliance than out of compliance.

1  
2 The clarity and simplicity of the presentations, I mentioned that  
3 before, and some of the fishers feel like the mic is going to eat  
4 them up, or they're going to be laughed at in front of the large  
5 crowd that is there, and they don't want to participate so much  
6 into it and not to be a laughingstock, and so, when you come out  
7 of these meetings, you see that the small group huddles around the  
8 people that are more common to attend these meetings, and it could  
9 be Carlos, or it could be Julian, or it could be Tony, or myself,  
10 anybody, and then they will just huddle in a group, and then they  
11 go in a one-on-one, to try and understand or simplify what has  
12 been told, in a nutshell.

13  
14 A generalization of tools and the social media, you know, we live  
15 in a modern world. You know, some fishers still pick up the  
16 newspaper, but most of us go by text or email and so forth, and  
17 just to have the frequent communication and the liaison person,  
18 and we've had that come into play.

19  
20 In-person workshops, again, the liaison thing, and outreach to  
21 non-traditional groups, again, the liaison, along with DAP  
22 members, a DAP member, or the chair of the DAP, somebody that is  
23 really comfortable with assisting the liaison person or who attends  
24 these meetings regular, and that will be a perfect match-up with  
25 the liaison person. That's the end of those bullets there.

26  
27 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** Thank you, Edward. I really appreciate you adding  
28 to this. Mr. Chairman, I'm just going to move on to the Puerto  
29 Rico DAP. The Puerto Rico DAP was the last group to go through  
30 this process, and so the top five that came out for priorities  
31 under resource health included pollution, erosion and  
32 sedimentation, coastal development, natural disasters, and then  
33 enforcement and habitat loss and destruction and construction and  
34 rehabilitation. Those two items really came up like exactly the  
35 same, and so that's why you see them lumped there.

36  
37 Social, cultural, and economic concerns, the lack of social and  
38 economic data, inadequate enforcement, infrastructure needs, and  
39 so they agreed with the need for landing and market sites, and  
40 addressing illegal and unlicensed commercial fishers, and the  
41 closed seasons and stock assessments for the impacted species and  
42 the evaluation of those closures were all very important things  
43 that the Puerto Rico DAP members wanted to see or thought that the  
44 council should focus on.

45  
46 Then, moving on to the management and operational issues, and so  
47 this included enforcement of existing regulations, accurate and  
48 timely commercial and recreational catch data, having fishers

1 involved in data collection, and having clear management  
2 objectives and cost-effective data collection technology.

3  
4 Then, finally, under communication and outreach, again, these were  
5 all topics that were important, that more was needed, that all  
6 tools, paper and social media and everything, are equally  
7 important, but it just depends on the group of people that you're  
8 trying to communicate to, that there's a need for a clear and  
9 simple explanation of the agency rules.

10  
11 You know, there's a lot of different agencies involved in the  
12 fisheries management process, and it's hard for people to  
13 understand, when we're using acronyms and terminology that is  
14 difficult to understand.

15  
16 Then improving general public awareness of fisheries issues was  
17 important, and that this also needs to include youth and outreach  
18 to the younger generation, and, similar to the other DAPs, the  
19 liaison roles are extremely important to helping fishers  
20 understand this. We did have some conversation about the documents  
21 and management plans being written officially in English and  
22 providing translations for Puerto Rico and the USVI and how to  
23 maybe -- How to improve that process, by working with the folks at  
24 NOAA Fisheries.

25  
26 We talked about some of the text message bulletins that NOAA sends,  
27 so that you can sign-up to receive text message bulletins from the  
28 National Marine Fisheries Service, letting you know when like a  
29 seasonal closure is going to come underway, and we also talked a  
30 little bit about use of an app called Fish Rules, and this is  
31 something that NOAA Fisheries has worked with the app developer  
32 on, and so, all up and down I think the east coast, Fish Rules is  
33 a great app that tells you what the regulations are, no matter  
34 where you are.

35  
36 There were a couple other things under management that I just  
37 wanted to highlight, that having -- There was also a conversation  
38 about having the clear management objectives, that sometimes the  
39 language that is used in writing the management objectives is  
40 difficult for people to understand, and so that makes it really  
41 difficult for fishers to understand and I guess get onboard with  
42 the reasons for the management actions, and so it's really  
43 important to have that clear language.

44  
45 Then we did talk a little bit about data technology systems and  
46 trying to -- That there needs to be some communication efforts to  
47 explain why this is so important, and so I think, once fishers can  
48 understand the importance of data, then they will be more likely

1 to comply with providing it in an accurate and timely manner.

2  
3 We did also have some conversation about the topic of illegal and  
4 unlicensed fishers and how this really goes hand-in-hand with a  
5 lack of new entrants into the fishery, and that was really  
6 something that came up under the social, economic, and cultural  
7 concerns, and that, really, I think there was -- Nelson can talk  
8 a little bit more about this, but there used to be, I think, a  
9 young fishers school, and it was apparently going really well, but  
10 there was some issues with allowing women to participate, and so  
11 there was some conversation surrounding that and about the  
12 council's efforts to highlight women fishers participating in the  
13 fishery and that that kind of aligned with also bringing --  
14 Educating the younger generation, to help raise interest in  
15 participating in the fishery in the future. Mr. Chairman, I'm  
16 just going to go to Nelson, to see if Nelson has anything that he  
17 would like to add as well.

18  
19 **MARCOS HANKE:** Nelson.

20  
21 **NELSON CRESPO:** Good morning, everyone. Regarding the resource  
22 health, in the case of Puerto Rico, the pollution and erosion and  
23 sedimentation and the coastal development, in our opinion, was one  
24 of the most important movement that we have against the resources  
25 and the habitat, marine habitats.

26  
27 The natural disasters, we have to deal with them, but, if we  
28 control the first three topics, I guarantee you that the resources  
29 are going to improve really, really good. The enforcement and  
30 habitat loss and the distribution and construction and  
31 rehabilitation is one of the main things that we need. We need  
32 effective enforcement to protect the habitat loss. Without  
33 enforcement, we are nothing, because all the agencies -- Every  
34 construction we have, it's -- They do whatever they want, because  
35 we have no enforcement.

36  
37 With the social and cultural and economic concerns, the lack of  
38 social and economic data is one of our biggest problems, because  
39 we have a bit problem with illegal fishermen, and they don't report  
40 their catches, and that affects the socioeconomics of the  
41 commercial fishermen. We don't know the real health of the  
42 resources without that information. Again, with inadequate  
43 enforcement, we cannot fix that issue with illegal fishers.

44  
45 Regarding the infrastructure, we really, really need better boat  
46 ramps and better access, safe access, to the sea, because, to this  
47 moment, it's very hard, especially in my area, to deal with the  
48 weather conditions, and we have a small ramp, and it's nightmare

1 every time we go out to sea, and, when we come back, we don't know  
2 how we're going to find the weather conditions inshore, and  
3 sometimes we have to navigate ten miles up the south, twelve miles  
4 up to the south, to find access to develop our job.

5  
6 It's necessary to obtain the closed season stock assessments. We  
7 don't know the health of these, because, every time we implement  
8 a management plan for one resource, or one fishery, that's it, and  
9 that's the end. It's very rare that we know how the resources are  
10 improving or it has stayed the same or it's getting worse, and we  
11 need more assessments for the resources and fisheries.

12  
13 Management and operational issues, enforcement is our nightmare,  
14 and so the commercial fishermen, most of the time, are punished  
15 with enforcement agencies, especially with the DNR Rangers, and  
16 the recreational act like nothing. They don't pay the same  
17 attention that they do with the commercial fishers, and the  
18 recreational fishers -- Everybody knows that a big percent of them  
19 are selling their catches, affecting, again, the socioeconomics of  
20 the fishermen.

21  
22 We need to have accurate and timely commercial and recreational  
23 data. That's the key, one of the keys, to know the health of the  
24 resources for better management. Involvement of fishers,  
25 commercial and recreational, all fishermen, in the data collection  
26 is going to improve that issue.

27  
28 We need to have clear management objectives, especially we need to  
29 speak the same language, and sometimes one regulation is coming  
30 up, and, depending on what you think it is, you develop your job,  
31 but, in reality, maybe I'm wrong, and maybe it's not okay, and  
32 there is constant confusion regarding how to work with management.

33  
34 The cost-effective data collection technology, for me, I would  
35 start out with electronic reporting, and that's one of the best  
36 things that has happened this year, and everybody is happy, and I  
37 hope that the data -- That the DNR Lab starts receiving the data  
38 on time and improving the data collection.

39  
40 In communication and outreach, like all the guys said, all of them  
41 are important. I understand that the education, especially to the  
42 fishermen, is the key to the benefits of the fishermen and the  
43 resources. We need to use the most effective access to develop  
44 the information, and I think the social media is the key.

45  
46 A group of fishermen preferred to have like paper, to put it in  
47 the fishermen's villages, so that the fishermen that go like to  
48 use the computer can stop and read everything and understand what's

1 going on, and, again, we need to have -- We need to speak the same  
2 language, every time.

3  
4 I talked with one enforcement agency, and they have one opinion of  
5 how to enforce. If we talk to another, they have another opinion,  
6 and there is constant confusion. Then, if they don't know how to  
7 enforce, or how to develop the management -- For the management of  
8 our resources, then we are not going nowhere.

9  
10 We need to bring, especially in Puerto Rico, young blood to the  
11 fishery. The age of the fishermen is more than forty years, and  
12 we're getting old, and the upcoming guys -- The amount of upcoming  
13 guys are really old, really, really old. We need to motivate those  
14 guys. Maybe if we attack the issue of illegal fishermen, we can  
15 collect a big group of young blood and help them to get their  
16 papers someday for the benefit of all of our fisheries.

17  
18 The liaison roles are very important, and, really, I trust those  
19 guys, and Wilson is very accessible. Every time we are confused,  
20 or every time we have a need, he is open to give us a hand, and  
21 they are doing a great job, and I support them 100 percent. That's  
22 all we've got. Thank you, guys.

23  
24 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Nelson. Michelle.

25  
26 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, and so I did do one more thing,  
27 just to show you guys -- I just want to review what the Outreach  
28 & Education Advisory Panel did, really quickly, and so the O&E AP  
29 saw the communication and outreach priorities that you all  
30 reviewed, and we asked them to rank which ones that they thought  
31 were the most important and to provide any additional input on  
32 each of these different topics.

33  
34 The one that came out on top was really improving general public  
35 awareness of fisheries issues, and that the council has multiple  
36 audiences, and each audience has varying levels of awareness, and  
37 so you have school students, supermarket owners, farmers,  
38 restaurants, et cetera, and so each one of these audiences has  
39 different levels of awareness and different communication needs,  
40 and one of the things that did come forward is that more attention  
41 is needed on recreational fishers and improving their awareness of  
42 these issues.

43  
44 The next topic that came out, sort of a tie between having regular  
45 in-person outreach workshops and ensuring that the frequency of  
46 communications, through alerts and reminders is high, and so the  
47 council has actually been working a lot on the frequency of  
48 communication, through its social media platforms, and the comment

1 was made that more frequent alerts, or reminders, means that more  
2 people will be involved in the process.

3  
4 The more frequent communication means that people have become more  
5 aware of it, and then, when they're more aware, they might decide  
6 to participate, and so, again, the social media platforms have  
7 really improved the council's communication, and increased it,  
8 particularly with younger generations, but there's still no  
9 substitute for that in-person contact, and it's really important,  
10 in order for the council to sort of get out on the street to  
11 improve public understanding, and that the existing in-person  
12 efforts, through PEPCO and MREP, have been incredibly successful,  
13 and you've heard support for that, but we do need some workshops  
14 focused on reaching recreational fishers.

15  
16 Then the clarity and simplicity of presentations was next, and  
17 you've heard a lot about that. The fishers and the general public  
18 need clear, simple explanations, without complex terminology, and  
19 some of the social media, and even printed materials and workshops,  
20 can be tools to explain some difficult concepts, and then this was  
21 followed by a variety of communication tools, and, finally,  
22 educational resources, and so a greater variety of tools means  
23 that more people will be involved in the process, and that's what  
24 we're shooting for, and so, even though paper and newspaper are  
25 still preferred resources, social media is becoming increasingly  
26 important.

27  
28 We need to make sure that the council's website is useful and  
29 attractive to the general public, and so, even though a lot of  
30 people use social media, there are still other folks who continue  
31 to use organization websites to receive information.

32  
33 Then development of tools is really a constant process of  
34 identifying new and varied audiences and what their needs are, and  
35 so your development of tools will never really stop, and it's  
36 always going to be evolving with your audience, and then, finally,  
37 with regard to educational resources, the council has put  
38 significant investment into this, and it's been a constant process  
39 of developing educational resources to meet audience needs, and  
40 ensuring that these are simple and understandable is important.  
41 One of the comments was that we really need something simple and  
42 understandable that explains stock assessment and science for our  
43 constituents.

44  
45 Mr. Chairman, I don't know if Alida would like to comment on this,  
46 or add anything to this. The way we conducted this with the O&E  
47 AP was that we just reviewed the list of initial outreach topics,  
48 and this was before the DAPs had their meetings, and then Dr. Alida

1 Ortiz asked the O&E AP members to rate which ones that they thought  
2 were the most important and then provide any additional  
3 suggestions, and so that's where this was generated. Thank you.

4

5 **ALIDA ORTIZ:** Yes, I'm here, Michelle.

6

7 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Michelle. Alida, it's your turn now,  
8 and, after your turn, Richard wanted to speak.

9

10 **ALIDA ORTIZ:** Okay. Thank you so much, Michelle. That's a great  
11 job, really a great job, that we can look at the importance of  
12 outreach and education and communication and the fact that all the  
13 aspects that you presented to us to analyze go to the very, very  
14 wide audience, and it is not just fishers or fish markets, but it  
15 is people from the mountains to the sea, people that consume fish,  
16 that sell fish, that work in the protected areas, and they are all  
17 important.

18

19 All the comments that came in your presentation regarding outreach  
20 and education to me are the same things that we have been  
21 discussing for a long, long, long time, and that probably this is  
22 the space and the time where we have a very comprehensive  
23 communication and outreach that will go to all the audiences.  
24 Thank you so much for the work.

25

26 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** Thank you, Alida.

27

28 **MARCOS HANKE:** Michelle, we have Richard Appeldoorn to make a  
29 comment, maybe on the Puerto Rico report.

30

31 **RICHARD APPELDOORN:** It's actually a comment on all the DAP  
32 reports, and what I was seeing there was a lot of attention toward  
33 enforcement, and I think it's important to recognize that it was  
34 not just fisheries enforcement that they were really referring to.  
35 When you're talking about coastal development and the impacts of  
36 that, and erosion, et cetera, that's enforcement of existing  
37 regulations on land use and construction processes and things like  
38 that, which are outside the realm of fisheries enforcement, yet  
39 these do have a major impact on the health of our marine  
40 environments.

41

42 In thinking about that, it's not just focused on the fisheries  
43 enforcement aspect to it, because there's other aspects, in terms  
44 of how construction is done, how land clearing is done, how  
45 effluent is treated, et cetera, and those, as I said, are usually  
46 outside the jurisdiction of fisheries enforcement. My other  
47 comment was going to be if there was time for a break. Thank you.

48



1  
2 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you very much, and, Michelle, do you have  
3 anything else, or can we go to a break?  
4  
5 **MICHELLE DUVAL:** I have just a couple of quick slides that will  
6 take me two minutes to go through that just show the overlap, and  
7 so this just shows like the overlap in those different resource  
8 health categories between the different -- Between the DAPs, and  
9 so you can just see that there is a significant amount of overlap  
10 on resource health.  
11  
12 This is you see overlap on the social and cultural and economic  
13 issues, and this is the overlap on some of those management and  
14 operational issues among the three DAPs, and that's it. I am done.  
15 You can go to break.  
16  
17 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Marcos.  
18  
19 **MARCOS HANKE:** Go ahead, Miguel.  
20  
21 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Before the break, and I suggest that we can have a  
22 ten-minute break, and then we have until twelve o'clock, and so,  
23 if nobody objects, we can take the Other Business up. Then we can  
24 have the afternoon dedicated to the second half of the meeting.  
25  
26 Just briefly, just to tell you how you did, from the exercise  
27 today, the members had habitat loss and destruction and resource  
28 health as your Number 1, followed by lack of biological and  
29 ecosystem information, and then you have a tie for each of  
30 enforcement, pollution, and illegal fishing. All of this will be  
31 included in the report that Dr. Duval is preparing.  
32  
33 Social, economic, and cultural concerns, your Number 1 is the  
34 closed seasons and assessment and evaluation, followed by a tie  
35 with recreational and commercial user conflicts, and then, second,  
36 you have a tie on enforcement and infrastructure needs. Then the  
37 last one is illegal and unlicensed commercial fishers.  
38  
39 Management and operational issues, your Number 1 is accurate and  
40 timely commercial and recreational catch data, followed by  
41 balancing commercial and recreational concerns, and then we have  
42 tie, a triple tie, with enforcement, regulatory consistency, and  
43 territorial licensing. All of this will be included in Dr. Duval's  
44 report, and so that's our suggestion, Mr. Chairman, is a ten-  
45 minute break, and then we can go into the topics of Other Business,  
46 if nobody objects.  
47  
48 **MARCOS HANKE:** Let's go for a ten-minute break, as requested, and

1 then we will come back for a short session before lunch. See you  
2 guys in ten minutes.

3

4 **MIGUEL ROLON:** That will be 11:24.

5

6 **MARCOS HANKE:** Yes. At 11:24, we will be back.

7

8 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

9

10 **MARCOS HANKE:** Hello, everyone. It's 11:28 a.m., and we are ready  
11 to restart. We're going to advance some Other Business items  
12 before lunchtime. Miguel, do we want to inform about the 170<sup>th</sup>  
13 Verbatim Transcription, and can you go on from there?

14

15

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

16

#### **APPROVAL OF 170<sup>TH</sup> COUNCIL MEETING VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTIONS**

17

18 **MIGUEL ROLON:** We just wanted to see if there is any comments to  
19 approve the 170<sup>th</sup> minutes that were posted, and Diana sent it to  
20 everybody, and so, at this time, we just wanted to know whether  
21 there is any additional suggestions for changing the minutes, and  
22 then we need a motion to approve the minutes as written.

23

24 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** I did read the minutes for the 171, and so,  
25 unless there are any corrections or additions, I am ready to move  
26 to accept the verbatim minutes for the 171<sup>st</sup> CFMC Meeting.

27

28 **MIGUEL ROLON:** We need a second.

29

30 **TONY BLANCHARD:** Second.

31

32 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Any objection and then motion approved, Marcos.

33

34 **MARCOS HANKE:** I have a point of clarification. We are talking  
35 about the 170 minutes, correct, Carlos?

36

37 **MIGUEL ROLON:** The past minutes, yes.

38

39 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Right. Sorry about that. 170, yes, because  
40 we're on 171 now.

41

42 **MARCOS HANKE:** Tony, are you clear that it's the 170?

43

44 **TONY BLANCHARD:** Yes.

45

46 **MARCOS HANKE:** Okay. Thank you. Is there any opposition on this  
47 motion? With no opposition, the motion carries. Next item,  
48 Miguel.

1  
2 **IBFMP UPDATE**  
3

4 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Okay. Diana sent the letter that Dr. Roy Crabtree  
5 sent to Marcos Hanke with the good news that the island-based FMPs  
6 have been approved, and remember that the next step will be for  
7 the publication of the regulations that implement the island-based  
8 FMPs. I don't know if Maria still is with us, because they were  
9 going to step out of the meeting for a while, if she wants to add  
10 anything else.

11  
12 **MARIA LOPEZ:** I'm here, Miguel.  
13

14 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Okay. Maria, can you add the next steps, please,  
15 once the island-based FMPs is approved?  
16

17 **MARIA LOPEZ:** Yes. As Miguel said, NOAA Fisheries approved each  
18 of the fishery management plans for the Exclusive Economic Zones  
19 of Puerto Rico, St. Croix, St. Thomas/St. John. That was on  
20 September 22, 2020, and the letter was sent from NOAA Fisheries to  
21 the council dated on September 23, 2020 to inform about that.  
22

23 The next step would be the publication of the proposed rule that  
24 would implement each of these fishery management plans. Right  
25 now, we are in the process of preparing that proposed rule, and we  
26 don't have a date yet to provide to you at this time for when that  
27 will be available, but, once that is available, we will communicate  
28 that to the council.  
29

30 The proposed rule will have a comment period of thirty days, and  
31 then, after that, any comments that were received on the notice of  
32 availability of the amendments that was published earlier and on  
33 the proposed rule -- Those will be addressed in the final rule,  
34 and so that's where we are right now, and, again, we want to thank  
35 all of you for the input and hard work throughout this process.  
36 This has been a process that has spanned many years, and we are  
37 really, really thankful for everything that you have contributed  
38 to this, and we are very close to the end right now. Thanks.  
39

40 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Maria, and thank you to the whole  
41 council, the staff and everybody involved, and this I think is a  
42 step in the right direction. Miguel.  
43

44 **MIGUEL ROLON:** I echo the thank you, and, especially, I want to  
45 mention Graciela from our staff, and Maria's staff, and Sarah, and  
46 Bill Arnold, the fellow that retired, and he was instrumental in  
47 putting all this together, with the assistance and blessing of Roy  
48 Crabtree and Jack and the other people from the Regional Office,

1 and the Southeast Fisheries Science Center, Clay Porch and the  
2 other members, and I cannot overemphasize the importance of having  
3 the DAP members all the way from the beginning, and the SSC, and  
4 so now the work starts for each one of the areas.

5  
6 We need to go into the amendments that you have been discussing  
7 before, and it is important that we start working with those, and  
8 Maria Lopez mentioned, in a previous meeting, that the amendments  
9 that we need for each one of the areas should be addressed as soon  
10 as possible.

11  
12 Graciela has also reminded us that there is a person always in the  
13 back helping us with this, to make sure that we are legal all the  
14 way, and we would like to thank Jocelyn D'Ambrosio. She has been  
15 instrumental in all of this, having all these island-based FMPs in  
16 place. She's a quiet lady, but she's really a hell of a lawyer,  
17 and it's good to have her on your side, and so, for that, we are  
18 really grateful.

19  
20 The next steps, as Maria mentioned, are the regulations, but we  
21 would like to encourage council members and DAP members to think  
22 about your area and think about 2021 and those items that you would  
23 like the council to address in each one of those island-based FMPs.  
24 Carlos Farchette has brought some to our attention, and Julian,  
25 and so forth. That is all we have for the island-based FMPs so  
26 far, Mr. Chairman.

27  
28 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you. I have Carlos on the line to speak, and  
29 I just want to reiterate my gratitude to Jocelyn D'Ambrosio about  
30 her job, and, like Miguel says, she's always available to all the  
31 stakeholders and all the participants, being very precise and  
32 clear, and we really appreciate her support. Carlos.

33  
34 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Let me see how I can  
35 word this. Maybe not to be discussed now, but in the future, when  
36 the IBFMPs are finally in place and implemented, and I am wondering  
37 whether, since we are only going to be speaking specifically for  
38 each island, does the structure of the membership remain the same,  
39 because, presently, I'm a recreational fisherman, and St. Thomas  
40 has a commercial fisherman representing, and so does that remain  
41 the same, or does each island then need a commercial fishery  
42 representative, and a recreational, or what? I don't know if this  
43 is the time for this, or maybe we can discuss this in another  
44 council meeting.

45  
46 **MIGUEL ROLON:** I can clarify that for you, and it's easy. In order  
47 to do that, you need to have an amendment of the Magnuson-Stevens  
48 Act, and that has been discussed before, and that isn't going to

1 happen in the near future, and so what we need to do is to make  
2 sure that members of the two sectors participate at every  
3 discussion that we have, and we can invite -- For example, you are  
4 recreational, and we should be able to invite a commercial fishing  
5 representative to be at meetings where we discuss the island-based  
6 FMP of St. Croix. The same with the U.S. Virgin Islands, St.  
7 Thomas/St. John, and, of course, Puerto Rico.

8  
9 The Magnuson-Stevens Act actually is -- This is on the side, but  
10 the Magnuson-Stevens Act -- Every year, we have bills that address  
11 the Magnuson-Stevens Act, to do this or that, and, right now, at  
12 the CCC meeting that occurred the day before yesterday and  
13 yesterday, we were advised that there is no atmosphere at this  
14 time to introduce any bill, or follow-up with any bill, except for  
15 two, that will amend significantly the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

16  
17 In the next four years, after the election, of course, starting in  
18 2021, there might be some room for that, and this council can  
19 suggest an amendment, through the appropriate channels, to the  
20 Magnuson-Stevens Act, but remember that we cannot lobby on  
21 anything, and we need to just ask the question to the appropriate  
22 people, or agency, to whether there will be an opportunity to  
23 increase the number of council members and to add what Carlos  
24 mentioned, but, for the time being, the only way that we can do  
25 that is by making sure that we have representation at every council  
26 meeting that discusses each one of those areas individually.

27  
28 We will start working on amendments in 2021, and you already gave  
29 us some lists of amendments that you wanted to talk about, and we  
30 need to also allow the regulations to follow the course of being  
31 approved, because remember the plan has been approved, but it's  
32 not implemented until you have the regulations, and so Maria  
33 mentioned this in the summer, and we need to allow the staff, once  
34 you come to terms of what amendments you would like for each one  
35 of those areas, and we need to allow the staff then to prepare the  
36 appropriate documents.

37  
38 I believe that, if the plan is implemented in 2021, the first  
39 quarter will be dedicated to look at each one of the areas and  
40 possible amendments, and then the other three quarters will be  
41 dedicated to work on those amendments, and those amendments could  
42 be -- If the amendments are not in a framework approach, then it  
43 will take a couple of years to be implemented. If they are in a  
44 framework, that might be easier. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

45  
46 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Miguel. I want to make a comment about  
47 what Carlos said. One way or the other, my intention, and the  
48 intention of the council has been to promote the participation of

1 all the sectors, and, if it's appropriate in the future, if it  
2 comes up, I think it's worth it to explore which we can pursue, a  
3 little more formally, those representations, like Carlos stated.  
4 So far, I am very grateful for the performance the council has had  
5 so far in including all the sectors. How about the Zoom meeting  
6 as a platform for meetings, Miguel?

#### 7 8 **DISCUSSION OF ZOOM MEETING PLATFORM**

9  
10 **MIGUEL ROLON:** The good news, I believe, has been announced at the  
11 CCC meeting, and I believe that everybody received the notification  
12 that we now can use Zoom, the business version, for meetings.  
13 There are some regulations, some guidance, that the federal  
14 government has to follow to participate, but the bottom line is  
15 that we can now use Zoom for our meetings.

16  
17 We then will have Zoom as our primary platform for meetings, and  
18 then the secondary will be to GoToMeeting and Google Meet, if it  
19 doesn't -- If the Zoom fails, then we will switch to GoToMeeting.  
20 If that fails, we will go to Google Meet. Hopefully that will not  
21 happen, but, with the experience that Graciela suffered during  
22 this SSC meeting, where the GoToMeeting never recovered from  
23 crashing, we welcome this guidance to be able to use Zoom.

24  
25 The addition of Zoom would allow us to have a very easy streaming  
26 of our meetings, and so the council will be streamed, and people,  
27 fishers and so forth, can join in and look at what we look at and  
28 hear the presentations and the discussions at each council meeting.

29  
30 By the way, all of our meetings, videos, et cetera, will be at the  
31 YouTube channel that the council has, so people can look at them,  
32 and we will have them all, starting in 2018, and we have the audio.  
33 In 2020, we have all the videos and audios on the channel that  
34 Christina is monitoring. That is the good news, Mr. Chairman,  
35 regarding Zoom.

36  
37 **MARCOS HANKE:** The next item for Other Business is Outreach and  
38 Education for Marine Reserves. Miguel.

#### 39 40 **OUTREACH AND EDUCATION FOR MARINE RESERVES**

41  
42 **MIGUEL ROLON:** We covered that a little bit before, when Dr. Duval  
43 was giving her presentation, and I had a meeting with Julian and  
44 Tony and Ruth and Diana and myself, and I believe Alida also was  
45 there, and we discussed issues related particularly to the  
46 Grammanik Bank and the Marine Conservation District, in terms of  
47 outreach and education.

1 Julian went out and had an experience at a restaurant, where people  
2 were selling fish, and he questioned that these fish are not  
3 allowed to be sold at this time, and why do you have the fish, and  
4 then he told us that the owners of the restaurant said that they  
5 didn't know the regulations.

6  
7 Also, people who frequent -- Especially non-commercial fishermen  
8 that frequent the Grammanik Bank and areas near the Grammanik Bank,  
9 it seems that they need outreach and education, and so we are going  
10 to make a special effort to have the outreach and education to  
11 include the marine conservation districts, and we now have a joint  
12 venture with the Sea Grant Program, and Sea Grant and the council  
13 will have a special project for St. Thomas/St. John and a special  
14 project for St. Croix, for outreach and education.

15  
16 In the case of St. Croix, fishermen were telling us that they don't  
17 know what Sea Grant is doing in St. Croix, and they want it to  
18 have a better presence there, and so Mr. Ruperto Chaparro from Sea  
19 Grant will be working on a project for implementing the presence  
20 of Sea Grant and joining efforts with the council. We also will  
21 recruit, with the liaison officer, Nakita Charles, in St. Croix,  
22 and then we'll do the same, and we'll discuss some ways to improve  
23 the outreach and education in St. Thomas/St. John, for the  
24 Grammanik Bank.

25  
26 We also talked to Nelson, Christina and I, and Nelson Crespo from  
27 Puerto Rico has several good ideas that we are going to implement  
28 regarding social networks and the outreach and education. For  
29 example, in the case of St. Thomas, what Julian suggested was to  
30 use the same placemats that we have in Puerto Rico, but tailored  
31 to the realities of St. Thomas/St. John.

32  
33 Tony suggested some posters that we can put in the fish houses and  
34 places that people can take a look at it. Those would be depicting  
35 the two marine conservation districts and the species that are  
36 protected and any regulations that we have, and so Sea Grant is  
37 going to do the design of the posters, and we have the placemats  
38 that we used for Puerto Rico, and we are going to do the same in  
39 St. Thomas/St. John and St. Croix.

40  
41 The placemats will be on paper, because, right now -- They used to  
42 be plastic, but they have to be paper, and this is a one-time use,  
43 because of COVID, and it's a good project, and it's a good  
44 investment of the council's money for outreach and education.  
45 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

46  
47 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Miguel. The last item on the agenda  
48 that I have for Other Business is the October 7 meeting. We talked

1 a little bit already about that, but can you expand, Miguel, before  
2 we adjourn for lunch?

3

4

#### DISCUSSION OF OCTOBER MEETING

5

6 **MIGUEL ROLON:** There are two things for October. The first, in  
7 the morning, is the DAP meeting of St. Thomas/St. John, and the  
8 idea was to discuss the ecosystem model with the officials of the  
9 U.S. Virgin Islands, so we can hear from them any projects, ongoing  
10 projects, and any information they may have on especially the  
11 eleven components of the ecosystem model that were identified by  
12 the DAP St. Thomas/St. John.

13

14 However, we have not been able to receive any names or emails from  
15 the U.S. Virgin Island government agency, and so we are asking Dr.  
16 Angeli and the Commissioner to help us obtain those names, and we  
17 invited them also to a previous meeting, but none showed up, and  
18 so, if we don't have anybody from the local government participated  
19 in the DAP, we may consider cancelling that meeting in the morning  
20 and just dedicate the meeting to going over some of the fine-  
21 tuning of the ecosystem model of the DAP. Graciela and Liajay  
22 will be available to do the presentation. I believe we have Carlos  
23 Farchette, and Christina posted in the chat the address of the  
24 YouTube channel, so the public can go and check the videos that we  
25 have.

26

27 **MARCOS HANKE:** Carlos.

28

29 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** That's an old chat request.

30

31 **MARCOS HANKE:** I think we have finished with Other Business. Does  
32 anybody else want a turn to speak?

33

34 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Let me also clarify to Graciela. Graciela, there  
35 are two different Federal Register notices for that meeting, and  
36 I just wanted to make sure that -- One is for the morning, and the  
37 other one is for the afternoon. Then, in the afternoon of October  
38 7, we are going to meet with all the DAP members and all the  
39 Outreach & Education members, as we said.

40

41 Dr. Alida Ortiz suggested that we invite another speaker from the  
42 Sea Grant Program, and we're sending the invitation through Mr.  
43 Chaparro at this time, and so, in the afternoon, we already have  
44 all the -- There will be a presentation by each one of the DAPs  
45 and the Outreach & Education, and Dr. Alida Ortiz will give a  
46 presentation of general topics of outreach and education. Yasmin  
47 Velez from the Pew Charitable Trusts will give a presentation, and  
48 we have a place for Sea Grant to address the group on the projects



1 that they are conducting and will be conducting in the U.S. Virgin  
2 Islands and projects that they have in Puerto Rico so far that are  
3 related to the commercial and recreational fisheries of the U.S.  
4 Caribbean. That's what we have so far, Mr. Chairman. The meeting  
5 in the afternoon will be chaired by Marcos Hanke.

6  
7 **MARCOS HANKE:** Yes. Thank you very much, Miguel. I don't have  
8 anything else, and I think we can go to lunch now, ten minutes  
9 before, and we will come back at one o'clock for the afternoon  
10 session.

11  
12 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Can I have a quick minute?

13  
14 **MARCOS HANKE:** Go ahead.

15  
16 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Now that I have heard Miguel talking about the  
17 Federal Register, when it comes to outreach, I noticed that I no  
18 longer see in the newspaper the advertisement for council meetings,  
19 even though they are virtual, and I'm not sure if there's a way  
20 that we can continue doing that, and I used to see the  
21 advertisement for the council meeting, when we used to meet face-  
22 to-face, but I haven't recently seen anything advertised for  
23 council meetings in the newspaper.

24  
25 **MIGUEL ROLON:** The newspapers are no longer a requirement for  
26 advertising, but, if you all think that we should go back and do  
27 the advertising, yes, we can do it. We can have every meeting,  
28 starting with the meeting in December, to have the advertisement  
29 in the newspaper, the *Daily News and Puerto Rico's El Vocero*. Yes,  
30 we can do that again.

31  
32 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Sure. I think, for St. Croix, I think it's  
33 kind of important. I mean, I read the newspaper six days a week,  
34 but I don't read the Federal Register. I get my information  
35 through the emails and through the council website, but not many  
36 people go there, but they do read the newspaper, and particularly  
37 for the St. Croix District. Thank you.

38  
39 **MIGUEL ROLON:** That's a good point. Nobody reads the Federal  
40 Register, unless they really want to know what's going on. We  
41 switched to mostly the council webpage and electronic, but that's  
42 a good point, and we are going to continue advertising the meetings  
43 of the council, virtual or in-person or a mix, from now on in the  
44 newspapers of the Virgin Islands and the newspapers of Puerto Rico.  
45 Thank you, Carlos.

46  
47 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Carlos. It's a good comment, and, adding  
48 to your comment, it's also a way to advertise that we are doing

1 the meetings virtually, and it's a secondary message there that  
2 the jobs didn't stop, and we keep working virtually, and it's  
3 another way to reach the people that are interested to participate.  
4 We will come back at one o'clock. Thank you very much for your  
5 attention, and we will restart at one o'clock.

6  
7 (Whereupon, the meeting recessed for lunch on September 25, 2020.)  
8

9 - - -

10  
11 SEPTEMBER 25, 2020  
12

13 FRIDAY AFTERNOON SESSION  
14

15 - - -

16  
17 The Caribbean Fishery Management Council reconvened via webinar on  
18 Friday afternoon, September 25, 2020, and was called to order by  
19 Chairman Marcos Hanke.  
20

21 **MARCOS HANKE:** It's 1:00 p.m. on Friday, September 25, 2020. We're  
22 going to restart our meeting, the afternoon section, and, Miguel,  
23 can you hear me well?  
24

25 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Yes, I can hear you.  
26

27 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you. The next item on the agenda is the  
28 Executive Order 13921, Section 4, the recommendations made for  
29 that section, and the presentation -- We're going to collect --  
30 We're going to ask the DAP and the SSC and the Outreach Advisory  
31 Panel their recommendations, or their input, for that Executive  
32 Order. Miguel, do you want to follow-up?  
33

34 **EXECUTIVE ORDER ON PROMOTING AMERICAN SEAFOOD COMPETITIVENESS**  
35 **AND ECONOMIC GROWTH**  
36

37 **MIGUEL ROLON:** First, what we did between the last meeting and  
38 this one is that several fishers, led by Julian and Nelson and  
39 Eddie Schuster, met to go over the EO 13921, and then the SSC also  
40 went through the same exercise.  
41

42 What I have on the screen here is the summary of the 13921 sections,  
43 and they have all these sections, and it includes the purpose and  
44 the policy and removing barriers to American fishing, and this is  
45 the Section 4, and this is the section that the council is supposed  
46 to address with the fishers.  
47

48 Also, yesterday, we were discussing with the CCC the aquaculture

1 opportunity areas, and, very briefly, these areas are going to be  
2 nominated through the National Marine Fisheries Service, and the  
3 idea is to have at least ten in several years, and they will be  
4 invited. The person is Danielle Blackwell, and she will be invited  
5 to come to a council meeting, probably in December, so she can  
6 present to us the aquaculture components of the Executive Order  
7 13921.

8  
9 I asked the question, the specific question, of whether the  
10 council, Caribbean Council, the U.S. Caribbean area, could be  
11 considered, given that we are too small, compared to the Gulf and  
12 other areas, but we have some people interested, and we have some  
13 projects with aquaculture, like the queen conch that you saw, and  
14 the sea urchins, and now there is a project on mutton snappers  
15 that Jose Rivera is going to be working on.

16  
17 Basically, Mr. Chairman, today, we need to address this part,  
18 Section 4, which is this is what we discussed with the fishers,  
19 the local fishers, and, in Section 4, we also have the eight  
20 topics, suggestions, that were given to Dave Whaley, our liaison  
21 with Congress, regarding things that can be considered by the EO  
22 13921.

23  
24 The first one, marketing of underutilized species and webinars on  
25 how to cook them, it's kind of funny, because we were working on  
26 a recipe book to promote underutilized species, and so we are  
27 meeting the first requirement way ahead of time, and so I will  
28 have this on the screen, and then, also, we will consider your own  
29 suggestions, Mr. Chairman, for adapting these eight topics to the  
30 realities of the U.S. Caribbean.

31  
32 We asked the DAP Chairs and the O&E Chair and the SSC to give us  
33 a presentation as to the topics that they would like to see  
34 included in this Executive Order. The first presentations that we  
35 would like to hear from are the three chairs, and you can start in  
36 any way that you would like to order the presentation, Mr.  
37 Chairman, and we have the SSC, and the TAP didn't meet, but  
38 Graciela may have some ideas of what they would like to address,  
39 because some of the members of the SSC also belong to the Technical  
40 Advisory Panel. Dr. Alida Ortiz is here to represent the Outreach  
41 & Education Panel.

42  
43 I can advance to you that there were several discussions with  
44 fishers and so forth, and there are two topics that people would  
45 like to include in the letter that you are going to send to Chris  
46 Oliver in October regarding this.

47  
48 Number 1 is to see if the orders, when we talk about the Section

1 4(i), changes to regulations, orders, et cetera, and we would like  
2 to ask for a waiver for voluntary surveys to the councils from the  
3 Paperwork Reduction Act.

4  
5 The experience that we have is, for the Paperwork Reduction Act,  
6 you can have a survey, but it takes you a lot of money to get  
7 permission, and, in the case of the Caribbean Council, we had to  
8 stop our survey, and we switched to what we just did, having the  
9 DAPs and everybody else that is attached to the council meet at  
10 different cases and different dates and go through each one of the  
11 cases that we have. The exercise that you did this morning is the  
12 way that we approached obtaining the information for the five-year  
13 strategic plan.

14  
15 The other one is that Julian and Tony and Ruth had a meeting with  
16 us, and they suggested that we should include monies to assess the  
17 marine closed areas that we have, and we were talking, at that  
18 time, about the Grammanik Bank and the Marine Conservation  
19 District, but it's understood that it should be extended to all  
20 closed areas around Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

21  
22 By no means are the fishermen asking to open the Grammanik Bank or  
23 the Marine Conservation District of St. Thomas. What they would  
24 like to see is that we have some ideas, through surveys, of what  
25 is happening inside, and Tony added that, instead of exploring one  
26 particular species in one corner of the Marine Conservation  
27 District, to study the whole area, and then the results of the  
28 study should be summarized in layman's terms and presented to the  
29 fishers and the public in general, so we can follow and monitor  
30 the Marine Conservation District and the Grammanik Bank, as well  
31 as any other areas that we have closed via regulations.

32  
33 That's in the EEZ, and the DAPs also asked the local governments  
34 to tell us information about what's going inside in the areas that  
35 they manage, so we can have that information given to the public.  
36 I will stop here, and then, Mr. Chairman, we would like to hear  
37 from the other -- From the Chairs that are going to address this.

38  
39 **MARCOS HANKE:** I am going to -- Carlos asked for a turn to speak,  
40 and we can start with the DAP. Carlos, if you want to speak about  
41 anything else, use the time now and then continue with your DAP  
42 report on this matter. Go ahead.

43  
44 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Not Carlos. This is Edward Schuster is the DAP  
45 Chair.

46  
47 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Marcos, you need to recognize Eddie Schuster.  
48

1 **MARCOS HANKE:** Yes. Eddie Schuster, go ahead.  
2  
3 **EDWARD SCHUSTER:** Okay. The DAP members met, and we came up with  
4 this collaborative report, and so I'll start off by saying this.  
5 These recommendations are for the U.S. Caribbean Geographical Area  
6 of the St. Croix Exclusive Economic Zone. These recommendations  
7 were submitted by a sub-committee of commercial and recreational  
8 and dive, and also charter, fishers, following the Executive Order  
9 to reduce burdens of domestic fishing and to increase production  
10 within its sustainable fisheries.  
11  
12 Number 1 is improve and develop boating infrastructure, like new  
13 boating ramps and parking in the various landings sites on St.  
14 Croix, USVI, with particularly attention given to Krause Lagoon in  
15 St. Croix and Christiansted docks and hurricane mooring plans, and  
16 also drydock storage areas.  
17  
18 Number 2 is to promote boatbuilding programs to young people to  
19 design and construct commercial fishing vessels in the twenty-one  
20 to twenty-five-foot range, similar to the Spyder boats that are  
21 built in Puerto Rico, in collaboration with the Gold Coast Yachts  
22 and a boatbuilding company on St. Croix.  
23  
24 Number 3 is to develop training workshops to attract young fishers  
25 in the industry. Number 4 is increase the capacity of the Sea  
26 Grant Marine Advisory Board to support fishers. Number 5 is expand  
27 the Sea Grant Marine Advisory Program to include the development  
28 of training workshops to attract young fishers into the industry.  
29 Number 6 is develop electronic reporting for commercial fishers on  
30 St. Croix.  
31  
32 Number 7 is expand the Caribbean small-boat permit to allow fishing  
33 for HMS species. Number 8 is actions that can take be taken to  
34 enhance sustainable fisheries in the U.S. Caribbean and help  
35 alleviate the current seafood trade deficit by incentivizing the  
36 Southeast Fishery Council to begin stock enhancement of critical  
37 commercial fishery species and begin the restoration of the species  
38 by utilizing mariculture operations.  
39  
40 Lowering the application fees for the current regulations in the  
41 U.S. Caribbean from 20,000 to 1,500. Pass the Aquaculture Act HR  
42 6191, A Bill Established for a Regulatory System for the  
43 Sustainable Offshore Aquaculture in the United States Exclusive  
44 Economic Zone of the U.S. Caribbean.  
45  
46 These actions would greatly enhance and restore our wild-stock  
47 fisheries and promote the use of mariculture to address our needs  
48 for a safe and variable seafood increase on our exports and spur

1 the economic growth in American fisheries.  
2  
3 Number 9 is designate the areas of Lang Bank, St. Croix a safe  
4 fishing zone in the EEZ by prohibiting cargo vessels and tankers  
5 from navigating inside the hundred-fathom curve around Lang Bank,  
6 St. Croix. Reduce the northern boundary of the Buck Island Reef  
7 Monument to 300 feet, which would be equal to 91.4 meters, which  
8 presently extends seaward to the depths of over 5,000 feet for  
9 this protection of the deepwater corals and to allow the  
10 traditional fishing activities of trolling for pelagics and  
11 fishing for deepwater snappers.

12  
13 Number 11 is promote the restoration of prematurely-aged coastal  
14 ponds and wetland restoration projects to be used as a variable  
15 fishing nursery areas. Number 12 is promote the use of fishing  
16 and underutilized species, such as lionfish, diamondbacks, squid,  
17 and deepwater shrimp.

18  
19 Number 13 is allow special permits to eradicate the lionfish in  
20 the seasonal and year-round closed areas. Number 14 is develop a  
21 recreational fishing license data collection program to obtain  
22 information on the number of recreational fishers and recreational  
23 catch. Number 15 is develop separate ACLs for commercial and  
24 recreational harvest. Number 16 is expand the FAD program to  
25 harvest seasonally-abundant pelagic fish species, thus reducing  
26 fishing effort on the depleted inshore reef species.

27  
28 Number 17 is conduct studies on the effectiveness of the area  
29 closures and increasing fish populations, such as mutton snapper,  
30 queen conch, and red hind. Number 18 is conduct studies on larval  
31 recruitment and disbursement for St. Croix as an oceanic island  
32 with a small, shallow inshore reef platform.

33  
34 Number 19 is install a weather buoy off the south shore coast, or  
35 the easternmost point of St. Croix, for real-time data. Number 20  
36 is develop the lanes for commercial vessel traffic off the south  
37 shore coast of St. Croix, to reduce vessel conflicts with fishing  
38 activities. That concludes the report. Any questions?

39  
40 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you very much for a very detailed report.  
41 All the chairmen that are going to present today, make sure you  
42 send the written statement or points for us, to make sure that we  
43 don't miss any points. Thank you very much, Ed. Any questions  
44 from the group?

45  
46 **MIGUEL ROLON:** If there is no questions, you can go to the next  
47 one.

48

1 **MARCOS HANKE:** DAP Chair of Puerto Rico.

2  
3 **NELSON CRESPO:** Good afternoon, everyone. In the past meeting  
4 that we had with the DAP and fishermen to talk about the Executive  
5 Order 13921, it was brought to the table suggestions that applied  
6 to job security, education, enforcement, and the direct aid to  
7 fishermen, among others. Now I am going to break down what we  
8 talked about in those meetings.

9  
10 The first one is safe access to the sea. Build new ramps and  
11 piers, where needed, and repair existing ones that are in poor  
12 condition. Build small service marinas, where possible, to  
13 establish new fishing centers on the island, where, at the same  
14 time, you could reserve some spaces for the enforcement agency  
15 vessels. These actions, in addition to providing support to  
16 commercial fishing, would develop socioeconomic activity in the  
17 surrounding areas.

18  
19 The next one is reform the existing fishing villages with the  
20 necessary infrastructure, to make their more resilient. Equip  
21 them with ice machines for fishermen, with a solar panel system,  
22 a freezer, et cetera. Where it necessary, locate or establish  
23 access to fishing villages for fishermen and customers. This will  
24 help our return to work in less time, in the event of a natural  
25 disaster.

26  
27 The next one is provide fishermen with the necessary safe equipment  
28 for their boats. Coordinate with the United States Coast Guard to  
29 amend the safety regulations for commercial vessels to exclude the  
30 American Caribbean from the requirement to have onboard the life  
31 raft for vessels of twenty-six feet or less, as made in the State  
32 of Hawaii.

33  
34 This safety equipment is used mostly in cold water, to avoid  
35 hypothermia, which is unlikely to occur in the Caribbean waters.  
36 In addition, on small boats, space is extremely limited, which  
37 could cause instability to the boat and further restrict the space  
38 for fishing. This requirement could be replaced with personal  
39 location beacons on each Type 1 vessel.

40  
41 The next one is establish a regulated process to provide aid to  
42 fishermen in the event of natural disasters in the shortest  
43 possible time. Aid needs to get where it needs to go and not to  
44 be used for other purposes.

45  
46 The next one is allocate funds to help commercial fishermen acquire  
47 new vessels when the useful life of their vessel ends and to  
48 support the restoration of the existing boats and the purchase of

1 new engines and equipment when needed.  
2  
3 The next one is it is necessary to carry out studies and document  
4 all the information collected on closed areas and fisheries that  
5 have closures of management plans, to know the status and health  
6 of the resource. In most cases, when we establish a management  
7 plan, the result is not received in a reasonable time.  
8  
9 Implement a FAD program, with the collaboration of fishers, around  
10 the island. This would be a great help for commercial fishing,  
11 and, at the same time, it would alleviate fishing pressure on all  
12 fisheries.  
13  
14 The high increase in poachers on our island must be addressed.  
15 In addition to affecting the socioeconomics of commercial  
16 fishermen, it is negatively impacting the management of the  
17 fisheries. The next one is it is necessary to bring in new, young  
18 fishermen. The average age of the commercial fishermen is over  
19 forty years.  
20  
21 The next one is establish alliances with other fish houses in the  
22 country so that, when a surplus of a product occurs, it can be  
23 marketed in other parts of the island. The next one is education  
24 is very important when implementing laws and regulations.  
25 Workshops should be developed to educate law enforcement agencies  
26 and fishermen and all related parties. We must speak the same  
27 language, to avoid misunderstanding and protect the resources.  
28  
29 The next one is evaluate the implementation of compatible  
30 regulations in areas that it can be done, and this is extremely  
31 necessary. This will facilitate enforcement and avoid confusion  
32 in nearby areas where there are different management plans.  
33  
34 It is necessary to create an outreach and education campaign in  
35 restaurants and fishing villages and the community, in order to  
36 offer other species that aren't known as well that are the same,  
37 or even better, for consumption, and maybe more economically  
38 accessible. This will really help diversify the supply in  
39 restaurants and fish houses and relieve the pressure on other  
40 fisheries.  
41  
42 It is important to hold workshops for fishermen, where they can  
43 learn to use electronic data reporting applications and navigation  
44 systems and weather and nautical charts, et cetera. The next one  
45 is the use of internet is essential everywhere, and that is why it  
46 is necessary to offer access to it in remote areas, such as  
47 Desecheo and Mona Island. This will facilitate help in case of an  
48 emergency, and it would also allow the fishermen to communicate



1 with their families when they are fishing for several days away  
2 from the island.

3  
4 The last one is the implementation for greater enforcement to  
5 recreational fishing is necessary. The implementation of the  
6 recreational fishing license cannot continue to be postponed. It  
7 is common knowledge that many recreational fishermen sell their  
8 catch at a lower cost, affecting the market and the commercial  
9 fishermen's economy. During this COVID pandemic, it was evident,  
10 without the competition of recreational fishers, that it was  
11 possible to sell the catch efficiently, even when most of the  
12 restaurants were not operating. That concludes my report.

13  
14 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you very much, Nelson. We have on the screen  
15 the document that you sent already, and thank you so much. We  
16 have now the DAP Chair for St. Thomas, Julian.

17  
18 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Marcos, do they have any questions for Nelson?

19  
20 **MARCOS HANKE:** Does the group have a question for Nelson?

21  
22 **VANESSA RAMIREZ:** I just want to thank Nelson for the presentation  
23 and practically getting to all the problems that we have right  
24 now, and so thank you, Nelson, for all your efforts.

25  
26 **NELSON CRESPO:** Thank you.

27  
28 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Vanessa. Anybody else? Hearing none,  
29 let's go to Julian.

30  
31 **JULIAN MAGRAS:** Good afternoon, everyone. I am just going to list  
32 the top-eight items that we looked at right now, and an official  
33 written report to the Executive Order will be submitted to the  
34 council, but I want to make this nice and short and sweet, and we  
35 had several discussions among the fishermen, both recreational and  
36 commercial, actually, and one day, Monday evening, we had a small  
37 GoToMeeting with some of the members from the DAP, and we were  
38 joined by Miguel and Diana, and thank you for that support in  
39 setting up the meeting for us.

40  
41 On our list, our top issue right now is dealing with the seasonal  
42 closures and assessments being done, these stock assessments being  
43 done, to these seasonal closures. It's been over fifteen years  
44 that we've had this in place, and we are concerned, and we would  
45 like to know if the seasonal closures are actually working, or are  
46 they working against us, because, in the SFA document, it clearly  
47 states that seasonal closures can work, or it can actually be  
48 detrimental to a fishery.

1  
2 Also, one of the other top items that we want looked into is the  
3 MCD, which is known as the Hind Bank, and also the Grammanik Bank,  
4 and we would like some reports, to actually see what is taking  
5 place and how effective the studies has been ongoing and what's  
6 the outcome of these studies, and especially for the MCD. It was  
7 noted, through discussions, that we don't want to only see the one  
8 spot where they've been studying, but we want to know what the  
9 whole fourteen-mile closure is actually doing. The Grammanik Bank  
10 is way smaller, and, with what they're studying, we should be able  
11 to get some good reports out of that.

12  
13 Some of the fishers, both recreational and commercial, the issue  
14 is docks, and they would like to see some docks put in place for  
15 their use, because, right now, it's costing them anywhere from  
16 \$900 to \$2,000 a month to store their boats at the different docks,  
17 and so there is property out in the mangrove lagoon that some docks  
18 can be built that these fishers, which is maybe about twelve or  
19 less, can put their big boats, where it can ease the burden on  
20 them.

21  
22 The next big issue was the fish markets. There is two fish markets  
23 that actually have structures built right now, and they would like  
24 to see the other two main fish markets brought up to the standards  
25 and all four of them to meet both health standards and fish market  
26 standards that are used throughout the world, and that includes  
27 having generators and solar panels and everything that supports  
28 that building, like ice machines and running water and restrooms,  
29 the works.

30  
31 Fishers are willing to help with getting the information that's  
32 needed, and there is also ownership of two of the properties,  
33 lands, that is willing to donate the land to the fishers, once we  
34 are going to build something to help the fishers out.

35  
36 The next big issue the fishers had was the improvement of the data  
37 collection program. A lot of the fishers know that we turn in  
38 catch reports, and they are port sampled, or supposed to be, but  
39 it's not getting done to the satisfaction of the fishers, and they  
40 feel it's going to come back to bite them, in the long run, and so  
41 they want to see a better improved program, with the fishers being  
42 involved to help the people who would be doing the data collection,  
43 to make the process more effective.

44  
45 Another issue is local sale, local products, or some way to get  
46 better support to advertise to the restaurants, and to the hotels,  
47 that promotion of fresh, local-caught product be used in those  
48 areas, and there's been a lot of discussion about that, which would

1 lead to the next issue of education and outreach and educating the  
2 public and the restaurants and hotels on the rules and regs and  
3 helping to promote the fresh product that is caught on the island.  
4

5 One other top issue is we talk about trying to get the young  
6 fishers involved, and, you know, while I was here sitting down at  
7 this meeting today, I've been texting a couple of fishers, and I'm  
8 here with our Vice Chair, Mr. Blanchard, and something hit me, and  
9 I think it's something that the council really needs to look into,  
10 and I think it ought to be part of this Executive Order, and that  
11 is a mentorship program.  
12

13 A mentorship program meaning that you have representatives on the  
14 council and getting one of the young fishers to sit alongside, or  
15 a new fisher to sit alongside, of a member on any of the committees,  
16 the SSC, the council, the DAPs, and help them to understand what  
17 is taking place in these meetings and get a feel for how we bring  
18 back the information to the fishers, and I think that is something  
19 that's really needed.  
20

21 Presently, here in St. Thomas, we have I would say maybe about six  
22 new fishers, young fishers, under thirty, and I think it would be  
23 a great opportunity for them to become part of this mentorship  
24 program and understand the process, because we're not going to be  
25 here forever, and we need to start to wean some of these new  
26 fishers, and young fishers, into the process, and we have both  
27 male and female fishers, and get them involved in what's going on,  
28 and I think they will be able to help us with getting the message  
29 brought across, and so I really think that we need to see if we  
30 can get some funding or some help, through the Executive Order, to  
31 implement this program. That's my report today, and I will be  
32 submitting the written response to Chairman Hanke very soon. Thank  
33 you very much.  
34

35 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you very much for your report. Any questions  
36 from the group? Go ahead, Miguel.  
37

38 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Some of the recommendations that we have heard today  
39 can be implemented by the council without the need to go through  
40 the Executive Order outcome and all that. Certainly, now that the  
41 island-based FMPs will be implemented next year, we are supposed  
42 to have meetings specifically addressing issues to the local areas,  
43 and the in-person meetings that were planned before were going to  
44 be for each one of the areas.  
45

46 For example, we'll have a meeting in St. Thomas just for the issues  
47 pertaining to the island-based FMP of St. Thomas, and certainly we  
48 can invite young fishers to attend those meetings. It's not

1 something that will be extra costly. Now that the meetings will  
2 be virtual, for especially the first-half of 2021, and I had this  
3 for the end, but just to let you know how we're going to work next  
4 year. Certainly we can invite them to these meetings, and the  
5 council can take this mentorship program and to target a mentorship  
6 program, and, if we ever get money for the 13021, extra funding,  
7 then excellent. I believe that you have now Richard.

8  
9 **MARCOS HANKE:** Yes. If there are no questions for Julian, we have  
10 Richard.

11  
12 **RICHARD APPELDOORN:** Thank you. The SSC considered the Executive  
13 Order just from the perspective of our role in looking at  
14 scientific issues, but specifically for the roles of stock  
15 assessment, and we had a simple statement, and I think that's  
16 coming up.

17  
18 **GRACIELA GARCIA-MOLINER:** Can everyone see it?

19  
20 **RICHARD APPELDOORN:** I can, and so I'm assuming it's fine.

21  
22 **MIGUEL ROLON:** We can see it, Graciela.

23  
24 **RICHARD APPELDOORN:** All right, and so the statement says, very  
25 simply, the SSC recognizes that, in order to address the policy in  
26 Executive Order 13921, two things are needed on a continued basis.  
27 One is to conduct resource surveys to determine the abundance of  
28 key marine resources in the U.S. Caribbean, and the second is to  
29 conduct quantitative stock assessments that can provide guidance  
30 on OFL limits, i.e., to get to Tiers 1 through 3 of the ABC control  
31 rule. The SSC recommends that the CFMC seek additional funding to  
32 support these activities.

33  
34 What we're saying is that, if you want to reduce regulations and  
35 burdens from the role of the SSC, basically, we have to reduce  
36 uncertainty, so we can say, hey, there's this much resource more  
37 that we're confident that you can go after. To do that, we need  
38 the money to do the surveys, and that's fishery-independent and  
39 fishery-dependent, and catch statistics and everything that's  
40 included in that, and then the ability to conduct the quantitative  
41 stock assessments. That would give us the overfishing limits,  
42 which is a starting point for eventually getting to the ACLs, and  
43 so that's the gist of our comments on that, and I think it's fairly  
44 short and simple.

45  
46 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you very much, Richard. Any questions for  
47 Richard? Thank you for a very precise and clear paragraph. That  
48 was very important. We have also the participation of the Outreach

1 & Education Advisory Panel. Alida.

2  
3 **ALIDA ORTIZ:** I am here. Thank you so much for the opportunity,  
4 and I am really very, very happy, because, when we first saw that  
5 Executive Order, the letter, we were conducting, through the  
6 Outreach & Education Advisory Panel, a responsible seafood  
7 campaign, for probably the last two years, with the idea that we  
8 had to approach the consumers to recognize the species that they  
9 eat and to see that the fisheries is much, much more wider than  
10 just groupers and snappers and mahi-mahi, dorado, that makes our  
11 plates.

12  
13 We had started a campaign already, with posters of underutilized  
14 species, and also with a placemat of the species, and this has  
15 been limited, at this moment, to Puerto Rico, but we have discussed  
16 with St. Thomas and St. Croix to do the same products for their  
17 areas, and that will be attached to the island-based fishery  
18 management plans.

19  
20 Also, the other thing is that this campaign is not directly only  
21 to the consumer, and we were, before the pandemic lockout, trying  
22 to hold a meeting with the restaurant association owners, and it  
23 was cancelled, and it was going to be done with the Department of  
24 Natural Resources and the council, the fishery council, where we  
25 would present them all the information that we have on closed  
26 seasons and why are those species being regulated and the spawning  
27 aggregations and the importance of these, the importance of the  
28 size they catch, and when, the restaurants presents something in  
29 their menu, they must make sure that this is not a regulated  
30 species under a closed season or a size limit, because they will  
31 be contributing to violating those regulations. That is still the  
32 plan, and, as soon as possible, we are going to do it.

33  
34 The other thing is that, at this moment, we are also working on a  
35 cookbook, so that we can present to the consumers cooking methods  
36 that are not the traditional, exclusively traditional, ones that  
37 we have for fried fillet or the same type of cooking all the time,  
38 and so we have very good chefs from Puerto Rico and the Virgin  
39 Islands that are presenting the recipes for sixteen species, some  
40 from Puerto Rico and from St. Thomas and from St. Croix.

41  
42 Then part of that book will be a good chapter on the ecology of  
43 these species and where they are found and when are they fished,  
44 and this type of thing, and another chapter on the nutritional  
45 value of these species, and then the recipes with the information  
46 about the species.

47  
48 We have been working with that for quite a few years, and now we

1 will continue with it, expanding it to each one of the islands,  
2 and that's the thing we are doing, and we have a meeting of the  
3 Outreach & Education Advisory Panel next week, and we are going to  
4 present this to them, even though this has been discussed and this  
5 has been their idea, and we are just implementing the  
6 recommendations, but, if there are any new changes, or any new  
7 recommendations, I will get them, and I will make a report to the  
8 council for this Executive Order. That is my report.

9  
10 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Alida. Thank you very much. Any  
11 questions for Alida?

12  
13 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Alida, the idea was for the O&E AP to tell us what  
14 should be included in the communication that Marcos will have to  
15 send to Chris Oliver regarding 13921, and so probably you can send  
16 us a letter, similar to what Richard did, that these are the things  
17 that should be included, and then we can include it for Marcos's  
18 report to the official National Marine Fisheries Service in  
19 Washington.

20  
21 **ALIDA ORTIZ:** I will do that. Can that be done after the meeting,  
22 after the O&E AP meeting?

23  
24 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Yes.

25  
26 **ALIDA ORTIZ:** Okay. Great, because that's what I am going to do,  
27 is present the Executive Order to them and then discuss what we  
28 could produce for that letter.

29  
30 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Alida. I want to make a comment, to put  
31 it in perspective, the local situation of the U.S. Caribbean, and  
32 this is from my expertise as a fisherman and talking to the  
33 fishermen around, and it's going to be a little repetitive at  
34 first, but it's saying that, because of all the damage of the  
35 hurricanes, the past hurricanes, earthquakes, and now COVID, the  
36 industry is already being affected by multiple things at the same  
37 time, and sometimes it's hard to measure.

38  
39 I made a synthesis of things that I think are important to mention,  
40 and it's what the fishermen have been saying to me. For example,  
41 a lot of them, and I am addressing now specifically the COVID, but  
42 a lot of them have been -- They stopped fishing, for multiple  
43 reasons, being afraid of being sick, a reduction of market,  
44 restrictions of the local Executive Order, and, also, the timing  
45 of the Executive Order that didn't allow them to go out, and, also,  
46 the diminishing of -- They are going less days out and fishing for  
47 less time in the water.

48

1 Fishermen are reporting less landings overall, because of no  
2 market, and some of them are reporting loss of equipment, because  
3 it's stolen or lost, because they couldn't go out to tend the gear,  
4 and something else that is very important is the hotels and  
5 restaurants have been operating at a minimum capacity, and some of  
6 them have never opened yet, and this is one of the main markets,  
7 especially for the high-end products, like lobster, on our island,  
8 especially on the east coast and some areas around Puerto Rico,  
9 where tourists believe is better.

10  
11 It's necessary to have these in mind once we make the  
12 recommendations on the Executive Order, because that's the reality  
13 that the fishermen from different regions are calling me and  
14 talking to me and saying, Marcos, make sure that people consider  
15 this information before they take any decision, and we need the  
16 support of the council, and this is just one note from the Chair.  
17 Thank you. we can keep going on. Miguel.

18  
19 **MIGUEL ROLON:** You have the agenda. What is next?

20  
21 **MARCOS HANKE:** I thought you asked for a turn to speak. Does  
22 anybody else want to make a comment on this matter, or should we  
23 keep going? I don't have anything else, besides the Executive  
24 Order, and I would like to hear either from Maria or Roy if they  
25 have something else to say to complement all the information that  
26 was presented by the chairmen of the different groups.

27  
28 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Mr. Chairman, I believe that we covered everything  
29 that we had, and the next step is just to explain to the group  
30 what we are going to do. I have Nelson Crespo is trying to talk.

31  
32 **MARCOS HANKE:** Nelson, go ahead.

33  
34 **NELSON CRESPO:** I just wanted to bring to the table one comment  
35 that belongs more to the local government than the council, and I  
36 wanted to talk straight to Damaris, to see if she can give us a  
37 hand. We have a delay with the issue of the renewal of fishermen  
38 licenses, and everybody is asking me, day-by-day, if I know what's  
39 going on, because I have fishermen that have applied for the  
40 renewal for six months, and they have not received the new license,  
41 and so, Damaris, can you answer that? I would really appreciate  
42 it.

43  
44 **DAMARIS DELGADO:** Yes, and so I realize what you are talking about,  
45 and I know that the volume of requests for renewals have been  
46 great, and also of new requests from many fishers, and so the  
47 volume of work of the office has been exceeding what it usually  
48 is, but at least the way we are dealing with that is that, every

1 time the Secretary extends the activation of the licenses with an  
2 Administrative Order.

3  
4 Through Administrative Orders, he has extended the validity, or  
5 the time, of the licenses, because of all these COVID challenges  
6 that we have been facing and the problem of coming to work and not  
7 remotely at DNER, and also some infrastructure problems that we  
8 have been facing, for example with the air conditioner here at the  
9 central office.

10  
11 For the people that have requested their renewal applications on  
12 time, they don't have to worry about it, and they can keep fishing,  
13 and they can show these Administrative Orders that extend the  
14 validity of the licenses into the future. For all those people  
15 that are worried, they shouldn't be worried, because we are aware  
16 of the requests for the renewal applications, but, since there are  
17 so many challenges that we are all facing in these times, those  
18 administrative orders will cover them, and they shouldn't get any  
19 interventions from law enforcement agents, like the Rangers.

20  
21 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you.

22  
23 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Damaris, can you send us a written statement that  
24 we can publish on Facebook, so the fishers will be able to get  
25 that information?

26  
27 **DAMARIS DELGADO:** Yes, and I can send you the latest Administrative  
28 Order extending the validity of the licenses.

29  
30 **MIGUEL ROLON:** I have a note here from Graciela, but she's saying  
31 the same thing, and so that would be greatly appreciated.

32  
33 **DAMARIS DELGADO:** Okay. Yes. For sure.

34  
35 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you, Damaris, and I want to also put something  
36 very short in the discussion that complements everything that we  
37 have been saying, once we discuss the impact on the economy and so  
38 on, and I was on the internet the other day, and this is for the  
39 council to give me input on this, or to see if it's a good idea,  
40 but we have an association of restaurants in Puerto Rico, and this  
41 is also statistical information of the government of Puerto Rico  
42 and the tourist data that addresses three major information that  
43 we need in terms of seeing how the economy on people that buy the  
44 fish has been lately, in the past year.

45  
46 That data, I think, is available through those three committees,  
47 or parts of the government, and I would like to hear from you,  
48 Miguel, or from Graciela which is the best way to request that



1 information and to see if we can have a little more information on  
2 those decisions about how the economy has been affected and the  
3 capacity of buying fish and all that.

4  
5 **MIGUEL ROLON:** This is outside of this meeting. I believe that  
6 what you are referring to is Other Business again, but we can get  
7 that information and send it to you, and Graciela and I will work  
8 on it and send it to you. Here, what we need to ask the group is  
9 are you all finished with 13921, and then we can talk about the  
10 next meeting of the council.

11  
12 **MARCOS HANKE:** I don't hear anything else. Does anybody else have  
13 any comment? It looks like nobody has any other comments, and it  
14 looks like we're finished with the recommendations.

#### 15 16 **NEXT MEETING**

17  
18 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Okay, Mr. Chairman. Then the next meeting of the  
19 council is December 8 and 9. It will be virtual, and as well as  
20 the meetings of the council between January through June of 2021.  
21 If we have a situation where everybody will be vaccinated, and  
22 still alive after the vaccine, we will start having in-person  
23 meetings, with a mix of in-person and electronic platforms.

24  
25 From now on, the council will work that way, until further notice,  
26 but it seems that, from the meeting that we had with the CCC and  
27 the information provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service,  
28 they are going to be working, during 2021, with a mix of at-home  
29 and present employees approach to this. Also, the council will  
30 follow the development of the COVID plan.

31  
32 Somebody asked me what happens now that you have done all of this  
33 about 13921, and, well, it all depends on the election, really.  
34 However, it seems like regulations that National Marine Fisheries  
35 Service does every year, or every three years, and so, whatever we  
36 have in terms of regulation, it's something that the National  
37 Marine Fisheries Service and the council can consider without  
38 having to get into any of the consent of the 13921.

39  
40 Others are requesting money here and there for the different  
41 activities that you mentioned, from science to infrastructure,  
42 will depend on the budget allocations for the next three to four  
43 years, and so that's all we have, Mr. Chairman.

44  
45 The Chair and the staff will develop the agenda for the December  
46 meeting, and it will be a Zoom meeting, by the way, and we will  
47 start from nine o'clock probably until three o'clock on the 8<sup>th</sup> and  
48 the 9<sup>th</sup>, depending on what we have for that meeting. That's all

1 we have, Mr. Chairman.  
2  
3 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you very much. If we don't hear anything,  
4 any other questions, Christina Olan is stating on the chat here  
5 that the order was also posted on Instagram, and we are ready to  
6 adjourn the meeting. Thank you to all for your cooperation and a  
7 productive meeting, and I will see you next time.  
8  
9 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Hold on.  
10  
11 **MARCOS HANKE:** Carlos.  
12  
13 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** For the December meeting, I have a topic for  
14 the agenda for Other Business, and so should I just send it to the  
15 council, to Graciela or somebody, and it's only one slide.  
16  
17 **MIGUEL ROLON:** No. Go ahead.  
18  
19 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** I will send it to Graciela.  
20  
21 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Then she can put it in the --  
22  
23 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Also, Miguel, when you were talking about  
24 December and mid-2021 or 2022, whenever we do in-person, and we  
25 were talking like vaccines, is that going to be like mandatory to  
26 attend an in-person meeting?  
27  
28 **MIGUEL ROLON:** That's the kind of things that we are looking at.  
29 Right now, the COVID control plan that the council has, which was  
30 adopted following the federal and local law, is not addressing  
31 that part. The only thing that it's addressing is whomever works  
32 for the council has to fill out a form releasing the council from  
33 any legal action if you get the COVID.  
34  
35 The way that we are going to work next year is still pending  
36 discussion, because you cannot require a person to be vaccinated.  
37 It's up to each person to decide on that one. However, what we  
38 can really require, according to the lawyers that we have been  
39 discussing this with, is that the person has to bring a  
40 certification, recent certification, of COVID free, and that's as  
41 far as we can go with any in-person meeting.  
42  
43 Requiring vaccination and all that, it's not something that we  
44 have addressed, but, at that time, for the first in-person meeting  
45 of the council, we need to establish a protocol that we are going  
46 to follow. I know that certain people are promising a vaccine  
47 before November 3, but other experts are saying no way, Jose, and  
48 you are going to have a vaccine probably in June, and so this

1 council, at least, will be on virtual meetings during half of 2021,  
2 and maybe the entire 2021.

3  
4 The staff is not going to go to the office as usual until we have  
5 the COVID-free environment for all staff to be at the office, and,  
6 now that I'm talking about it, just the other day, we had an  
7 incident, and a person that came to the council office to deliver  
8 some shelves later told us that she had COVID, and so, at that  
9 time, I had Liajay -- We had a meeting of the SSC, and I had to  
10 tell Liajay to get out of the office, and, also, I have to  
11 quarantine Natalia and Luz, because they were present in the  
12 office, and so this is very serious, the way that you have to  
13 implement this COVID control plan, and so it's a long answer to  
14 your question, but, in summary, the council will be virtual until  
15 we have the conditions for opening the meetings to in-person, and  
16 perhaps what we are going to have is a mix.

17  
18 I myself am not going to go anywhere until I get vaccinated, and  
19 I am too old, and I am too sweet. I am diabetic, and I'm seventy-  
20 one, and so I'm not going to go anywhere, and that means that we  
21 will have the facility for the people to participate. Mr.  
22 Chairman, I have Robert Copeland that has a question.

23  
24 **ROBERT COPELAND:** Thank you. I just want to confirm, and we're  
25 stating that the next meeting, the next virtual meeting, is going  
26 to be in December, and what are those dates again?

27  
28 **MIGUEL ROLON:** December 8 and December 9.

29  
30 **ROBERT COPELAND:** Okay, and there's not going to be another council  
31 meeting in between these two meetings, correct?

32  
33 **MIGUEL ROLON:** So far, no. It's not expected that we are going to  
34 have another meeting.

35  
36 **ROBERT COPELAND:** Okay. Thank you very much.

37  
38 **MIGUEL ROLON:** You are welcome.

39  
40 **MARCOS HANKE:** Thank you very much.

41  
42 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Mr. Chair, did you receive Carlos's --

43  
44 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Not yet. I will be sending it in a minute.

45  
46 **GRACIELA GARCIA-MOLINER:** I can also make him the presenter, if  
47 you want to just show your screen.

48

1 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** No, this is not now. This is for the December  
2 meeting.  
3  
4 **MIGUEL ROLON:** What is it that you want to talk about, Carlos?  
5  
6 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** I want to talk about safe fishing zones.  
7  
8 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Okay.  
9  
10 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** So that would be either under Other Business or  
11 on the agenda, and I'll send a slide to Graciela for the December  
12 8 meeting.  
13  
14 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Just send us a request to include it in the agenda,  
15 and we'll include it in the agenda.  
16  
17 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Okay. That sounds good.  
18  
19 **GRACIELA GARCIA-MOLINER:** Are these Coast Guard safe zones or  
20 something else?  
21  
22 **MIGUEL ROLON:** He will write it and send it to us, Graciela.  
23  
24 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Yes. I didn't want to take up too much time  
25 here.  
26  
27 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Mr. Chairman, for closing the meeting, you need a  
28 motion and then to adjourn the meeting.  
29  
30 **MARCOS HANKE:** I need a motion to adjourn the meeting.  
31  
32 **TONY BLANCHARD:** So moved.  
33  
34 **CARLOS FARCHETTE:** Second.  
35  
36 **MIGUEL ROLON:** Any in opposition? The motion carries.  
37  
38 **MARCOS HANKE:** Is there any opposition? Hearing none, the meeting  
39 is adjourned. Thank you very much, everybody. See you guys next  
40 time.  
41  
42 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on September 25, 2020.)  
43  
44 - - -  
45