

Marine Life Protection Act Initiative



Science Advisory Team and Regional Stakeholder Group: Working Together

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**Presentation to the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group
October 7, 2008 • El Segundo, CA**



Charge of Science Advisory Team

The charge of the SAT is to provide scientific knowledge and judgment necessary to assist with:

- Meeting the objectives of the MLPA Initiative
- Providing input to the MLPA Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) and MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG)
- Completing the south coast portion of the master plan for marine protected areas (MPAs)



Charge of Science Advisory Team

Functionally, the SAT is charged with

- Reviewing and commenting on scientific information relevant to the implementation of the MLPA
- Developing and providing scientific guidance for each study region
- Reviewing and evaluating alternative MPA proposals
- Reviewing draft master plan documents
- Addressing scientific issues and questions raised by the BRTF or stakeholders



Science Questions for the SAT

- SCRSG- or BRTF-generated science questions are posed in writing by the SCRSG or BRTF
- Other science questions are posed by SAT members or MLPA Initiative staff
 - See handout for list of initial questions for the MLPA South Coast Study Region



Science Questions in RSG Meetings

Process for developing science questions in SCRSG meetings:

1. Questions are recorded by MLPA Initiative staff for SAT consideration; primary staff contacts are [Michelle Horeczko](#) and [Elizabeth Pope-Smith](#)
2. MLPA Initiative staff and SCRSG craft questions together to frame for the SAT
3. SCRSG break-out groups also may develop questions and work with staff to craft questions for the SAT
4. If SCRSG develops multiple questions, SCRSG may identify top priorities for MPA planning



Science Questions in RSG Meetings

Process for developing science questions in SCRSG meetings (continued):

5. SAT co-chairs and staff will review and prioritize questions for the SAT
6. Questions presented to full SAT
7. SAT may discuss in full or assign work group to address science questions
8. SAT and/or work group provides guidance to staff on procedure for responding to question
9. Staff and work group responses will be reviewed by full SAT before finalizing



Composition of SAT Work Groups

- SAT work groups are SAT members with specific expertise on a particular subject matter
- SAT work groups may call on colleagues with relevant expertise from outside the SAT membership
- SAT work groups provide expert advice and information; respond to or relay questions to the full SAT



Function of SAT Sub-Team

- Members of the SAT **South Coast Regional Sub-Team** will work directly with the SCRSG
- At least one SAT sub-team member will be present at each SCRSG meeting
- SAT sub-team members will not participate in SCRSG decision-making



SAT Sub-Team to South Coast Project

- Larry Allen (CSU Northridge; SAT co-chair)
- Mark Carr (UC Santa Cruz; SAT co-chair)
- Christopher Costello (UC Santa Barbara)
- Paul Dayton (Scripps Institution of Oceanography)
- Steve Murray (CSU Fullerton, SAT co-chair)
- Daniel Pondella (Occidental College)
- Dan Robinette (Point Reyes Bird Observatory, Vandenberg Field Station)
- Stephen Stohs (Southwest Fisheries Science Center, NOAA)



SAT Work Groups

- Levels of protection
- Bioregions
- Key and unique habitats
- Species likely to benefit
- Modeling
- Water quality



Other Science Questions

Examples of 'other' questions from initial list of science questions being considered:

- What are biogeographic subregions in the study region?
- Which species are most likely to benefit?
- How could habitat restoration and artificial reefs be considered in planning and evaluating MPA proposals?



SAT Interactions with MLPA Groups

- SAT will strive to speak with a clear voice - not necessarily a single voice
 - On matters of science, SAT will make clear, unambiguous recommendations to the California Fish and Game Commission, BRTF, and SCRSG
- When multiple, scientifically supported, choices are available, SAT will clearly describe choices so the California Fish and Game Commission, BRTF, or SCRSG can incorporate scientific findings into decision-making process
- Staff will not speak for the SAT unless specifically requested