

California Marine Life Protection Act Initiative
Questions Received at the November 18-19, 2008 South Coast Regional
Stakeholder Group Meeting
Revised December 10, 2008

The science questions listed below were received at the November 18-19, 2008 meeting of the MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (SCRSG). MLPA staff and the MLPA Master Plan Science Advisory Team (SAT) co-chairs have reviewed the questions and determined that some questions are policy or management-based, while others are science-based or may have both policy and science components. MLPA staff will provide responses to policy and management questions while the SAT will provide responses to science questions.

- 1. Where does California halibut *Paralichthys californicus*, fall on the scale of dispersal distance for both adult and larval stages?**

Status: A SAT work group has been formed.

- 2. Is the survivorship of larvae within a marine protected area reduced due to increased biomass and therefore increased numbers of predators?**

Status: A SAT work group has been formed.

- 3. How will spacing guidelines be applied between the Channel Islands?**

Status: This question is currently under evaluation by the SAT and may be informed by a decision of the California Fish and Game Commission. Formal guidance on this issue will be provided to the SCRSG as soon as the SAT evaluation is completed.

- 4. What information on hooking mortality and bycatch is available for catch and release fisheries in the MLPA South Coast Study Region?**

Status: A SAT work group has been formed and is currently investigating this question.

- 5. Shouldn't the level of protection (LOP) for urchin harvest be higher, since this activity helps to maintain kelp forests which are important ecologically? Given that otters are not currently found in the southern California kelp ecosystem, can humans be considered a keystone predator to urchin (purple and red) because human harvest helps to maintain kelp forest health; and, if so, how would that affect SAT evaluations on urchin harvest including LOP?**

Status: This question was previously addressed. Staff will provide a response.

- 6. Can more clarification be provided on creation of the minimum size guidelines that were created (especially the offshore component, since state waters is three nautical miles, not three statute miles)?**

Status: This question was addressed in previous study regions. Staff will provide a response.

7. How much scientific collection happens within the study region and what are the effects on marine ecosystems?

Status: Staff will provide a response to this question.