

**Annotated Agenda**  
**MAFAC meeting – May 24-May 26, 2011**  
**Key West, FL**

**1. Title of Discussion:**       **Seafood Safety Update**

**2. Presenters:**               **David Detlor**, Deputy Director, Office of Science and Technology, NMFS  
  **Steve Wilson**, Chief Quality Officer, Office for Seafood Inspection, NMFS

**3. Objective/Purpose:** **[Informational]** Update on Gulf of Mexico and Japanese seafood safety issues and the actions being taken by NOAA to ensure seafood safety.

**4. Background/Synopsis:** In the face of two disasters that had the potential to drastically affect fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific Ocean, NOAA has taken the appropriate steps to ensure that seafood exports and imports continue to be safe and free from contamination.

In the Gulf of Mexico, NOAA/NMFS continues to collaborate with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Gulf coast states, and our regional offices in the Gulf of Mexico to conduct the ongoing seafood safety efforts and ensure the seafood taken from the Gulf is free from contamination by oil and dispersant combinations. All of the [results](#) are publicly available. Over 500 tests of approximately 90,000 specimens have been completed following the *Deepwater Horizon* disaster last year. Sampling of the last 1,041 square miles immediately surrounding the wellhead that remain closed to fishing began in March and helped to determine when that area was safe to reopen. At this time, there are no closed areas in the Gulf. Areas were reopened to commercial fishing incrementally after testing found no dangerous levels of contaminants in fish stocks.

NOAA is also working with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the FDA to ensure the safety of seafood in the Pacific Ocean, both in areas under U.S. jurisdiction, and for imports from regions that may have been affected by the tsunami and nuclear disasters in Japan.

Based on the currently available information, these agencies have a high confidence in the safety of U.S. seafood in domestic marketplaces and seafood available for export abroad. To date, NOAA is also monitoring several other potential routes for contaminated seafood to enter the United States. One possible route is through a Highly Migratory Species, such as the North Pacific albacore tuna, which migrates across the Pacific from Japan in the summer months. To date, no short-lived or long-term radioactivity has been found in these migrating fish. NOAA also continues to monitor seafood imported from Japan and the surrounding areas. NOAA is working with Japanese authorities to monitor fish taken from the areas surrounding the damaged nuclear reactor. Only one species, the Japanese sand lance, has been found to have radiation levels above the safe limits. However, this species is generally consumed only in Japan and no shipments of Japanese sand lance have been offered for importation to the U.S. since the crisis began.

**Other Resources for Information**

- Link to NOAA's [Seafood Safety Fact Sheet](#) regarding radiation (5/03/11).
- Link to video on [Seafood Sampling by NOAA in Response to the BP/Gulf Oil Spill](#).
- Link to release on [Continued Seafood Sampling in the Gulf of Mexico](#).
- Interview with Don Kraemer, Acting Deputy Director of the FDA Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, on [Seafood Safety in the Gulf](#).

**5. Options:** TBD

**6. Preferred Recommendation:** TBD

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Record of Decision:

Decision, Next Step(s) and/or Action:

Assigned to:

Due Date: