



**Council Coordination Committee
May 1- 3, 2012**

Discussion Questions

Agenda Item: International Fisheries Management (TelCon) Russell Smith

- 1) Leveling the playing field for domestic fisheries
- 2) Increasing domestic production of underutilized fisheries to support coastal economies food security

1) US fisheries are on managed and regulated on a much higher level than many foreign fisheries. Such regulation comes with costs mostly borne on US fishermen. The US seafood market is overwhelmingly sourced by foreign imports. For many fisheries, US fishermen are targeting the same stock as foreign fishermen, competing to fill the same US market, but US fishermen are paying much more to compete with foreign vessels, which often are less regulated and subsidized.

Q1: How is US participation in Regional Fishery Management Organizations supporting the continuity of US fisheries?

Q2: How does the US encourage other nations to manage and regulate their fisheries to the standards of the US?

Q3. How can the government support US fishing industries supplying US caught fish in competing with foreign imports of the same products to the US seafood market?

2) Underutilized fisheries are not often discussed in the RFMC process, as typically the RFMCs are managing existing fisheries. However, identifying underutilized fisheries is important when considering various management approaches for existing fisheries, and especially when considering capacity issues (e.g. buybacks), IFQs and/or Catch Shares. In addition, identifying underutilized fisheries is important for fisheries development, employment in coastal communities, and local food security. The Findings and Purposes sections of the MSA establish a national program for the development of underutilized fisheries.

Section 2(a) "Findings," paragraph (7)(a) of the MSA provides:

A national program for the development of fisheries which are underutilized or not utilized by the United States fishing industry, including bottom fish off Alaska, is necessary to assure that our citizens benefit from the employment, food supply, and revenue which could be generated thereby.

Section 2 (b) "Purposes," paragraph (6) of the MSA is:

To encourage the development by the United States fishing industry of fisheries which are currently underutilized or not utilized by United States fishermen, including bottom fish off Alaska, and to that end, to ensure that optimum yield determinations promote such development in a non-wasteful manner

Q3: What is NMFS doing to support the national program to develop underutilized fisheries?

Q4: Is NMFS encouraging the development of the US fishing industry?