

# Healthy Ocean California

## sharing your perspective

### Workshop Summary

From managing coastal, marine, and water resources to planning for a changing climate, ocean health is the thread that links across state agencies, policies, and mandates. Led by the Ocean Protection Council (OPC), the state is embracing the opportunity to build a shared vision for California's ocean health. At this workshop, the OPC and California Ocean Science Trust brought together a panel of scientists, decision makers, tribal representatives, and constituents to lead a public discussion about what 'ocean health' means across our diverse coastal communities. Underlying a spirited discussion was a common theme - ocean health can be a unifying concept. Across the broad range of perspectives and ideas expressed by participants, a vision of ocean health offers a shared goal, opportunities to collaborate, and a foundation to celebrate collective progress.

### Reflections on Ocean Health as a Unifying Concept

- In California, we have always been committed to promoting ocean health. It is reflected in the laws our coastal communities have supported – from the Clean Water Act, the Porter-Cologne Act, and the Coastal Act, to the more recent Marine Life Management Act, Marine Life Protection Act, and California Ocean Protection Act, among others.
- Ocean health, in the face of a changing climate, is a state priority. Developing a shared vision and tracking progress advances key initiatives prioritized by our leadership; from the Governor's office to the agencies mandated to protect, restore, manage and sustain our coasts and oceans.
- A healthy ocean is central to the history, culture, perspective and vision of California tribes. A new dialogue presents opportunities to learn from each other, expand our horizons, and renew our collective relationship with the natural environment. Doing this together will be critical not only to envisioning a healthy ocean, but also to achieving it.
- Lessons from these emerging conversations are an opportunity to build bridges—between communities, tribes, science and policy, traditionally disparate stakeholders, and agencies—to foster constructive collaboration and sharing of knowledge.

**August 27, 2014**  
**9:30 to 11:30 AM**  
**Natural Resources**  
**Agency Auditorium**  
**1416 Ninth Street**  
**Sacramento, CA 95814**

*“A healthy ocean is something we can all agree that we want. We value it; we believe in achieving it both for current and future generations.”*

Tom Weseloh  
Consultant, Joint  
Committee on Fisheries and  
Aquaculture, Assemblyman  
Wesley Chesbro's Office



*“There is no more room for single-species or single resource management. We will simply have to work across sectors in a way we haven't before, but ocean health is a concept by which we can build these bridges — between communities, science and policy, traditionally disparate stakeholders, and agencies.”*

Louise Bedsworth  
Deputy Director, Governor's Office of Planning and Research

## Perspectives on What Ocean Health Means

- Ocean health should address the intrinsic value of the ocean alongside the benefits it provides to humans. In other words, include humans as part of the overarching system.
- A definition of ocean health could take a number of forms, but it is likely to be more qualitative than quantitative. Whether or not a final definition is reached, the conversation itself, and the questions that it raises about the benefits and limitations of existing laws and processes, is valuable.

## Next Steps

- Further examination of a shared vision of ocean health will be led by the OPC, working with decision makers across jurisdictions, and interested stakeholders. Initially:
  - The OPC heard interest in expanding the range of stakeholder perspectives they are hearing from and is currently exploring the possibility of holding another public workshop similar in style and format in southern California.
  - The OPC will begin scoping a kick-off meeting or workshop with state decision makers to begin building a common definition of ocean health.

*“Ocean health is embodied in the indigenous worldviews of native Californians. A solid understanding of this foundational perspective is the first step to providing possible solutions for a healthy ocean.”*

Briannon Fraley  
Self Governance Director,  
Smith River Rancheria

## Supplementary Materials

Visit <http://www.opc.ca.gov/2014/10/healthy-ocean-california/> for the complete workshop proceedings and other supplementary materials, including:

- Ocean Protection Council Science Advisory Team [Workshop Proceedings, June 11 2014](#)
- Earth Law Center, [Ocean Health in Environmental Law and Policy](#)

*“I encourage us to discuss ocean health in terms of the living environment—the scientific community can describe the range of ocean conditions important to sustaining marine and terrestrial life, and we need to consider humans as part of the system.”*

Brendan Kelly  
Director of Conservation Research and Chief Scientist, Monterey Bay Aquarium

