



Case Studies of Existing Advisory Bodies for Select Marine Resources

DCTF Members expressed particular interest in learning about available funding mechanisms to improve research capacity, promote economic development of the Dungeness crab fishery, and perpetuate a communication platform following the completion of the DCTF process. In response, this document provides a brief overview of the formation, purpose, and activities of the California Sea Urchin Commission and Salmon Council. These case studies identify potential, more formalized means to achieve the above stated goals. The case studies also demonstrate how landings taxes can be used for a variety of activities that contribute to the sustainable management of marine resources in California. For information on current landing tax rates for California, Oregon, and Washington, please refer to the document “Landing Taxes for Dungeness crab in CA, OR, and WA.” Finally, we plan to have Nick Furman from the Oregon Dungeness Crab Commission come and speak to the group specifically about advisory bodies at Meeting 4.

Case Study 1: The California Sea Urchin Commission

The California sea urchin fishery is a profitable industry; in 2008, statewide landings totaled 10.3 million pounds and were worth \$ 6.5 million (California Department of Fish and Game 2003). Industry participation in management of the fishery began in 1987 with the formation of the Sea Urchin Advisory Committee and continues with the currently active Sea Urchin Commission.

As a result of rapid growth throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, key stakeholders in this fishery saw a need to establish an industry advisory team to the Fish and Game Commission (FGC) (Kalvass 1992) in order to have a more unified and stronger voice in the Legislature. In 1987, the Legislature created the Sea Urchin Advisory Commission (DSUAC), composed of representatives from the sea urchin industry, the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), and California Sea Grant. The purpose of DSUAC was to improve understanding of the resource and use information gained to optimize resource management, including the establishment of a long-term management plan (CFDG 2003). From 1987 until 2001, DSUAC served as a research and development body for the California Sea Urchin fishery.

The DSUAC was funded by an industry-imposed landing fee of \$0.005 per pound, an additional amount from the commercial fishery landing tax that came into effect in 1994 (AB 718). DSUAC also worked with the California Sea Grant Extension Program (SGEP) on collaborative research and management. Research funded by the landing tax included resource enhancement and stock monitoring and assessment (Deweese et al. 2004), which has helped sustain the resource and provide scientific data to support policy and regulatory decisions for FGC. More than \$1.5 million was raised for research and management over a 15-year period until DSUAC disbanded in 2001 due to a lack of communication and collaboration among members.

The California Sea Urchin Commission, established in late 2003 by an industry-wide referendum under the California Food and Agriculture Code (FAC), functions as an advisory body (similar to an agricultural commodity group) on management and promotion of the Sea Urchin fishery (Deweese et al. 2004). Like the former DSUAC, the Commission coordinates with FGC (California Sea Urchin Commission June 2007) in its advisory capacity. Unlike DSUAC, however, the Sea Urchin Commission is comprised solely of members representing industry, including five handlers, five divers, and one public member (California Department of Food and Agriculture Marketing Branch 2008a). The Sea Urchin Commission also conducts a variety of other tasks, including quality-setting,



~California Dungeness Crab Task Force~

<http://www.opc.ca.gov/2009/04/dungeness-crab-task-force/>

marketing, public education, research, and resource conservation (California Department of Food and Agriculture Marketing Branch 2008a; California Sea Urchin Commission December 2007).

Funding for research, education, marketing, and management conducted by the Sea Urchin Commission is generated by a \$0.01 per pound landing tax on urchin delivered by divers to handlers (each side pays half) following each calendar quarter (3 months) (California Department of Food and Agriculture Marketing Branch 2008a). Examples of work funded by this tax include: development and presentation of a comprehensive regulatory structure for FGC; continuation of a diver stock monitoring program; execution of workshops and distribution of newsletters designed to promote industry collaboration; outreach to (potential) industry partners and participation in public events (e.g. festivals) to promote the California fishery (California Sea Urchin Commission July and December 2007). In 2008, the Commission increased landing fees to \$0.03 per pound due to increasing challenges and operational costs the Commission faces. For example, a current priority for the Sea Urchin Commission is participating in the design and implementation of the Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) in California, to ensure that sea urchin fishers are equitably represented and that their livelihoods are protected in this process (California Sea Urchin Commission March 2008).

Case Study 2: California Salmon Council

Formed in 1989, the California Salmon Council (CSC) was formed by referendum (i.e. voted by majority of commercial salmon vessel operators) and serves as a marketing board for commercial salmon fishers as well as an advisory body to FGC. DFG regulates the coastal and inland salmon fishery in California, and the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) regulates the fishery outside of 3 nautical miles from the coast. CSC's primary purpose is to market and promote the consumption of commercial salmon and salmon products (California Department of Food and Agriculture Marketing Branch 2008b).

CSC is composed of nine voting members—including vessel operators, processors, and exporters/wholesalers. CSC also includes five non-voting members, with representation from each of the following entities: Department of Food and Agriculture, DFG, Sea Grant, Coastal Fisheries Foundation, and the California State World Trade Commission. Ongoing activities of the Council include marketing, research, restoration, conservation, and public education on the California salmon fishery. CSC collaborates with local, state, and national agencies as well as industry groups to conduct its work (California Department of Food and Agriculture Marketing Branch 2008b). Funding for the CSC is generated by a \$0.02 per pound landing tax on salmon harvested in California. Funds raised from this tax support the Council's program and administration (California Department of Food and Agriculture Marketing Branch 2008b); this fee is part of the current landing tax of \$0.05 per pound (Pacific Fishery Management Council 1999).



~California Dungeness Crab Task Force~

<http://www.opc.ca.gov/2009/04/dungeness-crab-task-force/>

References

California Department of Food and Agriculture Marketing Branch. 2008a. *CA Sea Urchin Commission Law*. Accessible via:

<http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/mkt/mkt/pdf/Laws/SeaUrchinCommissionLaw.2008.pdf>

California Department of Food and Agriculture Marketing Branch. 2008b. California Salmon Council Law. Accessible at: <http://www.cdfa.ca.gov/mkt/mkt/pdf/Laws/SalmonCouncilLaw.07-02-08.pdf>

California Sea Urchin Commission. March 2008. CommUNItY: News of the California Sea Urchin Commission. Accessible via: http://www.calurchin.org/images/community/Community_March08.pdf

California Sea Urchin Commission. December 2007. CommUNItY: News of the California Sea Urchin Commission. Accessible at: http://www.calurchin.org/images/community/Community_Dec07.pdf

Deweese, C. M., Sortais, K., and W. Leet. 2004. "Conserving California fish ... Extension approaches applied to contentious marine-fisheries management issues." Accessible via:

<http://californiaagriculture.ucanr.org/landingpage.cfm?article=ca.v058n04p194&fulltext=yes>

California Department of Fish and Game. 2003. "Red Sea Urchin." *Fisheries Forum Annual Report*. Accessible via: <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/marine/status/report2003/redsu.pdf>

Pacific Fishery Management Council. 1999. "Addendum 14 to the Pacific Coastal Salmon Plan." In *Appendix B. Description of the Ocean Salmon Fishery and its Social and Economic Characteristics*. Accessible at: <http://www.pcouncil.org/salmon/salfmp/a14/99econ.pdf>

Amendment to 1068, 8051.1 and 8051.2 of the Fish and Game Code. AB 718. 1995. Accessible via: http://info.sen.ca.gov/pub/95-96/bill/asm/ab_0701-0750/ab_718_bill_950526_amended_asm.html

Kalvass, P. 1992. "The Northern California Commercial Sea Urchin Fishery—a Case Study." Accessible via: <http://nsgl.gso.uri.edu/cuimr/cuimrw92001/cuimrw92001index.html>