

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEMBER VISIONING WORKSHOP

**King and Prince Hotel
St. Simons Island, Georgia**

March 2, 2015

SUMMARY MINUTES

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Additional Observers Attached

The Visioning Workshop of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened in the Sidney Lanier Ballroom of the King and Prince Hotel, St. Simons Island, Georgia, March 2, 2015, and was called to order at 9:00 o'clock a.m. by Chairman Michelle Duval.

DR. DUVAL: I have 9:00 o'clock on my computer clock, so I think we're going to go ahead and get started on our Visioning Workshop for Snapper Grouper. We had a number of attachments for folks to look through, revisions to the previous draft strategic goals for management and communication.

Amber is going to take us through the new draft goals for governance and science. Staff conducted a pretty extensive gap analysis to go back and do sort of a point-by-point comparison of all the different items that were brought up through the port meetings and pointing out where exactly these were being addressed in the different draft management strategic goals and then also identified things that were brought up at the port meetings that have not been addressed.

I think we are going to switch things around a little bit, but I think the first thing I am going to ask Amber to do is kind of take us through the short version of the gap analysis summary. There are a couple of different attachments for that. There is Attachment 5, which is the summary and then I believe there is another attachment – no?

MS. VON HARTEN: No, those are last December's.

DR. DUVAL: I am thinking about the extensive one that was in the December briefing book as well, so I also had a copy of that. I am going to turn things over to Amber. Once she goes through, this sort of keep these things in mind as we make our way through the draft strategic goals.

MS. VON HARTEN: This gap analysis summary is summarizing the more complete gap analysis that I gave you guys in December. This actually is just pulling out – because the gap analysis also included things that you did include in the strategic goals and objectives and discussed during our October workshop.

This summary is just showing what is still not in the strategic goals documents. You will see they are separated out by sector. I don't know if you want me to go through point by point. The purpose of going over these now is as we get into the discussions of each of the four strategic goals, it would be helpful if you could be thinking about some of these things that are on the gap analysis and where they might fit into some of the strategic goal strategies and actions.

We did have some folks talk about training for the dealers on that new weekly reporting requirement and the forms – there seemed to be some confusion about how to fill those out – third party review of stock assessments, different types of technology to use to collect more data like underwater cameras; getting credits towards the ACL for the use of descending devices; specifics for a minimum size limit on red porgy; addressing latent commercial effort in the fishery; and the value of owner/operators in the fishery; eligibility requirements for new entrants to the fishery, and specifically referencing the endorsement programs for black sea bass and golden tilefish.

We also had some folks that said no new endorsement programs, so they don't want to see that either; separating the Jacks Complex, and I made a note there that it looks like that is going to be something that you addressed through another management action. Limit harvest of Goliath grouper, and again that is another notation that is going to be probably addressed by the Joint South Florida Issues Committee.

Then the one that kind of goes throughout all sectors is the mixed opinions on catch share programs; just noting that the majority of fishermen at the stakeholder meetings, at those port meetings were in opposition to that. We also got from a couple states the idea of separate joint agreements between federal and state management agencies for regional management; similar to what is in place for law enforcement but for regional management.

Then a couple on MPAs; consider sunset clauses on the current Deepwater MPAs; and then, of course, no new MPAs. I am not going to repeat – some of these were repetitive throughout each sector so I will just go on to the recreational sector and talk about the ones that weren't addressed previously.

Another idea, that third bullet down, is create complex-specific permits for recreational and for-hire sectors so it is based on the HMS model to help identify users specifically fishing for snapper grouper. Some ideas for black sea bass management as well as lane snapper and mangrove snapper and mutton snapper; and then just a recommendation to implement a five-fish-per-species bag limit.

Ideas about hogfish, which again is going to be addressed through the South Florida Issues Committee; and Goliath grouper again. The mixed opinion on catch shares, regional stock assessments; which was one that came up in a couple of different states. Allow the state to manage specific species; and then the last idea came out of one of our Georgia meetings, I remember, about having – this is more of an outreach one, a communication one – have stakeholder meetings that has forecasting during the meetings in a sense that like we could present what is on the table, what is happening with the council now and kind of forecasting out how that might look in the future for the fishery and incorporating fishermen's knowledge.

Then for the for-hire sector, the only one that is really different there is ways to improve recreational discard estimates. Then the chefs came up with another couple of ones; more representation from that kind of sector on the council advisory panels in the activities and outreach programs.

Then also they were interested in having a one-stop shop, like a web portal or something for chefs and consumers to access information about regional fisheries and kind of what is open, what is closed, what has been assessed; so they can better understand how to make choices for their menus.

DR. DUVAL: Are there any questions for Amber on that? When I was looking at some of these, I was making notes regarding places I thought that they might fit in well in some of the draft strategic goals. I think some of the very specific suggestions with regard to size limit changes; I think we have some things in the management draft blueprint that address size limits. I sort of feel like maybe those more general statements can encompass some of the specific suggestions for size limit changes in there. Ben, did you have a question?

MR. HARTIG: Yes; I had the same feeling that those could be incorporated under the size limit discussion for everything. The other thing is the first one under commercial, the training for the weekly reporting requirements, the forms; that was a time-sensitive issue that is quickly going away. The longer dealers have to do that; hopefully – and Bonnie could tell us or not how well that program is working now with the weekly reporting.

DR. DUVAL: Bonnie, do you have just any sense of sort of has the level of requests for assistance gone down or maybe the level of complaints gone down since the requirement for weekly reporting has been implemented since last August?

DR. PONWITH: There certainly has been a learning curve. I don't have metrics on it off the top of my head, but I am certainly willing to have a conversation with the folks back and get some qualitative views on that. Like I say, I do know there has been a learning curve and I know there have been incremental improvements in people's understanding and compliance with that requirement. I'll touch bases with them.

MR. BELL: Related to that; I know our state statistics people spend a lot of time working with the dealers and all in helping them understand things. I assume that is probably similar in other states. A lot of that is probably going on already unofficially, but I know Amy Duke spends a lot of time trying to help guys understand things and work through problems.

DR. DUVAL: Similarly for us, we have one of our biologists in North Carolina, Grace Kemp; she works with all the dealers in terms of sort of being their outreach person on the electronic reporting software. Then also our port agents who are out there working with the dealers and auditing trip tickets are also part of that outreach in terms of the learning curve. Are there any other questions or comments on the gap analysis?

MR. HAYMANS: When I was looking through it; Amber, you didn't go back to the management table and add the gap things, right? The ones I highlighted were like address latent commercial effort and methods and eligibility requirements for new entrants. But when I go back to management under 2.2 F, we're talking about overcapitalization in the fishery. To me that kind of captures that. I don't necessarily see it as having been missed so much as included under that broader category.

DR. DUVAL: When I was going back and forth between the gap analysis and the revised draft strategic goal statements, I had some similar thoughts. Similarly, some of those very specific size limit types of suggestions, I sort of feel like we're trying to address those in a broader way to deal with things like discards, to deal with things like recreational access, et cetera.

I think again that is why I had Amber go through this initially. We can sort of keep those in mind and raise your hand and highlight those areas where you think it might be appropriate to address one of these or if you think it is already being addressed through a broader statement like that.

MS. VON HARTEN: That is great. I guess my question to you is do you want to lose this resolution of recommendation from the port meetings and just keep it as part of the background material, just so we can say, okay, here is this Action 2A that is broader; but we know we got

some specific recommendations from the port meetings, and kind of just have that on file to cross-reference at a later date?

DR. DUVAL: I agree; I think we want to maintain the historical recording of what were the things that were initially missed in the first go round just so that we have it, but note where we believe it is being addressed, whether it is in a broader fashion or a more specific fashion.

DR. PONWITH: Just a reflection on that list; when I look at that list, it is binned by what sector the recommendation came from. When I look at it, one of the things that makes it challenging for me to kind of go through is that when it is binned like that; certainly that is important for understanding where the source came from, because it helps interpret what they mean; but I see a mixture of science recommendations and management, a mixture of strategic recommendations and other recommendations that are really more tactical.

I am wondering if it would be visually more approachable if instead of putting it in a list in a word document, if you created a spreadsheet and then created some characteristics of those in terms of where they land; is it a strategic recommendation or one that is tactical; we need to change this size limit now, and also from which sector it came from.

It would enable you to do some sorts and filters and be able to look at that. It will also enable you to more readily cross-reference that list against what you have already accomplished in the document and recognize ones that have and haven't been included. It is just an idea to make the input a little more approachable.

DR. DUVAL: That is a great suggestion, Bonnie; I see Amber writing furiously. I was hit by the same type of realization in looking through those as well. It is not just sector types of things; but when I was thinking where would we put this, I was thinking about which strategic goal it was and whether, like you said, it is a change in tactics or something that is really more structural I think in how we manage the fishery.

MS. BECKWITH: Along those same lines; when I was reading through specifically the science one that we'll get to now, as I was reading through the actions I kind of kept thinking, well, that is something we have the power to do and influence over and then some of these other ones are things that we need to encourage other folks to do.

They were kind of mixed together in the one list. One of the suggestions I was going to make is, is there a way of organizing those as sort of under the power and influence of the council versus some of those actions that we would have to work with partners or encourage partners to develop some of that information. It gives the sensation that somehow we have the ability to do all the things that are within those action items, and we don't have the power to do those or many of them; so just a suggestion.

DR. DUVAL: That is certainly something that I think we've had conversations about before regarding what the council can do directly with regard to the science that is available to inform our process here versus work with other partners to try to bring our concerns forward regarding those things. That is another good suggestion. Okay, I think what I would like to do is turn things over to Amber to kind of walk us through the draft strategic goals for science and governance; again keeping in mind some of the statements from the gap analysis. Once we're

done with those, we will take a quick walk back through the management and communication ones as well and try to address some of those gaps.

MS. VON HARTEN: I just wanted to also bring your attention to we added some background text at the beginning of each of these documents to kind of explain to the reader the purpose of these documents, how they were developed, and what is included in the documents; especially before we go out for public input, because we want to make clear that these documents reflect input received during the port meetings as well as ideas that the council themselves have brought forward to the table so that it is clear that there are ideas that are coming from both methods of input, council and port meetings.

For the science objectives – and again it is really good that you all observed what I struggled with when I was putting these together is knowing that a lot of these science ones are things that the council can support or encourage but not necessarily directly do. As we go through that, maybe if we could note some of those things, that would be helpful for me.

Objective 1 is talking about supporting quality data management programs. Strategy 1 is talking about looking at what we currently have in place, what data collection, monitoring and reporting programs. A lot of these are talking about looking at fishery-dependent and independent data programs, SEDAR; identifying sampling resources needed to support data programs; SAFE reports; and the idea of this third party assessment in the standard stock assessment program.

1.2 is talking about consistency in data collection programs, incorporating standardized methods or improving upon what is there; so utilizing ACCSP standards and creating a uniform reporting mechanism for logbooks, trip tickets, whatever mechanism that is being used to collect data. Then Strategy 1.3 specifically is addressing fishery-independent programs; so trying to figure out alternative sources of funding to support expansion of the existing surveys, working with management partners to secure long-term funding from MARMAP, and the creation of a comprehensive data portal that could provide access to all fishery-independent data.

MS. McCAWLEY: Do we want to indicate throughout the document that it is clear we are talking about snapper grouper only, because some of these seem really broad. Even in the title, it doesn't seem clear that we're talking about snapper grouper only.

DR. DUVAL: We can certainly clarify that and include it; just referencing that this is specific to the snapper grouper fishery. Do you feel like there is not enough emphasis of that in the background blurb that is at the beginning, which specifically talks about this visioning process being for the snapper grouper fishery?

MS. McCAWLEY: The background itself was okay; but as you move throughout the document and when you look at the title, it is not clear to me. I didn't want people to get the wrong idea as they were looking at this.

MR. BELL: Maybe what you could do is just for each of the major goals insert for the snapper grouper fishery at that point. At least it occurs throughout the document that way. Jessica is right. I mean we know all this because we've been doing this, but that might be a simplified way of just inserting that, perhaps.

DR. DUVAL: Would that address your concern? Okay, great. Erika.

MS. BURGESS: I think what Jessica is referring to; if you look at the top of each page, it says the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Draft Vision Blueprint. It sounds like it is the draft vision blueprint for the entire council, not snapper grouper fishery or the FMP.

DR. DUVAL: We can certainly make sure to insert in any of those headers that it is for the snapper grouper fishery.

DR. LANEY: I think we all acknowledge the fact that fishery-independent sampling is going to catch a lot of other things beside snapper grouper. I think there is no objection, right, to generating data on other species of interest to the council with these programs. I see your point, so I don't have any problem with that, but I think we should acknowledge that some of these are going to benefit other council fisheries as well just in the course – well, by virtue of the fact that they are fishery independent and the gear is not necessarily always specific to just snapper grouper species.

MS. VON HARTEN: Objective 2 is talking about development of mechanisms to effectively engage and collaborate with stakeholders on a multitude of things, cooperative research, data collection, and analysis. The first strategy is talking about cooperative research and surveys and promoting and expanding those opportunities, so looking at sources of funding, both traditional and nontraditional, so not just the existing grant programs that are available, but also other types of funding.

Improving partnerships between potential researchers and fishermen, supporting partnerships to enhance habitat and ecosystem mapping in the region; there was also the idea of a multi-disciplinary body to oversee and guide cooperative fishery-independent surveys, monitoring research. A lot of other regions use industry research set-aside funding programs. That idea was brought up; and then utilizing fishing vessels and captains as alternative observer platforms.

Then Strategy 2.2, it is talking about citizen science; so talking about supporting a volunteer angler training program to train fishermen how to collect specific data to address a science or management need, and then also looking at ways to incorporate that citizen science data for use in stock assessments and other management measures.

DR. DUVAL: Are there any thoughts or reactions on those in terms of – Anna had mentioned clarity of whether or not these are things that the council has some direct influence over or role in versus working with some of our other partners to potentially accomplish some of these things. Certainly, the council plays a role I think in most of these potential strategies or actions.

One thing I was going to bring up under Strategy 2.2, the citizen science programs, was perhaps add an additional action to consider the use of tagging programs. That was something that came up in a few of the port meetings at least in Georgia and North Carolina. I am thinking of like traditional tagging programs where you're getting estimates of mortality from things like that. It is obviously not going to work for all species, but there was a suggestion that was made that might be an appropriate place to fill it in.

MR. BELL: Yes, we've had success with tagging programs and that is a good format for fishermen to work cooperatively with us. In addition to that, I noticed it kind of ends – under 2.2 you have A, B, and then C was blank; but I was thinking and I came up with a C. You had A is all; B is for-hire recreational.

There is sort of not anything there that speaks specifically to the commercial sector in terms of working. We are already doing some things with them, but maybe there needs to be something that talks about efforts with commercial fishermen specifically. That was just a suggestion for a C, if you wanted to fill in C.

MS. VON HARTEN: Well, could A and B incorporate all sectors perhaps instead of adding a new one?

MR. BELL: Well, yes, it says “all”, but –

DR. LANEY: But I liked your idea to add a volunteer angler tagging program under 2.2. That one could plug in under C, I guess. A says training, so would that include tagging under A?

DR. DUVAL: It could; certainly A could certainly –

DR. LANEY: I like the idea of getting the word tagging in there, though, because there have been a lot of highly successful angler tagging programs like the ALS, for example, because we used the striped bass data from that in the stock assessment for that species. Again, I think training is key to that; and there may be some species for which it is more appropriate than other species as well. You may want to tailor it to a given species. Although I think the South Carolina program, Mel, you all tag a bunch of different species, don't you? I know Virginia does also; they tag a whole bunch and so does ALS.

DR. DUVAL: Right; I think having a broader statement of considering volunteer tagging programs. I guess I was thinking not just of anglers but that is something that could certainly be expanded to all sectors of the fishery with appropriate levels of training; but that was my thought.

MR. BELL: Back to the point I was making; the way A is worded right now under 2.2 it talks about an angler training program to collect specific data. I guess with commercial, I was thinking we already work with some commercial assets, kind of like vessels of opportunity, and there is not necessarily any training that occurs with that.

You've got very experienced commercial fishermen that have the vessels, have the gear, and know what they're doing. You may have a need for certain data that they can help you with and it doesn't necessarily involve a training program. That is why I was thinking that might be a little different; but if you think it's the same, it is okay.

MS. VON HARTEN: Maybe we need to add one that talks about utilizing fishing vessels and captains. It kind of talks actually – the Strategy 2.1 before; utilize fishing vessels and captains as alternative observer platforms; maybe we need to say not just observer platforms, but actual data collection.

MR. BREWER: I just wanted to echo the support for putting tagging in this thing. There are some pretty successful tagging programs in Florida. They are not run by the council; they are run by like the Billfish Foundation and whatnot. You even can get support for these things with some of your larger fishing clubs. They will actually do the training or provide facilities to do training for those kinds of things within the club itself.

I know the West Palm Beach Fishing Club, we actually have a competition for tagging fish, and in some of the tournaments the person who puts the most tags in gets a plaque or something like that. There has been a lot of response to it and really a lot of success with it. Now that particular fishery is HMS; it is not council managed. I see a lot of potential there, I really do.

DR. DUVAL: I am wondering if maybe we need to include in that draft language for C something about partnership with fishing clubs or other organizations to help train and promote.

MS. VON HARTEN: Okay, Objective 3 is talking more about the social and economic elements of the fishery with regard to science; some of the science that is needed in that realm; so looking at cumulative social and economic impacts that propose in existing management measures and alternatives; data collection that considers economics when determining allocation strategies; and then working with partners, research institutes, and others with the appropriate expertise to collect more relevant and timely social and economic data to support the needs of the council.

MS. BECKWITH: How is A different from what we do currently? Were we adding stuff to this that we were kind of already doing or were we trying to keep it to new ideas?

DR. DUVAL: I am going to just put forward one way in which A is a little bit different than what we're doing now. We obviously evaluate the social and economic impacts of any management measures that are proposed or that we take, and that includes a cumulative effects analysis.

However, the way the cumulative analyses are done currently is it is only evaluating the cumulative impacts of actions that are taken just within this particular fishery. I think we are all well aware that many of our constituents participate in a variety of fisheries, and so they are impacted by management actions that are occurring in those fisheries as well.

I think my sense is we need a more comprehensive cumulative effects analysis. I know that is a huge lift, but that can consider what the impacts of management measures are from other fisheries and note that in the analyses that we do for the management actions that we're taking; so existing but more expansive, I guess.

Maybe the language just needs to be updated to reflect that. Do we need to revise that language or add something on to indicate that cumulative social and economic impacts; we would like to see that be broader and inclusive of management measures that are occurring in other fisheries that also affect snapper grouper fishery participants or at least be aware of it.

MS. VON HARTEN: In Objective 4 it is talking a lot about monitoring and reporting programs; supporting improved and expanded programs. The first one is pretty broad; supporting a wide range of monitoring options to meet a specific management objective. The talk of use of observers; support the use of observer data to improve discard rate estimates, development and

use of appropriate electronic monitoring methods; to consider scale/cost approach; and then also a law enforcement action to support them for enforcing monitoring requirements.

DR. DUVAL: A swipe card?

MS. VON HARTEN: You describe what a swipe card is.

DR. DUVAL: Well, I may not be as familiar with it as you are, Amber. I am familiar with the use of a swipe card as something that I think the state of Maine; their glass eel fishery is currently using this. It allows fishermen to swipe a card to indicate what their landings are and what their harvest is immediately. It is sort of an on-the-spot type of thing. It allows for more rapid tracking of what harvest levels are. I know I might not be explaining that appropriately.

DR. LANEY: That's it; it just greatly expedites reporting and things like that. It just makes it easier. It is a step toward electronic reporting, basically. It worked out really well for the glass eel fishery in Maine; at least that is my understanding from the Maine folks.

MS. BECKWITH: But where are they swiping their card? I am kind of envisioning you have a little terminal at a boat dock and you are swiping on your way out and in.

DR. LANEY: I'm not sure, Anna. They have to report somewhere and I'm not sure who it is that has the little electronic gadget; or maybe they set it up so they can do it from their home computers. I'm not sure how it works. Somehow it enables them to track their landings and it enables the state and law enforcement folks to track them as well.

DR. DUVAL: I think it is actually a station where they are swiping if they're coming to a dock to land their catch, then they are swiping it there; but we can check in with some folks from Maine to see exactly how it works.

MS. VON HARTEN: Strategy 4.2 is talking about all the different types of reporting mechanisms that could be considered to be used. That is kind of why this is just a laundry list of ideas.

There are some that are just more broad in nature, a reporting program for the recreational sector and then there are ones that are much more specific; so use of electronic reporting mechanisms, swipe cards, recreational fishing stamp, permit or license for the fishery, dockside biological sampling for the recreational sector, catch card reporting programs, which you all heard about in December; improvement to the existing logbook programs in terms of better resolution on the logbook grids, VTRs and a discard logbook, and things like that.

Incentives were reporting in all sectors, consequences for lack of reporting, law enforcement support to enforce reporting requirements; so those three are kind of law enforcement related; increase bycatch and discard reporting; implement the SBRM; and develop a model to improve discard rate estimates for all sectors; kind of just a laundry list.

Objective 5 is talking about the ecosystem and habitat considerations for data collection. Most of these came out of your October Visioning Workshop when we discussed habitat. This is some of the ideas, improving understanding and considers species interactions; non-fishing ecosystem

drivers; how to utilize ocean monitoring to support management decisions; understanding of the effects of contaminants; evaluate ocean dumping and impacts; improve timeliness and accuracy of bottom mapping; determine how habitats contribute to the production of managed species and the distribution of different life stages and evaluating damage from disturbance.

Then Strategy 5.2 is talking about some climate change impact sorts of science that is needed; metrics to evaluate climate change; impact of sea level rise; cold water intrusion and the ocean acidification on the fishery. More science needs are most of these. Then Strategy 5.3 is talking about modeling efforts and all the different needs for that.

DR. DUVAL: Under Strategy 5.3, it seems like A, and C are sort of similar. I am wondering if we could just maybe eliminate one of those or combine them. Really, C seems to be more descriptive, so you could probably just eliminate A, but that was just my thought.

MS. BECKWITH: Under Strategy 5.1; that list of actions was originally where I was thinking it might be worth organizing them under what we can actually influence versus encourage partners to do. Certainly, D, E, and G are examples of things that we would probably have to encourage partners to do. I don't know that we can evaluate dumping, ocean dumping, but we can encourage other people to do that. They are kind of mixed together in there.

DR. DUVAL: Perhaps maybe rephrase that a little bit to just indicate support improved understanding or evaluation of ocean dumping by partners or something along those lines.

MS. BECKWITH: Right, or even just reorganize the list where maybe the first five are things under our purview and then have some extra words that would indicate that the remainder of the list is encourage partnerships or partners and then just have them a little bit separated.

DR. DUVAL: Great; thanks.

MR. HAYMANS: I don't want to overstate the obvious, but I have to ask the question. Today and in June we're preparing the document for public hearing. In June we're going to go out and get the public's opinion. Is the document that we're going to send to the public similar to this; is that what we're sort of looking at?

MS. VON HARTEN: That is what we need to discuss today, yes.

MR. HAYMANS: Well, I guess I am just kind of sitting riding along listening, because I've read through them all and nothing necessarily just totally said I can't handle it; but this is a lot of stuff to send to the public and should we be eliminating – I would go back to what you talked about a moment ago with the swipe cards. For me that is a non-starter because how are you ever going to pay for swipe cards for every single recreational angler in the South Atlantic when we don't have a fund generated for it? Should we be eliminating – like you're combining here; should we be eliminating those that the council just can't go along with? At what level should we be combining, deleting, adding?

DR. DUVAL: I think in our preamble that staff has put together for each one of these strategic management goals, we've stated that at this point nothing has been removed. We've been very inclusive as to all the suggestions that have come forward including those from the council. We

have some from the gap analysis that we definitely need to add in here. I think probably the only items that we really haven't included are things that it is simply illegal for us to do that we couldn't do under the law.

Then it was my assumption I guess that once we went out to get public input; that after that is when we would begin sort of taking things out of this list and putting them into an appendix where we said based on the input we've received thus far, the council isn't going to be considering this list of items in the near term or may elect to consider these things in the longer term. I understand there is probably a lot of stuff in here and throughout all four of these that are nonstarters for particular people sitting around this table, but I sort of feel like it might be a little disingenuous to the public to move things out because people feel like it is a nonstarter.

MR. HAYMANS: Well, sure, and that makes sense. I guess I am just concerned with the size. Okay, some of the public are used to seeing large documents from the council; but just a bulletized list of items, I am just wondering how receptive they are going to be to that. I'm fine with sending everything out and seeing what comes back. I just didn't know if we wanted to start deleting or not. I am good being all-inclusive.

DR. DUVAL: I think we can discuss sort of how we want to package this for the public. I don't really want to spiral down into that conversation right now, because we're going to go into – Amber is going to take us through sort of a draft plan for how to take these out to the public and how we want to provide that input.

I think if the hands raised around the table are addressing that right now, I would prefer to hold off on that conversation and finish this. We are almost done with it; go through the governance strategic goal and then go back to the management and communication pieces just to make sure that we're happy with the way that they are for us right now. Then we can jump into the conversation about sort of how this is packaged for the public when we get to the point of discussing public input; if that is okay with everyone.

MR. BREWER: Just a thought under Strategy 5; maybe we could put in there to evaluate effectiveness of artificial reefing; what effect it would have, maybe some sort of idea about where you might get maximum benefit; placement that would give you maximum benefit; the idea of shallow-water artificial reefing versus the deep-water stuff that would be more, hopefully, of a fish generator than a fish aggregator and that kind of thing.

There has been a lot of discussion back and forth about how effective these things are. It probably would be really good to know or at least have some scientific advice I think as to effectiveness, placement, and those kinds of things.

DR. LANEY: Under Strategy 5.1, could we add – we have F, improve timeliness and accuracy of bottom mapping – could we add “and coverage” in there? I know the council is not going to be responsible for determining where mapping occurs, but certainly we could weigh in I think from the perspective of where we would like to see it. Bonnie, I don't know; is there any entity in the South Atlantic that is presently looking at where mapping has occurred and trying to compile existing coverage? I know Roger and I have talked about that a little bit.

I know he is trying to incorporate information into the FTP site to the extent that he can do that. I don't know if there is any science center presence in terms of looking at areas that haven't been mapped and trying to prioritize areas for mapping or anything like that. Is that something that is already underway somewhere?

DR. PONWITH: Yes, mapping initiatives bubble up periodically and doing a gap analysis of the aerial coverage and the quality of the maps is always the first step that is taken. How comprehensively that has been done in our region; I would have to look into. One of the things that we've done is with the last build of fisheries research vessels; we've seen to it as a standard practice. We put an ME-70 on each of those vessels.

As we get better and better at being able to interpret those data and use them for bottom characterization, running them constantly is another mechanism. But as you know we're still trying to build toward a higher level of coverage even of that in our area. But nothing beats a well-planned, purpose-driven mapping exercise for the quality of the data.

The other thing to consider is this Administration's Executive Order on public access to federal data will make all of those data available as well as the metadata. It makes those second generation analyses much simpler to do. We're implementing that now and it goes into effect in FY-16.

DR. LANEY: That is great. That sounds to me like that is one to Anna's point that we would be doing in collaboration with the science center as a partner and other research vessels, too, to the extent that other vessels aside from NOAA vessels may be routinely mapping as they do other tasks.

MR. BELL: I had the same thought that Chester had. My thinking was under 5.1G where it says; determine how habitats contribute to production of managed species; what I wanted to clarify was that if we were including natural and manmade habitats in there. If you wanted to save some words, you could put in parentheses, maybe after habitats, you could put in naturally occurring and manmade or something.

I did want to make sure we captured and we were thinking that we were going to do some evaluation and pay attention to that. We're moving forward with some initiatives related to manmade habitats with MPAs and all, so that would be important to capture. One other point related to mapping; there is a lot of effort going on that I am sure everybody is aware of right now related to work offshore, potential things going on offshore.

There is a lot of mapping efforts going on. I think we'll see some of that later maybe when Roger is talking about some stuff. There are a lot of assets out there doing things and a lot of data that already exists; but there are still gaps in that as well. I was really surprised recently to realize how much mapping had been done by different entities already.

DR. LANEY: To that point; we'll hear about some of that this afternoon. The BOEM folks I think are going to talk to us about that.

DR. DUVAL: Anything else under Objective 5? If not, let's go ahead and move on to the draft blueprint for governance.

MR. BELL: Under the general boilerplate that we have at the beginning, if there are some things in there that might need editing, do you want us to just talk to you offline later? Okay.

MS. VON HARTEN: The idea of governance is kind of talking about how the council operates. This is a lot of objectives and strategies talking about the decision-making process, evaluation of that decision-making process, and things of that nature. Objective 1 is exactly that; creating an accountable and flexible decision making process and supporting an efficient decision-making process as it relates to snapper grouper management.

Looking at the current council process, considering mechanisms for streamlining that process with regard to amendment development; that was, of course, one of the biggest complaints we heard from stakeholders was how long it took the council to make management decisions. Consider alternative methods for collecting public input, which we're kind of doing some of that now.

Ensuring timely access of the documents and other materials to the council and the public mechanisms for evaluating the decision-making process, kind of to consider a consistency in accountability on our part. Also considering how the scientific information is incorporated into the management actions and provide flexibility in this process.

I think that was in the context of as new information comes in, in the development of an amendment, how to incorporate that new science into amendments. Also building capacity to streamline management efforts and better coordinate with management partners to these actions kind of support. Establish working relationships with non-fishery entities and agencies for future marine management issues, things like offshore energy development and how that may impact some of the fishery decisions that are made; strengthening existing relationships with different management partners to establish roles and responsibilities.

Consider involvement with regional planning initiatives affecting the snapper grouper fishery in the region; I think that was in relation to things like the Governors Alliance that I know Roger is involved with. Expanding partnerships with academic and research institutions to coordinate fisheries science research to address data needs. Then the last objective is talking about communication with stakeholders and supporting a process for engaging the stakeholders. A lot of this can also be captured in our communication goal as well.

DR. DUVAL: I'm wondering, Amber, if one of the items that came out of the gap analysis; this idea of having regional stakeholder meetings with forecasting to incorporate fishermen's knowledge; is that something that would fit under this objective here? Could one of these actions be expanded to incorporate that or would that be more appropriate you feel under the communication strategy?

MS. VON HARTEN: I'm thinking maybe the communication strategy.

DR. DUVAL: Comments or thoughts on the governance draft blueprint?

MR. BELL: One thing under 2.1, in looking at working relationships and partnerships and things; maybe one of the things we might want to include is discussion of partnerships that can

lead to funding support, whether it is private or industry-based, because we are going to have some things coming up where it is kind of logical that there be perhaps some help with funding of data collection efforts maybe electronic or at least discussion of it. I know the partnerships here we're talking about are kind of geared towards working, but there is nothing specifically that says anything about funding or financial support or something like that. It might be worth capturing.

MR. HARTIG: It is not to change this or anything, but while I have an opportunity to think about it so I don't forget it is how we're changing our public hearings. We need to develop some ground rules and we need to be able to explain to the public ahead of time. The hearing kind of got away from us a little bit in Cocoa. If we develop those ground rules, we don't have to do it in this venue but somewhere along the line just put it in everybody's mind that we need to do that.

MS. VON HARTEN: Well, I think that is a great suggestion, Ben, for Objective 3 actually, because it is talking about council process, but also talking about how we communicate with our stakeholders. I'm going to add something about that.

MR. BROWN: Is there any thought on trying to look into creating a poll or like for stakeholders having something that is set up to where they could have an input into it in regards to what direction they would want to go with any particular. Do you know what I'm saying; it is like a doodle poll or something to where if something is proposed, that they could have input into it per stakeholder?

DR. DUVAL: I know we've received suggestions like that. I think Chris McCaffity has brought this up a number of times about how it would be great if there was some sort of either online chat forum or some online survey or something like that where stakeholders could register what their thoughts were on management directions being considered by the council in advance; to sort of get a straw poll before the council kind of heads down one road versus another. We might get to that when we review the communication piece. I don't recall something like that as included in the draft blueprint for communication at this point.

MS. VON HARTEN: There is something in the communication goal, but it is more in the format of a forum, council staff moderated forum on the website or something like that. The one thing that is difficult for the council is to conduct surveys. It has to go through an OMB approval process. If there is a way that we can figure out how to do that informally like through our Facebook page or something like that; I think that that could be something we could consider exploring. But, yes, that would be great.

MR. BROWN: I know some of the topics that we're going to be discussing through this process; I know some of them are pretty important and that there is a lot of controversy on some of the topics. I just wondered if it would be a good idea to have something implemented to where the stakeholders would have a say-so in what direction they would like to go with this.

DR. DUVAL: Obviously, stakeholders are going to have an opportunity to provide comment as they do now on any management measure that we consider; just to clarify that this would be a more expedient means of obtaining that input sort of instantaneously. Rather than waiting for comments to sort of trickle in by e-mail or for people to actually come physically to a public

comment period; something like this might provide more input and public opinion up front before any analyses are conducted or stuff like that.

MR. PHILLIPS: I think we get plenty of – they can e-mail, they can call, it is all added up. Amber and company, they break down. It is mostly this point of view; it is mostly that point of view. I think we get all that. I would be hesitant to put something out there so it almost turns into a gripe session because we're not doing this, that or the other. We're not going to act on them until we get to council, anyway. Just sending letters out, we get all kinds of input. I'm not so sure how we could improve on that a whole lot.

MR. COX: I think that I certainly support the online chats and input from the stakeholders in that forum; but also a lot of our fishermen are still using traditional means and a lot of them don't have access to the technology. When we think about that, at the same time we need to think – the majority of the fishermen that I work with just don't have the technology to do that, but they would certainly like to be involved in that process. Just consider traditional means of communication.

MR. BREWER: I don't think Mark is really talking about an either/or; in other words, downplaying the more traditional methods of folks making comment and whatnot. This would be something that at least in my thought would be in addition to. Maybe it wouldn't. A lot of times now what we get on the e-mails are these click-throughs.

To me those are worthless. If you could encourage people to get involved in like a forum-like setting; and there are several pretty successful fishing forums that are already in operation. I look at a number of them periodically. It seems like to me it would provide an easier method of communication and unique communication from the standpoint of the folks that wish to comment in that fashion; it is going to be in their own words.

You're are not going to have these click-throughs and what not. It really might be of some value; and not saying that we're absolutely going to do it; but a visioning paper, it might be a good idea to include that as something to be looked at.

DR. DUVAL: I agree, Chester. I was absolutely hearing Mark's suggestion as something that was in addition to all the other forms of traditional public input that we receive. I certainly support having something like that, whether it is under this goal or under the communication goal, looking into how best to do that.

I think maybe it is working with some of those already well-established forums that fishermen are used to participating in to say, hey, would you mind throwing out a question on this particular management topic that the South Atlantic Council is going to be considering? That might generate more opinion and input. That is one possible option for something like that. Although, Mark, I think you were thinking more of the council actually hosting something on its own website?

MR. BROWN: Yes, that is what I was thinking of. Then the forum; we have some forums in our area, too, but some of them are a little – well, one in particular is pretty radical. When you start going that route you are going to get all kinds of responses. I am not sure how you would go about a friendly forum.

MR. BELL: No anonymity.

MR. BROWN: I was just trying to think of a way to give the actual stakeholders in this more of a direct response to what we're doing, so that we can really get a gauge on how the community and everybody feels.

DR. DUVAL: I agree, and I think this is probably a good segue to maybe go back and review the communication piece if nobody has any other suggestions on the governance goal. I think there is something in the communication's goal regarding trying to ensure that the methods that we're using to solicit public input meet the needs of the different constituencies. As Jack pointed out, some people are very technologically savvy and have access to technology and other folks don't. Trying to ensure that there is equal access to provide public comment is sort of the bigger picture of this.

DR. LANEY: Well, I think it is a great idea, but we always need to keep in mind how much time the staff will have to occupy. I think my sense, anyway – and maybe some of you could correct me; but my sense is the forum might be more time-consuming than the current Facebook page or tweets or anything else we're already doing. We just need to bear that in mind and I'm sure we will.

MS. VAN HORTEN: The one thing that we have to consider with those types of public input is that a lot of times fishermen don't understand. They think that they come and they have informal conversations or they post something on our Facebook page that they are submitting their formal comment. That is not the way it works, and so Kari constantly has to remind people; please, submit your comments in the formal way. We have to just make sure that we are clear about that.

MR. BELL: I think part of the problem with Mark's concept might be people that have anonymity like to just kind of go on about stuff sometimes. If a hundred of them tell you the same thing, they think that is what you should do. I think we're reaching out and we're making things available for people and opportunities to provide input. I would be afraid something like that would turn into what Mark was talking about, and it would be more of a complaint session sort of thing; and you would get lots of complaint, which is fine, but there are things already in place to collect that type of input.

A process question, if I might real quickly, if there were some things that we kind of didn't get to insert or talk about as we kind of were rolling through the science section; are we going to go back to that before we move on to communications or at the end are we going to – is there still an opportunity to point out a couple things maybe even back in science that might be worth considering inserting?

DR. DUVAL: Yes, sure. We only have three hours this morning so I want to make sure we're as efficient as possible in doing that. Absolutely, if there are things that you think of that you wanted to add to the science goal, we can certainly wrap back around and take care of that. Charlie, did you have a comment on this?

MR. PHILLIPS: We just need to make sure everybody has got Mark's phone number.

DR. DUVAL: All right, are there any other items under the draft governance blueprint at this point? Like I said, we can always wrap back around and insert a couple other things in. Let's go ahead and go through the management blueprint. We made a number of revisions to this at the last council meeting. This is sort of the heftiest one. I think some of the items from the gap analysis really would need to be inserted under this particular goal.

MS. VON HARTEN: By the way, I remember Doug making the recommendation instead of having Action 1.1A blah, blah, blah – now you will see that these just are mostly bulleted lists by letter, so that did clean it up quite a bit. I think I made notes throughout. We had some discussion – if you remember; there was a lot of duplicity in some of the actions throughout some of the different goals and strategies.

Whenever there was an action that was proposed that also met another objective, I made a note of that. For instance, under Strategy 1.1 you will see this note down here that says Action B, also applies to Objectives 2, access to the fishery; and four, reducing discards. This idea here could also apply to those objectives. They were not repeated in that other objective. That cleaned things up a good bit as well. Did you have some comments on this first one?

DR. DUVAL: I was thinking on this first objective, this first strategy, considering development of different types of quota-based management systems; some of these bullets are very specific and some are general. I was thinking we could probably eliminate the third bullet, which are state-by-state recreational quotas for black sea bass, because it is already I feel encompassed by the state-by-state quota-based management system for the recreational sector.

That is something that you would consider; it is larger. You could probably do the same thing for state-by-state commercial quotas for vermilion snapper and just say state-by-state quotas for the commercial sector. Obviously, any consideration of that is going to be on a species-specific basis. Rather than include all that detail in there, let's just make it more general. The public has already given us some input on species that they might want to see that considered for.

MR. HARTIG: I don't have a problem with that, but I still would put in parentheses those two species because those two were identified by the public.

MS. VON HARTEN: Moving along; again just more use of bulleted lists to kind of capture the specifics of an idea for the quota-based management systems information and some of the ideas about the different types.

MS. BECKWITH: Before you move on, under 1.2A, the third bullet; developing criteria for species to consider; that probably was supposed to be developing criteria by species, maybe? Under 1.2B, just semantics; I would add and/or opening/closing, just add the slash or. Under 1.2C, when you talk about categories; are you referring to like deep-water species? I wasn't quite sure; we don't typically use categories in our verbiage here, so I wasn't sure what that meant.

MS. VON HARTEN: I am trying to remember the discussion on that. We went round and round about that at the last meeting about bio and how to include that. I would have to go back

and look. That was a combination of two actions that came together, so I can go back and look, unless you have suggestions.

DR. DUVAL: Just to address, Anna, one of your first comments about 1.2A, that third bullet, developing criteria for species to consider; I see that it is developing criteria for species that you would consider for quota-based management.

MS. BECKWITH: Just verbiage, semantics; black sea bass don't consider their own criteria so it would just be developing criteria by species to consider; not for species.

DR. DUVAL: Okay, I did want to go back up to Strategy 1.1, because I think that is where we're talking about development of different types of quota-based management systems. B talks about voluntary sector-share management and community-based quota management. I am wondering if we need to add an Item C that would address the comments that we received from port meetings regarding the use of catch shares.

I'm not quite sure how to phrase this, but consider industry support prior to analysis of any potential catch share program or something like that that reflects the input that we got from the port meetings regarding the majority of stakeholders saying I'm not really interested in this. I think we need to include some statement in there regarding the use of catch share programs. I'm not quite sure how to do it.

MR. HARTIG: I think the council has gone on record that we wanted to do a referendum before any catch shares would be discussed, basically. I think we're on the record with that in the past.

DR. DUVAL: I don't recall. The previous council motion that we discussed at the last meeting was that the council would not consider any new catch share programs; and we sort of went down a rabbit hole in discussing that in terms of – you know, there is always turnover on the council. Any future council is not necessarily bound by the actions of the previous council, et cetera, et cetera. Certainly, I think you could just phrase it as consider a referendum prior to implementation or prior to considering any – conduct a referendum prior to considering any potential catch share program.

MR. BREWER: I certainly agree with that. I just got corrected; I thought Magnuson required a referendum across the board, and I have been corrected that it is only some councils or council regions in which it is required. I really did; but in any event, that is a great idea; you need to do it. Hopefully it will be a fair referendum and not just the folks that are going to benefit the most from the catch share program that will be counted in that referendum.

DR. DUVAL: Amber, do you mind just reading what you've added there to address this.

MS. VON HARTEN: I have consider stakeholder support prior to analysis of any new potential quota-based management program. We could add a separate one or modify that to specifically reference a referendum.

DR. DUVAL: You could probably add a parenthetical after that like; i.e. referendum or something like that to address that.

MR. PHILLIPS: We consider stakeholder support for anything we do. There is almost no regulation that we advance or talk about or implement, for that matter, that we don't consider a lot of stakeholder support. I am not sure why this is a whole lot different from anything else we do.

If we go into any kind of a number of variations of that possible tool, we're going to get a lot of comment. We're going to study the support and weigh the pros and cons of all of it. I don't know why we're kicking out a particular tool; but if that is the pleasure of the committee, then so be it, but we do that already.

MR. BROWN: Again, in regards to what I said earlier, I think that this is a good idea to go in that direction with a referendum or to have that input into it, because you kind of gauge what direction the people want or how people want to take it. I would rather build on a case like that then just to go ahead and implement something without the stakeholders' support.

DR. DUVAL: Just to Charlie's point about we consider stakeholder support for anything that we do, which is true, and sometimes we have to do things that have zero stakeholder support. I am thinking of a couple items that we will be addressing on our agenda later on at this meeting. My goal was just to try to make sure that we're addressing some of the comments that came out of the gap analysis that we have.

Namely; a lot of people said they did not support implementation of any new catch share programs; so how do we address that in this document? Maybe it is just put consider a referendum prior to any type of quota-based program.

MS. BECKWITH: You were taking the words out of my mouth. I was going to say that we often make decisions here that we consider public support on and move forward with anyway. Regardless if we have it or not, we make the tough decisions at this table. But a referendum for a catch shares program is a very specific tool that we would use for a very specific management tool. I think it is different than general support or feedback that we get from stakeholders on all of our issues.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, it is a different tool than we've used in the past; but if we start down this path of using referendums for which tool do you use and which not; then we get a referendum on do we want to use size limits. That could be a pathway that can really get out of hand. Again, we're going to get a lot of comment wherever we do, whatever we tool, but I get skeptical. That is all I'll say.

DR. DUVAL: I will just point out that the operative word is "consider".

MR. BELL: Yes, Charlie is right, we have to consider stakeholder support for anything we do or lack of support. What is so sensitive about this topic is it is a particularly sensitive tool or it is something that is not popular. Maybe what the public is concerned about is, okay, if you reach a point where you feel you need to use that tool to achieve your management goal, it is almost like it really needs to be a tool or an approach of last ditch effort.

I mean, this is it; this is the only thing that will work; before you would apply it or something. You were considering it as a potential approach, but it is sort of an approach of last attempt or

something. But Charlie is right; we have to consider stakeholder support. But it is just a real sensitive area, and that is why we're kind of dancing around with it a little more than some. But that is fine; if that language in there helps people realize that we're really, really taking their input seriously; but we take their input seriously for everything.

MR. CONKLIN: I was just going to point out some stuff about this referendum we were talking about here. That is going to be specific to commercial like snapper grouper permit holders, I assume? How are we going to poll every single recreational angler; and if that is not the case, then couldn't we just put some wording in here that is for commercial fishermen; and if that is what snapper grouper permit holders do or don't want to do, then they should be able to decide and not have any recreational people worrying about it?

DR. DUVAL: I think we can certainly modify that language to indicate that it would just be specific to the commercial sector; possibly consider use of tools to determine stakeholder support prior to analysis. That might get at that a little bit more effectively.

MR. COX: I was just kind of bouncing off what Charlie said. If you are going to put consider the use of stakeholder support for analysis of a potential quota base, then it should just be to the analysis of any style of management for fisheries. You are going to go down a road here where we are going to consider the use of MPAs for stakeholder support. You are just opening up something here to put this in everything that we do is what I'm saying.

MR. BREWER: If I understand Magnuson correctly, a referendum is already required across the board before you put in place a catch share system either in the Gulf region or in the New England region, if I understand it correctly. Magnuson already requires exactly what we're talking about and it is not necessarily just quota based; it is for a catch share program.

That is what everybody here realizes, I think, is a very, very sensitive management tool. There have been some councils that have been just literally torn apart over that thing. I think that it should be language that would be across the board before you put in place a catch share program. When I say across the board, I'm talking about recreational, which includes charter for-hire, and commercial.

I recognize that there are difficulties in having a referendum in the, quote, recreational sector, but that is what Magnuson already requires. I would anticipate that it is going to be required under the reauthorization for the South Atlantic as well. When you have something like this where you are visioning and just saying we want to look at this, I don't know that you need to have language that the council is going to consider stakeholder input. We already do that, I would hope, I think we do; but when you get into the catch share program, I think you can put some specific language that applies only to catch share programs.

MR. HAYMANS: Could I ask Monica to find me the section that Chester is referring to, please?

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: He caught my ear, because he was talking about the Act in general and referendums. Right now I think this point has already been made that the Magnuson Act requires the Gulf Council and the New England Council I think to have referendums. I think the Act envisions that is for a commercial fishery. What part of the Act do you want me to address, Doug?

MR. HAYMANS: What is the section number that requires the Gulf Council to have a referendum for limited entry?

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Okay, I'll find that for you.

DR. DUVAL: I think, Monica, it might be useful to know like what are the specifics with that in terms of how broadly that referendum is required to be administered. Again, the goal here was to just try to address something that came out of the gap analysis with regard to support or lack thereof for catch share programs moving forward.

We were just trying to add a statement to acknowledge that we hear what people have said. There is some support; there are a lot of folks who don't support it. How best do we do that? I don't want to tie ourselves up in a conversation about administering referendums and how to do that.

The language we have up there right now is consider use of tools to gauge stakeholder support prior to analysis of any new potential quota-based management program; i.e., referendum for commercial sector. We could chop that off. We could say just consider use of tools to gauge stakeholder support.

MS. BECKWITH: New potential quota-based management; I mean, we do quota-based management now. We are talking about catch shares. I don't know; I think that is kind of confusing. We're not going to do referendums for our ACLs. If we're talking specifically about catch shares, then let's say it is specifically catch shares.

MR. PHILLIPS: I would be inclined to just say we're going to measure the stakeholder support and even if you put i.e. referendum; there are a lot of people that are going to read that you have to do it. I would leave that out even though that is highly likely what may happen. Again, there are lots of different kinds of programs.

Some may need a different level of measurement of support than another. Support moves around; but I would just measure the stakeholder support in maybe some kind of more tangible way than what we already do; but I would leave out the referendum part for the time being, anyway.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: It's not to that point; I have the answer to Doug's question. Doug, if you will turn on Page 84 of the Act in Section 303A(6)(d); there is a whole section on New England and Gulf referendum, and then there is a number of paragraphs underneath that describe the whole referendum process for them.

Then that is these persons eligible to participate are among eligible permit holders and all that; that then would take analysis, depending on how you wanted to apply it, what species you were talking about and all that sort of thing. It gets pretty involved, but we've done it in the Gulf, as you know, several times. That is the section; it is on Page 84.

MR. BROWN: I still think you should leave it in there, and I think that we know how many permit holders there are. We are able to gauge that. It gives people a chance to have input into it. Whether or not they do or not, you can still gauge what percentage of the people would

participate. Then that way you would have a general consensus of what the overall permit holders or stakeholders wanted.

DR. DUVAL: Mel, I've just asked Amber to modify that language to read employ tools to gauge stakeholder support prior to consideration of any new potential catch share program; i.e., referendum.

MR. BELL: Yes, all I was going to say to accomplish what you want to accomplish; that would be fine. I am trying to think of what other tools there might be, which might help. You've got referendum; I'm not sure what other tools we might use; but if it were a referendum, something else, et cetera, you are not committing to that referendum. You are just saying that is one of the tools that we would look at, and then you would be good to go, as far as I'm concerned.

DR. DUVAL: Certainly, we could go through the whole OMB process to get approval for a survey, so that might be something else.

DR. ERRIGO: I just wanted to point out that you may want to clarify exactly, because I think it was Anna who said about being catch shares and not quota-based management. Catch shares in the most general sense I think also refer to state-based quotas. It is just a share of the catch goes to a particular entity.

If it is individual fishing quotas that you want to bring out to the public and ask them what you feel about it; you may want to just clarify exactly what it is, because I think there is a lot of support for state-based quotas; but as far as individual fishermen, like fishing quotas, that is more unclear. You may want to be specific about what it is you are looking at. Catch shares is a very general term that everyone equates it with individual fishing quotas, but that is not exactly what that means.

DR. DUVAL: Okay, so let's change it to – I would say remove catch share and insert individual fishing quota program.

MR. COX: I hate that we're going down this road right now and here we are dealing with this again, because I feel like at some point this council still likes the education of understanding what regional-based management does and how it is working in other parts of the country in different councils. We've been waiting on some presentations from different folks to do that. It would help make things that we're doing like this right here a lot more clear to folks at this table.

DR. DUVAL: A conversation we had here and we're having right now has nothing to do with the details of how those programs might work, and I think that is what those presentations are focused on. What we are trying to do here is address comments that came out of the port meetings regarding support for or lack of support for potentially using these tools down the road. I don't see those presentations as necessarily informing something like this; just addressing the input that we got from the port meetings.

MR. COX: To that point; I still see confusion in what catch shares, individual fishing quotas, state-by-state management; when we're trying to work something like this, we've got to get help from staff because we are still confused on some of the wording that we're putting up here on the table.

MR. BOWEN: To that point, I think the general public is in the same position that Jack is describing as well; the lack of understanding or education of the benefits or lack thereof of the terms that we're discussing.

DR. DUVAL: I'm not sure we're going to get out of this box right now. We've already wasted a significant amount of time discussing it I think in far more detail than what was necessary. I think the point is we just need to find some way to address what came out of the gap analysis. This may be far too specific for that. Let's think about it; we can come back at the end. We can come back at full council and also consider alternate phrasing for something like that to address it, okay?

MS. VON HARTEN: One thing we could do, if it would be helpful, is we had talked about at one time adding a glossary of terms to some of these documents where there was some terminology that perhaps was not clear what was meant by that; so perhaps what we could do is break out each of these things that are listed here; voluntary sector share management, community based quota management, and IFQs, and have that in the document at the end that defines what we're talking about.

DR. DUVAL: I think that is a good idea, no matter what, having a glossary of terms. There are certainly enough acronyms that are difficult for people to understand.

MR. CONKLIN: Even at the most general level, this discussion is going to get blown all out of proportion when it goes to the public. Let's just leave it in there and move on forward. Once the public gets educated and realizes all the stuff we've heard in these port meetings about state-by-state and regional management and stuff like that on both sectors; people might come to listen a little bit more. But it is like Mike said; it is still a catch share. We'll let our watch dogs take care of that.

DR. DUVAL: All right, we're going to move on.

MS. VON HARTEN: I think we were on 1.2, and this is just talking about the design elements and the management elements for those types of programs. Strategy 1.3 is talking about alternatives to sub-regional management strategies that are not quota-based. The one that has the asterisk by it is one that you all discussed in December and so I added it here. That was set state-by-state regulations for either sector.

MS. BECKWITH: I was just going to add to E. That is pretty specific, so I would add consider effort control strategies such as alternating two-week windows for fishing.

DR. DUVAL: One of the things that I noticed came up in some of the states was allowing the states to manage stocks that are stationary and having the council manage stocks that are more migratory. I don't know if that is something we want to try to include in there. It might be pretty difficult.

MS. VON HARTEN: Objective 2 is all about access to the fishery. Under the Strategy 2.1; development of management approaches to address retention; the same thing; the actions with the asterisks by them are actions that also apply to Objective 4, which was our reducing discards objective.

This one, consider in-season bag limit reduction; charterboat limit instead of a per-person limit on charters; aggregate limit for the commercial sector; aggregate daily bag limit for the recreational sector with no size limit; those were all things that also are supported in Objective 4. Strategy 2.2 is talking about effort in the fishery.

This one was added; evaluate the two-for-one permit requirement in the commercial sector after our discussions in December. Strategy 2.3, I don't believe anything changed there. A lot of this if you remember we were consolidating actions; so that is why there hasn't been too much change in some of these.

MS. BECKWITH: Under 2.3B; establish a time-out period of no fishing for recreational fishery; I would just change that to consider, because we haven't talked about that. In A, establish a recreational season for harvest of deep-water species by region; we have at least had that discussion around the table, so just semantics.

DR. DUVAL: Maybe that is just sort of another blanket statement as opposed to using establish, just consider.

MS. VON HARTEN: Okay, and then the next change I believe is not until we get down to Objective 3. Again, if you are thinking about this as we go along and there are other things that you want to see added or changed, just speak up. Objective 3 is the one talking about maximizing social and economic opportunity. Based on our discussions, we added a new strategy that would address recreational fishing opportunity. I believe Anna has lots of suggestions.

MS. BECKWITH: This section is going to be a bit repetitive from some of the other sections that we've talked about; but I think the 3.2, the heading that I was thinking was develop management approaches that support recreational fishing and allow for increased opportunity for trip satisfaction.

That is just something that we've kind of kept discussing. I keep throwing those terms out and it is the ideas of trip satisfaction and fishing opportunity are some things that I keep bringing up. I would like to see one section that brings all these ideas together. There are a number of them throughout the document; but just really quickly I had considered adding effort control strategies such as setting fishing seasons with post-season adjustments as AMs; in-season and post-season bag limit adjustments rather than closures; seasons for co-occurring species; bag limits that encourage participation in the fishery; emphasis on availability of easily accessible species; managing for abundance of easily accessible species; recreation-only artificial reefs or SMZs; and aggregate bag limits for for-hire fleets.

This is just as a couple of ideas for discussion. If I went back through the document, I could pull in more, but my real purpose here is to kind of have one section that a recreational fisherman can look through and see, rather than have it dispersed throughout the documents. That is just my suggestion.

DR. DUVAL: One of the things that I was going to note for this section is that I felt like Strategy 2.1, like Actions B through G, which talk about reevaluating the grouper aggregate, number of days of fish versus bag limits for the recreational sector, considering aggregate daily

bag limits with no size limits, et cetera; that those all kind of apply to this particular strategy. It is echoing a little bit what Anna said that there are some items already in here that apply to this particular section.

I think also we had a suggestion that came out of the gap analysis regarding creating complex-specific permits for the recreational and for-hire sectors based on the HMS model. I thought that might be a good place to add that. Then also I think under 4.2, it seemed like a couple of those might also apply to this section as well.

MS. VON HARTEN: Could you tell me those sections again?

DR. DUVAL: I was looking specifically at Strategy 2.1; Actions B through G all seem to apply in this section. Just considering what Anna said about having one place where recreational fishermen could look to see what strategies address or what actions address this particular strategy; we might consider moving some things around and putting them all in that place.

MR. BELL: I was going to say I agree with that. I think if you can make it a little simpler, easier to follow – it sounds like, though, that is going to take a little bit of retooling here, so maybe we could authorize you to kind of do that. It might be something if it would be ready by full council, we could look at it again or at the next time we look at it; but I agree with that approach. I think it would make the document a little easier to follow and logically helpful to people.

DR. DUVAL: If we give that direction to Amber to move stuff around, it is going to just create references in different places. For instance, under Strategy 2.1, if you move all those types of actions that I was referring to, B through G under there; you are going to need to create a little breadcrumb trail so that all the folks who were looking at different actions that could address management approaches for retention of snapper grouper species, they know where to go to see where that stuff is. We just need to leave the breadcrumb trail in a different place.

MR. BELL: That just makes it more user-friendly for everybody, I think.

MS. VON HARTEN: Anna, if you could send me your exact wording, that would be great.

DR. DUVAL: There were a couple other things that came out of the gap analysis that I thought might be appropriate under Objective 3, Strategy 3.1. I apologize that I didn't bring this up earlier; but one of the things was consider the value of the owner/operator. This objective is dealing with ensuring that management decisions help maximize social and economic opportunity for all sectors.

That was one of the items that came out of the gap analysis as well as considering approaches for allowing new entrants into the endorsement program. Those were two items that kind of struck me as not being addressed and that could be addressed under this particular strategy.

MS. VON HARTEN: Okay, and then the next ones are talking about reducing and mitigating discards. I think that was just a lot of consolidating. There are not really any new ones that we added since December. That actually might be the last new addition throughout the rest of the document.

MS. BECKWITH: I have some comments on six whenever you guys are ready.

DR. DUVAL: Before we leave Strategy 5, Objective 5 is supporting management measures and incorporate ecosystem and habitat considerations for the snapper grouper fishery. One of the things that we heard from some of the port meetings was that folks didn't want consideration of any new MPAs and that they wanted to see some sunset provisions for the MPAs that we have.

I thought perhaps we could add some language to the actions under Strategy 5.4 considering spatial management approaches to protect and conserve ecosystems and habitats for the snapper grouper fishery. We might be able to add those under there or potentially under Strategy 5.2, which is evaluating the biological, economic, and social impacts when developing ecosystem and habitat management approaches.

I think the sunset clauses sort of gets at some of those social and economic impacts and whether or not some of our spatial management approaches are actually meeting their intended goals. I just think that we need to address those in this section somewhere. They might both actually fit better under Strategy 5.2; I don't know.

MR. BELL: I was just going to say that is sort of a nuance to the use of the tool, so it is certainly worth capturing. Maybe under 5.2 would be better since you are dealing with social things.

DR. DUVAL: Okay Anna, you had some comments under Objective 6.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes; under 6.1C; truncate the recreational allocation time series from 2007 onward due to the economy; basically what we're saying there is that we would ignore historic participation in that recreational fishery. Rather than being so specific and kind of one-sided on that, I would much prefer to see something that says generally automatically reallocate every X years based on the previous X years; in parentheses, ignoring historic participation, because that sounds very one-sided.

I can read that back for you guys to write down for consideration if you would like. The verbiage would be automatically reallocate every X years to be determined based on the previous X years, and in parentheses ignore historic participation. That would achieve the same thing of what you're basically saying in C. Then I've got a few more, but if you guys want to comment on that first.

MR. COX: You're talking about for the recreational sector. Are you talking about reallocate – you are taking the historical time out of it?

MS. BECKWITH: Well, I don't agree with C personally, but that is not what we're here to discuss. I just feel like if we are going to consider strategies that are going to ignore historic participation, I am not sure it is fair to specify to one sector versus another. If you guys are willing to truncate the recreational allocation time series from 2007 on due to the economy, you are basically saying we are going to reallocate to the benefit of the commercial fishery because the recreational haven't increased their participation again. But that is again kind of one-sided in my viewpoint and very specific. I would much prefer a more broad action that says if we are going to consider reallocation that doesn't consider historic participation, then we should be doing it for all sides, not just recreational.

MR. HARTIG: I read it the opposite way that Anna did. The truncation would be you would use the historical time series and not the most recent years. That is the way I read it based on the impacts of the economy. That is the way I understood that; but we can't really be setting up allocation scenarios in this document right here, anyway. We need to keep it as general as we can.

MS. McCAWLEY: I don't like in the comment automatically reallocate. I still think it should be something like consider reallocation, but maybe that is already a given.

DR. DUVAL: My suggestion was going to be let's make this broader and just say consider time-based approaches for allocation decisions. There is going to be a document that the Council Coordinating Committee will be finishing and considering in June that considers a whole range of criteria for when a review of allocations would be triggered.

It seems like being a little bit broader might be easier. Rather than consider reallocation every so many years, I think you would want to potentially review your allocations every so many years to determine if they're still meeting the goals and objectives of your fishery management plan.

MS. BECKWITH: All right, under 6.2B, I would like to see consider and not establish. Under 6.2F, consider reallocation for a commercially important species; I am not sure why – you know, I would like to see commercially/recreationally important species. Again it is kind of one-sided. I would like to add after J, make the following one K, so it kind of flows. Before reallocation, consider managing for abundance of recreationally and easily accessible species.

MS. VON HARTEN: Can you say that again, Anna?

MS. BECKWITH: Before reallocating, consider managing for abundance of recreationally important and easily accessible species. I think that balances these out some.

DR. DUVAL: Again, maybe just sort of a blanket editorial like review where there is "establish" and replace that with "consider". Are there any other suggestions on this piece? If not, I am going to go ahead and suggest we take an eight-minute break, come back at 11:00, and we will review the last strategic goal. There is some information that staff has put together that we would like to review regarding capacity of the fishery. We also need to discuss the framework under which we will be soliciting input.

All right, everyone, we're going to go ahead and get started again, because we have a lot to do. Amber is going to review the communication strategic goal. There really wasn't anything that was added to this. We're just going to try to get through this a little bit more quickly and Amber is just going to point out a few things for us.

MS. VON HARTEN: Okay, to Mark's point earlier about this idea of a forum, we do have under Strategy 1.2A consider use of staff-moderated chat boards for each sector on the council's website. That is a little different I think than what he was talking about, but there is that idea or that concept in the goal document. Is that good enough, Mark?

DR. DUVAL: Mark is nodding.

MS. VON HARTEN: Yes. Then the only other thing that after a second glance just at the table during the break that we looked at was we could possibly combine a couple more things. Under Strategy 1.3, looking at K and L, it is talking about the more informal port meetings; and then L is talking about – no I'm sorry, M, I guess – okay, I'm sorry, K and L.

The annual informal outreach sessions to discuss current and upcoming management issues at the council level; so that was I believe the idea of this forecasting that came from that Georgia port meeting. We could combine those two actions to reflect that. Then in 2.1, also combining C and D, which is talking about maintaining a data base of fishing focus groups so that could include both the recreational sector and the commercial sector, seafood dealers. I can combine that one. But the rest is just a matter of combining some things since December, but no new things that you all added in December.

DR. DUVAL: Any other comments on the draft communication piece? Brian is going to take us through some of the other attachments, I believe, 6A, B, C, and D regarding the capacity of the fishery. Any other comments on communication? .

DR. CHEUVRONT: You have several attachments here. 6A is an attachment of an analysis that was done for Snapper Grouper Amendment 13C, so that goes back a number of years. It went through actually numbers for 2003, so the request came to update these numbers. What I did is I went through and updated it all through 2013.

If you compare the two and you look at the economic values, you will see that some of them even for the early years changed because I updated everything to the 2013 values. Don't expect to see the numbers actually match. What I did was I took into account all the inflation calculations so that when you compared dollar to dollar across the entire spreadsheet, a dollar in one year means the same thing as a dollar in another year.

There are certain things that you need to understand. This is now Attachment 6C that we're talking about and this shows the analysis that I did since your December meeting. There are two tables. Table 1 is the same one as that table that we just showed you from Regulatory Amendment 13C that continues the analysis all the way out through 2013.

Now, it updates that table; and a couple of things I wanted to point out to you from that. Approximately 35 to 40 percent of the permit holders are catching roughly 1,000 pounds of snapper grouper per year or less. Approximately 15 percent of the permit holders are landing less than 100 pounds. That also includes permit holders who had absolutely no landings.

Some things that you need to discuss here when you are looking at these tables; Table 2 is an analysis that you have to take with a huge grain of salt and try to understand what this really is going to mean. It shows breakdowns based on the number of pounds. Let's just look at this first one here. This is Table 2 that we're looking at, and then we'll go back and look at the specific landings.

You have potential optimal yield, and this was calculated out from a paper that John Carmichael had done to show you. If everything was at its potential maximum and everything was able to be fished at its potential optimal yield, everything is recovered, everything is in really good shape; you are talking about almost 9 million pounds of snapper grouper species that would be

available. Are we ever going to get there; I don't know. Consider this sort of the best case scenario. If you look over in the far left-hand column, you see number of vessels.

This would be if there were this many participating vessels in the fishery going from 900 vessels down to 25 vessels, the pounds allocated to each vessel. When I say allocated, this is the average number of pounds that each vessel would be able to land. If you had 900 vessels, each vessel would be able to land on average 9,881 pounds. Then there are three columns, the value of – if if the average value was two dollars a pound, three dollars a pound or four dollars a pound, to give you an idea of what the ex-vessel value would be to each individual vessel.

You look at that going all the way down and for potential OY and you've only got 25 vessels in there, each person at four dollars a pound could make \$1.4 million a year on average per vessel. That is pie in the sky; that is not really likely to happen. But if you look at the next box over, you can see current ACLs.

Based on the sum of the current ACLs for all snapper grouper species together, we're talking about almost 1.2 million pounds of snapper grouper species, and then those same numbers are calculated out going all the way down. This is a discussion that you may want to have at some point is what do you want in your snapper grouper species in your commercial fishery?

Do you want only full-time snapper grouper fishermen or you have a scenario that exists right now where you have a lot of snapper grouper fishermen who hold a snapper grouper permit as part of their portfolio of what they do. They might fish also for mackerels or dolphin and wahoo or some of the other popular things. You will need to think about that; how you want that to go.

But if you've got 200 vessels actively participating; that averages out now to about almost 6,000 pounds per vessel. Now, of course, that is on average and this is not evenly distributed, and you can see that when we look at the other table. But the price per pound really overall, for all snapper grouper species, right now is closer to between two and three dollars than it is between three and four dollars in current dollars.

You're saying that is not a huge amount of money that the average vessel is going to make; but you understand though that a lot of vessels are only in part-time and some are in full time; and so you've got a few vessels that are actually making a lot of money. Let's scroll up one page, because I would like to look at the last years. I don't want to spend a lot of time going year by year through this.

I did calculate it out so you can see the change from year to year. I am not sure what the benefit for us to go through that right now would be, but you can do that on your own, but let's focus in on 2013 a little bit right now. If you look at this, the total snapper grouper landings in 2013 were about 5.7 million pounds. The ex-vessel value of it was about \$16.2 million.

If you look at all of the revenue of all landings in the South Atlantic, this also includes state fisheries. You can see that snapper grouper makes up about 10 percent of the value. If you look at just finfish, you can see that is about \$60 million, so the percentage of it that is made up by snapper grouper is much larger. Now you can see the number of fishing trips – and we're getting back now to just snapper grouper numbers – you've got almost 13,000 fishing trips and over 21,000 days fished. An average day is about one and two-thirds day per trip.

If you look at the trends across the years, you're going to see that the number of days fished has not changed much. You can see the price per pound is now really about \$2.85 cents on average in 2013 for the pound of a snapper grouper caught. Now there are currently – well, when this was done, which was in January, there were 723 permitted vessels; and of those 723, 593 of those vessels had unlimited snapper grouper permits.

The difference between those two is the number that had the 225-pound limited snapper grouper permit. Now, there is another point that you might want to talk about. These limited permits were put into place I believe in the 1990s, and the idea was that these were eventually going to go away.

This is a trend that you might want to look at over time; is this trend going in the direction that you want it to go; is it going fast enough; how do you want to handle this? This was supposed to be a permit that was nontransferable. You still have a lot of those permits still out there 20 years later, so you might want to continue that.

Another issue was that at one point the council put in a two-for-one option on snapper grouper permits. New people coming in had to buy two permits, turn one in to be able to fish the remaining permit; and that was a way to reduce the number of permits that were out there. Another point that you might want to talk about is how far do you want that to go? What is the optimal number of unlimited snapper grouper permits that you want to be out there?

Because at the time that this was set up there was no discussion, as far as I'm aware of, as to when this was going to stop. Eventually you can get down to one permit. I don't know how long it would take to do that but that could happen theoretically. At some point you need to decide what the right number of snapper grouper permits is.

MR. BROWN: Brian, I hate interrupting you, but I also wanted to bring you up to date on something, too. You brought these numbers up to 2013. Actually, if you go on to the NOAA Website, the update up to March 2; up to today actually there are 61 less permits than there was in this document.

DR. DUVAL: Those numbers are fluid, Mark. They tend to go up and down as people renew their permits, because there are some permits that are expired but they are still renewable for a year, so that number tends to be pretty fluid. Brian sort of had to pick a point at which to access the database and conduct that, but that definitely helps. I just want to make sure Brian has gotten through everything that he kind of wants to convey to us and then we will go ahead and take questions from everybody.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Okay, if we start looking at the numbers of permitted vessels versus the number of vessels landing snapper grouper species; you will see that in 2013 there were 723 permitted vessels but there were 731 vessels that actually had landings. There are two explanations for this. One is that there are permit transfers.

When I talk about the number of vessels, that can be very different than the number of permits because of transfer from one vessel to another for the permit as well as there could be some illegal sales. That is probably a very, very small amount. If you look at 2013, from 731 to 723, you are talking an eight-vessel difference.

If there are illegal sales, there is probably a small number of vessels that are doing that. Probably all of it or most of it is being accounted for by permit transfers that occurred in that year. That is going to be my guess. Now, can we look at landings by permit? That is very, very difficult to do, because our landings are not done that way.

When I did the analysis for Regulatory Amendment 16, looking at black sea bass pots, I got Mike Errigo to take those 32 black sea bass endorsement holders and line up all of their landings by those permit holders. It took him a week to do it for 32 people, at least a week. It was a lot of hard grunt work to do that, because it had to be done manually.

Now if you go back to the earlier years where you are looking at about 2009, you will notice there were 783 permitted vessels and 936 had landings; but you'll remember in those days we had some vessels that were not permitted in the snapper grouper fishery that were allowed to land a recreational bag limit and sell it if they had the appropriate commercial permits to allow them to do that.

That was the case in North Carolina, I know. I believe it was Snapper Grouper Amendment 15B or 15C that stopped recreational bag limit sales under whatever conditions. I believe it was also occurring in Florida, too, under slightly different conditions than they had in North Carolina at the time. That is why you can see the effects of 15B.

When we cut that out, you can see the number of permits or vessels actually selling snapper grouper species dropped dramatically. But then if you look at the number of vessels that have either 100 pounds of landings, 1,000 pounds, 5,000, 10,000 or 15,000 pounds; you get a feel for how those permits were being used.

By and large, you've got a lot of those vessels, like I mentioned earlier, landing less than 1,000 pounds of snapper grouper per year. The issue is that right now we don't know what else is going on there, what else they are fishing for. It would be very difficult as well – even if we could line up all of these snapper grouper permit folks with all of their landings; we still have people who hold snapper grouper permits who participate in state fisheries.

The only way we could do that would be to literally line up snapper grouper permit holders with state trip tickets or the ACCSP or something that is going to give us all of the landings that was done by an individual entity holding that permit. That would be a very difficult number for us to be able to find.

You can also see that the overall trend is in the number of permitted vessels is slowly going down a little bit each year. Then you can also see the number of dealer permits in the last several years is also going down some. I think those are the main points I think I wanted to get out for you.

DR. DUVAL: Thanks, I really appreciate it, Brian, and all the work that you went to, to update this analysis and bring it up to current speed. I do think it would be interesting to have a similar analysis conducted for the for-hire sector, also looking at permits and potentially how those have fluctuated over the years. That might be useful information and we can probably talk a little bit more about that. Questions for Brian?

MR. HAYMANS: Brian, if the individual customer ID number had worked the way it was supposed to with the ACCSP, this would be a piece of cake because everybody has got their own number and all of their landings are there. I appreciate very much what you've put together here. What I was asking for; this is it, but then I know that the portfolio information has to go along with it at some point.

My point in asking the question is as much as I don't favor public-funded buyout programs, I am in favor of privately funded buyout programs in order to reduce effort. Under Section 2.2 of management, I would love to see a bullet or something put into one of the actions to explore a buyout program for snapper grouper permits; privately funded buyout program.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Doug, just the fact that you were just speaking reminded me you had a request we talked on Friday about trip costs. I wanted to update you on that. Doug asked me a question on Friday as to do we have an idea of what trip costs are for commercial snapper grouper trips.

I have a reference that I used that goes back to actually landings I think 2002 through 2003 that estimated different trip costs for snapper grouper species in the South Atlantic based on gear type usage. The problem is I don't have anything newer; so when I got to the black sea bass pot issue, I was able to update the estimate of the average trip cost; but that is all I've got is an average trip cost.

I could update it for the other gear-usage things to get an average snapper grouper trip cost. It is not just a straightforward thing of updating the number, because it has a breakdown of things like cost of gas per gallon. When you look at it was for marine fuel in 2002 compared to what it is now, even though we consider it to be pretty low now comparatively, it is at least double of what it was, and that is much higher than the rate of inflation.

We would be able to give a closer estimate to what it really would be assuming fishermen are fishing those gears the same way as they did in 2002 to 2003. That could be done; it would just take a little bit more effort on my part. I just didn't have the time to do it since Friday to now.

DR. LANEY: I just had a question for, Brian, I guess. We've had a lot of discussion in the past about the desirability of creating a professional fishery. Do we have any idea at this point in time or is something that we're supposed to think about as to what number of vessels or average income would be associated with a, quote, professional fishery?

DR. CHEUVRONT: I'm not walking into that minefield. I will be perfectly honest with you; you guys have to decide that. All I'm going to do is give you the data and you can decide what you want that fishery to look like and decide on what your definition of professional is.

DR. LANEY: But as a follow-up; I was just wondering, Brian, if there is like some magic socioeconomic thing you could do that would say if it was at such and such a level; is there a level at which social benefit would be maximized? I guess the answer would be if you could have the highest number of vessels involved at an economic level that maximized the ripple effect, or whatever terminology you all use; that might be a way that the council could get at the question of what does constitute the most professional fishery we could have.

I don't know; I guess I am trying to find some metric that we could use that would take some of the guesswork out of it, for lack of a better way to put it., to make it as objective as we could make it and keep with the Magnuson mandate for maximizing the value to society as a whole since it is a public trust resource.

DR. CHEUVRONT: As a fisheries' economist, my first inclination was to say, no; but as a fisheries' economist the way I would suggest handling it is let market forces take care of it. There has got to be reasons why people are holding onto permits that aren't being fished and why people are paying for permits that aren't used very much.

I don't know the economies of each individual fishing operation. There has to be a reason for why they're holding onto these permits and fishing them or not at the level that they do. At some point, economy will take care of the issue. I just don't know how long that is going to take, and you guys can do things that would influence those economies if that is what you wanted to do; but there is no magic bullet here.

Kari could give you probably a very different answer than I would about the impacts. She could address the impacts to communities by reducing the number of permits. What else would people do? People might actually get out of fishing altogether if they lost their permits; or as Doug had suggested, a non-governmental program for buying out snapper grouper permits. I mean if it was attractive enough, there might be some people that say I would like to get out of it now if I can get rid of my boat, too. They might want to do that; I just don't know.

DR. DUVAL: We're going to do this in an orderly fashion here; I know everybody's hand is up. Wilson, just remember that this analysis doesn't include consideration of a portfolio of other fisheries that fishermen participate in. While someone may use their snapper grouper permit and maybe they don't have very many landings of snapper grouper in a year; that doesn't mean that they are not a full-time fisherman and utilizing all of their permits.

DR. LANEY: I was just trying to remain in keeping with our snapper grouper focus, Madam Chairman.

MR. HARTIG: I would echo what Michelle said, Wilson, about the portfolio. I may not have a lot of snapper grouper landings, but it would be tough to me to lose those couple months that supports that part of my income for the year. The thing I wanted to say about Doug's stuff, talking about an industry buyback; there was and still is a buyback going on in the Pacific.

We can look at that model; and actually I think the last note I saw about that was they were defaulting on their loans because the value that they expected to get from their fishery wasn't as high as they had expected. There are some problems with the loan that they took out to buy back those vessels. There is a model there.

The other thing, Brian, in Table 2, under your current ACLs of 1.195 million pounds, it is a little bit difficult to get 6 million pounds of landings out of 1.9 million pounds of ACL. That figure needs to change; it is not correct. Really, that is all I had to say other than thank you very much for putting this together. It is very informative. It really allows you to look in detail at what the snapper grouper fishery is doing.

DR. BELL: I had a question about the same thing, the 1 point – not 2 versus 6. I was confused by that; but we can deal with that. Under the heading of professional fishery, what does that mean? Again from our perspective I see guys that operate kind of like Ben. It is some part of your income stream, you are a professional fisherman, but you are using just a component of your fishery as related to snapper grouper.

I don't know that we want to get away from that. Also, what I've seen related to fisheries and state level is guys are having to diversify to succeed, but you have a perfectly solid professional fisherman who is invested to some degree in different fisheries. I think that is a component of this fishery that is useful.

Particularly with the regional differences we have, where you've got in some cases boats have to go 40 miles offshore and some areas they only have to go five miles offshore; so you are talking about a center console vessel versus a 45-foot vessel or something; it is not going to be a monolithic fishery however it turns out.

We've just got to be sensitive to that and what we want to see to offer whatever the potential is for the fishery; it needs to be there for the wide spectrum of fishermen that we have. It is just always going to be different from region to region and fisherman to fisherman to some degree. Unfortunately, you can't just put it all in one real simplified box; but thank you so much for doing this, this is really great stuff. I think this will really help us kind of visualize what we've got to work with and what the potential is down the line.

MR. PHILLIPS: I guess this basically underscores how very little money there is in snapper grouper for most people. Even the producers, the ones that are catching – there are very, very few people that snapper grouper alone can support. A lot of these guys are holding on to the permits hoping it will change.

They want to get back on the water and sooner or later they just said they've got to take a day job because they just can't or maybe they pick along, but it just really brings it home how bad a shape snapper grouper fishery is for people trying to make a good living at it.

It is good that we can see it and we can go ahead and start trying to figure out ways that work better for the people that are going to stay in it; because not everybody can stay in it at these levels or not even close. When you look at putting three or four people on a boat and then you take your expenses out and your only catching X amount of fish a year; it really is, it is not good.

MR. COX: Charlie you and I have been at this for a long time and we're losing our traditional fishery. Our older fishermen are falling to the wayside. What I see going on is we're losing our professional commercial fishery in snapper grouper. The recreational guys that can afford to buy out the permits are doing so. It is a high concern of mine.

I don't know what the number would be to make it a professional fishery, but there are not young guys getting into the fishery. I am concerned about that. I was looking at this chart here that you put together, Brian. It is very interesting to see the number of dealers has pretty much stayed the same. Even though the number of landings is considerably going down; it tells you that the consumer still wants the snapper grouper species, so the demand is certainly there. I just wanted to make that point.

MR. BROWN: To what Doug said; I've got a drawer full of letters from people wanting to buy my permits. I get letters all the time from all over the place. As far as a private entity or something, they seem to have value to them. I keep my permits because I want to use them. At some point I am going to use them.

I just diversified into the for-hire sector and went from commercial to for-hire. I kept my permits and I used them some, but then it got to be more into the recreational side, doing it more and more. Then regulations started impacting at the time of year when I could go commercial fishing. I was impacted by regulations that there was certain species that were shut down at that time so you couldn't go harvest them.

Weather, a lot of times the weather would be so bad here in the Carolinas you just couldn't get out. There were some other factors, too. Then when you were talking about the landings, that was one of the things I was going to bring up. I'm glad you clarified that, Brian, on the number of permit holders and the large number of landings and everything, because I was trying to figure that out.

I noticed that it also showed over a period of time from 2009 to 2013 that slow decline. There were a couple of the years where it was kind of the same, but it was a steady decline. I think that some of that could have been from regulations, too, impacting the guys where they just couldn't go and harvest what they needed to harvest at that time.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: You may all know this; Doug talked about a private buyout program and the Magnuson Act does have a Fishing Capacity Reduction Program. That is in Section 312B of the Act. Doug, that is on Page 129. That may be something you might want to throw into the hopper, too.

DR. DUVAL: Thanks for that reference, Monica, much appreciated. Are there any other comments about the economic capacity analysis? Brian mentioned several things also that the council may want to consider such as looking at the 225 permits or the trip-limited permits which were supposed to be phased out. I had a question for Monica. Under what circumstances are those permits allowed to be transferred? Is it just to an immediate family member? I didn't think they were allowed to be transferred at all; but I just want to make sure I am clear on that.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: The two-for-one and the 225 permit went into effect at the same time. I think that was early 1999. I don't believe that the 225 allows for any transfer. I think the council's idea at the time – and I can look back at the amendment – was that there were certain individuals who didn't harvest enough fish to qualify for the unlimited permit; so the 225 was put in place with the idea that these people would be able to use it. Through time those would just – through either the death of the person or them turning in the permit or whatever; those would eventually go away. I don't believe there is any transfer allowed.

DR. DUVAL: Okay, thank you for that clarification.

MR. HARTIG: Just to follow up on your question, Michelle, can you lease those permits, Monica?

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: We don't lease the permit, right, because it is a vessel permit, but you can lease a vessel. I will check on whether you can do that or not. I'm not certain, Ben; I will get back with you.

MR. BROWN: Brian, was there any breakout or anything in the difference between the corporate permit and the individual permit; did you do anything with that?

DR. CHEUVRONT: No, I haven't done anything with that. All we did was just simply count permits of each type. I don't know which were corporate owned and which were individually owned; not at this time.

MR. BROWN: The only reason I bring it up is because of the transfer issue to where if you had the corporate; it was one for one.

DR. DUVAL: I don't know, Brian, if you can sort of add that as something the council might be interested in knowing; what is the breakdown of corporate versus individual permits, maybe how that has declined over the years; and then also the 225s, how those have played out over the years.

DR. CHEUVRONT: That is an easy one, because all we would do is subtract vessels with unlimited permits from the total number of permitted vessels.

DR. DUVAL: Never mind; so that is pretty easy math. I guess I don't know if there is any way to do any similar type of analysis for the for-hire sector. Those permits have also fluctuated over the years. They went up to a pretty high number and then have declined a little bit in terms of what the total number of for-hire trips maybe that have been taken over the years and total number of landings by charter mode, harvest, or estimate.

I think just in terms of looking at a picture of the fishery; we can certainly talk about that more and it is not information that has a deadline to it. I am just personally curious given what you've done here if numbers like that would be available and how much information they might provide to us; that's all.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Yes, to address that; I am not sure exactly at this point what we could pull together. I think we've got an idea of what it is you are looking for. The data have to come from a couple of different sources to make this happen. I have not done an awful lot of work with the for-hire permits.

Whether there is a historical data base of how many permits there were per year; we could get the pounds landed. Getting the value of that because that is recreational landings; I don't think we could get that, per se. I do want to bring up one comment that Ben pointed out that the pounds were different between those two tables and in our in-house editing we didn't catch that. Thank you for doing that.

What I had done is I grabbed the wrong number from John's paper. I've got the right number now and what I'll do is I'll revise it and I will get it sent out to everybody with the revised number for the second half of Table 2, so you will be able to see. I think one of the take-home messages though that you need to look at from this is that when you look at the table that was

done for Amendment 13C, it gave an even bleaker picture for participation in the snapper grouper fishery in terms of number of vessels and things that could participate in it than we have now. I think some of it may be through natural attrition of either because of management or other reasons, or whatever; but the picture is not quite as bleak as it was, say, in 2005 when that other analysis was done.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I just wanted to correct something I said. An owner of a vessel with a trip-limited permit, the 225, may request a transfer to another vessel owned by that same person. That is the only transfer allowed. I don't have an answer to Ben's question yet.

DR. DUVAL: Again, thank you to Brian for all the work on the economic analysis. I think maybe just some questions on additional information; and then I'm sure we'll probably have a more extensive discussion about this when we have our Visioning Workshop again in October regarding these questions of what constitutes a professional fishery and things like that. I'm sure we'll probably get some input on that when we take this Draft Strategic Blueprint out to the public. I would like to segue to Amber walking us through that.

MR. PHILLIPS: That might be a good question that we could ask the stakeholders, the fishermen, what level do they consider it be a professional fishery; how much money do they need to feel like they make, which might help us with some management on where we want to go.

MR. BELL: I was just thinking based on some of the comments I made earlier – and I'm not suggesting we create any more work for staff, but it would be interesting to look at it if you sorted it by vessel size or sorted it by state, just to see some of those regional differences in the fishery and associated with vessel size. That is another kind of key thing, but I don't know if that would be a real easy push the button and sort it kind of thing, but it would be interesting to look at it that way.

DR. DUVAL: That is something we can ask Brian about. Really quickly, because we're running out of time and we need to get through the public input piece, which is extremely important.

MR. BROWN: I'm just addressing what Mel said. I think in Coral Amendment 8, wasn't it broken down by county?

DR. DUVAL: Wasn't what broken down by county?

MR. BROWN: The permits and the landings and everything.

DR. DUVAL: It may have been; I think we can look into that. I don't recall off the top of my head. Doug might have a better sense of that being the chair of that committee.

DR. LANEY: Well, to your point and Ben's point, it seems like any future discussion of what constitutes a professional fishery would have to be sort of qualified by what constitutes a professional fisherman as well because of the point you and Ben made. If you are landing only a small part of snapper grouper species but that is an important part of your portfolio; that should

be taken into consideration somehow as well. I guess the consideration of what constitutes professional has to be defined, too, at some point.

MR. CONKLIN: I just wanted to bring it back to the surface that some of our vision should be to try and make the science and the stock assessment information, the outcomes of that as accurate and the best it can be. I understand that it seems like there is a lot of appeal and people trying to figure out how much money somebody needs to make a living and how many boats the fishery can capacitate on what science we have now.

But say we had more robust stock assessments like we're talking about and all this stuff; I think that it is our duty to try and make that more of a priority than trying to just figure out how to take the easy way out and get rid of permits. I think there is a lot of value in paying attention to the science side of it and holding people accountable for putting good input into these things and getting a better outcome.

Once we can kind of come up with like that standard operating procedure on best practices to conduct stock assessments and this stuff; if that stuff keeps coming back bad and poor and stuff like that, then we can look at how to reduce the effort. Right now it is, like Jack said, guys are dying out and permits are going to go down eventually. Maybe it is not as fast as it should be; but we've got to give these people a chance. I think that more fish would be the right way to go about it initially.

DR. DUVAL: Thanks for those thoughts and for reminding us that science is the underpinning of all the management decisions that we have to make. Okay, I would like to move on to discussing public input strategies for consideration, and then Ben has one item under other business.

MS. VON HARTEN: Okay, just to kind of keep everybody on track; this is Attachment 7. I wanted to back up and tell you there are also Attachments 8A through E, I believe it is a sector summary and then every state summary from the port meetings. And just so you know that these documents are here in the background; we have taken those port meeting summaries and point for point gone through them and matched every bullet point in those port meeting summaries and where they're being addressed in these draft strategic goals.

We can kind of cross reference, okay, this was brought up in this port meeting in this state; here is where it is being addressed in the strategic goal document. Just so if anybody ever asked you, any of your fishermen say, hey, well I brought this up; you can say, oh, well this is where we're talking about it in the strategic goal for management; just so you know.

This is Attachment 7, and this is kind of the project timeline that has been revised a couple of times. This is as it stands this morning to give you an idea of how we're tracking along and when we're going to have possibly this final blueprint ready. Of course, you are reviewing the goals today at this meeting.

We will further refine them at the staff level between now and the June council meeting. Then in June what you are going to do is take your final look at these draft goal documents and give any more guidance about what you want tweaked or changed or added or taken out. I was hoping we could have that discussion today about what format you wanted to take this out to the public in,

given that maybe the way that it is structured now isn't the best way to present it to the public. Then between June and September is when we're going to be collecting that public input.

That is what this document is about is some ideas that we had about ways we could do that. Then at the September council meeting you will review the public input and we'll start preparing for the October Council Member Workshop in Charleston. Then in October we'll have the workshop.

That is where, as Michelle said, we're going to prioritize all the different public input we got and short- and long-term action items, so that we can start developing those short-term action items into a snapper grouper amendment that I'm not quite sure which number it is because things are changing all the time.

Then between October and December we'll prepare this final blueprint, and then you will review it in December and approve any items for possible scoping in January 2016. That is the schedule. What I would like to get some input on is the ideas of how you want to do the public input for this.

We did 26 port meetings last spring throughout the region. They were very well received. I think there is some expectation from those stakeholders that participated that we will be back in their communities. Given the amount of effort that was put in and everything else that is going on, I don't really think that we're going to feasibly be able to go back to every single community that we went to.

We're trying to come up with some new ways to possibly get into those communities, but maybe just not necessarily always have all staff physically present. We're talking about maybe doing some webinars and this idea of listing stations that we've been talking about at the last couple of meetings that some of the other councils do and then still doing some in-person meetings that possibly could be timed with the public hearings that we have scheduled already for August.

I will just walk you through each of these different approaches. The webinars, we were thinking more of having them focused on each strategic goal; having a couple webinars just on the science goal and having people tune in and staff would give a presentation about how the whole visioning project has evolved and then go point by point through that goal document to answer any questions or get additional feedback; and do the same for the remaining three goals as well; so try to target those for sometime after the June council meeting, probably in July, and do a couple a week, maybe one during the day and one in the evening, and get public input that way.

MR. BROWN: You have a Facebook page for the visioning, right? Could you set up a comment place on there to where people could make comments?

MS. VON HARTEN: Well, we had a port meeting form for when we were collecting input at that point, yes, and that would be revised to reflect maybe organizing it by strategic goal and getting people to input that way. Yes, we can change that form. That is actually not in here, so I need to add that. I was thinking more in-person types of public input, but, yes, we would set up a comment form similarly.

MR. BROWN: Well, I was just thinking in regards to certain topics and stuff that people could reply to.

MS. VON HARTEN: Okay; and then the listening station approach, as we've been talking about it, would be where we would host some kind of web-based meeting in a community, preferably that is somewhere near a council members hometown where they could be present at the actual physical meeting and then staff is staying in Charleston tuning in via webinar.

The same kind of approach, a presentation describing the process and then have it set up in a facilitated format similar to what we did with the port meeting. What that looks like I don't know yet and would greatly appreciate some feedback on that. I don't want to just have a presentation with slide after slide of strategies and actions for people to comment.

That is not going to go anywhere, so we need to figure out a way to effectively get some good feedback. I think using some discussion questions kind of similar to what we did during the port meetings would be one approach and just figuring out how we want to facilitate those discussions in that format.

DR. DUVAL: I personally like the idea of a multi-pronged approach towards getting public input. I think having the webinars that are focused around the goals can kind of tee people up for what is contained within the Draft Vision Blueprint and then utilizing the listening-station approach certainly is going to save staff time and resources.

It will require a little bit of work on the part of council members, but I also think we owe it to our stakeholders to try to get back out to some of the places where we typically don't have public input and in a forum that is more comfortable for them. We certainly received a lot of praise with the port meeting approach.

Again, I think some of the logistics are needing to have internet access in order to conduct this listening-station approach; and then also the facilitation, how is that going to work; is it the council member doing the facilitation? We would certainly need to come up with some discussion questions, as Amber suggested, like we did for the in-person port meetings.

You can see the table at the top of Page 2 has some potential suggested locations for these listening stations. I'll just pick on North Carolina, since I am most familiar with that, but potentially coordinating with some of the Sea Grant offices and maybe even some of their staff who is familiar with some of these issues to aid in some of the facilitation. Those are a few suggestions. I guess I would be looking for a little bit of feedback from folks regarding I think that approach as well as facilitation.

MR. COX: Michelle, I agree with you; I can see that working very well, too, have some listening stations where we can both be there and have a presentation going on in Morehead. Then you can also just take where the biggest meetings were in each state if you want to do an in-person place and have just four meetings with staff to have where there were the biggest groups together. I certainly like the listening station and having folks come out to that. I think that would probably be very successful.

MR. CONKLIN: I certainly think we kind of owe it to the stakeholders and the public to go back out for another round of, okay, here is what you wanted and here is where we are now; what are we going to do with it? It doesn't have to be as many port meetings and stuff like that; but like Jack was saying, some mix.

I think people need to see us in person again at least once per state in the future to bring it back around; because if we really put all this effort into this campaign, then we definitely need to get back out to people and get sound comments and stuff like that instead of just like negativity over our Facebook page or forum or something like that. We need real ideas and solutions.

MR. BOWEN: To Chris's point and to Jack's; we need to make sure that the stakeholders and the public are aware that this is a follow-up to what we've done last year and that we are continuing to try to build on the ideas and solutions.

DR. DUVAL: Definitely, so advance notice of these listening locations is going to be really key in order to get good useful participation.

MR. BELL: On the webinars, those are designed where people can log on and submit comments and things or is it just information going out; how would that work?

MS. VON HARTEN: I envisioned that it would be similar to like our Q&A webinars that we do before the public hearings where staff gives a presentation and then we open it up to chatting and questions, and we allow a two-way engagement and not just us giving information.

MR. BELL: Right; and I think that works and that is the way to do it. We understand how we've got the plan broken down into these four major areas, but the public may not quite get that. If we want to focus on a particular area and it is the one time they can get on a webinar, they may want to comment on something else.

We just need to make it real clear up front this is how this is going to work. We're going to focus today on whatever it is, science or communications or whatever, just so they are not frustrated by, well, I really wanted to talk about something that had to do with management and all they are talking about is communication; as long as we're clear up front.

MS. VON HARTEN: Yes, and we can do some promotional types of things that kind of give an outline of the process, here are all the different ways you can contribute and how you can learn, to make sure that it is clear what each venue will be about.

DR. DUVAL: I think also making sure that because you may not be able to attend the webinar on the science piece; that you can interact via e-mail or this comment form or these other methods in order to provide your input. Staff can make sure to emphasize that at each one of the webinars.

MS. VON HARTEN: Again, all these public hearing dates are still kind of tentative, so that is what these were based around. If you see a location that you're like I don't think we really need to do that there; just speak up and this can change; but we kind of need to have this hammered out well before June.

MR. HAYMANS: Scratch MAREX off for Georgia – anything we’re going to have, we’ll host at the DNR – and scratch Pooler. When we start going back to another public hearing, I want to go back to Shellman Bluff where we had our largest attendance last time.

We’ll take the list of those who attended last time and personally invite them to come down to Shellman as well as reaching out to everybody else. I think if we throw some vittles into the mix, we might get a better attendance, too. We’ll work on that aspect.

MS. VON HARTEN: Doug, you’re saying don’t do a public hearing at all in Pooler for anything that is going on public hearing-wise or are you saying don’t do a listening station or an in-person meeting in Pooler for visioning?

MR. HAYMANS: For visioning I’m saying not Pooler, yes, because I am guessing I am going to get one public meeting, and I want to go to the center of the state and go to the location that had the largest attendance during the port meetings.

MS. VON HARTEN: Do you want Shellman Bluff to be an in-person meeting versus a listening station. Obviously, we probably can’t do a listening station.

MR. HAYMANS: Yes, in person.

DR. DUVAL: Just to clarify; we do have other items on the council’s agenda that we will be requesting public input on with regard to these tentative dates and locations for these in-person public meetings; so just to keep that is in mind as you’re providing input with regard to potential listening stations.

I think probably what I would encourage folks to do is to look through the locations that have been identified and then communicate directly with staff regarding places that you would want to put forward for a listening station location; keeping in mind sort of the logistical requirements that are needed rather than spending time on that right now.

MS. VON HARTEN: Let me get to the in-person meetings. As I noted, there are all these public hearings tentatively scheduled with lots of stuff going on at those public hearings, depending on what happens this week and in June. The idea was we wanted to keep these separate. We don’t want to have the visioning input going on during the public hearings.

These dates that you see up here; the way it would work is we would come to town; we would be in town in a location or a general region. We would do the public hearing one night and then the next night or the night before we would do a visioning meeting. They would be completely separate to keep the issues separate.

Again, same thing, these kind of were all centered around – where the listening stations were centered on locations of the public hearings; the in-person meetings were actually centered on the dates of the public hearings. Again, if we are in Shellman Bluff for an in-person meeting for visioning, tentatively we might be in Pooler for the public hearing; so that would fit fine.

DR. DUVAL: We’re all trying to just sort of be as efficient and cost-effective as possible.

MR. BOWMAN: Amber, I see you looking at me with that smile. As we know, the ones of us that are in Georgia; that Pooler turnout has been terrible. I remember several meetings that me and the staff were basically the only ones there with the exception of maybe one person. To Doug's point, I am all for moving that public hearing for Georgia – and that is the only thing I can speak of – to the center of the state around Shellman Bluff. I think our turnout there would be a heck of a lot more than it has been in Pooler.

MR. CONKLIN: I remember when we did the port meeting in Bluffton, a few guys from the Savannah area came over and participated in that meeting. I was just curious to see how many fellows from Georgia showed up if we had a meeting in Jacksonville or Mayport; did anybody come there in an effort to save time or money? It is not that far.

MS. VON HARTEN: I don't think we had any Georgia fishermen go to Jacksonville, but I know there was a lot of North Carolina/South Carolina interexchange when we were in Shallotte, and from Little River folks; even Southport, too, I think. That can be good. If you look, we tentatively might be Little River or Bolivia for a regular public hearing; so that would kind of play that role to get some cross-exchange there.

DR. DUVAL: I think we just need to just make sure we're aware of the fact that the in-person public hearings are being scheduled to solicit input on specific amendments. We just want to be conscious of the fact in terms of the locations of those public hearings, folks may be impacted by those actions.

I am thinking about things like Regulatory Amendment 16, which I think is one of the ones that would be scheduled to go out during this August round of public hearings. Just please keep that in mind as you're thinking about listening stations and in-person public hearings with sort of an add-on for soliciting public input on the Draft Vision Blueprint. I think if folks can chew on this a little bit and provide information and feedback to Amber with regard to locations; that would be great.

MS. BURGESS: I just want to get one point of clarification, because it is a little bit confusing to me. The listening station; is that set up for each webinar that you're giving on each topic; or when you use webinar describing the listening station, that means something different than webinar?.

MS. VON HARTEN: The webinars are just going to be for the topic-oriented webinars. The listening station will be a webinar as well, but it is a listening station where the fishermen come to a specific meeting location with a council member present and then staff is tuning in via webinar.

I also wanted to just let you know that I've gone back into the 360 people that participated last year and developed e-mail distribution lists in our constant contacts so we can target everybody that came to every meeting in North Carolina, Georgia, South Carolina for follow-up information.

DR. DUVAL: Awesome; I like that. I know we had a little bit of discussion previously about some concerns regarding the format of the documents we've gone through for the strategic goal areas and how we would want those presented to the public. I think, Doug your concern was that

this was a lot of information for people to go through. What we might be able to do is simply take the objectives and strategies and just condense all those together and have a larger document that has the different actions in there if people want to refer to that. I am not quite sure what you are getting at.

MR. HAYMANS: The actions are really what people are interested in. That is the tools that it comes down to. Again, I don't have the answer to it either, but somehow formatting it into a text document that is short, concise; where there are a lot of issues that overlap between the various ones, to only repeat it once. I don't know, just something that the public is going to pick up and read. When we had our decision documents that used to be six and eight pages, ten pages, they read them. Forty-page decision documents are getting a little hefty.

DR. DUVAL: I think we've tried to definitely address that on this first cut of stuff and alleviate some of that repetition in the management strategic goal area.

MR. HAYMANS: I noticed that and I think that works well from its previous version. Also, having them spread – the webinars at least spread out by section is going to help, I think, instead of getting all four at one time. The more I sit and think about these listening stations, the more I just want to dump them and go to either have webinar or in-person council meetings. We talked about it as an idea.

DR. DUVAL: Well, Georgia doesn't have to have a listening station, but I certainly feel like I would want to employ that as a technique in North Carolina.

MR. HARTIG: Yes, let's look to the Mid and see how they did it. They went out to public hearing and went through this. Ask them what they thought was most valuable to the public after the fact. I mean now we have the advantage of going to them and saying if you would do it again, how would you do it differently? I think we could get some input from them about how we can construct our document going forward.

DR. DUVAL: We could certainly do that, and I believe the Mid-Atlantic Council Chairman is going to be here later on during this meeting so we can ask for that input. Pres, I don't know, if you have any recollection of how the Mid-Atlantic Council went through after it developed its draft strategic plan to go back out to the public and get input on that. That was a couple of years ago, but if you have any recollection of how that was done.

MR. PATE: Michelle, we didn't do anything as elaborate as what you all are talking about; but we did go back out to the public for input on the final draft of the strategic plan. I can't remember how many public meetings we held. Two years ago is like ten years ago for me. From a personal standpoint, you can't take it out to the public too many times.

It is all a matter of how much time this council wants to put into the process and how much time the staff has to put into the process. You have to balance that against the final outcome, but taking it back to the public as many times as you possibly can would be important, I think.

DR. DUVAL: Wise words from a wise man.

MR. BELL: I can't add to that wisdom. I like the idea of diversification and having different options for people. I think, like Pres said, you can't take it out too much, maybe. If the listening thing doesn't work for Georgia, fine; but it is good to have the options realizing we don't get a lot of people at any individual event.

If we have a number of events, we'll catch as many as we can, and we certainly can't be accused of doing this being closed doors or something. We will have tried everything we can. I had the same idea that Ben did, just like you said here, how did they do it up north and what worked for them? I definitely think we need to offer as many different options as possible. I think we're doing that.

DR. DUVAL: I would like to wrap this up. Ben has one item under other business here. Please think about if you would like to consider listening stations where you would want those to be as well as pay attention to the locations of the in-person public hearings that are going to be scheduled for a variety of other amendments that are on our schedule when considering whether or not you want a follow-on for soliciting input on the visioning documents.

In terms of the format of the documents themselves, perhaps that is something that staff and the workgroup can look at between here and June and come back with some suggestions in June for ensuring that it is something that is digestible and concise for the public. We can look at that. With that; Mr. Chairman, please.

MR. HARTIG: I hate to hold you up from lunch, but I'm going to do it. I was able to attend that Citizen Science Conference a couple weeks ago in California. I wanted to take the opportunity at the beginning of the meeting to lay some of this out so you can think about it during the meeting. Also tonight, Pew is sponsoring a panel discussion on citizen science and ecosystem-based management.

Citizen science, what is it? Simply defined it is scientific research conducted in whole or in part by amateur or non-professional scientists; a pretty simple definition. This was the inaugural conference. There is now a Citizen Science Association with 3,000 members. This isn't new, as you all know.

Citizen science has been going on for a long time in our jurisdiction as well as the rest of the country and the world. At the conference they brought together 600 people from over 25 countries. I was blown away by the diversity of the topics or the initiatives that were conducted under the citizen science umbrella. It is a big tent.

There is a lot of stuff that gets done under the citizen science umbrella, as I said. It is an evolving discipline which continues to explore the potential impacts on society, of broader public participation and a full life cycle of scientific inquiry, from framing questions and guiding data collection to analyzing and communicating new knowledge.

It was really, really an eye-opener for me to go and see this. I had no idea how big it was. I think I'll read to you just one short paragraph from the keynote address, which brings it all together about what it does. The interplay between science and broader society is central to modern life. Citizen science is a natural upshot of this reality.

From mariner input into early wind charts that revolutionized transoceanic travel to the Christmas bird count where crowd-sourcing of site records from imperiled species, relationships between societal needs and public participation of scientific process have not only improved understanding of the world around us, but have also expanded the impact of science on our lives.

The history of citizen science suggests we can do more in a variety of context broadening the process of how scientific questions are framed and expanding who is involved in the framing is transforming how we do science. It is really, really cool. The conference was set up into seven concurrent sessions, which was a daunting task to figure out which session you wanted to go to.

The sessions were divided into themes. Some of this you heard throughout the conference. Education and lifelong learning – lifelong learning was a big part of it – broadening engagement, diversity and inclusion; these were the topics that were in these different sessions. Research evaluation of citizen science, best practices, tackling the grand challenges, and there were story presentations and speed talks across conference themes.

There were also, of course, the digital opportunities and challenges. Within these different sections, there were symposiums, panel discussions, dialogue, which was interactive and participatory, but you got to participate in that. I went to one of those and that was interesting as well, and there are talks as well.

The whole gamut of different ways this information was given to the people who participated. There was also a big poster session and an open session as well for lunch. Each session was an hour and twenty minutes long, and there were questions at most of those which you could answer or you could have answered.

Diversities, from the Christmas bird count, measuring rain, tracking box turtles, monitoring mosquito densities, monitoring mercury, and dragonfly larvae, tracking a flues, CO2 monitoring, cosmos quest, invasive species, biochemical applications, environmental change, biodiversity, wildlife camera trapping, MPA monitoring, climate change, and then I think one interesting aspect was creating a competitive game online that mapped an individual neurons of the brain.

That is taking this to a whole new level of where you actually set up a competition where people actually map specific neurons in the brain. It was amazing. It gets a little bit away from the traditional part of how this was, because the people don't really get a lot of science out of that; but they are getting something done scientifically by mapping the brain. It is just another shoot off of how it was done.

Building capacity was a big theme, and certainly in our data collection we can build capacity to try and collect more data. I mentioned lifelong education, stewardship. I need one of those things that Amber puts together with all these words; you know, all these important words that came from this conference, because there really are a lot of them that were mentioned a number of times.

Maybe I will have Amber do that for me. We'll do that for the citizen science. A couple of presentations that was applicable to our area; the MPA W in California is a really interesting program where they have 36 MPAs that are monitored by the citizens themselves, and they are monitored for use.

They are looking not only for people to get vested in the MPA concept, but they are looking at the use in case. Like in the Deepwater Horizon where you had an oil spill and you had impacts on that particular MPA; you could go back and look at your uses and you can put a monetary value on those uses that were in those MPAs. That I thought was a pretty interesting way to be able to do that.

For ours, when we have fishermen in the area, we could have them drive by and look at the different uses, whether they are illegal or not. It is not like you are going to be an enforcement agent; you are just going to document these things. The other thing they do is they document the enforcement presence, so you would know when your enforcement agents were out there at least when people were there.

But they do it from the land, they do it from the boats, they do it from the air for these MPA monitoring. They have people who walk down and transect a beach, and then they document the different uses. It was really, really, really interesting. Then there is another one where they have a diver team. That is the coast survey that goes out. It is a citizen science.

Citizens do this research, they go and conducts transects and denote the number of species they see over time. In Catalina there is a diver organization that designed their whole program and they pay for it. You have to pay to participate in the program. One of the things that has been interesting is the planning.

Some of these have been started without a lot of planning, and that bites them in the butt in the end. Because data storage, what do you do with the data, how do you store it, you go in and actually look at the data and get what it says out of it. That was a critical part of the Catalina Study.

They figured that out in the end, but it took them some time and it cost them a lot more money in the end. It was an interesting part of that. The one other thing I'll mention was the American Association for the Advancement of Science held their meeting. They started their meeting one day after the first day of the conference, so there was one day when we had interplay.

They had some presentations to deal with citizen science as well. One of the ones I went to, there was a question center. One of the scientists took the opportunity to make a statement during the questions. They kind of tried to cut him off but they didn't, because he had a pretty powerful statement.

His statement was, developing scientist citizens; not citizen science, but developing scientist citizens. His plea was each scientist needs to become a scientific citizen in that they need to be able to portray the daunting challenges that we face in the world today to the public. Everybody needs to be able to put this information forward to the public.

We've all seen how science has been swept under the rug, so to speak, in the last ten years in particular. We see in climate change on how the debate rages on about whether it is real or not and what is causing it and those types of things. I think one of the drivers of this is people are just so afraid that they are not going to have an input into what is going on in their planet, that they are using citizen science to reach the broader public about some of these challenges.

I thought that was really cool that scientist actually was trying to mobilize the scientific community to be more involved in getting the word out on their research. I think that is a great thing that needs to happen. With that, I think I'll wrap it up. I want to let you all go to lunch, and don't forget tonight we do have that panel and we can talk about things a lot more. I have a lot more to talk about, and I am going to try to commit to putting together a paper on this.

It is going to take a little bit of time. I've got an outline already; so having that for you to look at in a little more detail and some of the details about the MPA watch. They are applicable to our jurisdiction would be really cool. It has been a movement for some time. I think it is on the cusp of a revolution, to be honest with you.

It is almost a cult. These people are amazing in their passion and effort that they put into these different citizen science initiatives. But one thing I would add, though, that is in the back of my mind; it is not easy, it is not cheap, and they need to plan. With that, I will let you all go to lunch.

(Whereupon. the meeting was adjourned at 12:27 o'clock p.m., March 2, 2015.)

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March 2015

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