



# bay restoration commission

STEWARDS OF SANTA MONICA BAY

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California Sustainable Seafood Initiative Advisory Panel  
Meeting #3, Santa Barbara, CA

**Re: Current draft CA sustainable seafood certification protocol.**

October 13, 2010

To the members of the Advisory Panel,

I wish I could have been here to share my thoughts on the draft certification protocol you are discussing today.

The Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission is a non-regulatory state entity charged with restoring the health of the Santa Monica Bay and its watershed. The SMBRC works with local, state, and federal partners to find collaborative solutions to the challenges facing the Bay. One of the priority action items in the SMBRC's original Bay Restoration Plan addressed the threat to human health caused by the consumption of certain seafood caught near the Palos Verdes Shelf superfund site. We have recently begun to expand our work on this issue and see a need for expanded local markets for locally caught seafood that is also sustainable and uncontaminated. We believe that a California Sustainable Seafood label could make these goals much easier to accomplish. However, if the label does not contain meaningful standards, consumers will not have confidence in the label, it will lose its effectiveness, and waste taxpayer dollars.

Meaningful standards of sustainability must include the following:

- The fish stock must not be overfished, regardless of the capture method employed and the fishing yields. Ie the stock must be at healthy levels.
- The fishery must not be overfishing the stock, regardless of the capture method employed. Ie they must not be catching more than the optimal sustainable yield.
- The fishery must have effective and responsive management in place.
- The fishery must have minimized adverse ecosystem effects of fishing, such as bycatch and habitat damage.

For California's label to be even stronger, it should identify seafood that is safe for women and children to eat and its "port of origin". Finally, a chain-of-custody requirement would reduce the opportunity for unscrupulous players to defraud consumers and law-abiding businesses.

Thank you for volunteering your time to work on this important issue and I look forward to seeing your draft proposal at the OPC meeting in November.

Sincerely,

Lia Protopapadakis, Marine Scientist  
Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission

*our mission: to restore and enhance the santa monica bay through actions and partnerships that improve water quality, conserve and rehabilitate natural resources, and protect the bay's benefits and values*

