

29 August 2011

John Laird, Secretary for Natural Resources
Chair, Ocean Protection Council
California Resources Agency
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1311
Sacramento, CA 95814

To Secretary Laird, and the Staff and Board of the Ocean Protection Council;

These comments pertain to two areas identified in OPC's Strategic Action Plan for 2012-2017: (a) sustainable fisheries and marine ecosystems; and (b) improved use and sharing of scientific information to support ocean governance and management.

My comments also refer specifically to the statement on Page 14:

“Communications and outreach with **stakeholders**¹, agencies, scientists, **tribes** and **the general public**¹ is a priority, **and we have identified specific actions with associated metrics** throughout this plan to ensure effective communication. “

To address this goal, after reviewing the Strategic Action Plan, I would like to suggest adding the following metrics:

- a. Number and diversity of local, community-based experts¹ participating and providing expert testimony in OPC meetings.
- b. Number of key communications included on OPC list-serves.
- c. Number and diversity of local, community-based experts contributing to OPC publications.
- d. Number and diversity of local, community-based experts serving as professional associates in programs funded by OPC affiliates (e.g., Ocean Science Trust, the Monitoring Enterprise).
- e. Number and diversity of local, community-based experts participating in data collection for research funded by OPC affiliates.
- f. Number of OPC-sponsored research reports provided to local government bodies (e.g., via presentations to City Council and County Board of Supervisors meetings).

OPC's Plan would be strengthened by a greater emphasis on interdisciplinary science that prioritizes collaborative approaches, builds institutional and local capacity, recognizes cultural (especially tribal) and subsistence uses, and defines citizen science as a process involving local experts in research design, methodology, analysis, review, and reporting.

1. It is critically important to have tribal/native/indigenous science and locally expertise be a part of routine OPC meetings, OPC programs, OPC policy deliberations and documents, OPC scientific contributions to the DFG.
2. OPC would benefit by routinely allocating funds for regional community (public) outreach and education, and to appoint key communicators who are locally resident in coastal communities.
3. The OPC Science Advisory Team would benefit by the appointment of a tribal scientist, a cultural ecologist, and additional social scientists to balance the current bias towards the biological sciences.
4. OPC would benefit from the inclusion of scientific expertise from the Northern California coast on the Science Advisory Team.

¹ “Stakeholders” and “the general public” come in a wide variety of forms, and possess highly variable levels of expertise. Identifying and specifically inviting local, community-based experts (i.e., persons with >1000 hours of applied experience) is one way to ensure the inclusion of greater collective expertise amongst individual stakeholders and members of the general public.

5. Monitoring Enterprise projects would benefit by including local community experts, including local and tribal scientists and long-term residents as principal investigators, research associates, and collaborators (i.e., not simply as volunteers or informants).

Specific omissions in the Draft that need to be addressed include:

2. Guiding Principles • Page 7, Part 2 (1)

As written, this section does not acknowledge key uses of coastal waters and the ocean environment by resident communities, including tribes and tribal communities. It could be rewritten as:

...recognize the importance of aesthetic, educational, recreational, **subsistence**, and **cultural** uses.

I.C.2. Guiding Principles • Page 7, Part (3)

To emphasize the need for an interdisciplinary focus, this could be rewritten as:

“It is the state’s policy to incorporate ecosystem **and social science perspectives** into the management of coastal and ocean resources...

I.C.2. Guiding Principles • Page 7, Part (4)

To support the OPC’s emphasis on citizen science and the sharing of scientific information, this could be rewritten as:

“...to improve **collaborative** monitoring and data gathering....

I.C.2. Guiding Principles • Page 8, Part (5)

To recognize the vital role played by constituents and resident communities in resource protection, conservation, and maintenance, this section could state:

“...maintenance of healthy coastal and ocean ecosystems **and communities**, and restoration of degraded ocean ecosystems.

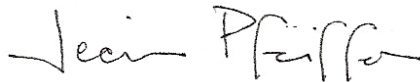
III. A. Core Strengths • Page 12, Section A., Subheading “Fund Innovative Projects”

In keeping with the spirit and goals of this section, it could be rewritten as follows:

“The OPC will seek to fund innovative, **collaborative** projects that improve how we manage our coast and ocean resources. The OPC will act as a catalyst for projects that can be self-sustaining, **build institutional and local capacity**, and will not require long-term ongoing OPC funds or staffing commitments for success.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide comment on the OPC’s Draft Strategic Action Plan for 2012-2017, and look forward to future collaborations.

Respectfully,



Dr. Jeanine Pfeiffer
San Jose State University

cc: Dr. Amber Mace, OPC
Sam Schuchat, OPC