

**Alaska Seafood Forum on Sustainability**  
Anchorage, Alaska  
July 21, 2008



# **Federal Fisheries Management**

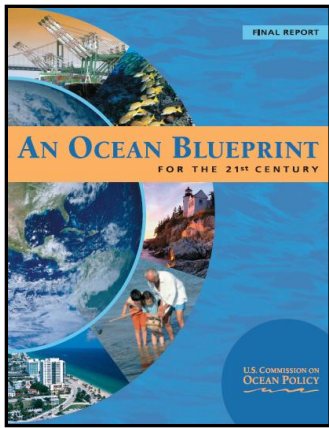
*Science, Service, Stewardship*

**Dr. Jim Balsiger**  
**Acting Assistant Administrator**  
**NOAA Fisheries**



# Rethinking U.S. Ocean Policy

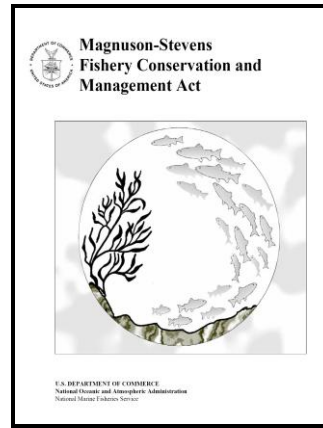
## Reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act



**2004  
USCOP  
Report**



**2004  
USOAP  
E.O. 13366**



**Jan 2007  
MSRA  
P.L. 109-479**

### Key Mandates:

- End overfishing
- Promote market-based management approaches
- Improve science and role of science in decision-making
- Enhance international cooperation



# US Commission on Ocean Policy Recommendations:

## Recommendation 19-2

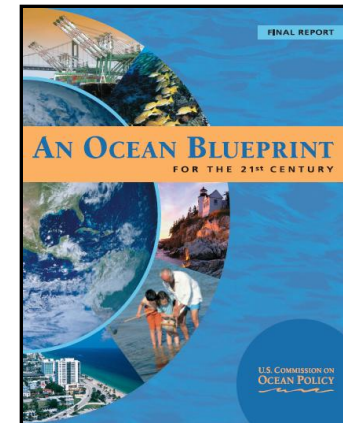
Scientific and Statistical Committees (SSCs) should supply Regional Fishery Management Councils with the scientific advice necessary to make fishery management decisions. Such information could include reports on stock status and health, socioeconomic impacts of management measures, sustainability of fishing practices, and habitat status. In particular, the SSCs should determine allowable biological catch based on the best scientific information available.

## Recommendation 19-3

Each Regional Fishery Management Council (RFMC) should set harvest limits at or below the allowable biological catch determined by its Scientific and Statistical Committee. The RFMCs should begin immediately to follow this practice, which should be codified by Congress in amendments to the Magnuson–Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

## Recommendation 19-15

Congress should amend the Magnuson–Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to affirm that fishery managers are authorized to institute dedicated access privileges. Congress should direct the National Marine Fisheries Service to issue national guidelines for dedicated access privileges that allow for regional flexibility in implementation. Every federal, interstate, and state fishery management entity should consider the potential benefits of adopting such programs.





# End and Prevent Overfishing

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- Annual Catch Limits required for all managed fisheries
  - Set at levels “such that overfishing does not occur”
  - Requires accountability measures
  - Based on scientific advice: may not exceed Councils’ Scientific and Statistical Committees (SSC) recommendations
  - Required in 2010 for stocks subject to overfishing; 2011 for others
  - For overfished stocks, or stocks approaching overfished: Management measures must be prepared and implemented to end overfishing immediately with 2 years of notification

Magnuson-Stevens Act amendments



# Promote Market-Based Management

## Limited Access Privilege Programs (LAPPs)

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- Councils may submit and the Secretary may approve a LAPP for fisheries managed under a limited access system.
- Involves a federal permit specifying the amount of catch a privilege holder may harvest
- Privileges and shares may be revoked, limited, or modified at any time. No right to compensation.
- Must contribute to rebuilding overfished stocks and reducing excess harvest capacity; promote fishing safety, conservation and management, and social and economic benefits
- Administrative review after 5 years and at least every 7 thereafter



# Promote Market-Based Management

## Limited Access Privilege Programs (LAPPs)

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- Individuals, corporations, communities, and “regional fishery associations” may hold privileges
- Initial allocations must be “fair and equitable” and consider:
  - Current and historic harvest
  - Employment in the harvesting and processing sectors
  - Investments in, or dependence on, the fishery
  - Social and cultural framework of the fishery
- Prevent acquisition of excessive shares

# Improving Science Based Management

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- Stronger role for Councils' Scientific and Statistical Committees (SSCs)
- Requires stipends for SSC members to attract and retain highly qualified scientists
- Authorizes the Secretary and each Council to develop a peer review process
- Requires each Council to develop 5-year research priorities
- Ecosystem Approaches:  
Fishery management plans may include measures to conserve target and non-target species and habitats, considering ecological factors affecting fishery populations

# Improving Science Based Management

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## Recreational Data

- New program required to improve the Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics Survey (MRFSS)
- Recreational angler registry
  - New registration required for some recreational anglers and associated vessels
  - Fishermen and charter vessels licensed, permitted, or registered with a qualified state program may be exempt

## Commercial Data

- Fish processing data and necessary economic information required in fishery management plans (FMPs)

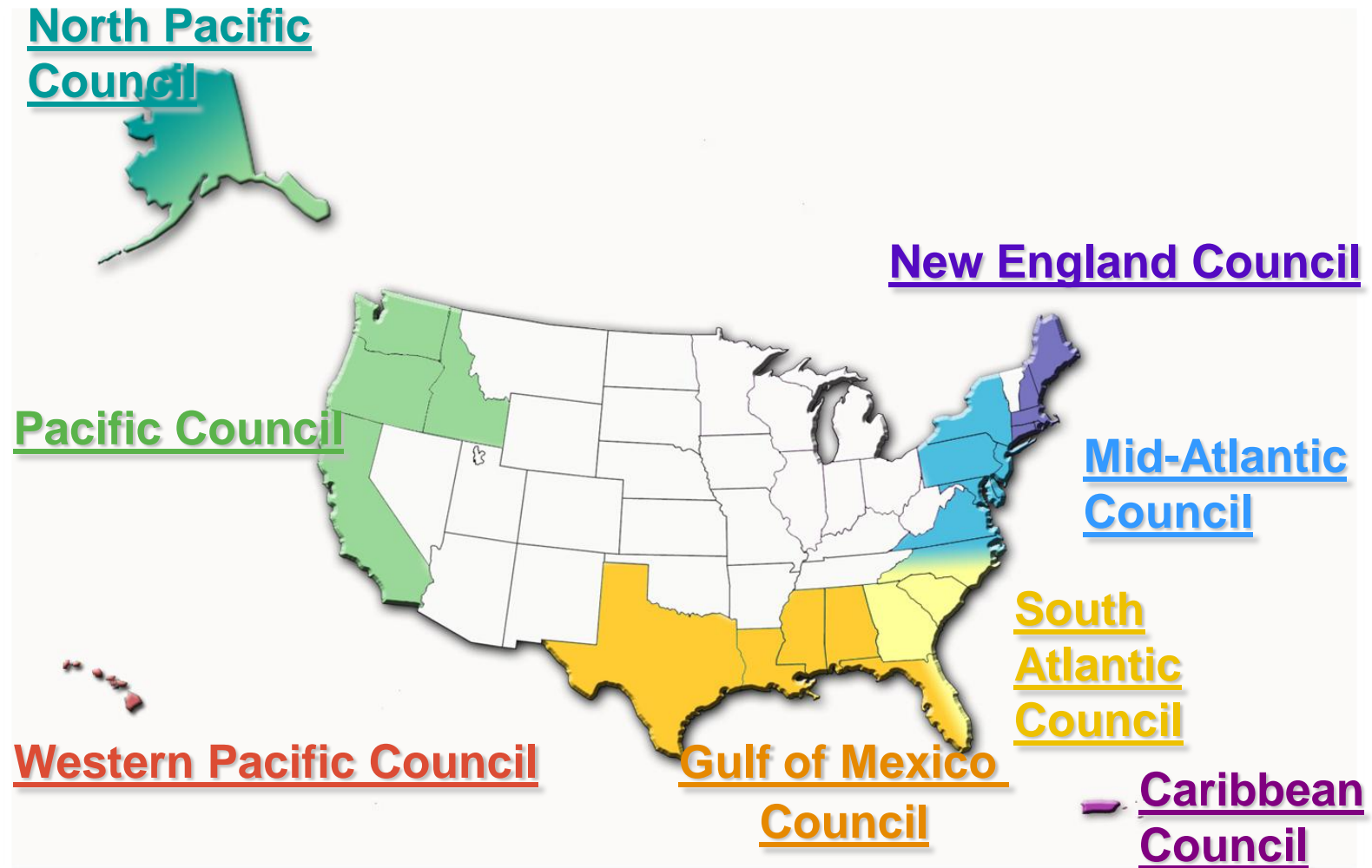
# Other Important Provisions

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- Strengthens conflict of interest rules for Councils
- Addresses illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing
- Addresses international overfishing
- Improves international monitoring of fishing activities and compliance
- Bycatch Reduction Engineering Program  
    Authorizes incentives to reduce bycatch
- Requires revised Agency procedures to streamline NEPA - MSA Act

# Regional Fishery Management Councils



# Alaska Overview



## **Physical Environment:**

- 70% of the U.S. Continental Shelf
- 47,300 Miles of Tidal Shoreline
- 28% of the U.S. EEZ
- 664,000 Residents

## **Socio-Economic Environment:**

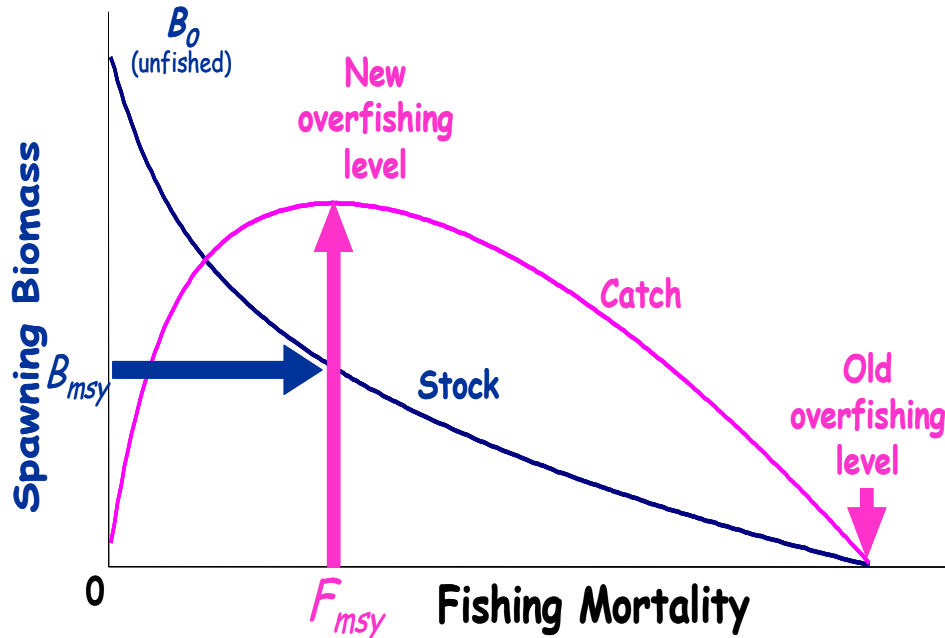
- Alaska waters provide half of all U.S. seafood
- Seafood Industry largest private-sector employer
- Subsistence fisheries & marine mammal harvests
- Significant ocean-dependent coastal communities
- Alaskan communities consistently rank as top U.S. fishing ports in either landings or value

## **Marine Resources:**

- Nation's largest fishery by volume
- 5 FMPs containing 69 stocks or complexes
- 32 managed stocks of marine mammals
- 9 ESA listed marine mammal species
- 2 MMPA listed marine mammal species
- 5 MMPA subsistence co-management species

# Managing Uncertainty in the North Pacific

Pioneers in the Precautionary Principle ◦



“...the North Pacific Council has a history of setting harvest levels at or below the level recommended by its SSC. Many policy makers believe this practice is largely responsible for the successful management of the fisheries in that region.”

2004 USCOP Report pg278

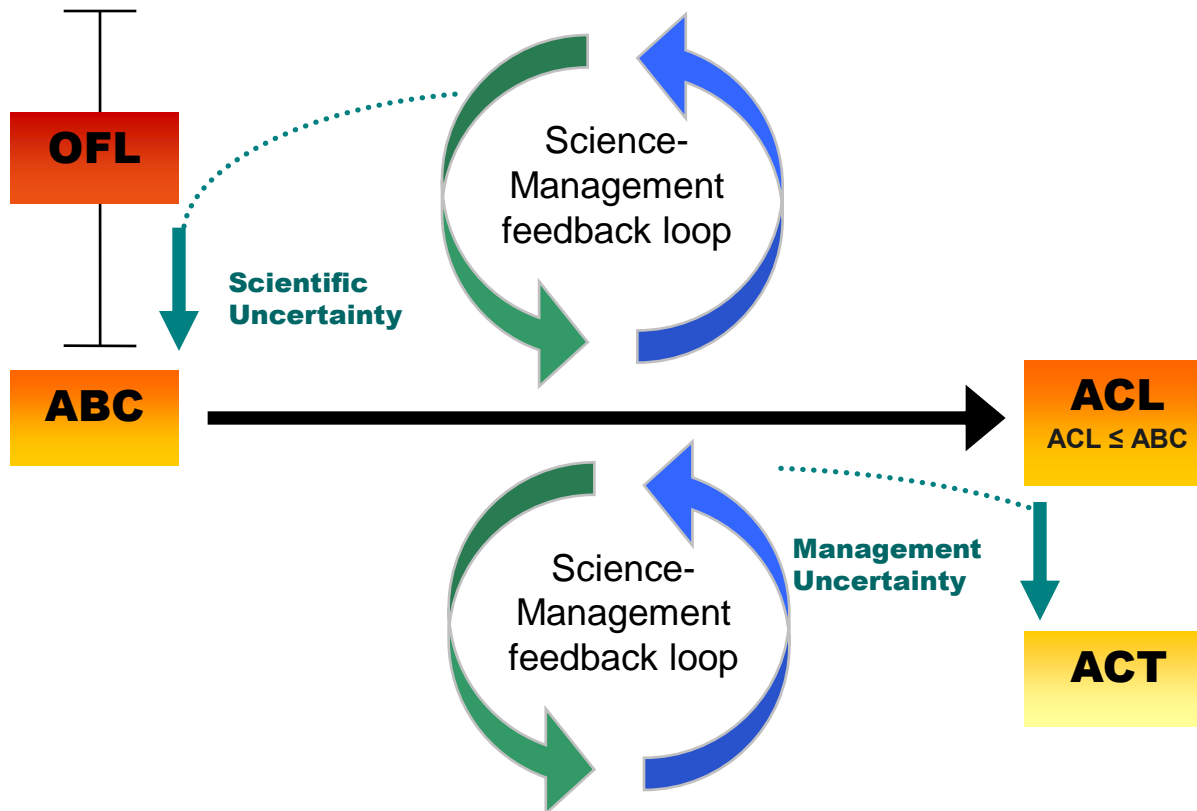
- **Maximum sustainable yield (MSY) is limit NOT target**
- **Fishing mortality rates are reduced when biomass is below target to allow automatic rebuilding**
- **In-season management ensures catch does not exceed quota (TAC), which is less than biological reference points of allowable biological catch (ABC) and overfishing level (OFL)**
- **Prohibited species catch limits and 2 million t. OY cap prevent some target fisheries from achieving ABC allowances**

# The Role of Science in Setting Annual Catch Limits



## SSC Role

## Council Role

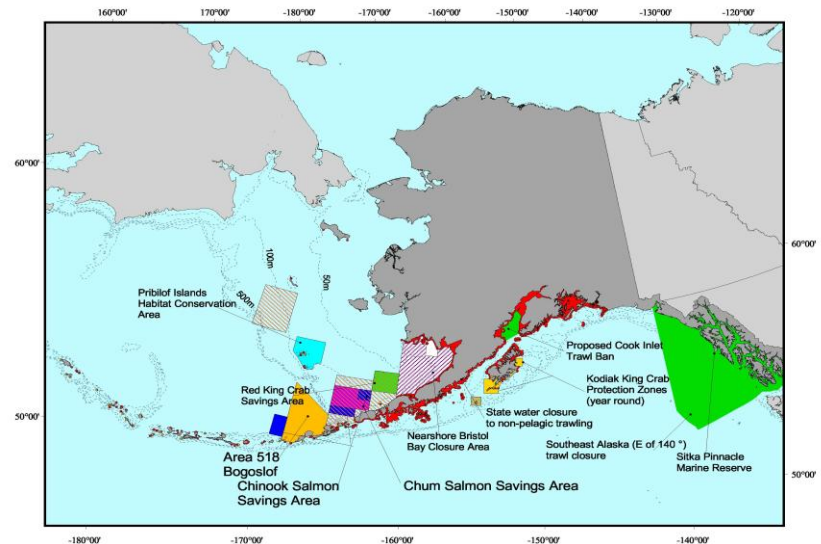


# Ecosystem Based Management Actions in the North Pacific



- **OY cap on total groundfish yield**
- **No target fisheries on forage**
- **Short-tailed albatross take restrictions, Seabird bycatch mitigation devices**
- **No fishing in Steller sea lion foraging area and minimum biomass threshold for sea lion prey**
- **Trawl closures, bottom trawling restrictions**

**CAP on TOTAL TARGET CATCH**  
Total yield < 2 million tonnes



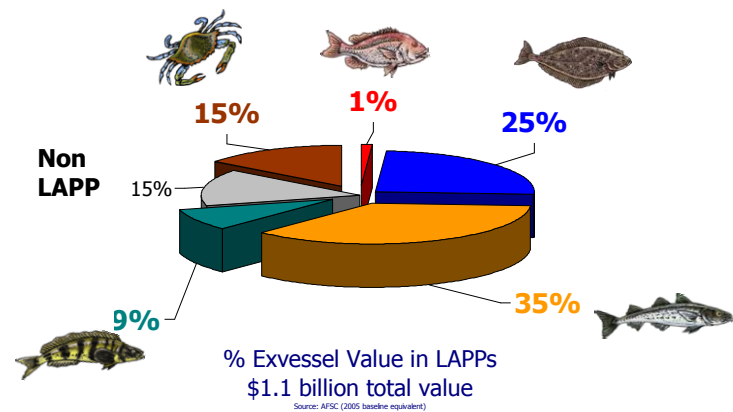
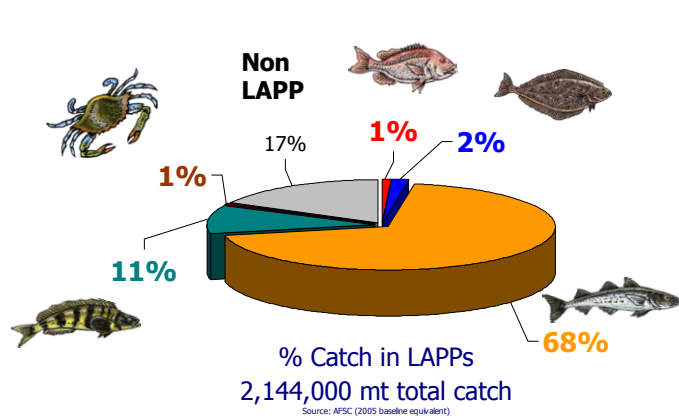
# Limited Access Privilege Programs in the North Pacific

Pioneers in Market-Based Management ◦



## What is a LAPP?

A fishery managed by assigning each person exclusive use of tradable quota for part of the annual catch limit. Commonly known as individual fishing or transferrable quotas (IFQs and ITQs), or “rights-based management”



Roughly 85% of all Federal Fisheries in Alaska are LAPPs

Find out more: [Lunch Poster Session on Alaska's LAPPs w/ Glenn Merrill](#)



# Robust Fishery Observer Program in the North Pacific

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- Comprehensive and sophisticated observer program: among the largest in the world
- First implemented in 1970s
- Science, management and compliance monitoring goals
- Enables real-time inseason management through daily catch and bycatch reports from observers
- Supports stock assessment and ecosystem research through extensive biological sampling
- **Mandatory coverage requirements**
  - 30% on vessels  $\geq 60'$  to  $<125'$  LOA
  - 100% on vessels 125' LOA or longer
  - Shore plant coverage based on monthly deliveries
  - Additional coverage for some programs (e.g. LAPPs)
- **Costs shared by government and industry**
  - Government costs  $\sim$ \$5M/Y for training, logistics, field support, data management, QA/QC
  - Industry costs  $\sim$ \$15M/Y for observer wages, transportation, etc.
- **In 2007**
  - The program trained and deployed 372 individual observers,
  - Observers sampled aboard 298 vessels and at 22 plants, and
  - 35,335 sampling days were completed

# Communicating Sustainability



The ten National Standards of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and provision of the ESA & MMPA underpin US fisheries sustainability standards.

[www.nmfs.noaa.gov/fishwatch](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/fishwatch)



National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

National Marine Fisheries Service



[fishwatch home](#) | [about fishwatch](#) | [management](#) | [gear](#) | [profiles in fishing](#) | [trade](#) | [seafood & health](#)

## FishWatch U.S. Seafood Facts

### Get the Facts!

Search Species

Search NMFS

Anchovy

Atlantic Striped Bass

### Are you seafood savvy?

FishWatch can help you make informed decisions about the seafood you eat by providing you with the most accurate and timely information available on the sustainability of U.S. seafood fisheries. FishWatch is brought to you by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, the U.S. authority on marine fisheries science, conservation, and management.

### What is sustainable seafood?

If you buy fish managed under a U.S. fishery management plan, you can be assured it meets 10 national standards for conservation and sustainable management.



## *Science, Service, Stewardship*



## Questions

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