



**Asia-Pacific
Economic Cooperation**

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Agenda Item: III A

Economy Report – United States

Purpose: Information
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APEC
PHILIPPINES
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**5th Oceans and Fisheries Working Group Meeting
Boracay, Philippines
10-12 May 2015**

**United States of America
Economy Report
5th APEC OFWG Meeting
May 10-12, Boracay, Philippines**

Updates since January 2015

Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Task Force Update

On March 15, 2015, the Presidential Task Force on Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing and Seafood Fraud, co-chaired by the Departments of Commerce and State, released its action plan. This plan articulates the aggressive steps that federal agencies will take both domestically and internationally to implement the recommendations the Task Force made in December 2014.

The plan identifies actions that will strengthen enforcement, create and expand partnerships with state and local governments, industry, and non-governmental organizations, and create a risk-based traceability program to track seafood from harvest to entry into U.S. commerce. The plan also highlights ways in which the United States will work with our foreign partners to strengthen international governance, enhance cooperation, and build capacity to combat IUU fishing and seafood fraud. This includes the Administration's work to secure historic and enforceable environmental provisions in the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a regional trade agreement that includes countries that together account for approximately one-quarter of global marine catch and global seafood exports.

Learn more about the action plan here: http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ia/iuu/noaa_taskforce_report_final.pdf

In addition, the United States is seeking public input now through June 8 via in-person and web seminars, on the principles to be used in determining fish species "at risk" of these illegal activities. The draft principles list will be used to develop a draft list of species for a risk-based seafood traceability program. Recommended principles will need to be measurable, have a reasonable amount of existing data to assess, and be applicable to domestic and/or international fisheries. More information can be found here: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ia/iuu/taskforce.html>.

U.S. Domestic Fisheries Reach Fewest Overfished and Stocks with Overfishing

The 2014 Status of U.S. Fisheries report to Congress was recently released. The number of domestic fish stocks listed as overfished or subject to overfishing has dropped to an all-time low since 1997, when NOAA began tracking stock status. We recognize the progress still needed to ensure sustainable fisheries of all stocks, however the reduction in overfishing and overfished stocks illustrates the effectiveness of science-based management.

To read the full 2014 Status of U.S. Fisheries report, find fish stock status information, and learn more about U.S. fisheries management, go to the NOAA Fisheries website: http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/news/2015/status_of_stocks_2014.html.

Expansion of Two National Marine Sanctuaries Announced

The Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary, located 42 miles north of San Francisco, will be expanded from 529 square miles to 1,286 square miles. The Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary will be expanded from 1,282 square miles to 3,295 square miles of ocean and coastal waters.

The expansion is based on years of public comment and research by NOAA and its scientific partners that identified the nutrient-rich upwelling zone originating off Point Arena and flowing south into the original sanctuaries as one of the most productive in North America.

Cordell Bank and Gulf of Farallones national marine sanctuaries represent globally significant, extraordinarily diverse, and productive marine ecosystems that encompass areas as varied as estuarine

wetlands, rocky intertidal habitat, open-ocean and shallow marine banks. They include areas of major upwelling where nutrients come to the surface and support a vast array of sea life including 25 endangered or threatened species, 36 marine mammal species, including blue, gray and humpback whales, harbor seals, elephant seals, Pacific white-sided dolphins, and one of the southernmost U.S. populations of Steller sea lions; over a quarter million breeding seabirds; and one of the most significant white shark populations on the planet.

Coastal Resilience Study Released

A new NOAA study, published in *Environmental Science and Policy*, notes that the resilience of U.S. coastal communities to storms, flooding, erosion and other threats can be strengthened when they are protected by natural infrastructure such as marshes, reefs, and beaches, or with hybrid approaches, such as a “living shoreline” — a combination of natural habitat and built infrastructure. Analysis included assessing reports and peer-reviewed studies on the strengths and weaknesses of using built infrastructure, such as seawalls or dikes, natural infrastructure, or approaches which combine both. The study focuses on how these approaches help coastal communities reduce their risk of flooding and erosion, as well as additional benefits, and the tradeoffs when decision makers choose one type over another. Although specific to the United States, these findings can be informative or beneficial to international partners examining the possibility of using natural infrastructure for disaster risk reduction in their own communities. More on the study can be found here:

<http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2015/20150429-noaa-study-finds-marshes-reefs-beaches-can-enhance-coastal-resilience.html>.