



## MARINE RESOURCES ADVISORY COUNCIL

### **Meeting Summary**

November 18, 2014, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Evergreen State College

### **Meeting Attendance and Objectives**

The Washington Marine Resources Advisory Council (MRAC) held its sixth meeting on November 18, 2014. The meeting was chaired by Martha Kongsgaard and facilitated by Angie Thomson of EnviroIssues.

Members in attendance: Martha Kongsgaard (Chair), Dick Sheldon, Megan Duffy (Department of Natural Resources alternate for Peter Goldmark), Bill Dewey, Christine Woodward, Garrett Dalan, Hedia Adelsman (Department of Ecology alternate for Maia Bellon), Steve Hollenhorst, Lisa Graumlich, David Allnut (EPA alternate for Dennis McLerran), Paul Dye, Rich Childers, Philip Anderson, Representative Larry Seaquist, Libby Jewett, Representative Dave Hayes

#### MRAC members not in attendance:

Terry Williams, Tony Floor, Brian Allison, Senator Kevin Ranker, Senator Steve Litzow, Mike Cassinelli, T.J. Greene, Norm Dicks, Dennis McLerran, Kelly Wood, James Peters, Tom Davis, Phil Rockefeller

#### Other participants

Betsy Peabody (Puget Sound Restoration Fund), Cathy Cosca (NOAA), Julie Horowitz (Governor's Office), Michal Rechner (DNR), Mindy Roberts (ECY), Tina Echeverria (DOH), Micah Horwith (DNR), Cinde Donoghue (DNR), Al Smith (Grays Harbor MRC), Brian Walsh (Puget Sound Partnership), Libby Hudson (Puget Sound Partnership), Kirsten Feiga (DNR), Jan Newton (WOAC), Brad Warren (Global Ocean Health), , Ray Colby (Makah Tribe), Glen Patrick, (DOH), Teena Reichgott (EPA), Eric Swenson, Erika McPhee-Shaw (WWU)

#### Meeting objectives:

- Discuss MRAC media strategy
- Review submitted decision packages
- Discuss MRAC legislative strategy
- Discuss coordination in ocean acidification landscape
- Discuss future of MRAC

#### Materials distributed:

- Ocean acidification Science and Policy Landscape
- MRAC Long-range Vision

### **Welcome, recent and upcoming happenings**

Chair Martha Kongsgaard opened the meeting and thanked Council members for their participation. She explained the goals of the meeting and the importance of ocean acidification as demonstrated by recent media coverage. She noted that although ocean acidification is a global issue, communicating the local impacts will help the MRAC gain more public support. She added that the Seattle

Aquarium is interested in hosting an event in March 2015, coinciding with the XPrize, to highlight ocean acidification. Martha then invited Council members to share updates on recent happenings related to ocean acidification. Topics discussed included:

- Hedia Adelman explained that the Pacific Coast Collaborative (PCC) is working to establish a date for a 2015 meeting. She recalled that PCC sent a letter to President Obama and Prime Minister Harper to encourage collaboration between federal agencies and California, Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia. She noted that Washington is interested in focusing on taking action on ocean acidification, while California and Oregon have favored discussing monitoring and modeling. Julie Horowitz added that Washington is working with California and Oregon to establish the desired outcomes of the meeting.
- Bill Dewey shared that since the last MRAC meeting he has participated in several meetings and conferences discussing ocean acidification, including the Restore America's Estuaries conference and the Council on Environmental Cooperation (CEC) public advisory committee meeting. He and Christine Woodward spoke about ocean acidification at the CEC meeting. Christine added that they were able to discuss the impact of ocean acidification on communities and engaging Mexico in international work.
- Jan Newton added that the Washington Ocean Acidification Center (WOAC) has been working with NOAA and others on plankton monitoring. NOAA PMEL has developed an equation for predicting pH based on salinity and water temperature, which has been applicable to Puget Sound. They are now evaluating the equation to see if it can be used on the coast. She noted that Terrie Klinger and Richard Feely were participating in a UNESCO meeting to discuss ocean acidification. Martha asked how people typically discuss communications at science conferences. Jan responded that communication is rarely discussed. Lisa Graumlich added that the WOAC does not receive any funding for communication or outreach, making it difficult to dedicate resources to either.
- Libby Jewett added that she will be leading an ocean acidification event as a part of the UNFCCC meeting in Peru. She noted that it is unlikely that the NOAA budget will grow to include ocean acidification. Securing any additional funding for ocean acidification will be an uphill battle.

### **Media Coverage of Ocean Acidification Issues**

Martha began the discussion of media coverage of ocean acidification. Hedia explained the series of events that occurred following the publication of Cliff Mass' blog post about ocean acidification. She explained Cliff Mass posted an article about the lawsuit filed by the Center for Biological Diversity against the US EPA, which took some information about state agency positions on ocean acidification out of context. Maia Bellon, the Director of the Department of Ecology, responded with a blog post clearly stating that ocean acidification is a critical issue for the State, and that the Department of Ecology is on board with the Governor's office. Several other websites published articles discussing the disagreements between the Governor's office and the Department of Ecology, creating some back and forth as Ecology attempted to respond to the articles. Hedia explained that in retrospect, Ecology should have let Maia Bellon's blog response be the final word from the agency. Moving forward, Ecology wants to focus on positive voices in the ocean acidification field, rather than attempt to combat deniers. Lisa noted that Cliff Mass is a physical scientist who focuses on the natural variability of climate change. His position and his blog's following require that the ocean acidification movement solidify its argument and evidence so future issues are easier to dismiss. Erika McPhee-Shaw added that in her experience, the general public does not necessarily listen to

scientists. Instead, it is the personal stories, especially those of shellfish growers, that can have the largest impact. Martha emphasized the importance of being proactive and the benefit of notifying MRAC members of such media issues. Teena Reichgott added that EPA is interested in working with the Department of Ecology on a communications strategy. Dick Sheldon noted that transparency is critical, and the group as a whole needs to be clear about what is currently known and unknown. Paul Dye noted that communications campaigns have to be strategic. In order to create a strong, strategic communications plan, MRAC needs more than just funding; it needs to have a very specific objective. MRAC members need to work together to determine what the outcome of the plan should be. Martha agree with Paul and added that the funding requests to the Legislature will allow for better understanding of the science behind acidification, informing any communications plan. Al Smith asked the group if there is currently a map of all data gathering stations in the Pacific Northwest and how many stations there are. He commented that the group must have the data to bolster any communications plan. Jan responded that there is an existing map on the NANOOS website. She explained that the WOAC is developing a map to track ocean acidification-specific monitoring. She agreed that the scientific evidence is critical to getting the general public to understand that the issue is real, despite recent misunderstandings in the press. Rep. Larry Seaquist explained that he represents a district with over 100 miles of shoreline, and yet in the past six months of campaigning around the district, not a single question came up from any of his constituents about ocean acidification or the environment. He emphasized that the public awareness and interest in the issue is not present. At the legislative level, he added, there is considerable polarization around the Governor's plans. To be successful, the MRAC needs to break down these barriers in the public sector and the government. Martha agreed and added that the best solution may be a multi-pronged one: to have the best science and to communicate it well.

### **Status of Decision Packages**

Martha explained the decision package development process. She noted that although the requests are not directly embedded in any agency budget requests, the decision packages were vetted extensively with OFM before being submitted. She expressed confidence in the requests and emphasized that the funding requested appears to be manageable. She added that the final decision will not be known until the Governor's budget is finalized in late December. Angie added that MRAC received some questions about the difference between carry forward funds and new requests. Hedia clarified that many of the activities included in the decision packages are ongoing, and ongoing activities are often included by the Legislature and OFM in subsequent budgets as carry forward funds, ensuring continued funding. However, in the case of ocean acidification activities, nothing was carried forward so all requests at this time are considered new budget requests. Lisa commented that she liked that each decision package referenced the Blue Ribbon Panel and that the MRAC should communicate the integration of the decision packages and the Blue Ribbon Panel. Al Smith asked if the MRAC has a contingency plan for funding if the Legislature does not fund the decision packages. Martha explained that there is a suite of items that did not make the list of decision packages, and the MRAC is still searching for funding for those items as well. She emphasized the need to be creative and to think differently about how to fund the remaining work. Bill added that the MRAC can write grants for funding from foundations and work with legislators on the committee to increasing funding opportunities. Larry added that even if the MRAC cannot get funding from the Governor's budget, the group should work to find legislative champions for ocean acidification.

### **MRAC's 2015-2016 Legislative Strategy**

Martha explained that the first step to getting funding was to understand how to get ocean acidification requests into the Governor's budget. The next step is to understand which Legislators are interested in ocean acidification and who can be a champion for the issue, on both sides of the aisle. She noted the MRAC will have a briefing session in the House of Representatives in early 2015. Before the session, the MRAC will need to determine the exact message and develop a larger communications strategy. Steve Hollenhorst expressed concern that the MRAC has not made any requests for public outreach funding. Public awareness is extremely important, especially considering the lack of awareness Larry mentioned. Martha agreed and emphasized that the list of decision packages was only a small list of items that need to be funded. The list can be used as a way to amplify the rest of the items that need funding. Bill added that although outreach and education are critical, it is not likely that the government will fund them, so the MRAC needs to prioritize finding foundations or private organizations that are interested in funding either portion. Hedia suggested that foundations should be invited to the event at the Seattle Aquarium in 2015. Paul asked if the MRAC will come together to plan the legislative strategy, or how it will be developed. Martha responded that the Legislative Ad Hoc Committee will meet before the end of the year.

### **Coordination in Ocean Acidification Landscape**

Angie presented the Ocean Acidification Science and Policy Landscape graphic and explained that the document attempts to identify the focus of each organization and its membership to help keep track of how all of the organizations relate. Steve commented that it is helpful, but that there are other organizations missing that do not necessarily fit into the science or policy category. Lisa added that it would be useful to be more explicit about how the organizations are connected to help the MRAC define its role. Bill added that there are organizations on the research side such as labs and universities that should be included. He noted that a map outlining ocean acidification resources on the west coast would also be helpful. He asked if there is any other organization connecting agencies. Jan responded that NANOOS and the WOAC both integrate many partners. Hedia noted that a map could be helpful, but it should be simple and easy to understand. Paul noted that he is less interested in an institutional roadmap and more interested in understanding the coordination. For example, he would like to know more about how the PCC and West Coast Governor's Alliance (WCGA) are related or different. Hedia responded that the PCC includes the Governor's and their policy directors. The WCGA is at the staff level, focused more generally on climate change and sea level rise with some work on ocean acidification. Martha added that she participates in PCC calls and will continue to do so to keep MRAC informed. Paul commented that the missing piece he sees in the landscape document is the adaptation and industry portion. Shellfish farms implementing the adaptation tactics informed by science, but not necessarily a part of the policy. Martha agreed that an industry category might be appropriate to help understand the work happening on the ground.

### **MRAC in 2015 and Beyond**

Martha presented the MRAC Long-range Vision and noted that the MRAC does more than just document and track recommendations, and must now ask what comes next for the group. Part of MRAC's responsibility is to advise the WOAC, as well as to provide the Governor's office and State Legislature with a report explaining how funds have been used and what work has been completed. Paul commented that the status report should be a wrap-up document, summarizing what work is

underway, what work has been completed, and what work remains. It should be written concisely so that legislators will read it. It should explain what the MRAC's future priorities are and why those priorities are important. Hedia added that the report should include other work being done on ocean acidification, even if it not part of the latest funding. Garrett Dalan added that the Washington coast feels a greater impact from ocean acidification, and needs to implement immediate adaptation strategies. He suggested that MRAC focus on ocean acidification rather than constantly make the connection to climate change. Climate change deniers will then automatically dismiss ocean acidification. Instead, the MRAC should focus on the immediate impacts of ocean acidification, such as those to shellfish growers. As one of the few organizations charged to focus on ocean acidification specifically, the MRAC can make a greater impact by narrowing its focus. Martha agreed and added that the MRAC is putting all of its energy towards ocean acidification. Rich Childers commented that the MRAC is still in the framing state. It is not trying to solve a problem at this point, but rather trying to define it. The data sets and survey work will inform the issue and solutions, but in the meantime, the organization is still defining the issue. Martha agreed and added that the decision packages suggested action on the ground to help the MRAC better understand the problem. Bill noted that the MRAC needs to get a better understanding of the resources it has available. Steve suggested that the MRAC could become a sounding board but also an encourager of the conversation that is occurring among different entities working on ocean acidification. He added that the MRAC should move away from evaluation efforts and towards developing the discourse for discussing the solutions. Bill commented that the MRAC Vision document should be amended to say the MRAC should "recommend policies and adaptation strategies based on science." Paul agreed and added that there is not enough mention of adaptation in the Vision document. Hearing from MRAC members on what is and is not working could be useful to continue the adaptation discussion. Jan responded that the MRAC does advise the work of the WOAC. The feedback from the MRAC and its ad hoc committees directly influenced RFPs published and the work that is being done. Hedia suggested that if the MRAC plans to have a meeting on the coast in 2015, it should coordinate with the coastal Marine Resources Committees. Garrett agreed and noted that having an executive conversation for those that are aware of ocean acidification and a public conversation for those who are not as aware would be beneficial.

Martha noted that the MRAC will sunset in 2016, but the sunset is not necessarily set in stone if the group can prove that it serves a demonstrable purpose. She asked the group what it would mean for the MRAC to disappear and for ocean acidification to become a part of daily life. Larry responded that if the MRAC explicitly states what it will do, then state agencies and the Legislature will know what to do in response, even after the MRAC sunsets. In that case, the MRAC then becomes a catalyst. Paul suggested that the MRAC should pick bench marks that will serve as indicators of success. For example, having ocean acidification considered a coastal hazard by the state Coastal Hazard Resilience Network before the MRAC sunsets would be a success. Bill commented that because the science and understanding of ocean acidification evolve so quickly, he does not understand how the MRAC can cease to exist. The adaptation strategies will continue to change and to be reprioritized, and the MRAC should continue to lead that conversation. The state leadership will feel some obligation to support the work of the MRAC if it continues to be a leader in the ocean acidification field. Hedia suggested that the MRAC write a budget proviso to extend the group for at least ten years. The proviso would not be a policy decision, but rather a budget decision. The MRAC should do this as soon as possible, while it has the support of the Governor's office. Julie agreed to help in creating the budget proviso to extend the life of the MRAC.

### **2014/2015 Puget Sound Partnership Action Agenda Update**

Bryan Walsh presented the Action Agenda to the group and explained that the 2012 executive order directed the Partnership to work to advance the Blue Ribbon Panel recommendations. The Partnership used the decision packages the MRAC submitted to inform the near-term items on the Action Agenda. The group landed on several actions:

- 4.1.1: Support ongoing function of MRAC and the WOAC
- 4.1.2: Improve, expand, and enhance ocean acidification monitoring and modeling
- 4.1.3: Ocean acidification mitigation strategies

Martha explained that the Partnership is tasked with doing a full performance management analysis. The system is quite robust and evaluates the action taking on particular items and how funding was used. The MRAC's status report discussed earlier will not necessarily use the same system as the Partnership. Hedia suggested that rather than asking what actions the Partnership is taking to help with ocean acidification, the approach should be to identify actions in the Partnership's work that are essential to ocean acidification. Martha responded that there is some concern that without an MRAC, the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Panel need to live somewhere. The Action Agenda is a roadmap for recovery. Hedia added that since the Partnership focuses on local sources, it is important to link them to ocean acidification. State agencies should start integrating ocean acidification into their local sources actions. She suggested that the most important near-term actions are those that deal with local sources. Martha commented that she would relay the comments to the Partnership and see what changes are possible. Bill noted that the Partnership was the logical place to track the progress of the Blue Ribbon Panel. Many actions still need to be tracked, and although some work is captured in other actions, some is not. He expressed concern that some relevant, ongoing work may get lost or not counted. Julie added that the Governor's office has been working on next phase of Washington Shellfish Initiative, which started in 2011 and called out Blue Ribbon Panel. Now they are looking at continuing to include ocean acidification in the next phase of the initiative. They have talked about listing Key Early Actions as stated in the Blue Ribbon Panel and suggesting that all of the actions would not be tracked in the initiative, but rather by the MRAC and Partnership. Bill expressed some concern that all ocean acidification and shellfish monitoring would be tracked by the Partnership, given that coastal communities may feel they are not being properly represented by the Puget Sound Partnership. Jan noted that biological response research is currently listed under near-term action 4.1.1. She emphasized that if this near-term action is changed in any way, the biological response research should not be lost. Betsy Peabody suggested that near-term action 4.1.3 be rephrased as "investigate ocean acidification mitigation strategies" so as not to give the impression that the strategies are currently being implemented. The group thanked the Partnership for the update on the Action Agenda.

### **Next steps**

Martha noted that there seemed to be consensus around establishing a comprehensive communications strategy, and that she will begin taking steps to develop one. Garrett added that the WCMAC will be working on a public advisory of the marine spatial plan. In summer 2015, WCMAC will request feedback from the MRAC. Steve noted that the planning group is meeting for the Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference and encouraged members to contact him for more information. Martha added that MRAC members should expect updates on the legislative strategy, budget proviso, and Seattle Aquarium event in upcoming months.

Martha thanked everyone for participating and comments and adjourned the meeting.

**Action Items**

- Angie and her team will work to develop a map of ocean acidification monitoring and research in Washington
- Angie and her team will update the Ocean Acidification Landscape document to reflect comments made during the meeting
- The Legislative ad hoc committee will begin developing a legislative strategy in the next month
- An ad hoc committee will be created to address communications and outreach strategies
- The MRAC will draft a budget proviso to be included in the Governor's budget that would extend MRAC for several years