



American Samoa Public Listening Session Outputs

March 30, 2016

Pago Pago, American Samoa

Over 30 people attended the public listening session to provide input, including representatives from the local government, recreational users and commercial users of the coastal and ocean areas of American Samoa, and members of the community interested in the coasts and ocean of American Samoa.

The following are the outputs of the two working groups by question. Individual responses are compiled as submitted, unedited except for spelling/grammar. The group responses are those submitted following review and group discussion of individual responses.

Question 1: Why are the ocean waters around American Samoa important to you? Why do you care about them?

Group 1 Individual Responses:

1. Protection of resources for future generations.
2. The ocean waters around American Samoa support the economy, ecology, and culture of the region. They support life.
3. Our canneries rely on fish supplied by our Samoa-based fisheries companies, some of which fish within American Samoan waters.
4. Our oceans provide one of the main hazards for the residents/visitors of this Territory. Hence, I am interested to know more about how I can serve and protect the marine and coastal community, and how we can improve our existing marine products.
5. It is important because it is part of the Samoan culture, and part of my traditional responsibility.
6. We are islanders, and the sea is important in our culture.
7. The livelihoods of the people.
8. Economic sustenance.
9. Cultural importance.
10. Protect our lands.
11. Food.
12. For recreation.
13. For food.
14. Why our waters are important is mainly to provide the much-needed resources that American Samoa, as remote islands like ours need.
15. I have lived here 43 years. I want to see balance between commercial and recreational uses.

16. The ocean waters are our life.
17. It is my livelihood. The fish I eat are from it. The natural resources should remain pristine and clean. Our remoteness is part of this.
18. Because it is my home.
19. I am concerned about policies passed in Washington D.C. that affect the livelihoods of the citizens of American Samoa.
20. Local control will protect private enterprise investors, primarily the American Samoa Tuna Boat Association.
21. Our waters provide a bond to our region as bring an important and valuable source of marine resources.
22. Our waters provide a source of income to feed and care for local families and villages.
23. Treaty protections of use and resources.
24. Enjoy family gatherings at the beach.
25. My job depends on our ocean waters. Vessels bring back marine resources.
26. Provides food for my family.

Group 2 Individual Responses:

1. Healthy reefs/ ocean will help sustain local fisheries, assisting in self sufficiency
2. Important for food, commerce, transportation, fishing, harvesting the reefs, etc from economic view tourism, though diving, scenic tours, whale watching, etc.
3. Food
4. Recreation and Transportation
5. Water and bathing
6. Livelihood of the people
7. Nutrition
8. Traditional lifestyle of our people revolves around our land and water (ocean). We depend on our ocean for sea food. It would be true to say that traditionally, we eat almost anything that moves in the ocean.
9. Food is important from the ocean- fish, shrimp, crabs, oysters, etc, etc, etc
10. Conservation and management of our ocean resources is traditionally taken care by village council of chiefs.
11. Economy
12. Our local economy now is very depended on the fishery resources and this makes it more important for protecting our ocean and its resources.
13. Waters important to create diverse economy. Tourists love fishing, diving, swimming. Can't depend on canneries.
14. Healthy reefs will attract tourists and help local economy.
15. Economy depends on tuna fishery. Without it, territory economy collapses.
16. Huge draw for tourism money.
17. They are our traditional fishing grounds for the survival of our people. The natural beauty of our waters should remain untouched by outside capitalism. Our ocean waters are the passage east and west for trade.
18. Shipping lifeline->goods to enter territory
19. Transportation
20. Soul level ambiance (beauty)
21. Corals are beautiful to look at and yet they are dying

22. I care about the ocean because the next generation needs to look at the beauty of it, like how we currently enjoy it.
23. Life sustaining (island creation, food, erosion control, etc.)
24. Related to my livelihood. I believe the health of the oceans dictate the health of entire planet.
25. My heritage. My livelihood (commerce sustains jobs). I love fishing. I do not want any more Monuments or MPAs.
26. When you stop fishing lie monuments and sanctuaries, then you take away a right that is a gift from forefathers.
27. Oceans are my happy place, want healthy oceans for the future.
28. Teach my children how to use it. Samoans have been doing this for centuries because we do not play with our fish.
29. These public hearing processes are good if used properly. An ocean that lays dormant and is not used is hurtful to the indigenous fathers.
30. Global health, weather, etc.
31. Conservation and management
32. Recreation
33. Because I like to swim and fish. Life begins from the water so it is important to keep the waters clean.
34. I like swimming and other water sports. I came because EPA has condemned the whole island so I feel like there is nowhere available to swim.
35. Local administration and oversight too much federal oversight.

Group 1 Group Responses:

1. Food
2. Economy
3. Culture
4. Natural resources
5. Our voices being heard back in Washington D.C.
6. Livelihoods
7. Recreation
8. Protection/preservation of our lands and sea
9. Protection/preservation of our indigenous rights and treaties
10. Natural hazards
11. Treaty protections
12. Life cycle

Group 2 Group Responses:

1. Food
2. Economy
3. Culture
4. Beauty
5. Livelihoods
6. Heritage
7. Recreation

Question 2: *What do you believe are the most important issues currently facing the ocean waters around American Samoa?*

Group 1 Individual Responses:

1. Over-regulation.
2. Climate change.
3. Under-utilized by local residents.
4. Fear of foreign fishing boats in the area causing overfishing.
5. Protection of these waters and its marine resources.
6. Climate change.
7. Overfishing.
8. Water quality.
9. Lack of enforcement of littering, which has impacts on the ocean.
10. Pollution.
11. Federal intervention/federal rule.
12. Self-governance and self-determination.
13. Determining the needs of the large-scale, small traditional, and recreation fisheries that depend on American Samoa's waters.
14. Lack of due process (i.e., individual rights being expressed).
15. American Samoa Constitution is outdated and amendment process too difficult.
16. Confusion among locals regarding local versus federal jurisdiction. It is important to clarify different roles and players locally and nationally.
17. Maintaining the healthy ecosystem that the waters support.
18. Maintaining sound ecological and environmental practices.
19. Global warming.
20. Sustainability of marine resources.
21. Opening of the 50-mile zone (LVPA) to the long liners.
22. Federal ownership of near and off-shore waters.
23. Access of traditional fishing grounds (US purse seiners).
24. American Samoa and all Territories as members of Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) in regional treaties.
25. Misunderstanding of facts on policies.
26. Lack of due process by federal government with native peoples.
27. Lack of local government support for local commercial fishermen.
28. Security of our borders.

Group 2 Individual Responses:

1. Uninformed federal decisions impacting local use of the resource
2. Pres. Obama making our entire EEZ a monument like Hawaii
3. Federal regulations are often in conflict with traditional use of our ocean resources. Federal regulations are most often tailored toward the US mainland
4. Federal process of making regulations is sometimes not consistent.
5. Fisheries are sometimes over-regulated.
6. Too many Federal regulations that stop our development (NEPA and NMFs)
7. Level of local control on usage regulation
8. Climate change
9. Marine debris pollution

10. Overfishing
11. Climate change
12. Land-based sources of pollution
13. Human activities
14. Poor management
15. Pollution/littering in the ocean
16. Too much littering
17. Pollution-modern can drinks, plastic stuffs, diapers, cans, bottles
18. Land based pollution
19. Starkist and tri-marine fish supplies
20. Fishing
21. Fish extraction rate
22. Federal agencies sometimes do not communicate with each other. Example: WPFMC set 50 mile LVPA at 50 miles, set Rose Atoll as a sanctuary. There was a 10 mile difference.
23. Federal regulators not listening to local population. E.g. LVPA; no fishing MPAs
24. There is little to no overfishing. To not use resources is wasting resources.
25. Sustainability vs. Short term economic needs. Competition between the two.
26. Accurate characterization of resources
27. Lack of public awareness regarding local fisheries
28. No comprehensive plan taking into account wind, solar, shark feeding etc developments
29. No vested long term interest by main players (regulatory and commercial).
30. Oceans are good for recreational uses boating fisheries, swimming, snorkeling. Take care of it.
31. EEZ
32. Sanctuaries
33. No traditional input with our successors to our treaty chiefs.
34. You want local input but have not gone out to Samoan Affairs to reach the entire local population.

Group 1 Group Responses:

1. Climate change
2. Balancing the needs of all users (example: large-scale commercial fishers vs. small-scale commercial and local recreation fishers)
3. Access for all
4. Pollution
5. Sustainability
6. Security
7. Water quality
8. Lack of due process with native peoples and villages; unclear which federal appellate court to go to.
9. Revisit political status and ownership over waters
10. Federal planning and regulatory controls before determine political status
11. Discrimination against who should and should not have access and rights to marine resources
12. Clarify local and federal government agency roles, goals, partnerships, and stakeholders
13. Jurisdictional issues (local versus federal) as they relate to the rest of the region (i.e., American Samoa as a Small Island Developing State)
14. Can I continue to get my food from the sea?

Group 2 Group Responses:

1. Federal over-regulation
2. Pollution
3. Littering
4. Climate change
5. (a)Overfishing (b) Overfishing is not a problem
6. Lack of federal agency communication. Inconsistent.
7. Lack of local control
8. Balancing uses/ Sustainability
9. Lack of information/ planning

Question 3: In 10 to 15 years time, what would we see happening in American Samoa as a result of the coastal and ocean waters being effectively managed and multiple ocean uses balanced?

Group 1 Individual Responses:

1. Healthy, sustainable, and resilient ocean resources.
2. Co-existence of many uses, with plentiful fish, cleaner waters, and access for all.
3. Life goes on.
4. Maybe all American Samoans living offshore will migrate back and enjoy the ocean and its resources.
5. Life as usual.
6. Maintenance of American Samoa as the pearl of the Pacific.
7. Bountiful, sustained marine resources.
8. Clean waters.
9. Thriving waters with fish and marine resources.
10. More people will depend on the sea for sustenance.
11. Canneries will leave and we will not miss them, as tourism will thrive.
12. Clean.
13. Two canneries are still operating within American Samoa.
14. Ideally, fair representation by all those living here who care for our ocean waters; our Senators, Attorney General, and legislative representatives will be based on our island population.
15. More American Samoans participate in industries related to our ocean resources, and appreciate our ocean resources.
16. Entirely local control and efficient management of our waters out to the 200 NM EEZ boundary.
17. More American Samoans learn to swim and go fishing.
18. American Samoa is still the hub for tuna canning and the tuna fleet in the U.S. Pacific.
19. People still are able to fish for any purpose.
20. A sound economy, thriving ecology, and the continued development of local communities.
21. I would like to still be able to catch game fish as a result of growing fish stocks.
22. Our ocean waters are off-limit to rich oil rigs.
23. Clean waters.
24. Fishing is good, the economy is great.
25. Optimum maximum yield in pelagic and bottom fishing; the data show sustainability in our fishing practices and fish stocks.
26. A more effective partnership between all players (government, non-government, etc.).

27. Roles amongst individuals, organizations, government agencies (both local and federal) are clear.
28. Improved discussions at the local level.
29. Improved marine forecasting/modeling products from the National Weather Service.
30. Our communities are more resilient to natural hazards.
31. The tuna canneries are locally-owned.

Group 2 Individual Responses:

1. Pristine coral reefs.
2. Sustainable fisheries.
3. Sustainable tourism.
4. Clear picture of shared jurisdictions in overlap areas.
5. Effectively managed by whom and multiple ocean uses balanced how? We need to be a de-colonized territory first to move forward.
6. Access to commercial and recreational opportunities.
7. A singular vision to maximize uses of coastal and ocean resources.
8. Better response to energy needs- sustainable energy- windmills, OTEC, wave generators.
9. Streamlined management of coastal/ocean resources with enhanced coordination of local/fed agencies and communities.
10. Resource bonanza (minerals etc)
11. Less trash
12. Everyone will know how to swim and fish
13. Fewer harmful algal blooms
14. More abundant fishing resources
15. Improved local economy (Tourism, fishing)
16. More recreation inshore and between islands
17. Sea food supply for our people will be better
18. We will continue to enjoy fishing and water sports
19. More sea transportation between islands
20. More fishing boats! If fish stocks rebound, fishing will be economically viable again.
21. More sea bird nesting and sea turtle nesting.
22. More fish to eat! And u'u (coconut crab)!
23. Healthier reefs
24. Cleaner waters encourage people to get out and swim and play. Fewer ocean related illnesses.
25. It would look beautiful!
26. Healthier reefs with rebounding fish stocks. Based on elder interviews, reef fish and shelf are more scarce than when they were young. Hopefully we will see numbers increase.
27. Thriving economy in different areas- water sports activities, hotels fully occupied tourism at an all time high.
28. Our grandchildren will continue to enjoy the beautiful ocean and swim happily.
29. Improved sustainable fisheries and economic development. Thriving coastal and ocean resources for American Samoa to enjoy.
30. Fewer sharks, more fish, robust economy with balanced commercial fishing and tourism.
31. Beaches would not need EPA warnings.
32. We see a sustainable lifestyle with reduced Federal actions perhaps things roll uphill to DC.
33. Improved and effective collaboration among local and federal partners.
34. If effectively managed, resources would be as of today, with less pollution and land run off.

35. More control of environmental resources
36. Robust fishing industry
37. As clean or cleaner near shore.
38. Beautiful ocean. Plenty fish. Plenty food. Everyone happy.

Group 1 Group Responses:

1. Clean waters
2. Lots of fish; plentiful shellfish (including lobster, oysters) across all islands
3. Strong economy
4. Tuna canneries are: (a) closed; (b) open and locally-owned; (c) still there, as the hub for the US Pacific
5. More people have learned how to swim
6. Effective partnerships (including with neighboring Island Nations)
7. Sustainability
8. Everyone's voice is being heard in the management/decision-making process
9. Tourism
10. Local control and effective management of the EEZ
11. Clear role of all actors/organizations; better understanding of how they contribute
12. Improved understanding of climate change impacts and weather/meteorological products
13. Resilience
14. Increased local awareness of sustainability and stewardship
15. Access to ocean resources for all; no discrimination
16. Public awareness and cultural practices increased
17. Improved local discussions
18. We are able to fish for any purpose

Group 2 Group Responses:

1. Collective management
2. Due process to get to the vision
3. Optimistic
4. Accessibility for ocean users (cleaner waters with less closures)
5. Diverse economy (fisheries, tourism, cannery)
6. Effective management
7. Appropriate management
8. Maximized resource use
9. Sustainable use of resources (beauty, uses, resources)

Question Four: Does the proposed vision statement (below) adequately capture the key concepts that you have shared and discussed tonight for American Samoa's ocean waters? What changes do you suggest?

Proposed vision statement: "American Samoa's sustainable oceans, coasts, and developing communities lead to a thriving ecology, economy, and culture."

Group 1 Individual Responses:

1. This statement is so general and does not exude/reflect the passion we have for the importance of our ocean waters, and our need to protect them.
2. Yes, the statement looks good.
3. In essence, the statement covers what we have discussed tonight.
4. Yes, but add three words, as follows: "... oceans, coasts, and developing resilient communities lead to ... culture, awareness, and partnerships."
5. Yes, this is fine.
6. Change the word "ecology" to "ecosystem and habitat".
7. I absolutely object to the American Samoa Ocean Planning Team draft vision statement because it does not represent the customary planning process, which includes input from the chiefs and villages.
8. No. I am tired of government doing things without public input.
9. No. This statement denies due process.

Group 2 Individual Responses:

1. Proper planning and sustainable use of American Samoa's oceans, coasts, and communities will lead to a thriving ecology, economy, and culture.
2. Vision statement is perfect! Authors are brilliant!
3. Better communication between Federal regulation and local needs regarding permitting, usage, local needs, etc. More local input to decisions. More input from the community.
4. Change ecology to environment.
5. Access/ data/ info for improved engagement.
6. If you want change, everyone helps out. Community services through ecology, economy, and culture.
7. Include social to capture access.
8. Too much Federal regulation. Responsible local management, not conservation at all costs. Less pollution.
9. Almost impossible with conflicts between Federal needs, local needs, commercial needs. Otherwise pray utopia.
10. Our economy with centers around the fishery resources will continue to improve and employment for our people will be safe.
11. Well informed leaders with data.

Group 1 Group Responses:

1. Yes, the statement is fine as written; essence covers everything we discussed.
2. Yes, the statement is fine after revisions (word additions/replacements).
3. No, the statement is too general.

- No, the statement must be rejected because it was developed without meaningful due process, and needs more local input. Meaningful process requires adequate notice and requires going to villages and traditional leadership structure, to meet with and hear from both.

Group 2 Group Responses:

- Yes, the statement is fine after revisions (change ecology to environment, add social).
- See process recommendations

Group 2 Process Recommendations:

- Generate enthusiasm (Fautasi enigma)
- Due process
- Listen, listen, listen!
- Commitment. Increase visibility and stay visible.
- More transparency. Share intent.
- Authenticity related to the process
- Ensure participation/ loop in OSA and chiefs. Provide translations. Go to Monday meetings and provide a briefing.
- Funder/ donor visibility
- Conversations with village leaders, key people, champions.
- Keep the process open to existing leaders, public
- Rely on local stakeholders to ensure we are on the right track
- Identify the right approach based on models and then integrate

RESPONSE RATE SUMMARY

Group 1

<i>Question #</i>	<i># of individual responses</i>	<i># of group responses</i>	<i>All responses</i>
1	26	12	38
2	28	14	42
3	31	18	49
4	9	4	13
TOTAL	94	48	142

Group 2

<i>Question #</i>	<i># of individual responses</i>	<i># of group responses</i>	<i>All responses</i>
1	35	7	42
2	34	9	43
3	38	9	47
4	11	2	13
TOTAL	118	27	145