



American Samoa Ocean Planning Team
 Stakeholder Listening Sessions Summary
 June 25 – July 6, 2018

The American Samoa Ocean Planning Team held listening sessions led by Sarah Pautzke (Pacific Islands Regional Planning Body), Miranda Foley (ecoLOGIC), Chris King (AS Port Administration), and Tony Langkilde (AS Department of Commerce). Targeted stakeholder sessions were scheduled for commercial fishermen, port users, recreational fishermen, and non-consumptive recreationalists. Four community sessions were also slated, as well as a trip to Manua to speak with the villages on Ta’u, Ofu, and Olesega. For the community sessions, due to scheduling conflicts, we were only able to meet with the village of Leone. The trip to Manua was cancelled for weather reasons as well as several key village leaders and residents being on Tutuila for an annual church conference.

During the commercial fisherman meeting, Manu`a Representative Faufano Autele attended. He offered his support of the ocean planning effort and welcomed us to host meetings in Manu`a. During the recreational non-consumptive meeting, attendees offered support of the ocean planning effort.

The goal of the listening sessions were to solicit feedback on the AS Ocean Plan’s objectives, as well as to demonstrate the functionality of overlaying proposed uses over current use maps, and proposed uses against flood hazards. The maps demonstrated how future uses could be analyzed to make determinations about the best siting for new uses.

Summarized feedback:

- Add an action in Goal 1 to assess locations for seawalls, stairs, revetments, and other shoreline structures to improve resiliency against natural disasters and coastal erosion and increase ocean safety and health.
- Include information about the Longline Vessel Prohibited Area (LVPA) as it relates to spatial fishing restrictions in Goal 2.
- Goal 2, Objective 3: Add *as related to coastal and ocean uses*.
- Goal 2, Objective 4: Add *and ocean users*.
- Goal 2, Objective 5: Refine to say *local food security* and add *at all water depths*.
- Include more information about recreational fishing in Goal 2 uses.

Feedback by Goal:

Session Group	Goal 1	Goal 2
Port Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives aligned well with the goal • Map contaminated areas (No swimming zones) in GIS to provide real time hazards to the community 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add “Spatially plan” to Objective 2 to align with other objectives • Include uplands in Objective 2 because it is a main source of pollution • Infrastructure is an issue with respect to healthiness of our coasts, which is where spatial planning could help by pinpointing areas of potential infrastructure while taking into account marine wildlife and habitats, and risk areas to mitigate conflicts. • Dead animals, such as stray dogs, that are not removed are a danger to the cleanliness of waterways and the ocean 	
Leone Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need healthy and safe coasts so people can swim safely. Improving seawalls and stairs can help. • If the objectives are accomplished, American Samoa will be beautiful. • Are there maps for pre and post tsunami coastal uses? Is there any data being collected in that respect? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 1: Identify vulnerable areas that might need protecting with respect to coastal uses and development • Objective 3: Look to village council policies regarding traditional values and knowledge • Objective 5: Change it to “local” food security.... “at all water depths.” And coordinate with local enforcement to ensure food security.
Recreational Fishermen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 1: Add language regarding identifying habitat necessary for life stages of species of interest (e.g. yellowfin). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 1: WPFMC and NMFS partner in sustainably using fisheries by identifying spatial strategies for sustainable fisheries, which will also provide opportunities for enhanced recreational fishing that will increase tourism and consequently improve the economy. • Objective 3: Add “as related to coastal and ocean uses” to the end. • Objective 4: Add “and ocean users” to the end. • Objective 5: Recreational fishermen do not sell their fish (it could be considered “cultural fishing” because the fish are given away).

Additional Feedback

We were encouraged to develop a strategic plan for the actions specific to the overall goals and objectives to ensure the AS Ocean Plan is implemented.

Leone asked that seawalls be mentioned in the plan, particularly that locations for seawalls and revetments, as well as other shoreline structures, be assessed to improve resiliency against natural disasters and coastal erosion and increase ocean safety and health. The village supported the objective regarding marine debris efforts because it impacts them directly – there is a longline vessel broken in half off their shore. Lastly, Leone requested that the connection with the Coastal Management Program regarding the upland wetland be explored; i.e. what is the connection between the AS Ocean Plan and the uplands of Leone.

Recreational fishermen had several ideas for projects or management actions that could be taken. Recreational data regarding impacts of longline fishing within 12 nm of Tutuila were presented at the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council in June 2018. Data showed that fish were either smaller since the shrinkage of the Longline Vessel Prohibited Area from 50 to 12 nm, or that fishermen caught nothing, which is purported to never having happened during the 50 nm closure. Recreational fishermen requested that, within the ocean plan, managers look into options for spatial strategies to reduce conflicts between user groups. This includes results discussed above, but also includes gear conflict reduction (i.e., longline vessels may not be over the banks the recreational fishermen are fishing, but their longline gear is drifting over the area).

The recreational fishermen requested that within Goal 1, research be conducted that analyzes habitats to identify nursery habitats for yellowfin tuna, and identifies the habitat needs for different life stages of species of interest across the shore, banks, and open ocean. They also welcomed closing the outer banks to commercial fishing to sustain recreational fishing in those locations by protecting the prime habitat located on the outer banks.

Recreational fishermen asked that enforcement of illegal fishing in U.S. waters by foreign vessels be captured in the AS Ocean Plan within the actions identified for enforcement, and that enforcement mechanisms be mapped from strongest to weakest.