

## Long-term Marine Protected Area Socioeconomic Monitoring Program for Commercial and Commercial Passenger Fishing Vessel Fisheries in the State of California

### Perspectives on the Health and Well-being of California's Commercial Fishing Communities in Relation to the MPA Network *Members of Bodega Bay's Commercial Fishing Community*

The Marine Protected Area (MPA) Human Uses Project Team<sup>1</sup> is hosting over 30 virtual focus group conversations with fishermen throughout California from July - October 2020. The information shared during these discussions is a core component of a study to gather and communicate information about the health and well-being of commercial and Commercial Passenger Fishing Vessel (CPFV) fishing communities in California, including impacts from MPAs. A key goal of this study is to convey fishermen's perspectives about the unique challenges and opportunities that fishing communities are facing to managers and decision-makers through a series of summaries and other products. The results of this study will be made available to inform discussions about MPA and fisheries management, including California's 10-year MPA network performance review.

For each focus group, a small number of fishermen representing a range of fishing interests were brought together to:

- provide their perspectives on their fishing community's health and well-being, including environmental conditions, markets, infrastructure, and social and political relationships, including impacts of MPAs; and
- share feedback about their focus group experience to help improve the process for future focus groups.

The focus groups included quantitative questions where fishermen were asked to score their port on various topics and an open-ended qualitative discussion followed each question. This document summarizes both quantitative and qualitative findings from the focus group. More details about the methods used for each focus group discussion, including questions asked to participants and the approach to recruiting focus group participants, is available on the Project Team's website, <https://mpahumanuses.com/>. The website also hosts focus group conversation summaries and an interactive data explorer, which will be components of the final products developed upon completion of this project in 2021. For questions about this project, including focus group engagement and the content of this document, please contact us at [hello@mpahumanuses.com](mailto:hello@mpahumanuses.com).

**Port: Bodega Bay**

**Date: Thursday, July 9, 2020**

**Participants: Scott Bertelsen, Ernie Camilleri, Lorne Edwards, Jeff Kaseman, Ryan Kozlowski, Dick Ogg**

#### **Overview**

On July 9, 2020, six commercial fishermen operating out of Bodega Bay participated in the first focus group conversation, which was deemed a pilot. A high-level summary of the conversation is captured below, including:

- the numerical final scores (via Zoom polls) for questions asked within each theme;
- a summary of participant's perceptions, insights, and perspectives related to each question; and

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<sup>1</sup> Consisting of Humboldt State University researchers, Ecotrust, and Strategic Earth Consulting

- direct quotes from participants that help to illustrate sentiments in their own words.

### Guidance for Interpreting Figures

There are 15 figures displaying participant responses for those questions that had a numerical/quantitative component. In those figures, the percentages located directly above the bar (between 1 (low) and 5 (high)) represent the percent of participants in the focus group who selected that response. The total number of focus group participants is labeled 'n' to the right of each figure. The length of the purple bar indicates the average rating for each question, also labeled 'avg.' to the right, and 'dev.' refers to standard deviation, or the extent to which scores deviated from one another. There are also two figures on pages 10 and 16 that display all of the average responses for each question in the well-being and MPA sections, respectively, from highest to lowest.

In addition to providing feedback to help refine our process and approach for future focus groups, participants requested several resources be shared with them, including:

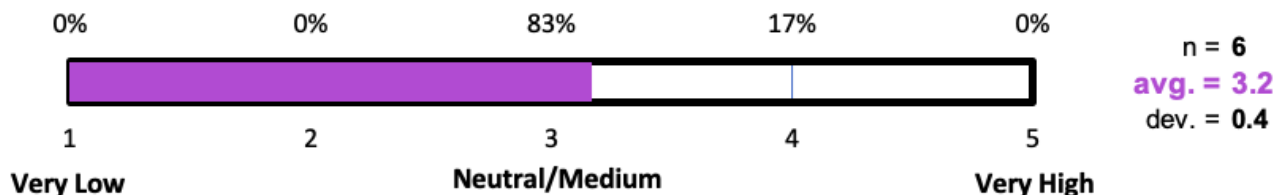
- [California Fisheries Data Explorer](#): This interactive site allows users to visualize commercial landings data (i.e., number of fishermen, pounds of fish landed, and revenue from fish landed) and CPFV logbook data (i.e., number of anglers, vessels, trips, and fish caught from specific fisheries and ports).
- [MPA regulations for the North Central Coast](#)
- [Reports on baseline MPA monitoring projects, North Central Coast \(2010-2016\)](#)

Our Project Team would like to express our appreciation to the six Bodega Bay fishermen who participated in the pilot focus group. We thank Scott Bertelsen, Ernie Camilleri, Lorne Edwards, Jeff Kaseman, Ryan Kozlowski, and Dick Ogg for their time and contributions to the conversation. A seventh participant attempted to participate, but was unable to due to technical difficulties; we extend our gratitude to them and all participants for their patience as we learned from this pilot experience.

## Perceptions of Fishing Community Well-being

### Well-Being, Environmental

**1. Marine Resource Health - Present** Overall, how would you rate the current health and sustainability of the marine resources on which fishermen from this port rely?



**Discussion Summary** In terms of the current health and sustainability of marine resources, participants reported that, in general, they perceived their primary fisheries to be relatively healthy.

- Several noted Dungeness crab populations tend to be consistent, while salmon populations tend to fluctuate more.

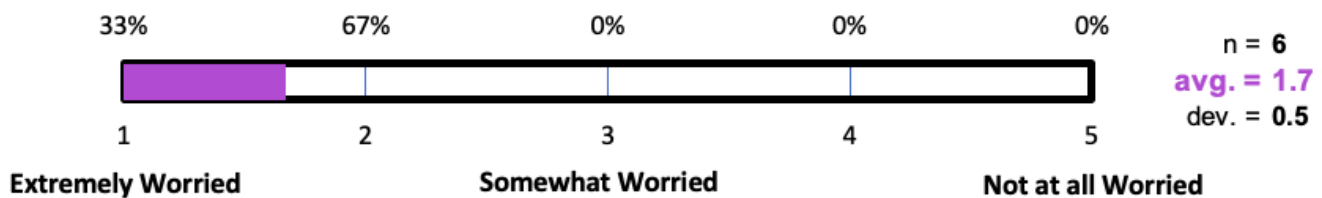
- Several participants expressed that salmon health depends on ocean conditions such as water quality but, overall, there is sufficient biomass to sustain the fishery.
- A majority perceived there is an abundance of marine resources, such as rockfish and groundfish as well as salmon, however, there is a lack of opportunity to access these resources as a result of restrictions.

### Participant Quotes

“The primary two that we [fish] here in Bodega, I would tend to say the salmon and the crab, the salmon as I said, you know, the salmon seem to be volatile and the crab seems to be pretty stable.”

“I think there's plenty of salmon so to speak to catch, it's the opportunity and the way we're being managed in that opportunity is just as [important] as, you know, what's there.”

## 2. Marine Resource Health - Future Concerns Overall, how worried are fishermen from your port about the future long-term health and sustainability of the marine resource populations on which you rely?



**Discussion Summary** When reflecting on the future or long-term health of marine resources, participants identified several concerns related to changing ocean conditions.

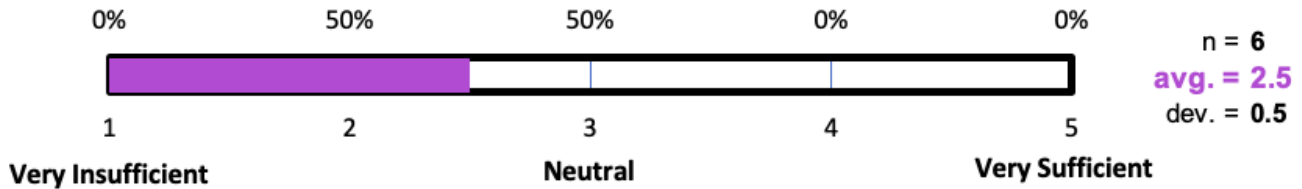
- One fisherman identified ocean temperature change and inland fertilizer use as a concern related to the health of marine resources.
- One fisherman expressed some concern related to ocean change, including acidification.
- Most participants communicated some worry about long-term effects the growing sportfishing sector could have on marine resources.
- Concerns were also expressed about the loss of commercial access and fishing opportunities in the long-term.

### Participant Quotes

“I really rated salmon as being more of a 1, Extremely Worried, based on current water politics which have a lot to do with what we see in the ocean. It isn't really about the ocean front of the Bodega Bay, it's what's happening inland for the most part, and management decisions made by the Department that, you know, don't always put us at the front of their decision-making. And with respect to crab, not considering whale issues which is more of an access thing, but just with global warming, acidification of the ocean, and there is some reason for concern with regard to [crab] populations though.”

## Well-Being, Economic

**3. Access to Harvestable Resources** Overall, how would you rate your port in terms of the level of access that fishermen have to marine resources to support the local fishing fleet?



**Discussion Summary** Participants expressed several concerns related to the level of access to commercial fish resources for fishermen from their port.

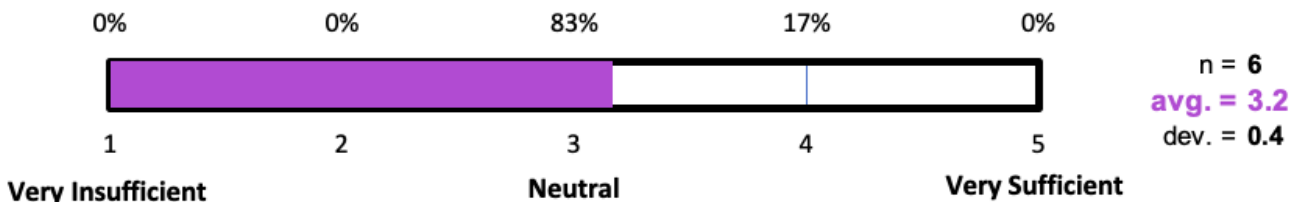
- All participants agreed that the ability to sustain a livelihood based on open access quotas can be challenging, especially for younger, newer entrants into the fishery who may not have the means to purchase limited entry permits.
- Several fishermen identified the financial and capital investment necessary to enter different fisheries as a barrier to access, and emphasized the importance of participation in multiple fisheries to maintain a liveable income.
- One fisherman cited rockfish conservation areas (RCAs) as a restriction of particular concern because RCAs prevent local fishermen from being able to supplement their income with rockfish, particularly when other fisheries they participate in are not doing well.

### Participant Quotes

“It's just difficult because the limited entry costs are just beyond anybody's financial means unless you have additional income someplace else.”

“I'm one or two regulations to where, if this doesn't make it, if it doesn't become profitable, and you just can't, you can't live on one fishery alone. You have to be multiple fisheries in order to make this, and having access to the multiple fisheries is also an important thing.”

**4. Income from Fishing** Overall, how would you rate the income that fishermen from your port earn from fishing in terms of supporting livelihoods?



**Discussion Summary** When discussing income and livelihoods from fishing, participants indicated it is difficult to support themselves and their families based on income from fishing alone.

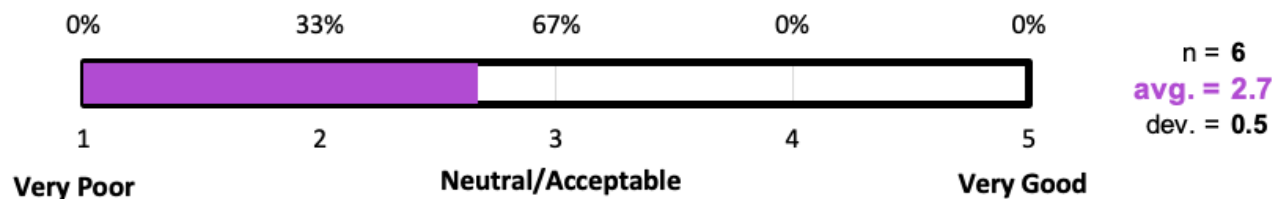
- A majority of participants reported they have a second source of income beyond fishing to support themselves and believed that others in their port did as well.

### Participant Quotes

“[Open] access is really where young people have an opportunity to enter the industry. And open access as it exists today cannot provide enough income for somebody to survive, let alone advance their business to the point where they could invest in limited entry permits and, you know, broaden the base of what their income stream is. And so until we have substantial open access available to the fleet, we're gonna have problems.”

“I think if you were to poll the fleet, you'd find that, well, a great majority have some second income, whether it's people that are retired, people that have wives at work, people have separate businesses.”

### 5. Markets Overall, how would you rate the quality of the markets to which fishermen from your port are able to sell their catch?



**Discussion Summary** When discussing markets, participants noted there has been a reduction in buyers in the Bodega Bay port over time. Additionally, existing buyers tend to only purchase certain types of products or from certain types of vessels, which creates challenges for commercial fishermen in the port, including less competition between buyers, and thus lower prices offered to fishermen for their catch.

- Participants shared that the presence of only one major buyer on the West Coast created competition and pricing challenges for fishermen.
- Several participants indicated that the recent decision for the Marina to allow fishermen to sell catch off their vessels was a positive development that gave fishermen more options for selling their catch.
- Participants reported the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the markets in Bodega Bay by lowering the demand for catch due to restaurant closures and other factors. This has led to severe price reductions in some fisheries, most notably Dungeness crab. Fishermen noted the local seafood producers co-op was doing very well during the pandemic, with home delivery options and product often selling out.

### Participant Quotes

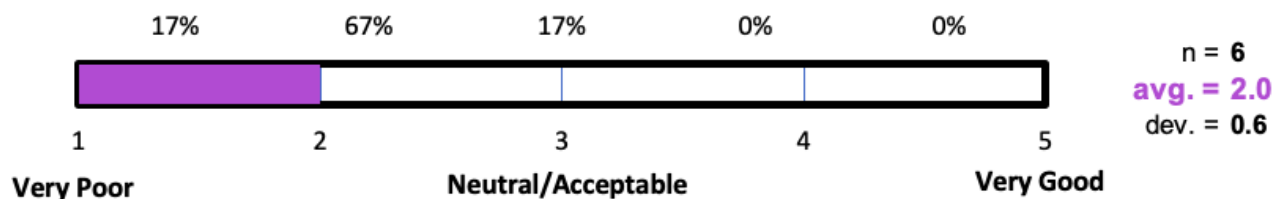
“In Bodega Bay, there has been a reduction in buyers or changes in the buyers and they specifically only want certain [products]. By bringing in the seafood producers [co-op], I think there's kind of a resurgence of, hey, maybe there's some competition, we better start paying our boats better.”

“COVID definitely affected the crab fishery at the end. And it got to a point where the buyers didn't even want your crabs and they just told you just to bring your gear in and find somebody

else to sell them to. The price was, I don't remember, three bucks or something - should have been like six.”

“For a number of years I've sold to restaurants so I was significantly impacted this year. But what I saw even more impactful to the whole fleet was: the buyers came out publicly and said, ‘Hey, because we don't have a restaurant market, we're going to start at \$3 a pound for salmon,’ you know, it came up after that. But it had a major impact for the projected price for fish coming to port. So COVID was, in fact, a big player.”

**6. Infrastructure** Overall, how would you rate the state of infrastructure and services that support commercial fishing in your port?



**Discussion Summary** Participants shared diverse views about the state of their port’s infrastructure.

- Some participants highlighted the condition and presence of infrastructure as a high point in Bodega Bay (particularly when compared to other California ports), while others noted areas for improvement.
- A majority of participants believed that the loss of the local boat haul-out facility had a cascading effect on the port and indicated that getting a functioning boatyard back in the port was top priority.
- Other participants expressed concerns over the lack of maintenance of navigation and safety infrastructure, like channel markers.

**Participant Quotes**

“We don't have a haul-out facility; we haven't had one in quite a few years and I think when we lost the haul-out facility was kind of like the tombstone for Bodega Bay, everything else seemed to go away slowly but surely after that.”

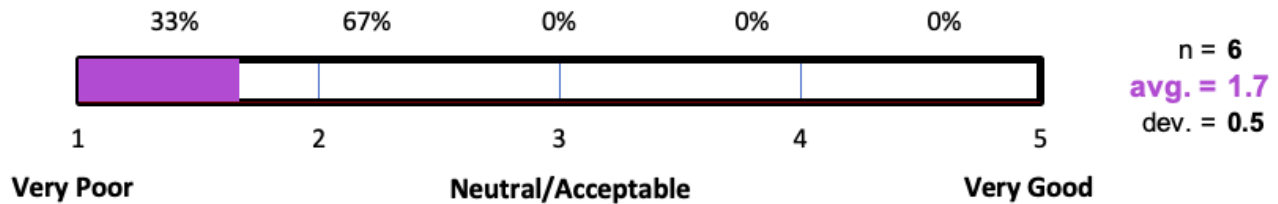
“We should also acknowledge that the Marina has been left in disrepair from lack of proper maintenance. Access to important things like fuel and ice once was a 24 hour seven day a week item and now we're on very limited hours which causes our businesses to have to adapt to the county schedule which, in turn, costs each business money because they can't operate in an efficient fashion.”

**7. COVID-19 Impacts** How disruptive do you think COVID-19 has been to your port’s fishing operations?

**Discussion Summary** (Participants did not rate or discuss this question because it was not asked during this focus group.)

## Well-Being, Social/Political

**8. Labor/New Participants** Overall, how would you rate your port in terms of being able to recruit new entrants to the industry and being able to retain current participants?



**Discussion Summary** Most participants indicated that recruitment and retention of participants to the commercial fishing industry in Bodega Bay is a challenge.

- Since the port is fairly remote, participants shared that recruiting good crew members can be difficult for individuals with bigger boats.
  - This is less of an issue for small boat operators that may not have crew members.
- One fisherman suggested that California adopt an apprenticeship program similar to one they had seen in Alaska to help entrants make the transition into the fishery.
- Several participants considered the financial difficulties of entering and staying in the fishing industry as a barrier to sustaining fishing participation in the port. One fisherman knew of many entrants who had to leave the industry because it was difficult to sustain a living with limited access to permits and/or fish to catch.

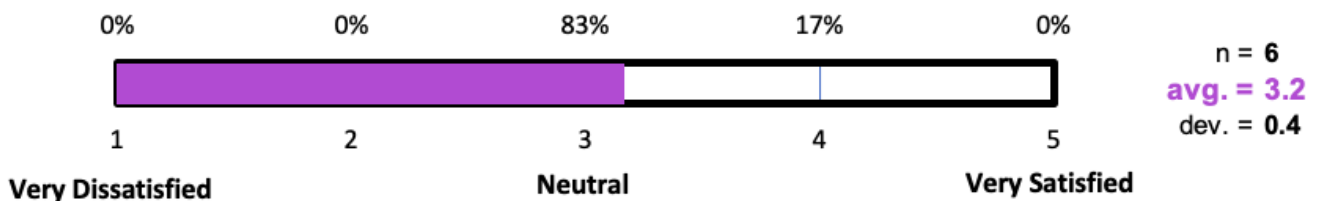
### Participant Quotes

“I started fishing when I was a teenager with a little fiberglass boat and a rod reel. And I built my business from that. And nowadays ain't no young kid can do that. You can't do that. You have to have hundreds of thousands of dollars to start the business. If we can't get young fishermen, it's just a time clock. Pretty soon the industry is going to be gone.”

“If [hook and line fishing] was reestablished [it] may give us some hope that we might have an industry you know, long-term. Because it seems rather simple, but you need some way for people with a dream to get involved.”

“And, you know, when somebody finds [a good crew member] that's a long term solution, it's almost a miracle. Many boats go through many, many, many deckhands that don't work out.”

**9. Job Satisfaction** Overall, how satisfied do you think fishermen from the port are with their jobs in the fishing industry?



**Discussion Summary** A majority of participants explained that they fish because they enjoy and prefer the work despite the sacrifices required and challenges of the job.

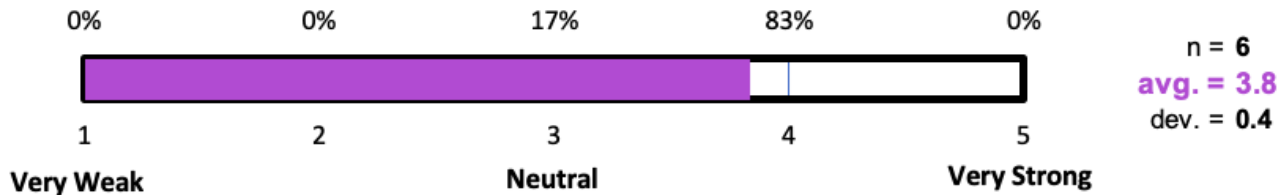
- One fisherman highlighted they feel satisfied with their job due to the hard work and loyalty on behalf of other fishermen who help to support and advance the commercial fishing industry locally and in California.

**Participant Quotes**

“And as far as satisfaction I chose neutral. There's good days and bad days. But for the most part, it's what I want to do. That's why I'm doing it.”

“This is not an easy profession, it's extremely difficult. And they love it. Otherwise they wouldn't be putting up with the difficulty.”

**10. Social Relationships - Internal** Overall, how would you rate the strength of social relationships (or social capital) within your port?



**Discussion Summary** Overall, participants reported that they felt social relationships within the Bodega Bay fishing community were strong.

- Several fishermen perceived the Bodega Bay Fishermen’s Marketing Association (BBFMA) to be one of the strongest in California, though one fisherman believed that participation in the BBFMA has decreased in recent years so it was not as strong as it had been.

**Participant Quotes**

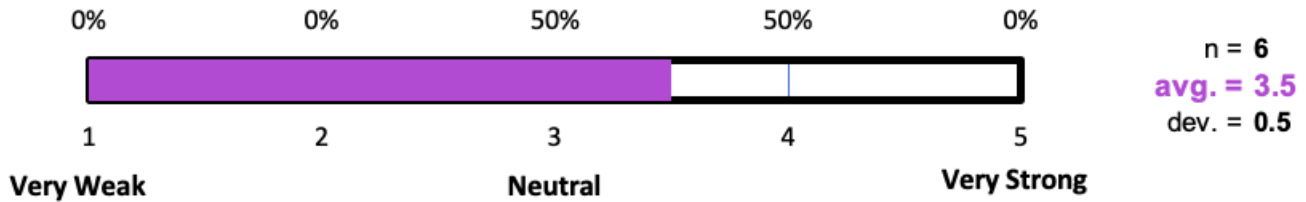
“I selected strong internal relationships just because I think our Marketing Association is one of the strongest on the coast.”

“In terms of the internal is, when you develop a relationship with other fishermen, we've become, you know, pretty strongly bonded, whether we're at Port or if we're out in the ocean searching for our catch.”

“If I feel comfortable, if I found something that I needed to fix on my boat, I'm going to be referred to someone [competent] and I'm going to figure out a way to get it done. And [name redacted] in particular has helped me a few times or a number of times and [names redacted] even helped me. He may not even remember he's helped so many folks. But, so there is a group within the community in Bodega that do help each other.”



**11. Social Relationships - External** Overall, how would you rate the strength of the port's relationship with external groups who could help support community needs?



**Discussion Summary** Participants shared diverse views about their fishing community's relationships with external groups.

- One participant explained that some fishermen do not believe the government and environmental non-governmental organizations (NGOs) support the long-term success/viability of the commercial fishing industry and would rather not engage with them.
- Another fisherman perceived relationships with external groups to be strong because Bodega Bay has strong representation in several working groups related to fishery management.

**Participant Quotes**

"I've talked to some people in Bodega Bay that they just don't like the government, they don't like the NGOs; they just want to be left alone. Because every time [government and NGOs] start talking, it just means we're going to get less time on the water, they're going to restrict us. They're just taking things away. [ . . . ] So why should I sit there and fight anymore?"

"I chose strong because our port is represented on the [Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear] working group, the Dungeness [Crab] Task Force, PCFFA, all the different organizations, we have a presence, a strong presence. It's by very few people who do most of the representing and we owe them a lot. But we are represented in all those areas where other ports may struggle to have a representative."

**Well-Being, Overall/Additional Comments**

**12. Overall/Open-ended** Is there anything not captured above that you would like managers and other readers to know about your fishing community/industry?

- What do you think federal and state managers could do to better support California's fishing communities?
- What do you think members of your fishing industry could do to support the well-being or sustainability of your fishing community?

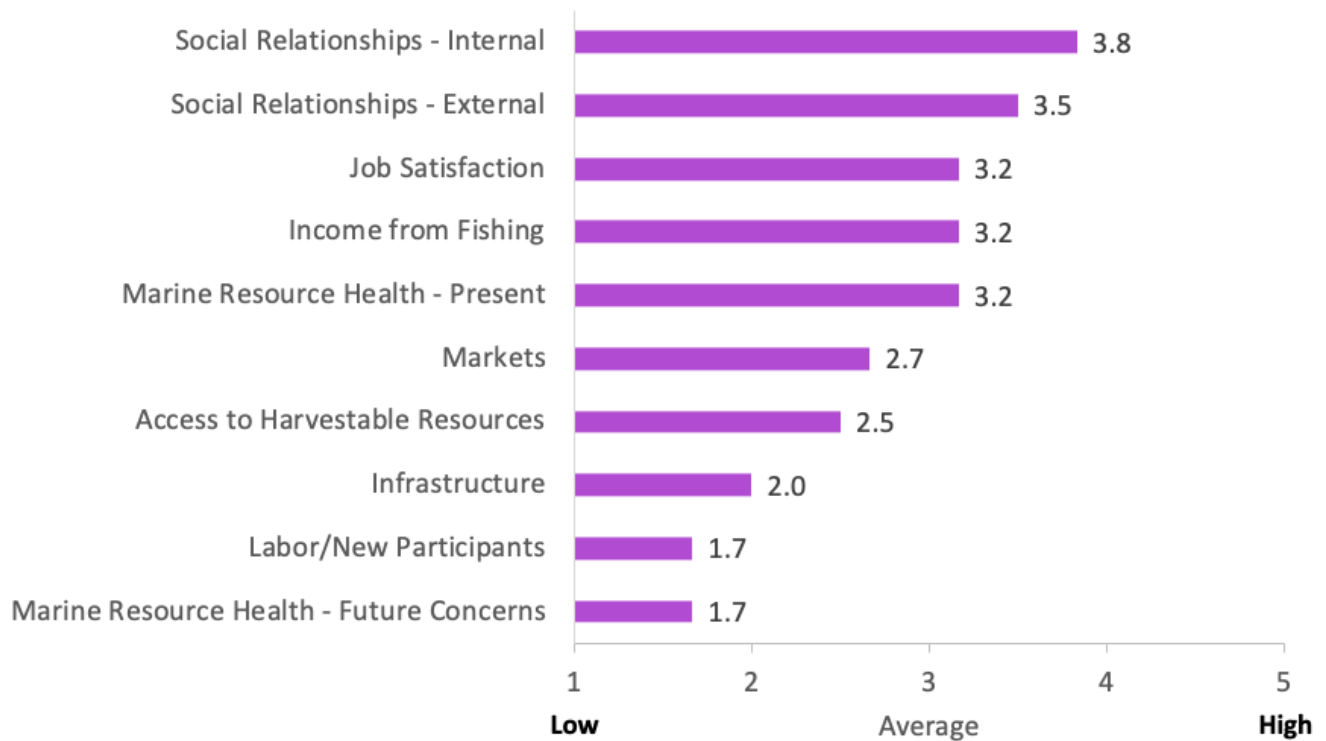
**Discussion Summary** When asked to follow-up with additional information or recommendations related to fishing community well-being, several participants offered suggestions for fishery managers.

- One fisherman said they would like to see the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) move towards making in-season adjustments to management based on real-time data collection; they believe the technology exists for this possibility and have seen it work in other

states. The adoption of e-tickets was suggested as a tool that could help with real time data collection and potential in-season flexibility in management.

- Another fisherman stated that, overall, they would like to see managers give commercial fishermen less restrictions and more time on the water.

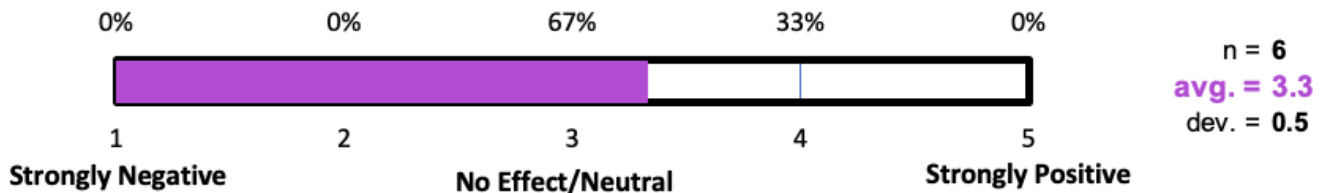
### Perceptions of Fishing Community Well-being, Average Responses for Questions 1-6, 8-11



### Perceptions of MPAs

#### MPAs, Outcomes/Effects

**13. MPA Ecological Outcomes** Overall, how would you rate the effect that the California MPA network has had on marine resource health in your area?



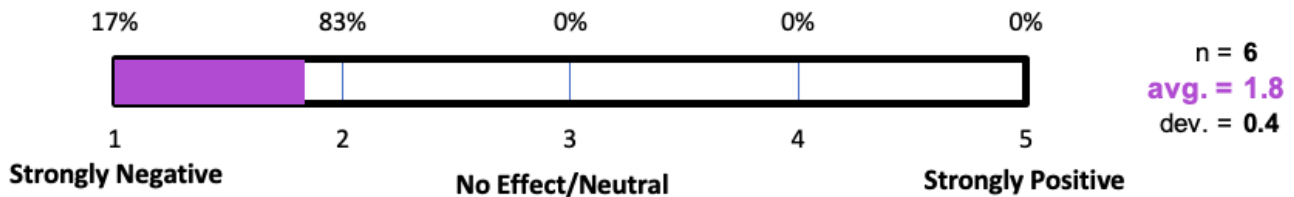
**Discussion Summary** Participants stated they aren't clear on the ecological impacts of MPAs primarily due to limited knowledge of research being conducted to evaluate MPA effects.

- Many participants suspected that the closing of areas likely would have a positive effect on some resources and habitats based on their knowledge and experience with other closures.
- Some participants stressed that MPAs do not address other ecological challenges facing fisheries, like water pollution.
- Other participants indicated they thought it would be appropriate to allow some fisheries with no bottom contact (i.e., salmon trolling) to continue in MPAs.
- Several participants expressed an interest in gaining more information on the ecological effects of MPAs and would appreciate better communication and outreach regarding MPAs in general.

**Participant Quotes**

“With respect to how [MPAs have] improved or not improved things, we have no measurable way to respond to that [ . . . ] we don't have any information of other people sampling in there to know what's happening. In our mind, we envision some grand utopia, but you know, we have no way to respond to that question.”

**14a. MPA Livelihood Outcomes** Overall, how would you rate the effect that the MPA network has had on the ability for fishermen from your port to earn a living/gain income from fishing?



**Discussion Summary** Please see the **Discussion Summary** following question 14b. *MPA Effects - Overall* which summarizes the conversations related to questions 14a and 14b.

**14b. MPA Effects - Overall** What other types of effects or impacts have fishermen from your port experienced from MPA implementation?

**Discussion Summary** Participants reported that several MPAs were placed in economically important fishing grounds and that losing those fishing grounds negatively affected many fishermen from Bodega Bay.

- Participants reported that Dungeness crab fishermen saw substantial financial implications from the loss of key fishing grounds. Urchin fishermen were particularly affected by the placement of MPAs in their fishing grounds, leading a number of urchin fishermen to leave the port.
- Participants recounted their participation in economic data collection efforts during the MPA planning process, where they mapped the economic importance of fishing grounds by placing pennies on maps of fishing grounds based on the relative importance of the fishing spot.
  - These participants said they were disappointed to see that many MPAs were placed in the most high value fishing grounds they had indicated, leaving feelings of bitterness and with some wondering if the mapping exercise was designed to take away their most important grounds.

- All participants shared the perspective that the MPA network required Bodega Bay fishermen to travel further and use more fuel to find productive fishing grounds, and that this also resulted in safety and navigation issues.
- Several noted that MPAs had contributed to the crowding of vessels in open areas, particularly along MPA boundaries.
- Most participants shared the perspective that MPAs had a compounding adverse effect on fishermen's livelihoods.
- One fisherman noted a positive effect from MPAs on their livelihood in certain MPAs where some types of fishing is restricted (i.e., larger boat restrictions) which allows them to fish more effectively in these MPAs.
  - *Note from the Project Team: Not all participants had been fishing prior to the implementation of the MPAs and newer fishermen could not speak as readily to the effects; participants who are newer fishermen reported that the MPAs were another reality they had to contend with.*

### Participant Quotes

"I think one thing to keep in mind is that the fish in the ocean are actually the resource of people, and all these restrictions and closures, all they do is deprive the people of their own resource."

"I'm worried about the regulations, and how they're going to impact us as fishermen in the long-term because we're slowly but surely losing our opportunities, and it's difficult, you know, to see this continue."

"I would say those that left fishing left because [. . .] of the generalized difficulty and challenges in making a living. So the MPAs certainly added to that [. . .]. When you ask a question, 'was it because of that?,' maybe [MPAs] were the straw that broke the camel's back, but they weren't the weight that broke the camel's back. They were just the final straw."

"I can remember the penny thing, where we put pennies in [. . .] important areas and seemed like we all lost our money. You know, that's kind of our feeling, you know, we never felt like it was beneficial. In fact, where we put the penny seemed to be where the MPAs ended [. . .] so that was kind of a defeating feeling."

### MPAs, Discussion of Specific MPAs

**15. MPA Effects - MPA Specific** Which MPAs have had the most impact (positive or negative) on fishermen from your port and why?

**Discussion Summary** Participants highlighted several MPAs that have had a negative effect on Bodega Bay fishermen.

- *Bodega Head State Marine Reserve (SMR) and State Marine Conservation Area (SMCA):* Participants shared their perspectives that these MPAs have forced fishermen, particularly those who fish for salmon and Dungeness crab, to travel further and fish areas that are more difficult to access.

- Participants questioned why salmon fishermen are allowed to transit these areas but are not able to fish in them since salmon trolling only interacts with the target species.
- *Point Reyes SMR and SMCA*: A majority of participants shared opinions that these MPAs led to a substantial/important financial loss for the Dungeness crab fishery, which was highlighted as a major concern during the MPA planning process.
- *Stewarts Point SMR*: Participants identified this as a notably productive area, and said this MPA had restricted urchin fishing substantially, as well as Dungeness crab fishing.
- *Saunders Reef SMCA*: A participant shared their perspective that this MPA was also a productive spot that fishermen from Bodega Bay can no longer access.
- *North Farallon Islands SMR*: One participant reported that the implementation of this MPA had resulted in crowding around the MPA boundaries, especially during Dungeness crab season.
- *Año Nuevo SMR*: One participant shared this was a productive area for salmon fishing, and was a preferred fishing spot due to it being protected from prevailing winds.
- *Soquel Canyon SMCA*: One participant identified this MPA as having a beneficial effect on salmon fishermen because the MPA restrictions on ground gear decrease conflict between salmon, Dungeness crab, and hagfish gear.
  - A fisherman mentioned that sometimes when they are fishing in the Soquel Canyon SMCA, rockfish climb onto their gear. Due to restrictions, they must throw the rockfish back where they think they will likely die. They'd like to see a change to allow for utilization of bycatch in these circumstances so the catch isn't wasted.

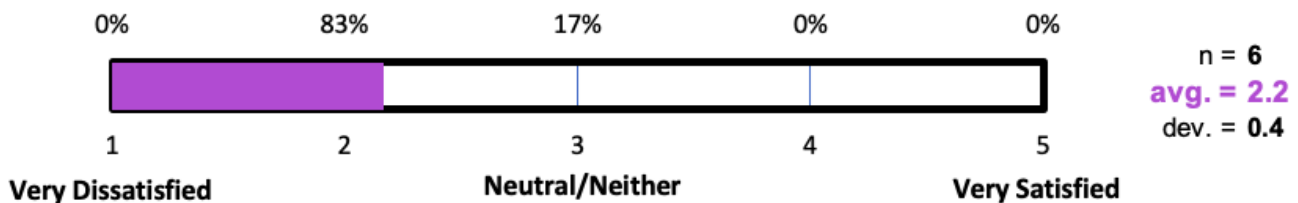
### Participant Quotes

"The protected area up by Stewart's Point, the urchin fishermen were impacted significantly; that was one of the most productive areas for them. And [the urchin divers] basically said, that's where we want to protect, we want to be able to dive there and that was taken away and it did leave a very sour taste in everybody's mouth."

"From my view, the MPAs are highly productive areas that have been removed from our use, and they were places we went. And because they were highly productive areas, we were highly productive there. And now we might have to travel farther, use more fuel to go to areas [that] might not be as productive, and spend more time to do what we could have in these productive areas."

### MPAs, Management

**16. MPA Management** Overall, how satisfied do you think fishermen from your port are with the management of the MPA network?



**Discussion Summary** Generally, participants had limited knowledge of any management actions, including adaptive management, that had taken place since the MPA network was implemented.

- The majority of participants shared that they were unaware of any MPA management efforts and said that they did not see clear goals or purpose for the implementation or management of the MPAs.
  - Several participants felt that lack of communication around goals was a key failing of the process and could erode fishermen’s cooperation in the long-term.
- One fisherman expressed the importance of finding a balance between protecting and using the resource.
- When discussing management of the MPA network, several participants reflected on the MPA implementation process. They described how fishermen at the time came together to engage with the MPA implementation process, but that the outcome made some fishermen not want to engage in future processes.

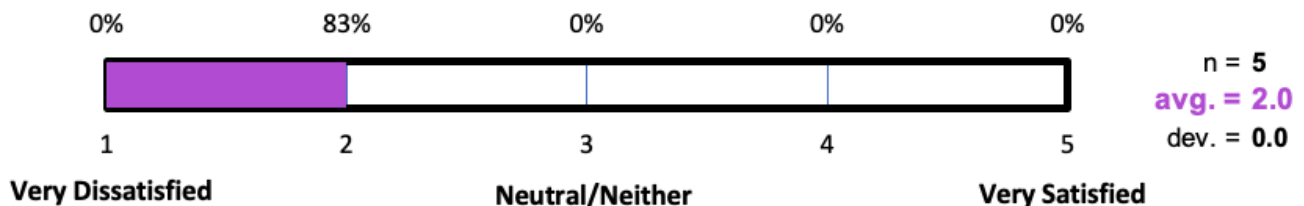
**Participant Quotes**

“It's difficult for me to understand where this [MPA management] is going and what it's, what the true purpose is. It's real frustrating.”

“The objective of the MPAs is something that's always been in question in my mind. And it's situation [is] similar to what we go through with a closed area regarding whale entanglement or any of the issues that we deal with closing off areas. Once that's done, are we looking at utilizing this as a method of improving the resource and then allowing the resource to be accessed by the fishermen, or are we looking at closing the area forever, saying, ‘no more access, this is going to be this way. And it's a nature preserve, it's always going to be there’? Is that the end goal? And is there a way to reverse this to give us the opportunity to access these areas? You know, I just wondered what we're doing.”

“I think we deserve that kind of information [about MPA goals]. And to not tell us that or give us an opportunity to understand it is a major shortfall. And certainly it's going to erode cooperation.”

**17. MPA Monitoring** Overall, how satisfied do you think fishermen from your port are with the monitoring of the MPA network?



**Not Aware/Not Enough Information: 17% (n=1)**

**Discussion Summary** Generally, participants had limited knowledge of any monitoring activities that had taken place since the MPA network was implemented.

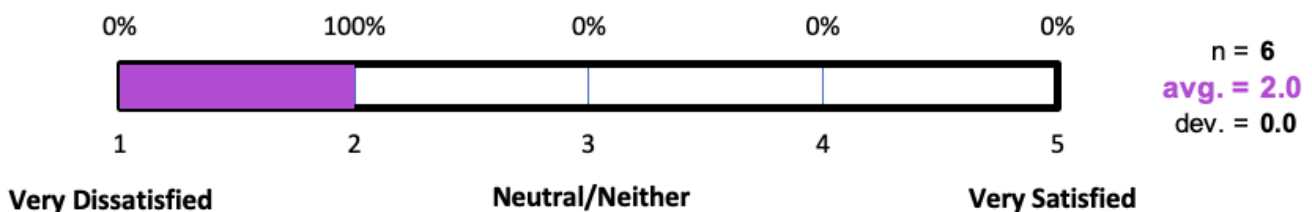
- Most participants reported they were not aware enough of the monitoring program to comment on it.
  - One participant said that monitoring could benefit from adding fishermen’s perspectives or their ‘eyes on the water.’
- Multiple participants stated they would like to know if there is evidence that the MPA network has improved marine resource health and, if so, whether the intention is to re-open these areas or to keep them closed indefinitely.

### Participant Quotes

“In terms of the monitoring, I would have voted not enough information. That's mostly what I hear is that [fishermen] just can't find the information as to how these MPAs are doing.”

“So here we have a bunch of fishermen that are saying we have these areas provid[ing] significant productivity to the consumer in providing crab or salmon. And so it would bear the question in doing that, and giving that up, what was the overriding goal? And has that been met so that productivity can be returned back? Or was it always something else? And so I think, in fact, we are owed that kind of information, that kind of understanding.”

### 18. MPA Enforcement Overall, how satisfied do you think fishermen from your port are with the enforcement of MPAs?



### Discussion Summary

Participants were generally dissatisfied with the enforcement of MPAs.

- Participants reported there was not always consistent interpretation or communication of the rules, making enforcement uneven and compliance challenging.

### Participant Quotes

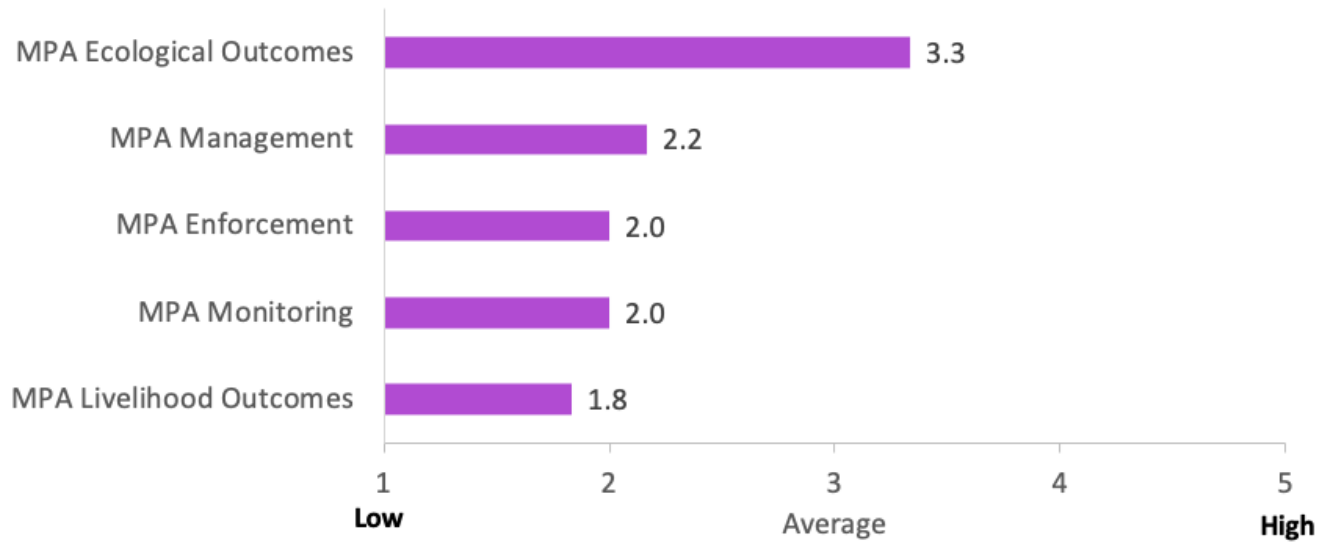
“You have an enforcer in the Bodega Bay area that said ‘Oh, yeah, you guys can go ahead and do this, this, and this.’ You go to a different [place] and all of a sudden: oh, wait a minute here. You know, no, that's not the interpretation. And so now you have to go to court, you got to do this blah, blah, blah. Takes away the fisherman from his duties. And yet, I mean, it was like the enforcement people had their own different points of views of how they were going to go about [enforcing regulations].”

### 19. MPA Overall Any additional comments or concerns about the MPAs and MPA management you would like to communicate?

### Discussion Summary

Participants felt they had expressed everything they wanted to share through the previously asked questions.

## Perceptions of MPAs, Average Responses for Questions 13-14a, 16-18



### Feedback on Virtual Process

**Discussion Summary** Overall, participants responded with positive comments about the focus group experience.

- Some participants stated they really enjoyed the experience and appreciated the time that the Project Team took to make them comfortable with the technology.
- One participant believed that the virtual Zoom meeting was a good way to gather participants remotely in a manner that they feel comfortable (i.e., in their own homes) but would prefer an in-person meeting if possible.
  - One fisherman commented that the virtual format helped them open up about their experiences because they were at home in a place they felt comfortable.
  - Another fisherman stated that participating online was the only way they could have engaged in the focus group conversation.