



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Northwest Fisheries Science Center
2725 Montlake Boulevard East
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98112-2097

F/NWC1

November 13, 2020

Dr. Clarissa Anderson and Dr. Henry Ruhl
The California Ocean Observing Systems
Southern California Coastal Ocean Observing System
Central and Northern California Ocean Observing System

Dr. Jan Newton
Northwest Association of Networked Ocean Observing Systems

Dear Drs. Anderson, Ruhl and Newton:

On behalf of the NOAA Fisheries Northwest Fisheries Science Center and the NOAA California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (CCIEA) team, I enthusiastically endorse the valuable data and services provided by the Southern California Coastal Ocean Observing System (SCCOOS), the Central and Northern California Ocean Observing System (CeNCOOS), and the Northwest Association of Networked Ocean Observing Systems (NANOOS), located at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California San Diego (UCSD), the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute (MBARI), and the University of Washington, respectively.

The NOAA CCIEA team is a cooperative team of scientists and policy makers representing the Northwest and Southwest Fisheries Science Centers, the NOAA Fisheries West Coast Regional Office, and many academic and NGO partners. The CCIEA team strives to provide science in support of ecosystem-based management of fisheries, protected species, and other valuable resources and ecosystem services along the U.S. West Coast. We rely heavily upon primary data collection platforms such as those in IOOS to provide monitoring data and expert understanding, in order for us to generate products such as ecosystem status reports, risk assessments, and management strategy evaluations. Among our strongest partners are the Pacific Fishery Management Council; the five National Marine Sanctuaries located along the West Coast; state fisheries management agencies; and the NOAA Fisheries Office of Protected Resources. We also are working on an emerging partnership with the West Coast Ocean Alliance, particularly around areas of non-fisheries activities such as offshore renewable energy development.

Information collected by NANOOS, CeNCOOS and SCCOOS is ideal for the work we do, and is already being incorporated into our efforts, including annual ecosystem status reporting to the Pacific Fishery Management Council and supporting National Marine Sanctuaries with their place-based condition reports. Additional information of the sort proposed by the West Coast IOOS RAs would add considerable value to monitoring and ecosystem status and risk assessment: for example, expanded information on anthropogenic sound profiles at the scale of Sanctuaries would

enhance their ability to assess conditions within their waters for species such as marine mammals, and may also support CCIEA scientists' assessments of risk for marine mammals that are also being affected by other stressors such as coastal habitat quality change and variability in forage. Further, developing good baselines of sound levels and variability is imperative to assessing changes and impacts that may be brought about by offshore renewable energy projects, deep sea mining, and other potential ocean uses that may affect fishery species and protected species.

Sustained funding for SCCOOS, CeNCOOS, and NANOOS is crucial to the maintenance of the ocean observing network and to continue the delivery of important data products and services that these observing systems enable. Continuity of data streams, data processing and delivery, and monitoring focused on emerging priorities are only becoming more essential as other monitoring efforts are curtailed due to funding and logistical constraints. The CCIEA and our many partners thus strongly endorse support and funding of West Coast IOOS projects. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Harvey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and "H".

Dr. Chris Harvey
Research Fishery Biologist
Co-lead, California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment team