

## At A Glance

- The sanctuary began its management plan review in Summer 2010.
- The process relies heavily on the sanctuary advisory council and the public to assist in developing further management activities.
- The sanctuary advisory council held an open public meeting in January 17-18, 2012.
- Council members voted in favor to forward all sanctuary advisory council working group recommendation reports to sanctuary management.
- Sanctuary management will consider advisory council recommendations and continue consultations with the State of Hawai'i, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, subject matter experts, and other partners in developing an updated draft management plan and an associated environmental assessment.
- The draft management plan and draft environmental impact statement will be released to the public in early 2013.



Photo: HIHWNMS

Council members participate in a two-day council meeting in January 2012.

## Management Plan Review Status Update: January 2012

The sanctuary's management plan review began in 2010 and will take several years to complete. The process will result in a new management plan for the sanctuary. The draft management plan is being developed through an extensive public process. The target for a draft revised management plan is early 2013 with the final target for completion in 2014.

### Advisory Council Working Group Process

The sanctuary recently completed a key milestone in the management plan review process. Over the last 9 months, Sanctuary Advisory Council (council) working groups developed management recommendations to address priority issues identified during public scoping. Working group reports were presented to the full council for their review and approval on January 17-18, 2012. Council members voted in favor of forwarding all working group reports to sanctuary management.

Recommendations include shifting to an ecosystem-based sanctuary, adding additional regulations such as special management areas and speed limits within sanctuary boundaries. All reports recommend that the sanctuary works closely with communities and increases coordination among agencies.

The working group reports adopted by the council contain over 150 management recommendations including detailed rationale and justifications to



Photo: HIHWNMS

Working group members collaborate to develop recommendations at the Humpback Whale Protections Workshop.

support their findings. Members of the working groups are conducting extensive public engagement to gather stakeholder input on their proposed recommendations. Some of the recommendations may be controversial and raise concerns from the public. The recommendations do not reflect the views of the sanctuary, NOAA, or the State of Hawai'i.

### Stakeholder Engagement

The sanctuary has reached out to a broad constituency to ensure a high level of public and stakeholder engagement throughout the sanctuary management plan review process thus far. Participants contributed 2,010 individual hours of service to the working group process. The sanctuary has maintained a high level of coordination with the State of Hawai'i and NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service and will support their marine resource protection efforts through the new management plan. The sanctuary will continue to engage communities and stakeholder groups in the process.

## Background

- The sanctuary was designated by an act of Congress in 1992. It was designed for the conservation and management of humpback whales and can be expanded to include other marine resources of national significance.
- The sanctuary has initiated the process to review, evaluate, and update its management plan. This plan is a document specific to the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary that is used to guide management of the site.
- During the previous management plan review and revision process in 2002, numerous public comments were received requesting the sanctuary consider increasing its scope to include the conservation and management of additional resources. Former Hawai'i Governor Linda Lingle also expressed her support for the sanctuary's consideration of this concept.
- In the spring of 2010, 8 pre-scoping public meetings were held across the state to ensure that the public was aware of the upcoming opportunity to participate in the sanctuary public scoping process.
- A list of priority issues was identified from a 90-day public comment and scoping period held in summer of 2010, with 10 statewide public meetings and over 12,300 submissions received.
- The sanctuary advisory council established working groups to further examine priority issues and develop management recommendations. The working groups were made up of council members, representatives of user groups, and technical experts. Working group meetings were open to the public and facilitated public participation by gathering input from relevant constituent groups. Additionally, meeting agendas and minutes were posted on the sanctuary website.
- In January 2012, Governor Abercrombie indicated his support of the current management plan review and its consideration to broaden the focus of the sanctuary from the humpback whale and its habitat to the ecosystem as a whole, including historic and biocultural resources.
- During a public meeting in January 2012, the sanctuary advisory council voted to forward all working group recommendation reports to sanctuary management.
- There has been, and will continue to be, a high level of community engagement in the sanctuary management plan review process.

## Timeline

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| <b>2012</b> | Development of draft sanctuary management plan and environmental impact statement (EIS). |
| <b>2013</b> | Public release of draft management plan and draft EIS.                                   |
| <b>2014</b> | Completion of final management plan and EIS.   |



Photo: HIHWNMS

*Sanctuary engages with stakeholder representatives at community workshops.*



Photo: James Yamamoto

*Sanctuary staff collaborates with community members on Kauai.*



Photo: HIHWNMS

*Stakeholders participate in the "Visioning the Future of Aquaculture in Hawai'i" Workshop.*