

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON CHANNEL ISLAND
NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY (CINMS)

At its September 2005 meeting, the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) reviewed a document from the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (CINMS) dated May 25, 2005 and entitled “Supporting Materials,” which described draft alternatives for marine reserves in Federal waters at CINMS. “Supporting Materials” was not a self-contained analysis but drew heavily from a document cited therein as “Leeworthy and Wiley (2005).” Based on its ongoing technical concerns regarding previous analyses conducted by Leeworthy and Wiley in 2002 and 2003, the SSC noted the importance of having access to the Leeworthy and Wiley (2005) document cited in “Supporting Materials.” CINMS has provided that document.

At this meeting, the SSC reviewed the document: Leeworthy, Dr. Vernon R., Peter C. Wiley, and Edward A. Stone. October 7, 2005. *Socioeconomic Impact Analysis of Marine Reserve Alternatives for the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary*. The specific reserve alternatives analyzed in the 2005 document differ from the alternatives analyzed by Leeworthy and Wiley in 2002 and 2003; however, the methods of analysis are quite similar. The SSC’s concerns regarding the methods used in the 2002 and 2003 analyses continue to be unaddressed in the 2005 analysis. Major concerns include: (1) the method of estimating consumer surplus for consumptive and non-consumptive use value, (2) the method of projecting changes in non-consumptive recreation activity and value, and (3) the method of estimating passive-use value. In addition, the analysis largely disregards the SSC’s recommendation (made in July 2004) that a baseline of 2003 be used to analyze the current draft alternatives; this change in baseline is important to ensure that the analysis reflects recent regulatory changes, including the establishment of reserves in State waters at CINMS.

The SSC supports the Council in its efforts to collaborate with CINMS on issues of mutual interest. The SSC understands that some modification to the Council’s regulatory process may be warranted to accommodate CINMS. The Council is being asked to formulate fishing regulations and thus implicitly select a preferred alternative. The Council is expected to take this action on the basis of an analysis – portions of which are technically inadequate. The SSC is concerned about the potential precedent created by this major departure from the Council’s customary requirement for a Draft Environmental Impact Statement to inform its decisions.