

FOOD FROM THE SEA

WORKSHOP TO DESIGN AN OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR SEAFOOD SYSTEMS AND INNOVATION

May 14-16, 2018 Newport, Oregon



Oregon State
University

Workshop Executive Summary

From May 14 to May 17, 2018, Oregon State University (OSU), together with industry, agency, and community partners, conducted a three day workshop in Newport, Oregon with more than 110 participants to consider the future of seafood and ideas for developing a new OSU Seafood Center focused on innovations in seafood systems research, education, and partnerships. The concept of a Seafood Center arose from four emerging and intersecting forces: 1) the creation of the OSU Marine Studies Initiative and its focus on student experiential education, transdisciplinary approaches to marine research, and community engagement (<http://marinestudies.oregonstate.edu/>); 2) growing demand for seafood due to the rapid growth of the globe's human population; 3) the diverse and unique set of physical and human seafood "assets" at OSU including industry and community partnerships; and 4) the recognition that a U.S. University-based seafood systems center did not presently exist. Given these drivers, a group of OSU faculty developed a concept paper and a set of priority actions to create a Seafood Systems Center at OSU. The highest priority action item was to conduct a design workshop that would include participation of industry, resource agencies, and community partners. A workshop committee made up of representatives from OSU, the seafood industry, marine resource agencies, and coastal communities spent almost a year designing the workshop and developing financial support. The primary goal was to conduct a workshop that would advance planning, development, and implementation of a *Food from the Sea* Seafood Center. Workshop objectives and principles included: 1) developing bold and innovative ideas for the Center consistent with the MSI mission and objectives; 2) embracing entrepreneurship and systems thinking -- from ecosystems to consumers; 3) creating value for industry, community, and state, national, and international partners; 4) improving the benefits, efficiency, and profitability of seafood value chains; and 5) being interactive, stimulating, encouraging networking, and featuring seafood whenever possible. To achieve these objectives the workshop committee focused on four basic activities including interactive "ignite" panels and discussions, motivational panels and keynote speakers, culinary demonstrations, and tours of local seafood-related businesses and resources.

Workshop activities were spread over three venues (Good Samaritan Center for Health Education, Hatfield Marine Science Center (HMSC), and the Pacific Heritage Maritime Center—see agenda for details). After summarizing workshop goals and logistics, Day 1 began with a *Seafood Systems Thinking* panel that included Daniel Occhipinti (Pacific Seafoods), Katy Pelssier (Ecotrust), Jeanne McKnight (McKnight Group), and Jim Anderson (University of Florida). The panelists, all experienced in various aspects of food and seafood systems, helped to motivate participants in understanding major drivers of regional, national, and international food and seafood systems, and fundamental concepts vital for developing a successful Center. Day 1 then featured a presentation by OSU faculty including Culinary Research Chef Jason Ball and Astoria Seafood Laboratory researcher Angela Hunt of an innovative seafood design concept (in this case noodles made from fish protein). Day 1 also featured the first ignite session (West Coast Groundfish). Each Ignite Session was organized with a half hour panel presentation on a current and provocative seafood systems issue or case study, and then a half hour discussion by the workshop participants at their tables using guiding questions, sticky notes, and facilitators. A subset of tables were then asked to give a brief report to the workshop participants of their reaction including ideas relevant to creating a Center. Day 1 also featured two keynote speakers. The first was Carol Sanford, a leading author and strategist who helps companies and their employees become more innovative, entrepreneurial, and responsible. Her talk on *Living Systems Thinking for Innovation* challenged the audience to think broadly and creatively and avoid using constructs that limit creative thinking and organizational possibilities. The second keynote speaker was Thor Sigfusson who was the evening speaker after the workshop dinner held at HMSC. Thor is the founder of the Iceland

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Ocean Cluster dedicated to improving connections between companies and entrepreneurs in the marine industry sector. His presentation on *A New Way of Thinking in Seafood* explained how the Ocean Cluster was formed and operates, and the extraordinary range of creative value added products that go beyond traditional seafood concepts produced by young entrepreneurs using commercial fisheries products.

Day 2 featured three additional ignite sessions (Infrastructure, Bioeconomic Modeling, Aquaculture). Rick Spinrad, formerly Chief Scientist of NOAA as well as Vice President for Research at OSU, gave the last keynote talk, *Food From the Sea: the Pull and the Push*. Rick's presentation 1) emphasized the "blue" information-based economy, 2) rapidly advancing technologies (e.g., autonomous vehicles, sensors, acoustics, e-DNA), and 3) key OSU resources that can help support marine-related entrepreneurship (e.g., Advantage Accelerator, the OSU Entrepreneurship Center). Day 2 also featured a "world cafe" that allowed workshop participants to develop ideas for structuring, governing, and funding a Seafood Systems Center. The interaction was facilitated by questions that focused on required resources and partners, key activities, mission and value, stakeholder engagement, and revenue sources and costs. The day concluded with a culinary presentation by Local Ocean Seafoods chefs and a sampling of seafood products.

Day 3 centered on reporting back out initial summaries from the ignite sessions and the world café, discussing who may have been missing from the conversation, and engaging participants in a discussion regarding next steps. Not unexpectedly, given the structure of the workshop there were many great ideas and concepts around potential center structure, activities, and support. In the group discussion the array of potential possibilities also revealed concerns regarding the possibilities of a center being too broad and unfocused in structure, geographies, activities, and funding.

While it is premature to determine key Center concepts resulting from the workshop, there were some overarching ideas that resonated across speakers, panels, and sessions. A few of these include: 1) the importance of integrating education/training, research, and partnerships consistent with MSI principles and Land Grant and Sea Grant missions; 2) industry and community partners must be authentically engaged in center design, governance, and activities; 3) while a seafood systems center should not try to do everything, it must function as a trusted nexus and convener; 4) while supporting student education would be a key mission, a more vital mission would be attracting, training, and supporting the next "generation" of seafood business, policy, and management entrepreneurs; and, 5) the traditional concept of an academic "center" may be too limiting given the emerging ideas for organizing and managing the "Center".

The workshop organizers offer sincere thanks to the financial supporters and participants in making this workshop a success. The commitment, energy, and engagement of the participants was truly amazing. It is now the responsibility of the steering and workshop committees to follow through with 1) a workshop report (due in mid-late summer), 2) a cohesive set of center concepts (due in late summer/early fall, and 3) engagement of the University -- as well as industry, resource agencies, and community partners -- in conversations and actions finalizing the design, implementation, participation, and support for the "Center" (to be concluded by late 2018/early 2019).