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FROM THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS HUMPBACK WHALE NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL:

**HAWAIIAN ISLANDS HUMPBACK WHALE NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL  
PROPOSES FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

**“Aloha ‘Āina Guidance Document” informs agencies how to integrate Hawaiian knowledge  
and resource management approaches**

HONOLULU - The Advisory Council (council) for the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary (sanctuary) has approved a new guidance document that outlines a process for the sanctuary, as well as other government agencies, to work with communities throughout Hawai‘i. This “Aloha ‘Āina Guidance Document” describes a recommended framework of engagement, and is now available for the public to view on the sanctuary website.

The sanctuary is currently undergoing a process to review, evaluate and update its management plan, and will release a draft management plan for public comment in 2013. The Aloha ‘Āina Guidance Document was developed by a group of individuals with expertise in marine ecosystems, Native Hawaiian practices, and community engagement at a workshop convened to inform sanctuary management, with respect to the integration of Hawaiian knowledge and resource management approaches.

Council members recognized the need for more effective community engagement from resource management agencies, and they highlighted the place-based knowledge that exists throughout Hawai‘i. “It’s important for this document to include a process to gather appropriate local information because not all places are the same,” said Walter Ritte, council member representing Moloka‘i.

Dr. Kēhaulani Watson, lead author and Native Hawaiian representative on the council, also clarified that the document is not meant to describe a singular Hawaiian perspective, as both the scientific community and cultural communities have wide and diverse viewpoints. As sanctuary managers continue the management plan review process in the next year, they will consider how best to implement recommendations from the guidance document into the future management approach of the sanctuary.

Established in 1996, the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council provides advice and recommendations on managing and protecting humpback whales. The council is composed of 16 government and 18 non-governmental representatives. Serving in a volunteer capacity, the council members represent a variety of local user groups, as well as the general public. Sanctuary advisory council primary and alternate members serve two-year terms and meet several times per year in public sessions.

*“The council is an advisory body to the sanctuary superintendent. The opinions and findings of this publication do not necessarily reflect the position of the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the State of Hawai‘i.”*

**On the Web:**

Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary: <http://hawaiihumpbackwhale.noaa.gov>

State of Hawai‘i Department of Land and Natural Resources: <http://hawaii.gov/dlnr/>

Sanctuary Advisory Council: [http://hawaiihumpbackwhale.noaa.gov/management/advisory\\_council.html](http://hawaiihumpbackwhale.noaa.gov/management/advisory_council.html)