

July 2021



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

NOAA FISHERIES DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION *POLICY STATEMENT*

NOAA Fisheries is an organization that is renowned for its great research and science. However, to achieve such status, a tremendous amount of work was done by numerous individuals from various parts of the organization, with varying thoughts and approaches and from all walks of life. In other words, it took a diverse and inclusive workforce.

Diversity is important to me as a person, as a woman, and now as a federal civil servant. Over the years, I have witnessed the results of what can be done when we work together, connecting people in an environment that fully promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion and values employee engagement. People thrive in their jobs, opportunities arise, and we attract the best and the brightest talent to our ranks. In addition, when we have a work environment filled with employees of different backgrounds, skills, experiences, and knowledge who enjoy what they do, and where they work, there is a tremendous increase in both innovation and creativity.

Over the last several years, NOAA Fisheries has made the work of diversity and inclusion a top priority. Today, I want to make clear my support of these efforts and to further emphasize my commitment to you as we work to advance, cultivate, and preserve a culture of diversity, inclusion, and belonging. The work we do as an organization is critical to the nation. However, fostering diversity at all levels within Fisheries will make us a stronger, more successful organization, and align us with our overall mission of *“creating an organization where fairness, diversity and inclusion are valued and where every employee has the opportunity to reach their fullest potential.”* We must remain strategic in our efforts to uphold and enforce strong values, build a more supportive workplace, improve our outreach and recruitment efforts, and strengthen our organizational culture so that every employee feels valued and respected. Only when we have accomplished these tasks can we pause for a moment of reflection.

In the coming months, we will release our new NOAA Fisheries D&I Strategic Plan 2022-2025. The overarching goals of this plan will be to further enhance the corporate goals of workforce diversity, workplace inclusion, and sustainability. Implementing it will help further our broader goals of increasing our capabilities and promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility throughout the organization. Each of us is responsible for ensuring the success of this plan, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to achieve these important objectives.

In closing, please remember that our ability to actively demonstrate the principles of diversity and inclusion is everyone’s responsibility. Whether a federal employee or a contractor, a manager or a non-manager, I stand firm on the conviction that we can achieve much greater success when we come together, consciously demonstrating and applying the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Doing so will further promote the



type of healthy culture that results in NOAA Fisheries becoming a model representative in the federal workforce.

If you have any questions or need additional information, reach out to our Diversity and Inclusion Coordinator, Melissa A. Johnson, via email at Melissa.Johnson@noaa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Janet Coit". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Janet" being more legible than the last name "Coit".

Janet Coit
Assistant Administrator
for Fisheries