

**2016 Recipient of the Oscar Elton Sette Award
presented by the Marine Fisheries Section
of the American Fisheries Society**

Dr. Ellen K. Pikitch

The Oscar Elton Sette award is given annually to a marine fishery scientist who has demonstrated sustained excellence in research, teaching, administration, or a combination of the three. This year's awardee, Dr. Ellen K. Pikitch, has been active in our field since the late 1970s, and she has excelled in all three areas, as well as public outreach, with a strong focus on conservation.

Ellen Pikitch began her studies at the City College of New York, where she earned bachelor's and master's degrees in Mathematics. After a few years consulting, she entered graduate study at Indiana University, where she received master's and doctoral degrees in Zoology, while working closely with Michigan DNR on her dissertation research on Lake Erie.

Ellen is currently full professor in the School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences at Stony Brook University. She also is Executive Director of Stony Brook's Institute for Ocean Conservation Science, which she founded (as the Pew Institute for Ocean Science) in 2003. On her professional path back to her native New York, she taught and conducted research at several well-known institutions in our field: Oregon State University, the University of Washington (where she served as Director of the Fisheries Research Institute), Columbia University, and the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School. Among her more than 30 advisees are some of the leaders of our field.

Ellen's work has focused on threats to and conservation of marine fish species, large and small. She co-founded and served as lead scientist of the Caviar Emptor initiative, which led to listing of beluga sturgeon in 2004 under the Endangered Species Act and a ban on U.S. imports of beluga products the following year. Worldwide trade in sturgeon caviar was halted under CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) in 2006, and conservation of sturgeon continues as a result of those efforts.

During the late 1990s and early 2000s, Ellen was at the Wildlife Conservation Society, where she was founder and director of Fisheries Programs, then of Marine Conservation Programs, then of Ocean Strategy.

A few more highlights of Ellen's conservation accomplishments must include coordinating a major – and very widely cited – scientific article on ecosystem-based fishery management, published in *Science* in 2004; co-authoring a pioneering monograph on biology and conservation of pelagic sharks in 2008; and serving as chair of the Lenfest Forage Fish Task Force (2008–2013), which has had a large impact in our field. She currently serves as board member of the Ocean Sanctuary Alliance and Fishwise, and on Advisory committees of WildAid and Seafood Watch, among other conservation organizations.

Ellen's approximately 200 publications are heavily cited and have made contributions to the technical aspects of stock assessment and conservation, as well as highlighting important needs in marine resource conservation. Their subjects have varied widely, including Bayesian methods for stock assessment, ecosystem management, food web theory, biology and status of rare species, and the worldwide effects of overexploitation and environmental degradation. For her many accomplishments, she was elected Fellow of the American Institute of Fishery Research Biologists (AIFRB) in 2014 and Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) in 2015. She received the Award for Excellence in Public Outreach from AFS in 2014, and has received numerous other awards from scientific and lay organizations concerned with conservation science. The Marine Fisheries Section of AFS is proud to confer upon her the 2016 Oscar Elton Sette Award.

Prepared by Michael H. Prager, chair, 2016 Sette Award Committee.

Committee members: Kenneth Able, Mary Fabrizio, Edward Houde, James Morris, Jamal Moss.