

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON ECOSYSTEM-BASED
FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management (EBFM) is a concept that is currently attracting much attention. A number of fishery management councils around the country have begun developing some form of an EBFM plan. Congress is also now considering specific language in the re-authorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to mandate EBFM by Councils nationwide. Several recent actions taken by the Council are consistent with EBFM principles, including the krill harvest ban, designation of groundfish EFH, and extensive spatial management of rockfish stocks. There has been a substantial amount of discussion in the scientific literature concerning the rationale and benefits of EBFM, but it remains unclear how to explicitly incorporate these concepts into Council management of exploited fish stocks.

Given the complexity of EBFM, the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) proposes that the newly established Ecosystem-Based Management subcommittee of the SSC meet to review the rapidly developing literature on this subject in order to enhance SSC understanding of the scientific basis of EBFM and to further explore how EBFM principles might be incorporated in the Council's management practices.

PFMC
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