



FACT SHEET: FISHERY ECOSYSTEM PLAN

23

The purpose of the Council's Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) is to enhance species-specific management programs with more ecosystem science, broader ecosystem considerations, and policies that coordinate management across the Council's fishery management plans and the California Current Ecosystem (the California Current affects the entire West Coast). The FEP helps the Council consider policy choices and tradeoffs as they affect managed species and the ecosystem.

The Council adopted the FEP, along with an Ecosystem Initiatives Appendix and a schedule for implementation, in April 2013.

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The FEP is regularly updated. Every year, the Council assesses the status of

ecosystem-based initiatives. Every two years, if necessary, the Council revises its priorities, usually in March. The FEP itself is scheduled for comprehensive review every five years.

The FEP helps improve management decisions by providing biophysical and socioeconomic information on climate conditions, climate change, habitat conditions, and ecosystem interactions. For example, information generated through the FEP helps provide buffers against the uncertainties of environmental and human-caused impacts to the marine environment. The FEP also helps prioritize research needs to address gaps in ecosystem knowledge and policies, particularly with respect to the cumulative effects of fisheries management on marine ecosystems and fishing communities.

The FEP is meant to be an informational document. Information in the FEP, results of the Integrated Ecosystem Assessment, and the annual California Current Ecosystem Status Report are available to the

Council for use in management, but how these items will affect fishery management decisions is at the discretion of the Council. Like all Council decision making materials, these documents are posted on our website (www.pcouncil.org).

ECOSYSTEM INITIATIVES

The FEP includes "initiatives," or issue areas that affect two or more fishery management plans.

The current list of Council initiatives includes:

- Potential Long-Term Effects of Council Harvest Policies on Age- and Size- Distribution in Managed Stocks
- Bio-Geographic Region Identification and Assessment
- Cross-FMP Bycatch and Catch Monitoring Policy
- Cross-FMP Essential Fish Habitat
- Cross-FMP Safety
- Human Recruitment to the Fisheries
- Cross-FMP Socio-Economic Effects of Fisheries Management
- Cross-FMP Effects of Climate Shift
- Coordinated Ecosystem Indicator Review Initiative



PROTECTING UNFISHED, UNMANAGED FORAGE FISH

The first initiative taken up by the Council aimed to prohibit the development of new directed fisheries on forage species that are not currently managed, at least until the Council has had an adequate opportunity to assess the science relating to any proposed fishery and any potential impacts to our existing fisheries and communities.

The Council completed work on the initiative in 2015, and protective measures for forage species were added to each of

the Council's four fishery management plans.

COORDINATED ECOSYSTEM INDICATOR REVIEW INITIATIVE

The Council completed this initiative in 2016. Through this initiative, the Council and its advisory bodies recommended

improvements to the annual California Current Ecosystem Status Report to ensure it better supports Council decision making.

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