

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF FISHERY ECOSYSTEM PLAN INITIATIVES

Preliminary Ecosystem Initiatives Report

The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) is concerned that the complexity and sheer volume of the initiatives listed in the current Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) will impact the Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) and workloads of our existing fisheries. The funding, resources and time to implement any of these initiatives, even with the help of ad hoc committees, are simply not available. The Council is even now so far behind that fishermen are still fishing under 2014 rules today.

While the HMSAS does not agree that all of the future ecosystem initiatives that are contained in Appendix 1 of the Fishery Ecosystem Plan are good ideas, we do believe that some of the ideas calling for future research on forage fish might be useful for individual Fishery Management Plans. A discussion among Council, its advisory committees and the public about which of these initiatives are most important and useable for management could be addressed.

Agenda items E2a:

Considering the Ecosystem Initiatives Appendix to the Pacific Coast Fishery Ecosystem Plan we make the following suggestions/recommendations:

A.2.1 Initiative on the Potential Long-Term Effects of Council Harvest Policies on Age- and Size- Distribution in Managed Stocks.

This is a low priority initiative, however there are examples of appropriate use such as the effects of the Japanese (Taiwanese, Korean) harvest of blue fin tuna.

A.2.2 Bio-Geographic Regional Identification and Assessment Initiative

This is a low priority initiative as the present framework plans are identifying the geographic regions and assessments in their present plans.

A.2.3 Cross-FMP Bycatch and Catch Monitoring Policy Initiative

On this initiative, we agree with the Ecosystem Advisory Subpanel (EAS) that it is a low priority as most aspects of the fisheries are so distinct from each other and are covered in the current fishery FMPs.

A.2.4 Cross-FMP Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Initiative

The EFH Initiative is better covered by the Habitat Committee and thus unnecessary.

A.2.5 Cross- FMP Safety Initiative

The Safety Initiative is covered extensively by the Coast Guard and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. This initiative is better handled in individual FMPs.

A.2.6 Human Recruitment to Fisheries

The HMSAS advises that one of the main factors that prevent entrance into the fisheries is the increasing regulations and their complexity; and financial and legal barriers. Commercial fishing is generally not financially viable by fishing in only one FMP fishery. This initiative should be combined with A.2.7 Cross-FMP Socioeconomic Effects if the goal is to increase domestic production of seafood and recreational fishing opportunities. This is the highest priority initiative for HMSAS, especially as it relates to the Drift Gillnet Fishery.

A.2.8 Cross-FMP Effects of Climate Shift

The HMSAS advises that any predictive climate changes giving predictive change to fish stocks for council management purposes are premature with the science today. This initiative is covered under agenda item E.3.b.

A.2.9 Indicators for Analyses of Council Actions

A better description of the purpose of this initiative is desired by the HMSAS.

In conclusion, the HMSAS proposes an Initiative that may stand alone or be folded into one of the other initiatives to evaluate the competition by marine mammals in removing living marine resources and how it affects our FMPs. An initiative that would highlight the ecosystem benefits of domestic seafood production is a higher priority for HMSAS. To do so, it is important to consider the negative impacts of the removal of living marine resources by marine mammals.

PFMC

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