

CALIFORNIA CURRENT ECOSYSTEM REPORT INCLUDING INTEGRATED ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will report on three topics under this agenda item: 1) the State of the California Current Ecosystem Report, 2) the California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) Phase II Report, and 3) current IEA work. Additionally, under this agenda item, the Council is scheduled to review and discuss the status of ecosystem initiatives under the Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP).

State of the California Current Ecosystem Report

The FEP calls for an annual report to the Council on status and trends in the California Current Large Marine Ecosystem (CCLME). The Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Team (convened by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or NOAA) has produced a second State of the California Current Ecosystem report, following past Council guidance on indicators and report content (Agenda Item C.1.a, Attachments 1 and Attachment 2). The purpose of this report is to bring ecosystem information for the CCLME into the Council process in a succinct, straightforward format to inform decision-making through the consideration of ecosystem variability. The report includes a synthesis of 22 key environmental, biological, and socio-economic indicators. The goal of the report is to present trends in physical and biological components of the ecosystem - alongside fisheries, ecosystem impacts from other human activities, and socio-economic factors.

IEA Phase II Report

The California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Phase II Report (Agenda Item C.1.a, Attachments 3 and 4) is a web-based, interactive report that synthesizes status, trends, and risks facing the U.S. West Coast marine ecosystem. This is a peer-reviewed report of 2011-2012 research based on contributions of the California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Team authors and affiliates (57 authors and 15 affiliations). This interactive report is an evolving product that will be updated annually and is completed as part of NOAA's National IEA program. It is organized around three questions:

- What are the status and trends of key indicators of ecosystem health in the U.S. West Coast marine ecosystem?
- What are the status and trends of drivers and pressures affecting the health of the U.S. West Coast marine ecosystem?
- How might potential future management options influence the health of the U.S. West Coast marine ecosystem?

Current IEA Work

NMFS will brief the Council on planned IEA work for 2014. Focus areas include:

- Conceptual models for human well-being, salmon, forage fish, groundfish, marine mammals, and seabirds;
- human dimensions, specifically the identification of measures that reflect vulnerability of fishing communities and measures of human well-being; and
- habitat considerations, the identification of key habitats and the development of potential indicators of habitat quantity, quality, and relative pressures.

The FEP states that each year at the Council's March meeting, the Council and its advisory bodies will:

- review progress to date on any ecosystem initiatives the Council already has underway;
- review the list of potential initiatives and determine whether any merit Council attention in the coming year and, if so, request background materials from the appropriate entities;
- in March 2015 and in each subsequent odd-numbered year, assess whether there are new ecosystem initiative proposals that could be added to the appendix; and
- in March 2018, assess whether to initiate a review and update of the FEP.

The Fishery Ecosystem Plan and Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management Initiatives

(detailed descriptions can be found in the Ecosystem Initiatives Appendix of the FEP, posted on the Council's web page):

Ongoing Initiatives:

- FEP Initiative 1, Protection for Unfished and Unmanaged Forage Fish – Scheduled for Council consideration at the April 2014 meeting in Vancouver, Washington.

Potential Future FEP Initiatives:

- Initiative on the Potential Long-Term Effects of Council Harvest Policies on Age- and Size- Distribution in Managed Stocks
- Bio-Geographic Region Identification and Assessment Initiative
- Cross-FMP Bycatch and Catch Monitoring Policy Initiative
- Cross-FMP EFH Initiative
- Cross-FMP Safety Initiative
- Human Recruitment to the Fisheries Initiative
- Cross-FMP Socio-Economic Effects of Fisheries Management Initiative
- Cross-FMP Effects of Climate Shift Initiative
- Indicators for Analyses of Council Actions Initiative

Council Action:

1. **Discuss the State of the California Current Ecosystem and IEA reports.**
2. **Review progress on ecosystem initiatives and provide guidance.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item C.1.a, Attachment 1: Annual State of the California Current Ecosystem Report.
2. Agenda Item C.1.a, Attachment 2: Annual State of the California Current Ecosystem Report Supplement (**electronic format only**).
3. Agenda Item C.1.a, Attachment 3: Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Summary Report.
4. Agenda Item C.1.a, Attachment 4: *California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Report* (**available only on the web at:** www.noaa.gov/iea/CCIEA-Report/index.html).

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Council Discussion

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