HABITAT COMMITTEE REPORT ON
PACIFIC MACKEREL MANAGEMENT FOR 2010-2011

Pacific Mackerel Management for 2010-2011
The Habitat Committee (HC) briefly reviewed the Status of the Coastal Pelagic Species Fishery and Recommended Acceptable Biological Catches – Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (CPS SAFE, Agenda Item F.1.a Attachment 1) for Pacific Mackerel.

The HC supports the conservative fishery harvest guideline proposed for 2010-2011 Pacific mackerel management that addresses the current scientific uncertainty in the stock assessment and acknowledges the recent history of low level directed fisheries relative to the harvest control rule. The HC continues to support conservative fishery management strategies for important forage species such as Pacific mackerel and moving towards development of specific set-asides for these forage species as better data are developed that identify the predator-prey food web relationships between Council-managed and other ecosystem species.

Coastal Pelagic Species Essential Fish Habitat
The HC received an update on the status of the CPS SAFE document, in particular the section on the 5-year Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) review process. Based on the information provided, the HC finds that the process warrants additional consideration and opportunity for input from the Council advisory bodies at the September or November meetings. For example, krill sensitivity to ocean acidification and the importance of upwelling zones warrant more attention.

The HC notes that the description of EFH for CPS is quite different than that for salmon and groundfish, as CPS EFH varies in time and space related to sea surface temperatures. The Council has a role in setting harvest guidelines for coastal pelagics which are important forage species, as prey is a component of EFH. Therefore, there should be specific consideration in the EFH section of prey species as important components of the ecosystem.

PFMC
06/12/10