

ECOSYSTEM FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) first voted to move forward with incorporating ecosystem-based fishery management principles through an Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management Plan (EFMP) in November 2006 and refined the intent in April 2007. The plan envisioned by the Council at that time would not replace the existing Fishery Management Plans (FMPs), but would advance fishery management under these FMPs by introducing new theories, new scientific findings, and new authorities to the current Council process. The EFMP would serve as an “umbrella” plan over the four existing fishery management plans, helping with coast wide inter-FMP scientific information, policy guidance, and research planning; creating a framework for status reports on the health of west coast ecosystems; and dealing with comprehensive area-based measures in a full ecosystem context.

In November 2009, the Council made progress on developing an EFMP by appointing members of an Ecosystem Plan Development Team (EPDT) and an Ecosystem Advisory Subpanel (EAS). Additionally, the Council provided guidance on the initial tasks for these two new advisory groups. The Council reviewed its record of decisions and guidance and heard reports from the Scientific and Statistical Committee, the Habitat Committee, and the public before assigning the following initial tasks to the EPDT, the EAS, and Council staff:

- Schedule presentations by scientists from the NMFS Northwest and Southwest Fisheries Science Centers on the state of the science in support of ecosystem-based fishery management.
- Review the Council record of dialogue on ecosystem-based fishery management including statements by the Council, its Advisory Bodies, and the public.
- Review the existing Council fishery management plans (FMP) to identify existing approaches and commonalities regarding ecosystem approaches to management.
- Inventory ecosystem-related management tools for their applicability to the EFMP process.
- Review existing ecosystem-based management efforts of other regional fishery management councils.
- Prepare a report to the Council that includes a draft statement of purpose and need; a list of initial goals and objectives; a range of options on 1) the geographic range of the EFMP, 2) the regulatory scope of the EFMP, and 3) the management unit species within the EFMP.

The EPDT has developed a report (Agenda Item H.1.b, Attachment 1) that is built on many of the November 2009 tasks and is a focused response to the last task on the list above. The EPDT and the EAS worked closely in the report’s development through a joint session and subsequent separate meetings to refine the report and provide initial information and recommendations on proceeding with EFMP development. Summary minutes of key meetings are included in the briefing materials under Agenda Item H.1.b and H.1.c. Additionally, the EPDT and the EAS are each preparing supplemental reports that will include comments and recommendations intended to assist Council decision-making on the direction of and next steps for an EFMP.

Because an EFMP and ecosystem-based management principals will likely have cross-cutting and broad applications for Council fishery management activities, the EPDT and the EAS have expressed interest in soliciting input from many of the Council's Advisory Bodies early in the process. Accordingly, several of the Advisory Bodies scheduled to attend the September Council meeting will discuss the EFMP, including the Scientific and Statistical Committee, the Habitat Committee, the Groundfish Management Team, and the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel.

Council Action:

1. **Review and comment on the EPDT report, *Ecosystem-Based Management Planning for U.S. West Coast Fisheries*.**
2. **Provide guidance on the draft purpose and need statements and goals and objectives of the EFMP.**
3. **Provide guidance on the format and regulatory scope of the initial EFMP.**
4. **Adopt a geographic range and scale for the EFMP.**
5. **Consider scheduling regular Council updates on the science of ecosystem-based management and the status of the ecosystem.**
6. **Provide guidance and tasks on the next steps, future work, and schedule on EFMP development.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item H.1.b, Attachment 1: *Ecosystem-Based Management Planning for U.S. West Coast Fisheries*.
2. Agenda Item H.1.b, Attachment 2: Summary Minutes of the July 21, 2010 meeting of the EPDT.
3. Agenda Item H.1.b, Supplemental EPDT Report.
4. Agenda Item H.1.c, Attachment 1: Summary Minutes of the May 4, 2010 meeting of the EAS.
5. Agenda Item H.1.c, Supplemental EAS Report.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview **Mike Burner**
- b. Report and Recommendations of the Ecosystem Plan Development Team (EPDT) **Yvonne deReynier**
- c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- d. Public Comment
- e. **Council Action:** Review Recommendations of the EPDT and Provide Guidance for Further Development of the Ecosystem FMP

PFMC
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