

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON THE  
FINAL FISHERY ECOSYSTEM PLAN

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) reviewed the draft Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP; [Agenda Item H.1.a, Attachment 1](#)) and the Ecosystem Initiatives Appendix A ([Agenda Item H.1.a, Attachment 2](#)). The GMT would like to thank the Ecosystem Plan Development Team (EPDT) for taking our previous recommendations into consideration in the latest draft. We do not have additional comments on the main body of the FEP at this time. We hope there will be iterations of the FEP with updates and improvements made periodically on a reasonable time scale.

On that note, the Council will also be considering next steps at this meeting. We did not have time to discuss the matter in detail and provide only the general comment that we support regular attention to the ecosystem initiatives (e.g. either annually or biennially) allowing an opportunity to provide or analyze new information and help develop considerations for prioritizing them. The initiatives all have merit, but may vary considerably in ease, costs, available resources, and other considerations. Likewise, the ability to undertake an initiative or the reasons for prioritizing a given initiative may change over time and would benefit from regular review.

We do have specific comments on Initiative 9, however, which the Council requested be added to the Initiatives Appendix at least partly in response to our request.<sup>1</sup> We think the EPDT captured the gist of the idea well. The Initiative is broadly written and is something to build towards across all fishery management plans (FMPs) over time. Our suggestion has been that the Groundfish FMP is a natural place to start. The idea is to bring in ecosystem expertise to advise on the design of the Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that is being discussed under Amendment 24. There may be staff, tools, and other resources associated with the Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA), the California Current Ecosystem Report, and the Essential Fish Habitat Synthesis Report that could be directed toward the effort. Pursuing Initiative 9 could provide indicators and other tools that would help ground the Tier 1 EIS and following National Environmental Policy Act analyses in the state-of-the-art ecosystem science being done on this coast. The intent of the ad hoc group we suggested in March was to scope out what resources, tools, and data might be available and how the Tier 1 EIS could be designed accordingly.<sup>2</sup>

PFMC  
04/08/13

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<sup>1</sup> November 2012 [Agenda Item I.2.b, Supplemental GMT Report](#), [Agenda Item K.1.c, Supplemental GMT Report](#), [Agenda Item K.2.c, Supplemental GMT Report](#), [Agenda Item K.3.c, Supplemental GMT Report](#).

<sup>2</sup> March 2013 [Agenda Item H.4.b, Supplemental GMT Report](#).