

HABITAT STEERING GROUP COMMENTS ON
GROUND FISH STRATEGIC PLAN

The Habitat Steering Group (HSG) applauds the efforts of the Council's Ad Hoc Groundfish Strategic Plan Development Committee and strongly recommends the Council adopt the plan.

The HSG has the following comments:

Section II. A. Groundfish Fishery Management

6. Marine Reserves as a Groundfish Management Tool

- The HSG strongly supports the strategic plan goal for marine reserves and the recommendations identified in the plan.

7. Pacific Groundfish Habitat

- The HSG strongly supports the strategic plan goal for pacific groundfish habitat and the recommendations identified in the plan with the following changes:

Recommendation # 2. ~~“Review and revise~~ Develop and implement gear performance standards for hook and line, pot, set gillnet, and trawl to increase gear selectivity, protect habitat, and/or decrease ghost fishing by lost gear.”

Add recommendation # 5. Identify habitats necessary for healthy fish populations and identify locations of those habitats.

Section II B. Science, Data Collection, Monitoring and Analysis

- The HSG strongly supports the strategic plan goal for this section and the recommendations identified in the plan with the following changes:

Recommendation # 2. “Create cooperative partnerships between state, federal, private foundations, and other private entities to collect and analyze the scientific fishery dependent and independent data needed to manage groundfish.”

Add recommendation # 12. Promote research to identify habitats necessary for healthy fish populations and identify locations of those habitats.