

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON  
GROUNDFISH STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Dr. Astrid Scholz briefed the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) on the Groundfish Fleet Reduction and Analysis (GFR) Project. The GFR project is a joint effort of Ecotrust and the Pacific Marine Conservation Council (PMCC). The goal of the project is to provide databases and policy tools that will facilitate Council deliberations regarding groundfish capacity reduction. The project expects to receive \$150,000 in funding, largely from foundations, and has a stated completion date of September 2002.

The SSC has the following comments regarding the GFR project:

- The project will involve creating databases of existing fishery and community information from a variety of sources, providing spatial depictions and analyses of such data, and developing policy tools that allow the Council to evaluate capacity reduction options in a way that considers fishery, ecosystem and community effects. The analyses will range from descriptive summaries to models that predict industry response to regulatory changes. The project description is not specific enough to allow the SSC to comment on its technical merit. Even given this non-specificity, it is clear the scope of the project is much too ambitious to be accomplished with the available funding or within the stated time frame. The SSC recommends that Ecotrust focus on one or more aspects of the project that will allow them to provide a tangible and useful product by the stated deadline.
- The SSC commends Ecotrust/PMCC for attempting to develop their project in concert with the Council and the fishing industry. Continuing consultation with the Council family will be important for determining how their databases and analyses should be customized to ensure the results are meaningful and useful for management. Continuing consultations with Council entities, particularly the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel, as well as other members of the fishing community, will also be important for encouraging trust. Without such trust, it will be very difficult for Ecotrust to obtain cooperation or to instill confidence in the results of their project.
- It is important for Ecotrust to recognize that the willingness of individual members of the Council family to provide input to their project should not necessarily be construed as endorsement of the project. If Ecotrust is seeking endorsement, they should be careful to obtain permission from individuals before using their names or their organizations in that manner.