

HABITAT STEERING GROUP COMMENTS ON
UPDATE ON REVISION OF AMENDMENT 12 – REBUILDING PLANS

The Habitat Steering Group (HSG) received an update from Council staff on the status of the rebuilding plans and the inclusion of habitat protection measures. The understanding of the HSG is that habitat-based protection measures will be included in selected rebuilding plans. The broader issue of whether to use protection measures such as marine reserves, gear restrictions, and habitat areas of particular concern (HAPCs) as rebuilding tools will be addressed in the essential fish (EFH) environmental impact statement (EIS).

The HSG has a couple of concerns:

- The proposed timing of the completion of the EFH EIS lags behind the scheduled adoption of the groundfish rebuilding plans.
- Some of the habitat protection measures proposed for the EFH EIS warrant more immediate attention and will not occur until after the rebuilding plans have been adopted.

The HSG proposes that the HAPC process occur concurrent with the development of the EFH EIS. To that end, the HSG will continue its work on the HAPC process and will coordinate with the EFH EIS process and the rebuilding plan process.

PFMC
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