

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL STATEMENT ON  
MARINE RESERVE PROPOSALS FOR CHANNEL ISLANDS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received an update from Mr. Jim Seger of the Council staff on activities surrounding proposals for establishing marine reserves in the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (CINMS). Additional information was provided by GAP member Ms. Kathy Fosmark, who represented the GAP at recent CINMS meetings.

The GAP continues to express its concern about the process and proposals involved in the CINMS marine reserve. The GAP notes the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) has expressed concern with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) document, which was prepared to analyze reserve proposals, and recommends the Council closely consider the SSC's comments.

The GAP observes that there appears to be little information presented on current fishery levels and fishery impacts in the proposed reserve area, as well as levels and impacts that would result in areas outside the reserve if it were established. It appears that little baseline analysis has been done; this should be a prerequisite for establishment of reserves. The Council also needs to consider the impact of reserve designation on various optimum yield (OY) levels; such analysis has not been provided.

Some GAP members questioned a statement that appeared in the draft Council letter included in the briefing material which appears to support pelagic recreational fishing in portions of the reserve, but not pelagic commercial fishing. If pelagic fishing is considered compatible with the reserve, then it should make no difference whether such fishing is for private recreational, commercial recreational, or commercial sale reasons.

Finally, the GAP notes, as it has in the past, that agreement amongst all constituent groups on a marine protected area comprising approximately 13% of CINMS was reached some time ago and that core area should be considered before expansion is contemplated.

PFMC  
09/11/02