

HABITAT COMMITTEE COMMENTS ON
PLANNING FOR FEDERAL WATERS PORTION OF THE CHANNEL ISLANDS
NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY (CINMS)

The HC received an update on the Channel Islands Marine National Marine Sanctuary planning process for potential marine reserves in Federal waters. The HC noted the importance of tracking and coordinating this process with ongoing work on issues such as the groundfish EFH EIS. The Sanctuary staff were interested in input into their process, but the HC did not have specific input at this time.

The HC also received a presentation from Dr. Richard Parrish regarding the potential use of marine reserves for fishery management objectives as contrasting with ecosystem, research, and social objectives. He expressed scepticism about the ability of reserves to meet multiple objectives simultaneously.

Dr. Parrish pointed out a distinction between complete no-take areas and areas that would allow some fishing, for example for migratory species. He said that even with marine reserves or partially closed areas, other management measures would always be required. He thought that no-take areas would be insufficient to meet most fishery management goals, but that could meet other objectives. However, Dr. Parrish indicated that a particularly important use of marine reserves for the Council would be to help determine unfished biomass estimates. To serve that purpose, a few large reserves could be established representing diverse habitat types but encompassing a relatively small proportion (less than 10%) of total habitat.

Dr. Parrish suggested that the Council Council needs to be prepared if it wants to influence the establishment of marine reserves in a manner that supports Council goals. To assure this, he suggested that the Council continue planning for marine reserves even with the constraints of inadequate funding. Other entities continue to plan and promote marine reserves and the Council needs to stay involved if it wishes to influence the process and be prepared when funding becomes available. The HC agreed with these recommendations. The HC suggests that the SSC Marine Reserves Subcommittee review Dr. Parrish's written report at its August meeting.

PFCM
06/16/03