

HABITAT COMMITTEE COMMENTS ON  
CENTRAL CALIFORNIA SANCTUARY PROCESSES INCLUDING KRILL BAN

The Habitat Committee (HC) reviewed the Briefing Book materials concerning central California marine sanctuaries. The HC urges continued communication with the Sanctuaries to ensure the Council's ability to influence Sanctuary decisions and foster a spirit of partnership. The Council and the Sanctuaries have many common interests and concerns.

The Monerey Bay National Marine Sanctuary has raised the issue of krill fishing. The HC discussed the potential for a krill fishery and the possibility of banning krill fishing. This issue has implications beyond those related to Sanctuaries. Because krill serve as a key component in the food chain for nearly all Council-managed species, the HC views krill as a component of fish habitat, and krill harvest as a concern.

The economic importance of worldwide krill harvest is growing quickly. While no formal proposal to either manage krill or ban krill harvesting has been put before the Council, increasing demands for coloring agents for aquaculture and other krill uses may make West Coast krill fishing economically viable.

The HC would like to see the Council recognize the potential importance of this issue, but does not know how best to deal with this. One concept might be to deal with this as an EFH issue; another might be to deal with it as a bycatch issue, since harvest techniques would likely involve tremendous impacts on juvenile fish. There may be other appropriate methods for the Council to address potential krill harvest as well.

If the Council wishes, the HC is interested in monitoring this issue.

PFMC  
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