

HABITAT COMMITTEE REPORT ON
GROUND FISH BYCATCH PROGRAM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The Habitat Committee received a briefing from Mr. Jim Glock on the Groundfish Bycatch Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). We felt the document was highly informative, useful, readable, and reflected the hard work of its authors. According to the Magnuson-Stevens Act, "bycatch" includes nearly all species of marine organisms except seabirds and marine mammals. This means bycatch includes biogenic species that are important as fish habitat. We concur that bycatch should include such elements. This produces an overlap with the Essential Fish Habitat EIS. This overlap is positive; however, the information in these two planning documents should be consistent. As these documents develop, we will continue to provide feedback to help ensure consistency.

PFMC
09/11/03