

HABITAT COMMITTEE (HC) REPORT ON
ECOSYSTEM FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN

The HC supports the ideas framed in the staff white paper, Agenda Item C.5.a, Attachment 1. As noted in Agenda Item C.5.a, Supplement Attachment 4, the Council has already taken multiple steps towards ecosystem-based fishery management (EBFM). The HC urges the Council to continue to move forward with EBFM by appointing a plan development committee or team. The HC believes such a team should encompass a broad range of ecological, social, and economic expertise. This could include representatives from other Council management teams and advisory subpanels (including the HC), academics, and other outside experts.

The HC believes such a team should be charged with identifying specific problems or issues the Council hopes to solve through EBFM, and placing those topics into an ecosystem context. This can become the Council's vision for launching the EBFM planning activity. A second step would be to identify and incorporate available information to further this process.

We urge the Council to set an ambitious schedule for the first phase of team activity. The team should meet this summer and provide its first status report to Council this fall.

The HC believes that EBFM provides a necessary tool to help the Council ensure that fisheries and fishing-dependent communities remain healthy and sustainable.

PFMC
04/03/07