

HABITAT COMMITTEE REPORT ON NMFS CLIMATE SCIENCE STRATEGY UPDATE

The Habitat Committee (HC) was briefed on the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Climate Science Strategy. The deadline for comments is March 30.

The HC notes a strong overlap between the Climate Science Strategy and Fishery Ecosystem Plan initiative A.2.8 (Cross-Fishery Management Plan Effects of Climate Shift Initiative). The draft Climate Science Strategy does a much better job of linking climate change to impacts to habitats as well as to the fisheries themselves. The HC notes that the draft Climate Strategy also applies to Fishery Ecosystem Plan Initiative A.2.4 (Cross-Fishery Management Plan Essential Fish Habitat Initiative).

Many of the objectives of the Climate Science Strategy are reactionary (reacting to climate impacts) and not proactive in terms of how climate science can help inform management actions to prevent further climate degradation. The plan should emphasize the science that informs prevention and adaptation strategies, as well as the role that coastal ecosystems play in mitigating climate change. The plan should also be more explicit in discussing the importance of reductions in carbon emissions as part of the strategies. In addition, Objective 3 could be expanded to include specific recommendations on Management Strategy Evaluation and socioeconomic strategies for adapting to climate change and their predicted benefits (e.g., carbon markets).

PFMC
03/07/15