

ECOSYSTEM ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON UNMANAGED FORAGE FISH REGULATIONS

The Ecosystem Advisory Subpanel (EAS) reviewed Agenda Item D.1.b, National Marine Fisheries Service Report on Federal Regulations to Implement Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment 1: Protecting Unfished Forage Fish Species. The EAS discussed with Ecosystem Work Group (EWG) members the rationale and potential impact of the proposed regulations. It was the consensus of the EAS that the regulations as proposed would accomplish the Council's direction to not constrain existing directed fisheries and provide reasonable certainty of discouraging new fishery targeting of these species. The EAS recognizes the need for and encourages more detailed sorting and coding of species to account more accurately for ecosystem component (EC) species. For example, this would reduce the influence of Humboldt squid landings on the pelagic squid Shared EC Species landings category. The proposed regulations are likely to promote such improvements.

The EAS also reviewed the EWG report on Unmanaged Forage Fish Regulations for a proposed Council Operating Procedure 24. The EAS agreed that there is a need for a clear exempted fishing permit process for Shared EC Species. Some members expressed concern that the proposed revisions imply a higher standard for consideration than the prior draft. The EAS could not reach a consensus in favor of the new language.

PFMC
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