

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE (NMFS) REPORT ON SWORDFISH  
MANAGEMENT PROJECT PLANNING AND OBSERVER COVERAGE

**EcoCast**

EcoCast, a multi-species, dynamic ocean management tool that harnesses oceanographic, ecosystem, and fisheries data to provide near real-time maps, is [now live](#). An article on the tool was recently published in Science Advances<sup>1</sup>. The publication explains that EcoCast provides forecast maps to help West Coast fishermen find the most productive fishing spots while avoiding locations with an increased risk of entangling non-target and protected species. Fishermen have long paid attention to ocean conditions such as sea surface temperature when deciding where to fish. EcoCast incorporates those data and more to help fishermen decide where – and where not – to fish, but is currently a voluntary information tool. Initial results provide evidence that an eco-informatics approach (the science of collecting and analyzing complex ecological data) that responds to ocean conditions at near real-time can be more effective than static boundaries in simultaneously supporting fishing opportunities and reducing bycatch. EcoCast is an example of management tools that can proactively adapt to changing ocean conditions and can identify new risks as they are happening rather than after they have had population impacts.

PFMC  
06/10/18

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<sup>1</sup> [E. L. Hazen, K. L. Scales, S. M. Maxwell, D. K. Briscoe, H. Welch, S. J. Bograd, H. Bailey, S. R. Benson, T. Eguchi, H. Dewar, S. Kohin, D. P. Costa, L. B. Crowder, R. L. Lewison, A dynamic ocean management tool to reduce bycatch and support sustainable fisheries. Sci. Adv. 4, eaar3001 \(2018\).](#)