

REPORT TO COUNCIL REGARDING ATTENDANCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL
FISHERIES OBSERVER AND MONITORING CONFERENCE

The International Fisheries Observer and Monitoring Conference (IFOMC) is the main international forum for working on and addressing issues on fisheries observer programs, emerging monitoring technologies, and fishery dependent data collection. The 9th edition of the conference was held in the city of Vigo, Spain June 11-15, 2018. Since 1998, the conference has been the only one of its kind to specifically address issues relevant to observer programs, and this was the first time it was held in Europe. Over 300 people attended the conference from around the world. Proceedings of the conference will be distributed and posted online later this year (<https://ifomcvigo.com>).

The conference included several modules, workshops and vendors with the latest technology for monitoring fisheries. This year the conference incorporated several electronic monitoring (EM) modules and presentations, including a half-day workshop that focused on EM. Staff from the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council), Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC), and the National Marine Fisheries Service West Coast Region and Northwest Fisheries Science Center attended the event. Council staff, Brett Wiedoff, presented “Implementation of Electronic Monitoring on the West Coast of the United States” and presented the Council perspectives on a discussion panel to provide insight regarding the development of the West Coast EM program, and highlight successes and challenges. In addition, PSMFC staff and Archipelago Marine Research, Ltd. developed and lead the EM workshop, which was highly attended. NMFS staff provided presentations on a variety of topics such as observer safety, new technology, and using EM and observer data for management.

The Council is one of a handful of groups throughout the world that is leading the development of EM for fisheries. There were many interested groups throughout the conference that desire to implement EM but are at the beginning stages. Therefore, it was highly beneficial for Council, PSMFC, and NMFS staff to attend to provide insight and guidance to other programs.

PFMC
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