

## HABITAT COMMITTEE REPORT ON CLIMATE AND COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE UPDATE

The Habitat Committee (HC) reviewed the reports on the Climate and Communities Initiative. As this Initiative focuses on increasing resilience of managed stocks and fisheries, the HC points out that building stock resiliency inherently depends on healthy and resilient habitats.

The Council can take a number of actions to increase the resilience of managed stocks (and the human communities that depend on them) in regard to climate impacts. Many of these are not related to habitat issues, but others are relevant in the context of improved linkages of climate impacts upon essential fish habitat (EFH). These could include:

- Improving conceptual frameworks for relating climate impacts to non-fishing impacts to EFH.
- Focusing Council consultations on the protection of habitat areas of particular concern (HAPCs), such as kelps and sea grasses (important to salmon and young-of-the-year groundfish) that can help buffer hypoxia.
- Improving Council coordination with National Marine Fisheries Service when EFH consultations are particularly important to ensure adequate freshwater inflow into estuaries and sufficient clear, cold water in streams and rivers (e.g. limiting water withdrawals in critical low flow periods to minimize disease and warm water temperatures).
- Identifying marine habitat features that are particularly vulnerable to climate change (e.g., corals, methane seeps, prey species).

The Council could task the HC to refine its suggestions on how best to further the initiative through EFH measures that will ultimately improve fishing community resilience in the face of climate impacts.

PFMC  
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