

## COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON CLIMATE AND COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE UPDATE

The Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS) reviewed the Supplemental CSI Report 1 (Agenda Item H.1.a, November 2018), and some members attended the Climate Scenario Investigation (CSI) webinar, held on October 23. We understand the role of the CSI Workgroup is to provide a framework and guidance to help the Ecosystem Workgroup (EWG) develop a detailed description of plausible future scenarios that might occur in the face of climate change, including 1) how fisheries and communities might be affected while meeting the goals and objectives for stocks consistent fishery management plans, and 2) ultimately, what the Council could do to mitigate impacts. The CSI also was tasked with developing a timeline for completion of various steps in the process.

Given existing staff obligations and workload, the fishery members of the CPSAS are concerned about where the Council will find the additional resources to carry out this initiative without jeopardizing existing fishery management needs, and asks the Council to consider the following:

- The Council has existing statutory and regulatory authorities, including those in the Magnuson Act, that address fishery management in the context of climate change. Although strategic planning is important, any future actions should recognize these existing mandates. It is essential to our fishing industry that the intent of these statutory and regulatory provisions are maintained and there is progress toward achieving these stated objectives.
- In the face of climate change, flexibility in fishery management is even more critical. The task of regulating fisheries continues to become more complex and less flexible. This is a major concern for many in the fishing industry. With new regulations surrounding climate change, we are apprehensive that flexibility may be further eroded with climate change regulations that override or hinder the mechanics of our fisheries management.

(A minority of the CPSAS believes that scenario planning is important to implementing the Council's climate initiative and that resources should be allocated or identified to carry out the effort).

The CPSAS believes the CSI team's initial thinking on both process and timeline both seem reasonable, and recognizes that the process is well underway. We note that the CSI report proposes to develop potential scenarios in consultation with the various management and technical teams, and suggests that the Advisory Subpanels also be included from the beginning of this scenario planning process. Fishermen serve as 'eyes on the ground' on the ocean, and through their observations they can ground truth scenarios for their plausibility.

The report states that Scenario Planning will focus on how the California Current Ecosystem might change in the future, and how west coast fisheries and fishing communities might respond to specific assumptions, with a focus on more than one set of predictions. We note that several

scientific groups have recently published ecosystem modeling papers focused on predicting future ocean conditions and potential impacts. These scientific papers should be considered along with other scientific research and empirical evidence in developing the various scenarios.

A recent report issued by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) stated that changes are occurring at an unprecedented rate, with impacts likely to be felt within 10 years under the Business as Usual (BAU) scenario. However, if fossil fuel use were sharply reduced in the next decade and global warming could be kept to only 1.5 degrees C, lower than earlier international agreement striving to cap warming at 2 degrees, impacts to ecosystems and the planet as a whole would be less harsh.

We suggest that at least 3 pathways be explored: Climate changes at 1.5 degrees C warming, at 2 degrees C warming, and at BAU. Providing a more hopeful outcome, contrasted with the worst-case scenario, hopefully will incentivize the fishing industry (and society as a whole) to understand the critical need to reduce their carbon footprint.

We note that the CSI proposed a scenario timing window beginning at 15-20 years, under the rationale that 5 years was too short due to interannual variability. However, in light of the IPCC report, we suggest planning for two timing windows – one beginning in 10 years.

Further, with regard to the selection of topics for in-depth climate scenario investigation by March 2019, we again suggest that the first focus be on species likely to be most vulnerable initially, considering the California Current Fish Vulnerability Assessment (Agenda Item I.1.a, September 2017).

We also appreciate the Council's consideration of the recommendations we made in our September statement (September 2018 Agenda item G.3.a, Supplemental CPSAS Report 1):

- Support policies that encourage and incentivize reducing the CO<sub>2</sub> footprint in fisheries.
- Support collaborative research, involving fishermen, to improve understanding of ocean resources and potential climate change impacts on fisheries.
- Operate under the principle that any response to climate change must not undermine the goals and objectives inherent in existing limited entry programs.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

PFMC  
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