

ECOSYSTEM WORKGROUP REPORT ON MARINE PLANNING UPDATE

The Ecosystem Workgroup (EWG) met via webinar on February 25, 2020, where we received the Northwest and Southwest Fisheries Science Centers' presentation on the annual ecosystem status report. During that report, Drs. Toby Garfield and Chris Harvey asked us about the Council's process for receiving information and updates on potential new installations of offshore energy sites. Their questions led us to review the materials for this agenda item.

New offshore installations of ocean energy and aquaculture equipment would likely come into the Council process through review of actions that may affect essential fish habitat (EFH). The Council should discuss whether EFH review provides sufficient Council opportunity for briefings and Council feedback on potential ocean use topics like ocean energy and offshore aquaculture.

Chapter 5 of the Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP), *PFMC Policy Priorities for Ocean Resource Management*, provides external entities with guidance on Council priorities for the California Current Ecosystem's status and functions. The EWG recommends the Council refer other entities to Chapter 5 for their analyses of the potential effects of proposed actions on the environment, small businesses, and fishing communities. The Council will be considering updates to the FEP outline under Agenda Item G.2.

PFMC
03/04/20