

ECOSYSTEM WORKGROUP REPORT ON THE CLIMATE AND COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE UPDATE

The Ecosystem Workgroup (EWG) thanks the Climate and Communities Core Team (CCCT) and Mr. Jonathan Star for their work over the spring and summer in support of the Climate and Communities Initiative (the Initiative). We offer no comments on the scenario descriptions provided in the September 2020 Agenda Item F.1, Attachment 1. Our comments for this agenda item focus on the workshop proposal in Agenda Item F.1, Attachment 2.

Regarding the workshop objectives, the EWG recommends revising the second objective of the workshop to read, “to generate suggested actions ~~that the Council [and other stakeholders] could take in order~~ to better prepare **our fish stocks, habitat, fisheries, and fishing communities** for a future of climate change.” Ultimately, the Council and its advisory bodies will need to think about specific science, policy, and regulatory approaches to manage for and quickly adapt to the potential effects of climate change on West Coast fish stocks and fisheries. For these workshops, we suggest keeping the objectives broad, so that participants are more free to think about problem-solving across Council and other management, infrastructure, and logistical arenas.

The EWG strongly supports inviting a broad range of stakeholders, including those who are not commonly part of the Council process and those who are representative of multiple fishery sectors to ensure that all Fishery Management Plan (FMP) perspectives are represented in each region.

Workshop logistics:

- The EWG strongly supports telling the stories of each scenario through brief video presentations. Video descriptions could be easier for interested participants and the public to digest and could provide real-world examples and headlines of the types of climate change effects described for each scenario. We appreciate the work of Council staff to improve the look and layout of the scenarios in Agenda Item F.1, Attachment 1 for this meeting, and see video descriptions of the scenarios as an extension of that work. Additional workshop material might include community/region-level one-page summaries of potential or historical changes in landings, revenue, and participation in state and Federal fisheries over time.
- We are concerned that the mid-October through mid-December timeframe may be overly ambitious given the advance work needed to organize the workshops and suggest that the Council give itself some flexibility to hold workshops beyond this timeframe.
- While we appreciate the need to maintain momentum on this project and support the practicality of planning for webinar workshops, we find in-person meetings to be more useful for generating diverse ideas. If these workshops do occur via webinar over this winter, we suggest that the Council consider providing additional opportunities for in-person discussion of this work later in 2021. The Council might also consider holding small in-person workshops following area-appropriate COVID-19 guidelines.
- Workshop plenary sessions and report-outs should be recorded and made available on the Council’s website to allow participants, Council, and advisory body members, and others to later review workshops and materials. We particularly think that participants from different regions may be interested in reviewing each other’s comments and ideas.

- We are concerned that the amount of time allocated to the breakout groups may not be sufficient for all of the participants to engage. Additionally, the time allocated for discussion during the report-out portions of the proposed agenda may not leave sufficient time for group discussion. Providing opportunities for written communication by workshop participants via chat features, shared online documents, or similar could help alleviate this concern.
- We are also concerned about the division of the participants by stakeholder groups in the afternoon of day 1 and the morning and afternoon of day 2, and suggest that well-mixed breakout groups could promote broader thinking within and between those groups.

To maximize the Council’s benefit from this Initiative, the EWG reminds the Council that the scenario planning process is only part of the Initiative. Our main priority for the scenario planning process is to ensure that it supports the Initiative’s goal to “consider strategies for improving the flexibility and responsiveness of our management actions to near-term climate shift and long-term climate change, and strategies for increasing the resiliency of our managed stocks and fisheries to those changes.” The Council has a history of actively supporting adaptive fisheries management, progressing towards comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Management, and being responsive to the concerns of our stakeholders. The Initiative builds on this history through increased understanding of the uncertain future and development of tools, products, and processes to proactively respond to potential future states. These objectives are distinguished from the more tactical outcomes of many Council activities/decisions.

After the scenario planning workshops and the final scenario planning report is complete, we expect that the EWG and other advisory bodies will need to help interpret the workshops’ outcomes and potentially translate them into Council actions. If so, we look forward to working with other advisory bodies and the public to identify further recommendations for Council consideration. Ideally, these recommendations will translate into changes the Council may consider making to the FMPs, the Fishery Ecosystem Plan, Research and Data Needs, or other Council policies.

PFMC
09/11/20