

HABITAT COMMITTEE REPORT ON FISHERY ECOSYSTEM PLAN FIVE-YEAR REVIEW

The Habitat Committee (HC) reviewed Chapter 4 of the Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) Five-Year Review and reviewed the pre-recorded webinar provided in the briefing book. The HC views Chapter 4.3, Human Activities and Marine Habitats, as a broad overview of human activities and impacts to ecosystem and essential fish habitat (EFH). The HC is unclear how this document will be used both by the Council and by outside entities; as it is currently written it lacks guidance.

The HC has the following recommendations:

- Include, as appropriate, potential ways for the Council to engage in some of the issues of concern identified in Chapter 4.
- Review the [list of priority non-fishing actions the HC developed](#), and Council approved, as a current focus for activity types the Council would like to be made aware of.
- Include links to the section of each fishery management plan (FMP) on non-fishing effects on EFH, particularly the conservation recommendations in Chapter 5.
- Include a stronger connection of ecosystem needs to the FMPs.
- The HC believes it is appropriate to make Chapter 5 a standalone document, and we would like to review the document at future meetings as it progresses.
- Characterizing EFH as a “set it and forget it approach” (p. 97) is a narrow perspective on EFH. While the maps of EFH potentially attract the most attention and are in many respects “static,” it is the textual descriptions that ultimately determine the extent of EFH designations, and therefore flexible in acknowledging temporal change. If the concern from the FEP’s standpoint is dynamic change, it may be fruitful to further develop habitat indicators (e.g., changes in kelp distribution) (Greene et al. 2015), which could provide a good perspective on temporally variable habitat conditions. This approach could conceivably be an outcome of Objectives 1a, 3b, or 3c.