

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON  
FISHERY ECOSYSTEM PLAN FIVE-YEAR REVIEW

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) reviewed the draft Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) five-year review and discussed the draft of Chapter 5, Ecosystem Science in the Council Process. The SSC appreciates the Ecosystem Workgroup's (EWG) efforts to develop the FEP and offers the following comments.

The SSC suggests the EWG could enhance the potential use of the FEP as a guidance document by further describing how the ideas in section 5.1 (Ecosystem Information in Support of Fisheries Management) could be applied in the Pacific Council's process and how that could affect Council decisions. Some additional examples that could be included in section 5.1.1 (Ecosystem considerations) are the use of ecosystem information to define time periods used for reference points as done by the North Pacific Council or using ecosystem information to support decisions to use dynamic reference points. The SSC also suggests another subsection could be added to describe the incorporation of ecosystem information into harvest control rules, as with Pacific sardine. The SSC recognizes that scientific advice on these topics is evolving and looks forward to the Council Coordinating Committee's Scientific Coordination Subcommittee meeting next year focused on the use of ecosystem information in assessments and management to provide further guidance.

The SSC recommends that further development of more system-level indicators, mentioned in section 5.3, be balanced with more consideration of how new and existing indicators could be used to inform decisions. Work towards identifying Fishery Management Plan-specific indicators presented closer in time to catch-setting decisions would be one way forward. Identifying how system-level indicators could be used to inform cross-Fishery Management Plan decisions may also be beneficial. Another workshop reviewing the full suite of indicators in the Ecosystem Status Report, as was done in 2013, could also lead to guidance on further indicator development.

The SSC supports the ongoing development of the FEP and could review a final draft if requested by the Council.

PFMC  
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