

HABITAT COMMITTEE REPORT ON FISHERY ECOSYSTEM PLAN 5-YEAR REVIEW

The Habitat Committee (HC) discussed the Ecosystem Workgroup (EWG) report on the final Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) Five Year Review (H.1.a, EWG Report 1). The HC appreciates the substantial undertaking by the EWG to update the FEP and finds the new report very informative.

As discussed in the EWG report, the former chapter 5 on Council policy priorities was extracted from the FEP report and is now a draft stand-alone document on *PFMC Guidance on Agency Activities in the California Current Ecosystem (CCE guidance document)*. This stand-alone document will have great utility for HC comments on issues of concern.

The HC discussed the EWG's recommendation (in its H.1 and C.2 reports) that the Council merge the CCE guidance document (Agenda Item C.2.a, EWG Report 1) with the offshore policy document that is currently under development. The HC recommends that the CCE guidance document remains separate from the offshore policy document because the geographic scope and suite of issues covered in the CCE guidance document extends beyond those issues and geographic scope addressed by the Marine Planning Committee (MPC). Specifically, the CCE guidance document covers the entire CCE, which expands into freshwater habitats of all coastal watersheds and addresses the full suite of over 40 non-fishing activity categories that occur within the CCE, such as hydro-dam operations, fish barriers, forest management practices, etc., whereas the scope of the new marine policy guidance document is narrowly focused on offshore development activities. For these reasons, and because the majority of issues covered in the CCE document are habitat-specific, **the HC recommends that it would be more efficient and appropriate for the HC to be responsible for maintaining the CCE guidance document.** The HC is able to assume this task, should the Council so desire.

PFMC
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