

ECOSYSTEM WORKGROUP SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT ON THE FUTURE COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA AND WORKLOAD PLANNING

In September 2021, the Council considered progress made on the Climate and Communities Initiative (CCI) and identified follow-up tasks intended to support West Coast fish stocks and fisheries in adapting to climate variability and change. At the Council's direction, the Ecosystem Workgroup (EWG) provided a March 2022 report recommending priorities for the follow-up tasks based on comments the Council had received from its advisory bodies (ABs) and the public, and categorizing those tasks by the type of Council action needed to implement the task (Agenda Item H.3.a, [Supplemental EWG Report 2](#), March 2022). Priority levels are discussed and further details provided in Agenda Item H.3.a, Supplemental EWG Report 2, March 2022.

At its March 8-9, 2022 meeting, the EWG discussed reporting regularly to the Council's workload planning agenda item so that the Council could track its progress implementing the follow-up work from the CCI. While this is a new approach, providing a list of potential tasks for the Council's discussions of its Year-at-a-Glance (YAG) is similar to how the Council sets priorities and plans for work under the fishery management plans (FMPs). The typical March and September schedule for considering ecosystem agenda items does not always align with individual FMP schedules. Moreover, getting feedback from ABs remains challenging and typically requires considering issues across multiple Council meetings.

Providing this April 2022 report allowed us to review feedback from March in time to update the list of potential CCI follow-up tasks for the Council to consider while it is planning work for the remainder of 2022. If the Council receives prioritizing or scheduling comments on CCI tasks from other ABs at this April meeting, the EWG would welcome the opportunity to report back again for the June 2022 future meeting planning discussion. Below, we separate CCI tasks into: 1) reports or other tasks that the Council could add to a future agenda without further additional background information from the EWG; 2) reports or other tasks that could be associated with a future Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) initiative or that might require additional background information from the EWG before being added to a future Council agenda; and, 3) reports or other tasks that the Council has already completed or assigned for further work.

Follow-Up Tasks

1. *CCI Tasks that the Council could add to a future agenda without additional background from the EWG:*
 - All FMP-specific advisory subpanels and management teams could report to the Council on barriers in the management of their fisheries to addressing the effects of ecological or management surprises and shifting stocks through in-season management actions, and on measures the Council could take to increase management flexibility/nimbleness pre-season and in-season, while supporting long-term stock and ecosystem integrity.
 - All FMP-specific advisory subpanels and management teams could report to the Council on priorities and processes for review of exempted fishing permit applications and

recommendations about how such permits could be deployed to advance climate ready fisheries.

- All FMP-specific advisory subpanels and management teams could report to the Council on opportunities for and challenges to embedding climate variability and change into our assessments, decision tables, and scientific advice for fishery management unit species, with advice and input from the Scientific and Statistical Committee.
- Plan a future workshop, in coordination with National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) Secretariats to the U.S. Delegations to the Regional Fishery Management Organizations (RFMOs) involving Council, advisory body, and management team members who engage with RFMOs, and other international forums that have management responsibility for West Coast fish stocks to:
 - Develop recommendations to address adapting to and mitigating for the effects of climate change on fish stocks and fisheries at the international level, and
 - Identify measures to improve current transboundary coordination to prepare for shifts in the distribution of managed fish stocks.
- Request that NMFS report to the Council on the West Coast fisheries' disaster determinations made in response to events that could be characterized as climate variability or change since 2010.
- Request that NMFS report to the Council on coordination among its hatchery, habitat, and hydropower policies to buffer Pacific salmon stocks against climate change effects.
- Task advisory bodies to explore the use of citizen science and traditional ecological knowledge through community-based and collaborative efforts in data collection for tracking climate change. (Note: Council received public comment report in March 2022 on an albacore stomach sampling program, a collaborative project between the highly migratory species fishing industry and NMFS Southwest Fisheries Science Center.)
- Request that NMFS report to the Council with a summary and evaluation of the Council's CCI scenario planning process.

2. *CCI Tasks that require additional background work from the EWG and others*

- Report specifying processes to address incorporating climate variability and change data and information into our stock assessments, ecosystem assessments, scientific advice, and decision-making, including expected shifts in our stock's abundance and distribution, and ecosystem conditions over the next 5-20 years. (Initial discussion provided in Chapter 5 of the updated FEP adopted in March 2022.)
- Use National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's climate vulnerability assessments to prioritize stocks for climate management strategy evaluations intended to develop climate-ready harvest control rules and other management measures.
- Bring FMP-specific ecosystem reporting into the Council process at times when it is most needed and useful, supplementing the annual ecosystem status report and harvest decisions that are under development.
- Define flexibility and adaptability in the Council's fisheries management process that could address shifting West Coast stocks, taking into consideration the scenario planning results and the February 2021 whitepaper "Flexibility in the Pacific Fisheries Management Council's Fishery Management Plans: What is Flexible Fisheries Management?" by The Nature Conservancy staff.

3. *CCI Tasks already completed or assigned*

- Ask the California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (CCIEA) Team to provide an appendix in the annual ecosystem status report that provides information specific to climate change, takes into account the CCI scenarios, and develops climate early warning indicators – tested March 2022, see Appendix E of Agenda Item H.2.a, [CCIEA Team Report 1](#), March 2022.
- EWG asked to include the statement in the Council’s Guidance Document on Offshore Non-Fishing Activities on the role of greenhouse gas emissions in climate change and related implications for West Coast fisheries – done March 2022, see Agenda Item C.2.a, [EWG Report 1](#), March 2022.
- EWG asked to reference the final Scenario Planning Report(s) in the FEP as an example of potential impacts of climate change – done, see [FEP at Section 5.2](#).
- Annual updates on actions taken by other U.S. fishery management councils to better prepare fisheries for climate change – assigned to Council staff and planned for initial discussion with other fishery management councils at the May 17-19, 2022 [Council Coordination Committee](#) meeting. A Council staff report on the results of this discussion could be included in background material for FEP initiative discussions in September 2022.
- Develop a Council webpage for climate-related work and resources to assist in educating and engaging the public – assigned to Council staff.

PFMC
04/08/22