

REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE STRATEGY

In 2022, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS/NOAA Fisheries) published a [draft Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy](#) (EEJ) and invited comments, including from the Regional Fishery Management Councils. At its September 2022 meeting, the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) reviewed and commented on this strategy, along with other Councils (see letters in [Appendix C](#) to the Council Coordinating Committee EEJ Workgroup report from October 2022). Since last fall, NMFS has been working to finalize the national strategy and has started drafting a proposed process for developing regional implementation plans. At this meeting, NMFS will report to the Council on the status of these efforts.

When the Council reviewed the draft strategy, members expressed an interest in providing input on both the process for developing the regional implementation plans and the content of plans themselves. Council directed staff to communicate with NMFS staff regarding the development of regional implementation plans and the Council role. Additionally, the Council directed staff to develop a list of things the Council already does that relate to EEJ concerns (Agenda Item F.1, Attachment 1).

Council staff understands that part of developing the regional implementation plan will involve community engagement that includes soliciting input from the Council family. In order to provide that input, it would be helpful for the Council to include an EEJ item on its agenda in the latter part of this year or early next year (best timing yet to be determined).

While NMFS works on the development of its plan, one question is what the Council wants to do on its own behalf with respect to EEJ issues? Does the Council want to expand its EEJ related activities beyond what is documented in Attachment 1? One step might simply be the solicitation of advisory body assistance in identifying potentially underserved groups that are affected by Council policies. Based on Council interest expressed at its September 2022 meeting, Council staff has tentatively asked advisory bodies to take the EEJ strategy into account as they develop initial recommendations for the upcoming update of Council research and data needs. The Council's "Process Efficiencies" agenda item (Agenda Item F.2) also provides an opportunity to consider EEJ principles.

Background: The first executive order (EO) on environmental justice was issued in 1994 ([EO 12989](#), Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government). The current administration has issued additional related EOs: [EO 13985](#), Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government; [EO 14008](#), Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad; and [EO 14091](#) Further Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government.

Council Action:

- 1. Provide input to NMFS regarding the timing and manner in which the Council wants to be engaged in development of the EEJ regional implementation plan.**
- 2. Review Attachment 1 for completeness and provide guidance on next steps for the Council process, as needed.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item F.1, Attachment 1: Existing Council Activities that Responsive to EEJ Concerns.
2. If received, Public Comments are electronic only ([see e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

F.1 Regional Implementation of the National Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy

Jim Seger

- a. National Marine Fisheries Service Report
- b. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
- c. Public Comment
- d. Council Action: Council Discussion and Guidance on Next Steps

PFMC
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