

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE STRATEGY

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) received a briefing from Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) staff Dr. Jim Seger and reviewed the briefing book items on the implementation of the National Equity and Environmental Justice (EEJ) Strategy.

The GMT considers the implementation of an EEJ strategy into Council processes to be very important, and in order to do so in a meaningful way, the team has several comments and suggestions:

- Given the complexity of EEJ and fisheries management, it will be key to have training and resources that help us develop a shared understanding of the Council’s EEJ principles and methodologies to identify areas where our current processes can be improved, and to help better incorporate EEJ into our work. For example, the Council could consider development of an explicit process tool such as an equity lens (e.g. [Equity Lens for Decision Making](#)). The GMT recognizes that a shared understanding of EEJ principles across the Council, Council staff, and advisory bodies will be important in implementing the EEJ strategy.
- The GMT’s ability to provide input on EEJ is informed by our understanding of currently underserved communities on the West Coast. We support the addition of social science studies outlined in the Research and Monitoring section of [Attachment 1](#) to the Council’s research and data needs list to provide a useful baseline understanding as well as potential improvements. Specific to “the need for research dedicated to identifying and understanding underserved communities,” the GMT sees value in better understanding how West Coast fishery revenues and seafood are currently distributed to various communities (defined socioeconomically, geographically, racially, etc.), which may better inform our impact analyses in the Council.
- The GMT agrees with the outline of existing Council EEJ-related activities in [Attachment 1](#). We note that commercial fisheries provide seafood as a healthy source of protein to many types of communities, whereas recreational fisheries provide direct public access to the resource. Many Council actions and discussions involve balancing those two services to the public, which relates to distributional benefits as outlined in the EEJ strategy, and may require further consideration relative to underserved communities.
- The GMT notes that as we develop our understanding of EEJ principles and practices, our approach toward EEJ will evolve based on Council guidance, experience, and training. We view incorporating EEJ into our work as an iterative, adaptive process.