

HABITAT COMMITTEE REPORT ON THE REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE  
NATIONAL EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE STRATEGY

Jim Seger, Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) staff, provided the Habitat Committee (HC) with an overview of current Council activities and policies that relate to Equity and Environmental Justice (EEJ). The HC appreciates these efforts and the current guidance for all advisory bodies to incorporate EEJ considerations into their operations and recommendations. Moving forward, the HC believes that additional clarity and guidance for defining underserved communities is needed to better identify those affected by Council policies. The HC discussed the potential for increasing participation and lowering barriers to participation. Council processes are complex and may be intimidating to individuals and groups not previously engaged. In the short term, reaching out with invitations to college students and community groups may be effective in bringing diversity into the Council process. Maintaining the option of virtual public comment allows for individuals to participate in the process without the financial and scheduling burden of attending Council meetings. In the long term, the HC supports a strategic approach for identifying underserved groups, reaching out to groups, and reducing barriers for participation in Council processes.

PFMC  
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