

HABITAT COMMITTEE REPORT ON  
COUNCIL MEETING AND PROCESS EFFICIENCIES

The Habitat Committee (HC) reviewed the Staff White Paper on Formats for Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) Advisory Body Meetings (Agenda Item F.2, Attachment 1) and discussed the tradeoffs with the different meeting formats, such as technology constraints, costs, Equity and Environmental Justice (EEJ) issues, and member participation. The HC recognizes the value of in-person meetings for encouraging member participation, relationship building, and improved understanding of Council processes. The Committee also recognizes there are numerous EEJ issues with requiring in-person meetings without a hybrid option, including family obligations and health considerations. Some of these equity issues are further elevated when in-person meetings are scheduled over the weekend. **In general, the Committee recommends some combination of in-person and remote meetings and to avoid scheduling remote meetings over weekends.** There were differences in opinions on how many meetings per year the HC should meet in-person; most members suggest 3-4 in-person meetings per year. **The HC also recommends that all in-person meetings should include a hybrid option to increase participation for those otherwise unable to attend.** Allowing all members of the Committee and the public to participate to the best of their ability to achieve the Council's goals should be prioritized over the potential costs associated with a hybrid format (technology, IT), especially since remote and hybrid options will reduce costs associated with travel and lodging. For example, during the March 2023 meeting, a limited hybrid format utilizing Pucks worked well in allowing members to participate that were unable to attend in-person, however, technology offering video and audio participation is preferred. **The Committee urges the Council to invest in hybrid technology to promote participation.**

PFMC  
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