

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON  
ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT AMENDMENT – FINAL ACTION

Kerry Griffin (Council staff) described the final alternatives from the Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) review. Eric Chavez (National Marine Fisheries Service, West Coast Regional Office, Long Beach) was also present to answer questions. The two alternatives derived from this review are: Alternative 1a) No action and Alternative 1b) Adoption of a new EFH Appendix.

The primary difference between the two alternatives is that EFH is defined specifically for market squid in Alternative 1b. There are no substantial changes to krill EFH, CPS finfish EFH, fishing impacts, and conservation measures in Alternative 1b compared to Alternative 1a. The SSC appreciates the considerable amount of work that was done to compile the information in the proposed new EFH Appendix, although the details of the Species Distribution Models were not fully documented. Nevertheless, the scientific literature, data, and information contained in the report represent a comprehensive review of CPS data currently available. The SSC found that there is a reasonable scientific basis for the alternative.

In the future, if the Council would like SSC input on EFH, the SSC should be involved earlier in the process.

PFMC  
6/22/23