

EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE (EEJC) REPORT ON
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE GEOGRAPHIC STRATEGIC PLAN
AND REGIONAL EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IMPLEMENTATION
PLAN

The Equity and Environmental Justice Committee (EEJC) had an organizational meeting on July 11, 2023, and selected Mr. Joe Oatman and Ms. Corey Ridings as its co-chairs. It met again on September 8 to discuss the charge given to it by the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council):

- to assist the Council in addressing equity and environmental justice (EEJ) issues and,
- in particular, to advise the Council on working with National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on the forthcoming EEJ Regional Implementation Plan and the Geographic Strategic Plan.

The EEJC received a presentation on the draft West Coast Geographic Strategic Plan from Mr. Jeff Bash (NMFS) and a progress report on development of the EEJ Regional Implementation Plan from Ms. Maggie Sommer (NMFS).

With respect to the Geographic Strategic Plan, the EEJC recommends that the Council forward the attached analysis of differences in how the National Strategic Plan and draft West Coast Geographic Strategic Plan address EEJ for consideration by NMFS as it finalizes its draft Geographic Strategic Plan.

The EEJ Regional Implementation Plan is to address the following:

NOAA Fisheries is responsible for managing the nation’s ocean resources and habitats. We use the best science available to make fisheries sustainable and productive, provide safe seafood, conserve protected resources, and maintain healthy ecosystems. It is our goal to make these services available to everyone, such that no community is underserved. This document outlines NOAA Fisheries’ strategy for incorporating equity and environmental justice (EEJ) into everything we do, and in ways that are consistent with applicable laws and availability of appropriations.

With respect to this plan, NMFS posed the question, “Does the Council want to be involved in developing the EEJ Regional Implementation Plan and if so, how?” NMFS offered that representatives of the EEJC and Council staff might have some joint virtual meetings with the NMFS group responsible for developing its regional implementation plan. Their participation would not substitute for any Council opportunities to review draft documents. The EEJC member role would be to provide information and perspectives about the Council process and reflect on proposals but not to provide formal advice or recommendations. Participation would not require formal appointment. **The EEJC recommends that the Council be involved in the process of developing the regional implementation plans and authorize EEJC members to meet with the NMFS West Coast EEJ team.**

The EEJC also recommends that the Council evaluate its own operations and decision making with respect to EEJ issues. This could start with an EEJ gap analysis that reviews Council processes and products noting where there might be improvements that would address EEJ considerations. The gap analysis would be followed by a prioritization of next steps for the Council, as necessary. The gap analysis could end up being the first step in the development of a Council EEJ plan, if the Council wishes to develop one after considering the results of the gap analysis. Outside expertise (including NMFS expertise, if available) could be used as part of a review of the gap analysis or to assist in any follow-on steps. Academic partnerships could also be useful in this regard. A full gap analysis may require an extensive effort, but it must be subject to the limitations of existing priorities, budgets and workload. If necessary due to those limitations, the gap analysis may need to be focused on particular areas (for example, evaluation of some recent policy analyses or Council operations). **The EEJC recommends that the Council charge it with developing a proposal for a gap analysis that considers current limitations but is scalable if additional resources are acquired.**

While the regional EEJ Implementation Plan is being developed and a gap analysis considered, the **EEJC recommends the Council provide guidance for the EEJC and Council staff to undertake the following tasks:**

Definitions. A common set of EEJ-related definitions could be valuable in the Council process. The NOAA Fisheries Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy includes definitions (see pages 5-6 of Agenda Item H.5, Attachment 3). At the same time, NMFS acknowledges that the definitions are not static and that its organizational knowledge will continue to develop. The Council could solicit comments to determine if there are ways that they might be better honed. This information might also inform future NMFS revisions, with the goal of a shared set of working definitions that can aid the Council and NMFS in furthering EEJ efforts and improving dialogue on the West Coast. .

Council Operating Procedures (COPs). Review the COPs for consistency with the EEJ related definitions and to identify portions of the COPs that might benefit from revision to better take into account EEJ considerations. Actual development of proposed COP revisions would come as a second step, prioritized based on results of the initial review.

EEJ Webpage. The Council should add an EEJ focused webpage to its website to provide information about EEJ and keep the public informed about related Council deliberations. This webpage could include the definitions, or a link to the NMFS definitions.

EEJC Report Attachment: NOAA Fisheries National/Geographic Strategic Plan Comparisons

The NOAA Fisheries National Strategic Plan for 2022-2025 (SP) focuses on

- Building a climate-ready nation, including resilient fisheries and coastal communities.
- Ensuring the sustainability and competitiveness of U.S. fishing and seafood industries.
- Recovering and protecting marine species.
- Continuing to build a mission-oriented, diverse workforce and to promote equity and environmental justice. (p. 2 of the NOAA Fisheries Strategic Plan, 2022-2025)

The draft West Coast Geographic Plan (WCGP) notes that in the West Coast Region

NOAA Fisheries' Northwest and Southwest Fisheries Science Centers, West Coast Regional Office, Office of Law Enforcement, and Restoration Center are responsible for building sustainable fisheries, recovering endangered and threatened species, maintaining healthy ecosystems, promoting safe seafood and environmentally-sound aquaculture, and supporting coastal communities (p. 6, WCGP).

This document compares the final National and Draft Geographic Strategic Plan statements relevant to equity and environmental justice (EEJ), noting differences between the two and some places where the draft plan might be modified to line up more with the national plan or otherwise incorporate additional EEJ considerations.

In the table below the SP goals and strategies are provided in the first column; corresponding excerpts of the SP text that relate, or potentially relate, to EEJ are provided in the second column; and EEJ related statements and strategy bullets from the draft WCGP are provided in the third column. Where there were no EEJ related statements or bullets, an example bullet is provided to illustrate the content of the draft WCGP. The final column provides observations on differences and potential ways in which EEJ might be further addressed in the draft WCGP.

Summary of the table:

In general, the SP tends to integrate EEJ considerations more into the Goal 1 strategies than the WCGP. The WCGP includes a Goal 1 umbrella statement that emphasizes engaging with tribes, and underserved communities, such that other references to engagement might be assumed to include the tribes and underserved communities—even if they are not specifically named.

For Goal 2, the SP does not directly mention EEJ considerations, while there are three mentions in WCGP coverage of Goal 2. At the same time, for the WCGP there might be room to increase the consideration of EEJ concerns under some of the Goal 2 related strategies. Additionally, providing an umbrella statement like that provided for Goal 1 might be something to consider.

For Goal 3, the SP gives more explicit consideration to EEJ for Strategy 3.2 (improve workforce diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility) than does the WCGP; while the WCGP appears stronger on EEJ for Strategy 3.7 (expand internal and stakeholder communications). At the same time, there might be some opportunity for strengthening the WCGP Strategy 3.7 with respect to EEJ issues. The WCGP description of its approach for Strategy 3.8 (implement an equity and environmental justice strategy) is not as extensive as for the SP but seems to cover the same bases – perhaps leaving fuller development of EEJ considerations to the upcoming EEJ Regional Implementation Plan.

Table 1. Comparison of SP and WCGP goals and strategies (key EEJ related terms in bold).

Plan Goal/Strategy	Strategic Plan 2022-2025 (SP)	DRAFT West Coast Geographic Plan (WCGP) – Selected Statements & Bullets	Observations
<p>Strategic Goal 1 Adaptively manage fisheries for sustainability and economic competitiveness</p>	<p>“Deploying economic tools and forecasts to ... and ensure participation of underrepresented communities will build resilience to fishery disasters and market shocks in our fishing and seafood industries”.</p>	<p>“We must engage and partner with fishing communities, tribes, and underserved communities to employ an ecosystem fisheries management approach that is resilient.”</p>	<p>No Comment</p>
<p>Strategy 1.1 Manage stocks for optimum yield [OY] and build climate and economic resilience in U.S. seafood and fishing sectors</p>	<p>“Strengthen economic returns and resilience to market disruptions in the commercial seafood and recreational for-hire/ charter industries and coastal fishing communities.”</p> <p>“Expand opportunities for sustainable recreational fishing and support subsistence fishing.”</p>	<p>“• Collaborate with the Pacific Fishery Management Council, international regional fisheries management organizations, states, and conservation groups to promote sustainable commercial and recreational fishing”</p> <p>“• Maximize the value of data collection efforts by strengthening collaborations...”</p> <p>“• Develop and maintain economic and sociocultural data collection, analysis, and research programs to inform management decisions and amplify resource value in commercial and recreational fisheries, and understand human–ecosystem interactions”</p>	<p>The SP strategy cites OY which is described in the guidelines as a “a decisional mechanism for resolving the Magnuson-Stevens Act’s conservation and management objectives, achieving an FMP’s objectives, and balancing the various interests that comprise the greatest overall benefits to the Nation.”</p> <p>Underserved communities are directly addressed under the WCGP discussion of Goal 1 but less so in the specific strategies. If EEJ is an interest relevant to the overall benefits the nation derives from the fishery, more might be mentioned in this section. They might be mentioned in the sentences on collaboration and data collection, in line with the WCGP goal level statement.</p>
<p>Strategy 1.2 Advance climate science and ecosystem-based fishery management (EBFM) to increase the sustainability of marine fisheries</p>	<p>“Integrate our understanding of the complexity of marine ecosystems into evidence-based decisions to inform multispecies/multi-objective resources management strategies for fisheries and aquaculture operations. Include equitable climate mitigation and adaptation in our management solutions.”</p>	<p>“• Support ecosystem-based fisheries management techniques.... to support management and maintain economic viability of fisheries in the face of a changing climate.”</p> <p>“• Investigate how climate change and human activities will affect fisheries and ecosystems along the West Coast and internationally, including Antarctica. Develop models, forecasts, and other decision support tools to inform fishery management decisions.”</p>	<p>The SP Goal 1 might imply some connection between participation in and deploying economic tools and forecasts. This would be in line with the National EEJ Strategy and, in particular, its Research and Monitoring objective and related actions. SP strategy 1.2 discusses including of equitable climate mitigation and adaptation in management solutions. These do not seem to be explicitly included in the WCGP.</p>

Plan Goal/Strategy	Strategic Plan 2022-2025 (SP)	DRAFT West Coast Geographic Plan (WCGP) – Selected Statements & Bullets	Observations
Strategy 1.3 Mitigate and adapt to climate-driven changes in fisheries habitat.	“Identify and implement restoration projects funded by the BIL and IRA to improve fish passage, restore coastal ecosystems, and enhance community resilience— especially for underserved communities and tribes . Integrate climate justice to ensure equitable habitat mitigation and adaptation solutions in our responses to climate change and help vulnerable communities better prepare for habitat-related fishery disasters.”	<p>“• Protect and restore essential fish habitat (EFH), and engage in community-based habitat restoration efforts to advance productive fisheries on the West Coast (e.g., Fir Island Farm Tidal Restoration in Puget Sound, Washington; Southern Flow Corridor Landowner Preferred Alternative in Tillamook Bay, Oregon).”</p> <p>“• Capitalize on BIL and IRA funds to improve fish passage, restore coastal ecosystems, and enhance resilience of underserved communities.”</p>	While community-based restoration is called out in the WCGP, underserved communities are only mentioned in the bullet on BIL and IRA funds. In that bullet, in contrast to the SP, tribes are omitted. The WCGP does not place as much emphasis on climate justice.
Strategy 1.4 Diversify our data collection technologies and expand/modernize data products and services	“Expand data products and accessibility to the public, fishing and seafood stakeholders, federal state and local government, and academia.”	“• Diversify and modernize data collection, storage, infrastructure, and dissemination processes for West Coast fisheries information. Provide scientific expertise to improve data collection technologies, products, and services governed by international agreements.”	While data products and services are a substantial emphasis in the National EEJ Strategy, that is less the case for this strategy of the SP. The SP does emphasize general accessibility to the public stake holders, which would include underserved communities and the tribes—but the default in the past has not necessarily included consideration of the special needs of these groups. Public accessibility is not explicitly mentioned in the WCGP under this strategy but is for Strategy 3.7.

Plan Goal/Strategy	Strategic Plan 2022-2025 (SP)	DRAFT West Coast Geographic Plan (WCGP) – Selected Statements & Bullets	Observations
Strategy 1.5 Ensure equity and accessibility for tribal, indigenous, and underserved communities	<p>“Implement the NOAA Fisheries Strategy for Advancing Equity and Environmental Justice to ensure meaningful involvement and equitable consideration of input by all peoples and communities regardless of race, color, national origin, language barriers, or income, Solicit traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) Consider that environmental justice is often a local issue affecting underserved communities with the potential for inequitable regulatory burden, or distributions of environmental costs and benefits, but decisions affecting these communities are often made at the regional or national level. Improve equitable participation in decision-making by soliciting inclusive nominations Review programs and policies to determine whether tribal, indigenous, or underserved communities face systemic barriers to accessing benefits and services. Support underserved communities and tribal needs through BIL projects.”</p>	<p>“● Engage with communities, Tribes, and partners to develop the West Coast EEJ regional implementation plan.”</p> <p>“● Expand our understanding of indigenous knowledge and traditional natural resource management techniques, in support of reintroducing salmon and steelhead to historical habitats.”</p> <p>“● Support tribal efforts to assess the feasibility of salmon reintroduction into blocked areas of the upper Columbia Basin.”</p>	<p>The WCGP may be leaving most of the elaboration on this strategy for the West Coast EEJ regional implementation plan.</p> <p>Both the SP and the WCGP cover TEK.</p> <p>The SP mentions program and policy reviews and BIL projects but not the WCGP (though it could be speculated that BIL would be the funding source for salmon reintroduction into blocked areas).</p> <p>The WCGP could expressly acknowledge the 26 Indian tribes that have “federally recognized fishing rights”, and their active participation and contributions to the PFMC process (Tribal seat on Council and the tribal representation on the management teams/ABs, and general participation in the relevant PFMC FMPs as management entities).</p>
Strategy 1.6 Counter IUU fishing activity & Promote Seafood Import Monitoring and Inspection	<p>“Combat IUU fishing and related harmful fishing practices—including forced labor—around the world and ensure imported seafood meets standards comparable to those set for domestic producers....”</p>	<p>“● Work cooperatively with state and federal agencies to conduct seafood inspections at ports of entry, and ensure compliance with Seafood Import Monitoring Program requirements so only legal, sustainable, and responsibly harvested seafood enters trade.”</p>	<p>There is no explicit mention of the forced labor issue in the WCGP, though it could be that it was intended to be covered under bullets such as the example provided here.</p>
Strategic Goal 2 Safeguard protected species and propel their recovery	<p>“Working with partners, we develop conservation policies, guidance, and regulations to conserve and recover protected marine species, and consult on proposed actions to mitigate threats to their survival....”</p>	<p>“We will work closely with communities, Tribes, and partners to implement high-priority recovery actions for species and habitat conservation.”</p>	<p>To the degree that there must be some prioritization of resources under this strategic goal, EEJ issues might be considered. This is mentioned in the WCGP when it discusses the goal but not in the SP.</p>
Strategy 2.1 Implement actions to recover endangered and threatened species	<p>“Focus on the species at greatest risk of extinction.... Identify and implement restoration projects funded by the BIL....Target enforcement efforts....Conduct emergency interventions for protection or recovery of animals in poor health.... Advance the Species in the Spotlight initiative....”</p>	<p>“● Utilize the expertise of tribes in the recovery process.”</p>	<p>Are there other underserved communities with expertise that might be consulted?</p>

Plan Goal/Strategy	Strategic Plan 2022-2025 (SP)	DRAFT West Coast Geographic Plan (WCGP) – Selected Statements & Bullets	Observations
Strategy 2.2 Model and predict the effects of climate change on protected marine species, to improve conservation outcomes	"Apply science and observations.... Update the NOAA Fisheries Climate Science Strategy Regional Action Plans, and apply the CEFI [Climate, Ecosystems, and Fisheries Initiative].... Investigate stranded, entangled, or out-of-habitat marine mammals.... Communicate those impacts.... Provide the science to assess climate vulnerability and develop climate-ready approaches to enhance resilience and adaptation strategies for protected species and their habitats, and incorporate conservation recommendations into management and recovery plans."	Example bullet "• Develop adaptive and dynamic management approaches to efficiently respond to climate driven ecosystem disturbances	Might consultation with underserved communities be warranted with respect to the development of management and recovery plans?
Strategy 2.3 Expand the use of advanced and innovative technologies	Increase the capacity to assess the status of vulnerable species... Use advanced technologies for species protection and conservation....	"• Work with industry, academia, and other partners to test, deploy, and use these technologies."	This bullet might be a place where the WCGP could mention EEJ issues.
Strategy 2.4 Protect and restore important habitats necessary for the recovery of endangered marine species	"Protect healthy habitat and restore lost or damaged habitat Improve resilience in consideration of shifting coastlines.... Apply a climate resilient approach, leveraging complementary funding opportunities and BIL funds...."	"• Build capacity for underserved communities to access grant opportunities under the BIL."	Note here the WCGP brings in an EEJ issue not included in the SP.
Strategy 2.5 Protect marine species while supporting ocean-based economic growth	"Provide evidence-based scientific advice.... Conduct science, provide advice, and require mitigation to support management decisions and rulemaking...."	"• Collaborate with partners to develop and implement measures to prevent entanglement and bycatch of protected species in domestic and international fisheries."	This bullet might be a place where the WCGP could mention EEJ issues.
Strategic Goal 3 Diversify our workforce, promote equity and environmental justice, and improve our mission performance through organizational excellenceWe will implement our plan for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) , including recruiting and training a workforce of the future, which represents a cross-section of society and has the skills and competencies in emerging technologies to meet evolving needs.... Improving communication across the agency and outreach to our constituents and Members of Congress will improve coordination on the progress of our mission.	".... We strive to increase the number of staff from underrepresented groups at all levels by recruiting and strategically deploying a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workforce Our goal is to maintain an environment of mutual respect , where decisions are made with transparent, reliable, and up-to-date information.... Additionally, we will emphasize infrastructure improvement to ensure that our information technology capabilities and facilities continue to adequately serve our mission.	No Comment
Strategy 3.1 Ensure total worker wellness	"Foster a healthy and safe working environment, including on vessels and in remote locations. Prevent harassment and other types of workplace violence and provide resources for effective behavioral health support. Provide training and resources for wellness best practices and develop a culture supportive of employee self-care. Improve behavioral health literacy in the workforce and train managers and peers to recognize the signs of behavioral health issues in their colleagues (e.g., stress, anxiety, and depression)."	Example bullet "• Protect the safety of observers by investigating assaults, interference with, or harassment of observers."	No Comment

Plan Goal/Strategy	Strategic Plan 2022-2025 (SP)	DRAFT West Coast Geographic Plan (WCGP) – Selected Statements & Bullets	Observations
Strategy 3.2 Improve workforce diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility	<p>“Implement strategies to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Continually build toward a workforce that reflects the diversity of America by recruiting and implementing actions to improve diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Develop and promote employees representing minority groups into positions of senior leadership. Understand and appreciate individual differences of race, color, creed, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation, and ensure their equal rights, opportunities, and inclusion in the workplace. Use training to improve our organizational culture in a way that promotes inclusion and psychological safety.”</p>	<p>Example bullet “• Advance efforts to recruit, retain, and empower a workforce that reflects our diverse region by improving training, coaching, recruitment, and hiring practices.”</p>	<p>The WCGP is not as specific with respect to the types of training and awareness need to promote EEJ.</p> <p>Promotion into senior leadership positions is not included in the WCGP bullets.</p>
Strategy 3.3 Develop workforce skills for the future	<p>“Build the workforce of the future. Increase NOAA Fisheries’ overall skills and competency in emerging technologies, data literacy, and virtual office management by strategically hiring to address evolving skill needs and enhance workforce proficiency through training, internships, and details or reassignments. Integrate hiring and reassignment strategies into the Strategic Resource Management process.”</p>	<p>Example bullet “• Prioritize the training and development of employees to ensure future workforce capacity and capability (i.e., succession planning).”</p>	<p>Might some mention of EEJ considerations be appropriate for this section or redundant with other sections?</p>
Strategy 3.4 Embrace a new paradigm for the workplace	<p>“Evolve a work culture that includes flexible and versatile in-office and alternative work spaces providing for the mission needs of our organization. Support a high-performing workforce and enable higher levels of productivity and resilience by fully using technological resources. Help all employees, including those working remotely, to experience a shared agency identity, common mission, and sense of belonging, with a healthy work-life balance.”</p>	<p>Example bullet “• Foster hybrid workplace collaboration to promote a sense of belonging and shared regional identity.”</p>	<p>How does the idea of developing “shared regional identity” interact with identities of those in underserved communities?</p>
Strategy 3.5 Adaptively manage infrastructure	<p>“Conduct asset management reviews and use data dashboards, lifecycle modeling, cost forecasting, and enterprise risk registries to provide the data needed to improve infrastructure analyses and decision making. Identify and mitigate climate vulnerabilities of our facilities and ensure they are climate-ready and energy efficient. Analyze office footprint needs and adjust where appropriate. Incorporate partnership approaches in our infrastructure solutions. Utilize cloud technology to reduce overall cost, optimize data and computing capacity, eliminate hardware obsolescence, increase physical and IT security, and reduce server hosting requirements and on-site maintenance”</p>	<p>Example bullet “• Support the maintenance of West Coast facilities and properties including field stations.”</p>	<p>Note that the location of infrastructure can be an EEJ issue, with respect to the distribution of costs or benefits from the distribution and maintenance of that infrastructure. EEJ issues are not explicitly mentioned in this strategy.</p>

Plan Goal/Strategy	Strategic Plan 2022-2025 (SP)	DRAFT West Coast Geographic Plan (WCGP) – Selected Statements & Bullets	Observations
Strategy 3.6 Optimize resources	“Analyze spending and improve processes to continually optimize resources toward the highest priorities, as required by OMB Circular A-11 Part 6. Execute an open, transparent, and deliberative Strategic Resource Management process. Make strategic planning an important driver of the budgetary and annual allocation processes. Provide opportunities to optimize resource allocation among headquarters offices, regional offices, and science centers and facilitate senior executives in communicating their vision and marshaling resources toward high priorities, as recommended by the National Academy of Public Administration.”	Example bullet “● Use priority-based methodologies to optimize investments for maximum economic return while meeting our mission and mandates.”	As with Strategy 3.5, optimization of resources can be an EEJ issue. Here the emphasis is on maximum economic return—although that is subject to mission and mandates, which might be interpreted as including EEJ considerations.
Strategy 3.7 Expand internal and stakeholder communications	“Coordinate strategic communications across the agency to improve the quality and frequency of internal communications on priority agency issues, high-interest topics, and news across Fisheries offices. Expand direct stakeholder engagement focused on key issues through virtual and in-person meetings with agency leadership. Expand and improve the NOAA Fisheries website and our federal web satisfaction scores with target audiences. Expand congressional outreach by proactively sharing regionally and nationally focused actions, increasing briefings, and being responsive to inquiries.”	<p>“● Enhance collaborations and engagement with tribal, state, local, and non-profit partners to leverage resources and increase mission impact.”</p> <p>“● Use a DEIA lens to improve communications efforts and reach new audiences and partners.”</p> <p>“● Involve NMFS stakeholders in decision-making processes, including strategic planning efforts.”</p>	<p>Collaboration and involvement (WCGP 1st and 3rd bullet cited here) go beyond communication (mentioned in the next WCGP bullet quoted here). It might be helpful to mention underserved communities in the other bullets.</p> <p>Since involvement, communication, and collaboration with stakeholders has often been mentioned in the past without necessarily resulting in EEJ considerations being taken into account, it might be helpful to specify: “especially underserved communities and the tribes.”</p>
Strategy 3.8 Implement an Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy	“Serve stakeholders equitably by engaging underserved communities in the science, conservation, and management of the nation’s ocean resources and their habitat. Build on equity and environmental justice efforts to provide guidance for incorporating and prioritizing EEJ in ongoing and future activities. Identify and recognize underserved communities , as well as address access barriers they face and more equitably and effectively serve all communities.”	<p>“● Develop a West Coast EEJ regional implementation plan that engages with underserved and underrepresented communities to reduce barriers and ensure equal access to our services and products.”</p> <p>“● Increase awareness of EEJ and empower our workforce to apply this knowledge in our work and the communities we serve.”</p>	No Comment

Plan Goal/Strategy	Strategic Plan 2022-2025 (SP)	DRAFT West Coast Geographic Plan (WCGP) – Selected Statements & Bullets	Observations
Strategy 3.9 Adopt Innovative Information Technology Strategies	Strategy not included in the SP.	<p>“● Implement data analytics and artificial intelligence by automating tasks and identifying patterns and trends in day-to-day functions and large datasets.”</p> <p>“● Adopt highly adaptable web-applications and web services to streamline application deployment and management, reduce costs, and increase scalability.”</p> <p>“● Emphasize user experience by incorporating user-centered design and user testing into product development and deployment efforts.”</p>	<p>This strategy is not included in the SP. Currently, artificial intelligence relies largely on the predominance of content often collected from the internet. Thus, caution may be warranted in that the results of artificial intelligence inquiries could further institutionalize the status quo.</p> <p>As innovative information technologies are developed, to the degree that they are public facing, NMFS will likely want to keep in mind the technological divide. For some underserved communities, the technological services may help overcome some barriers but for others the technology acquisition and use itself may be barrier.</p> <p>See Strategy 3.7.</p>