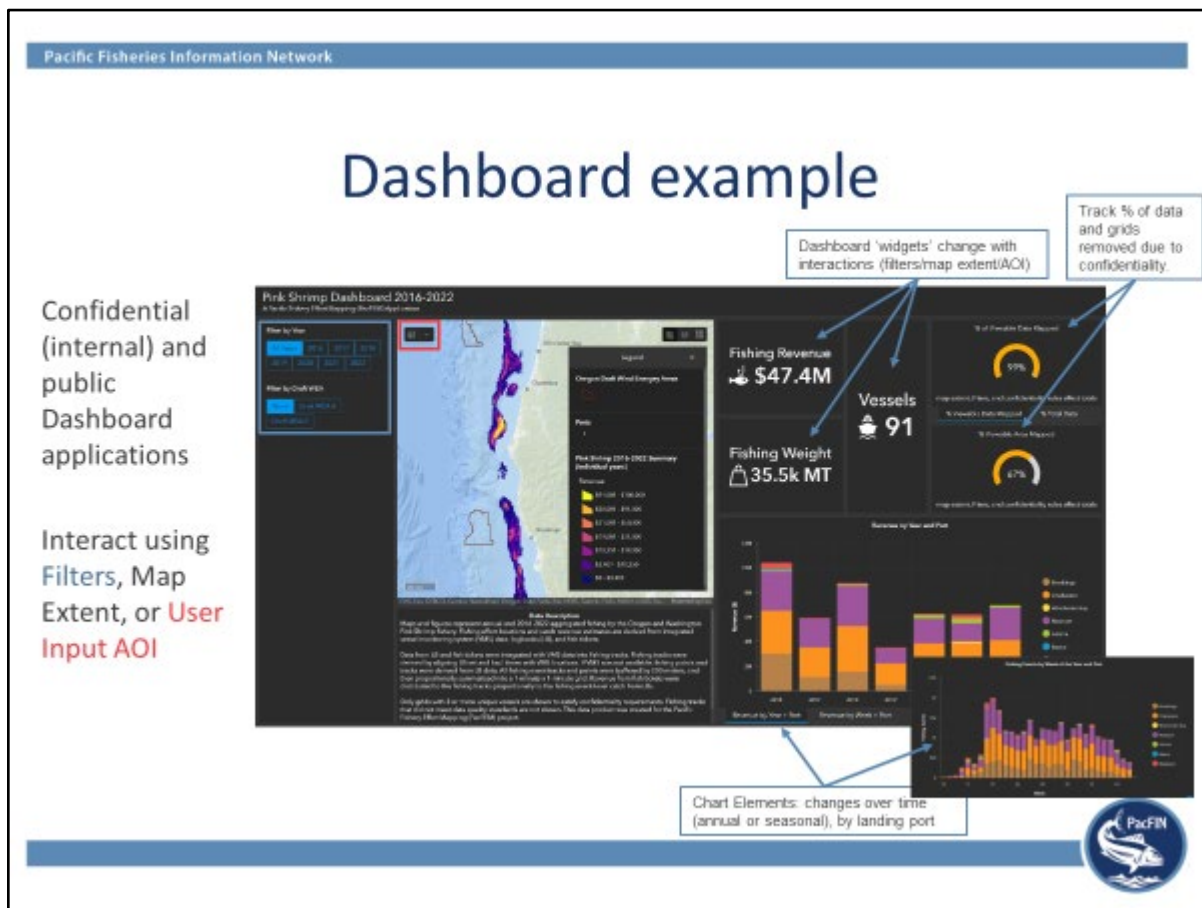


MARINE PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT ON MARINE PLANNING

The Marine Planning Committee (MPC) met in person November 1, 2023, to consider several offshore wind (OSW) energy and other issues. The MPC offers the following for the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) consideration.

Pacific Fishing Effort Mapping Project (PacFEM) update

Lisa Pfeiffer, with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Northwest Fisheries Science Center, gave a presentation about the Pacific Fishing Effort Mapping (PacFEM) Project, an effort to create an integrated fisheries spatial data system to support ecosystem management initiatives, marine planning, and economic analyses of ocean activities. NMFS and Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) are leading development of the tool, working in partnership with the state departments of fish and wildlife and with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM). It will have a public application (example below) that maintains data confidentiality and an internal application that includes confidential data, for authorized access only.



PacFEM will support fisheries management processes on the West Coast and can support planning and analyses for offshore wind energy, aquaculture, and other ocean uses. It will also be useful for

data requests from offshore wind developers, as noted by one of the California OSW developers in attendance. PacFEM incorporates institutional knowledge and expertise from state departments of fish and wildlife, NMFS, PSMFC, and the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council).

Phase 1 is nearly complete and includes three fisheries: pink shrimp, at sea whiting, and groundfish bottom trawl (2016-2022). Phase 2 in 2024 will add other federal fisheries and port-centric visualizations. Oregon and Washington state fisheries data has been provided for inclusion. Recreational fisheries data is not included due to the inherent limitations for spatial recreational data.

Marine Planning Committee Year at A Glance

The MPC looked ahead at upcoming activities and comment periods that may be of interest to the Council. Several important actions and comment opportunities are expected in the next few months. While the items listed below are expected to occur, the timing should be viewed as estimates. The intent is to provide the Council and stakeholders with a preview of what may be expected over the next 14 months, and for the Council and the MPC to consider workload and capacity to respond to these opportunities. It may become important to prioritize MPC activities and workload.

MPC Year at a Glance				
* At best a guess and subject to change				
Q4 2023	Q1 2024	Q2 2024	Q3 2024	Q4 2024
AB 525 Draft Strategic Plan	Oregon NOI EA	DPEIS AOAs	Oregon FSN ²	Oregon OSW lease Auction
SAPs ¹	IHAs	Oregon Draft EA		
NOI – DPEIS CA Leases	CADEMO Notice	Oregon PSN		
IHAs	WA – Pre-planning OSW	California Call Areas		
CA Coastal Comm. 7(c) working group	California Pre-Call Planning	Humboldt EIR		
		Feasibility Study – SB 605 (Ca)		

1 - Amount of MPC involvement unknown
 2 – Not an opportunity for engagement

- SAPs = Site Assessment Plans. These are submitted to BOEM by leaseholders. Some of the lessees off California have expressed an intention to begin site assessment activities in early 2024.
- IHAs = Incidental Harassment Authorizations. Request submitted to NMFS to “take” marine mammals in support of their site assessment/site characterization activities. These “takes” will be of Level B and Level A harassments.
- FSN = Final Sale Notice. PSN = Preliminary Sale Notice. NOI = Notice of Intent.

The MPC highlights three actions that may occur before the end of calendar year 2023, and may warrant Council comment, potentially via the Council’s Quick Response procedure:

- In 2021 California AB 525 was signed into law, requiring the preparation of a Strategic Plan for offshore wind energy developments installed off the California coast in federal waters. Required chapters in the Strategic Plan include: (1) identification of suitable sea space to accommodate the State’s offshore wind planning goals; (2) potential impacts on coastal resources, fisheries, Native American and Indigenous peoples, and national defense, and strategies for addressing those potential impacts; and (3) necessary investments in California seaports to support offshore wind energy activities. The release of the Draft Strategic Plan is imminent and the California Energy Commission has scheduled a [workshop for November 17 to discuss the Draft Strategic Plan](#).
- Notice of Intent to Prepare a Draft Programmatic EIS (PEIS) for the five lease sites off California. It is expected this will analyze potential impacts from anticipated offshore wind energy development in the five California lease areas executed in June 2022. This PEIS adds another level of environmental review to the leasing and development process; additional project-specific reviews are still required prior to a project being approved, disapproved, or approved with modifications.
- California Coastal Commission 7(c) Working Group. The Working Group is charged with developing a strategy to address fisheries impacts from the five lease areas off of Humboldt and San Luis Obispo County, respectively. Three MPC members have been selected to be on the Working Group. This will facilitate keeping the Council informed of activities Working Group activities.

MPC Road Map and Cumulative Impacts

The Council has repeatedly expressed the desire for a comprehensive cumulative impacts analysis for offshore wind (OSW) development at a regional scale that identifies the potential short-term and long-term impacts to natural resources, habitats, fisheries, and communities under the different processes and levels of development. The Council conveyed this need in a [May 2023 letter](#) to BOEM, which emphasized the importance of evaluating potential impacts through long term, West Coast-wide perspective.

Given the novelty of floating OSW technology and the uncertainty of the potential impacts, the MPC concluded that the first step to addressing the cumulative impacts analysis under a range of developmental scenarios was to list out the research and data questions needed to inform recommendations on OSW development decisions. Therefore, the MPC proposes developing a list of questions to address ecosystem, habitat, natural resources, ecosystem, and fishery uncertainties related to OSW development for public and Council review at the March Council meeting (see examples in table 1). As part of this list, classifications could also be assigned denoting where in the OSW developmental process these questions are most useful, and the relationship between these questions and Council purview (i.e., are these FMP specific question or cross FMP). These classifications may be useful in any future Council prioritization process.

The MPC discussed the utility and timeliness of the creation of this research and data needs list of questions for OSW. Through this list of questions, the MPC sees an opportunity to engage not only with ABs, the public, the science community, but also with potential funding agencies. For those questions where information is available, literature would be cited and potential impacts under different scenarios would be listed and could be used to inform Council’s discussions and

referenced in the Council’s QR letter process. For those questions where information is still needed, the Council could use the list when providing comments to other agencies. For example, this list could be used as rationale when providing comments to BOEM as OSW comment periods arise or when developing comments to NMFS on their strategic science plan that is under development. This list could also be referenced by other groups like the West Coast Ocean Alliance to inform discussion at their upcoming Offshore Wind Summit. Lastly, this document could be used to by funding sources to allocate resources to address the Council’s identified information gaps.

Table 1: Draft Example of OSW Questions to inform cumulative impacts analysis.

Impact Category	Question	OSW Developmental Phase	Council Process
Fisheries	How do OSW installations affect navigation, transit, and access to fishing areas?	Siting, Operations	Cross FMP
Fisheries	What are the socio-economic impacts to coastal communities?	Siting, Operations	Cross FMP
Ecosystem	Does energy extraction from OSW impact hydrological processes like upwelling, mixing, eddies, wind wakes?	Siting, Operations	Cross FMP
Natural Resources	What are the impacts of EMF to different species?	Siting, Operations	Cross FMP
Natural Resources	What are the impacts to migratory species?	Siting, Operations	Cross FMP

In addition to developing a list of questions to address information needs to inform cumulative impacts analysis, the MPC also discussed creating a conceptional diagram to provide a visual representation of the potential impact categories and how they vary under different regional development scenarios. One example discussed is that the impacts may be more limited under a single developmental scenario but will change as the level of development increases in the future. Thus, the MPC could develop a range of scenarios looking at the current level of development and the level that would be required to meet the regional energy goals.

These products combined will establish a roadmap for addressing the information gaps and uncertainty around future regional OSW development scenarios and their associated cumulative impacts.

Fishery Communication Plans

The two OSW Humboldt lessees (RWE and Vineyard Wind) collaborated on a joint Fisheries Communication Plan (FCP) that is a lease requirement. An Agency Communication Plan and a Tribal Communication Plan are also required. In September, the MPC and the Council reviewed the three draft FCPs by the Morro Bay lessees but did not develop written comments. At the November 1 meeting, the MPC discussed the RWE/Vineyard Wind draft FCP (C.3 Attachment 2)

and asked questions of the lessees, who attended the meeting remotely. The MPC offered minor verbal suggestions and were satisfied that the draft FCP provides an effective process for communication information and reducing space and use conflicts.

MPC Utility and Function

The MPC members discussed whether the MPC is fulfilling the function and purpose for which it was created. There was agreement that the MPC is a good clearinghouse regarding OSW activities across states, a voice for fisheries in the OSW process, and a forum for incorporating the perspectives from other Council Advisory Bodies (AB), which serves to minimize the length and repetitiveness that may otherwise occur. Members of the MPC from state and federal agencies agreed that this was a good way to support fisheries concerns that ordinarily are outside the scope of agency commenting.

Regarding optimization or improvements, members discussed the potential for utilizing previous comments to help streamline future commenting efforts and to look at the example of previous detailed comments to build trust for efficient adoption of future comment letters by the Council. Furthermore, there is a desire to have more subject matter expertise to pursue or comment on areas of concern where research or data is lacking. There were concerns regarding the scope of the MPC's mission, and members acknowledged the need to prioritize certain activities within OSW and aquaculture, recognizing that the overall purpose of the MPC is fisheries specific.

The MPC members agreed that the composition and representation of the MPC is commensurate with its mission. The MPC also agreed that the format of meeting 5 – 6 weeks prior to each Council meeting is an effective approach, and that the in-person meeting was extremely valuable. Lastly, the MPC provides a timely and public forum to discuss these topics and members for other ABs to informally discuss their specific AB members without a full public meeting at the other AB meetings.

Washington Update

As noted in MPC Report 1, the Washington Governor's representative to the Washington Coastal Marine Advisory Council (WCMAC) indicated that they were considering employing a consultant to support the Governor's Office in working with tribes and stakeholders to explore options for an effective OSW public engagement process with BOEM. The state Department of Commerce released a request for proposals (RFP) on behalf of the Office of Governor Inslee on October 27 seeking interest in such support. The RFP closes on December 11, and a pre-proposal conference will be held on November 19. Nocy Sumait was present at the November 1 MPC meeting and reiterated that BOEM did not plan to move forward with the two unsolicited lease requests until there was opportunity to work with the state on the planning process.

In addition, Governor Inslee also announced the Blue Wind Collaborative on October 10. The purpose of the Collaborative is to better understand the state's opportunities to become part of the OSW supply chain. This effort to understand economic, community, and workforce development opportunities is separate from the question of whether OSW should be sited appropriate for waters off the state.

Oregon Draft Wind Energy Areas

The MPC discussed the draft comment letter (C.3 Supplemental Attachment 3) on Oregon draft WEAs and commends the MPC and the Habitat Committee members who contributed to the report. The MPC recommends that the Council submit the letter to BOEM.

PFMC
11/03/23