

HABITAT COMMITTEE REPORT ON FISHERY ECOSYSTEM PLAN
INITIATIVE 4 – PROGRESS REVIEW

The Habitat Committee (HC) reviewed the work completed to date by the Ecosystem Workgroup in consultation with the Groundfish and Coastal Pelagic Species Management Teams and Advisory Subpanels, and the risk assessment work by the Scientific and Statistical Committee. We are impressed with the work to date. The purpose of Initiative 4 is to develop on-ramps for integrating ecosystem and climate information into Council fishery management plan decision-making.

As noted in our March 2023 comments, the HC continues to support work to develop ecosystem on-ramps for Sacramento and Klamath River fall Chinook salmon. Sacramento fall Chinook salmon are recommended because of their overall vulnerability to changing freshwater climate conditions. The HC and other advisory bodies have suggested Klamath River fall Chinook salmon because of substantial impending changes to freshwater habitat/ecosystem due to dam removal, combined with data streams that will include pre-, during, and post-dam-removal periods. Also, currently, there are necessary changes of monitoring of spawners in the system, which supports the need for an alternate approach.

Since stop light tables for both Klamath and Sacramento fall Chinook salmon have been developed, these tables could be refined, e.g. by weighting indicators or inclusion of additional indicators such as the habitat compression index, into numerical risk tables for integration into salmon management. This work could be facilitated by the efforts of the existing working groups reviewing conservation objectives for Sacramento and Klamath River fall Chinook salmon runs. Members of the HC could also work with the Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Team, the Scientific and Statistical Committee, or the Ecosystem Workgroup to determine how best to accomplish this.

PFMC
03/06/24