

ECOSYSTEM WORKGROUP REPORT ON CLIMATE AND COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE REVIEW AND PRIORITIZE TASKS

The Ecosystem Work Group (EWG) submitted an advance report H.3.a to the briefing book for this Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) meeting, describing the follow-up tasks from the Climate and Communities Initiative (CCI), including an appendix outlining possible follow-on activities from the CCI. The EWG appreciates the additional advisory body (AB) reports under this agenda item for Council consideration of Fishery Management Plan (FMP) specific prioritization.

The EWG recommends the Council consider convening a joint meeting among the EWG, other ABs, and the Science Centers to identify and prioritize what CCI follow-on actions can be incorporated into actions associated with pending Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funding for the Council and Science Centers. To ensure a complete understanding exists for the ABs and the public on the scope of the Council IRA proposals, a joint meeting could allow for communication, coordination, and alignment in the focus of IRA activities and clarify how they build on outcomes of the Climate and Communities Initiative.

EWG Prioritization Recommendations:

The EWG notes that the Ecosystem Status Report (ESR) climate appendices (2022-2024 ESRs) provide an indication of current capabilities with respect to supporting the “Science in Support of the Council Process” items in the compiled in [Agenda Item H.3.a, EWG Report 1](#), and could be used to support implementation of Council IRA proposals if they are funded. There is pending capacity (resources and funding under IRA / CEFI) over the next three years at the Science Centers to address actions aligned with CCI follow-on tasks. Council should consider this pending capacity when prioritizing follow on actions related to those related to those under “Science in Support of the Council Process”.

Considering all these factors, the EWG recommends the Council consider prioritizing (numbering for reference not to indicate priority):

1. “Council Process” item 1: “During potential Council actions to select preliminary preferred or final preferred Council alternatives, staff analyses of alternatives presented to the Council should evaluate and discuss whether alternatives would create more or less flexibility for fishery participants.”
2. “Council Process” item 6: “Develop mechanisms for incorporating purposefully built “if/then” statements into all fishery management frameworks to allow for timely management changes...” This could be part of the regular set of evaluation criteria that Council and NMFS staff use to analyze the potential effects of actions taken in the Council process under different FMPs and COPs, etc.
3. “Council Process” items 12a-e in future Council discussions of “Council Efficiencies and Effectiveness.”

4. “Science in Support of the Council Process” items 1.a and 1.b, and provide recommendations around focal stocks and FMPs. These actions relate to management frameworks (especially those providing flexibility), shifting species distributions, and changing ocean conditions. It would also be helpful for the Council to provide recommendations around which stocks and FMPs to help prioritize scientific research efforts.

PFMC
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