

## ECOSYSTEM WORKGROUP SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT ON THE ECOSYSTEM AND CLIMATE INFORMATION INITIATIVE - PROGRESS REVIEW

The Ecosystem Workgroup (EWG) met on September 9-11 to discuss the California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (CCIEA) report and feedback from the Scientific and Statistical Committee's Ecosystem Subcommittee (SSC-ES) on Agenda Item H.1 and integration of ecosystem information under Initiative 4 into the Council process. The EWG thanks both the CCIEA team and the SSC-ES for their thoughtful contributions.

### **Clarifications**

The EWG has a clarification to EWG Report 1 for this agenda item, which stated: "5. Provide a plan on incorporating this process into the groundfish FMP." We want to be clear that we are suggesting the risk tables be incorporated into the groundfish management process, *not* that we are suggesting any amendments to the fishery management plan.

### **Initiative 4 developmental pathways for Council consideration**

The EWG believes the groundfish risk (i.e., Climate and Ecosystem Adaptive Scientific Uncertainty Buffers) table is well-developed and looks forward to review and comments by the SSC and groundfish advisory bodies at this meeting. The EWG provides the following next steps, in the near and long term, for Council to consider in addition to the recommendations in EWG Report 1:

1. Further explore and develop methodologies for groundfish species that are less information rich (category 2/3, long-lived, etc.) for the 2027-29 assessment cycle.
2. Explore other pathways for groundfish (P\*, time varying sigma, etc.).
3. Expand the process into other FMPs.

Though the goal of this initiative was to develop tools for including climate and ecosystem information into the harvest setting process, the EWG wants to highlight that the information included in risk tables can be applied more broadly in the fisheries management process to build understanding of the effects of the environment on particular species. The EWG also recognizes that there are other ways in which climate and ecosystem information could be used in the harvest setting process, beyond risk tables. The EWG can advise on the exploration of these pathways if the Council would like to pursue additional applications.

### **EWG Role**

The EWG also recognizes the importance of clearly defining the EWG's future role in the further development and implementation of the risk table process. The EWG has played an important role in facilitating the application of risk tables in the harvest setting process for groundfish, and has reviewed and coordinated AB communication throughout the development of this application. The EWG anticipates serving in a similar role should the Council choose to include risk tables in groundfish management processes, or processes under other FMPs. If the application remains confined to the use of risk tables as developed under the pilot process, the EWG views its role more as a reviewer of risk tables and advisor on which species may be best suited to having risk

tables developed in future assessment/specifications cycles. It should also be noted that the EWG's capacity and role in this process will be impacted by the EWG's role and workload in the IRA projects.

PFMC  
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