

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT
ON CLIMATE AND COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE UPDATE

On March 1, the Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS) participated in a joint webinar with the Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT), in which Yvonne de Reynier provided an update on the Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) Climate and Communities Initiative, discussed existing management measures that could help fisheries respond to climate change, and discussed scenario planning. Trung Nguyen, CPSMT, reported on the Team's ideas for scenario planning. The CPSAS also reviewed the Ecosystem Workgroup (EWG) Report 1 (Agenda Item E.2.a, EWG Report 1) prior to the webinar.

The CPSAS notes that existing fishery management plan (FMP) measures could help CPS fisheries respond to climate change. For example, the Pacific sardine Harvest Control Rule (HCR) adjusts harvest levels based on sea surface temperature. In addition, the point of concern policy embedded in the CPS FMP can also address environmental or socio-economic issues as needed.

CPSAS members support the statement in the EWG Report Appendix that California CPS fishermen are dependent on a year-round availability of a portfolio of CPS species. However, fishermen that fish for CPS off Oregon and Washington seasonally often also fish for non-CPS species or move locations. We recognize that Northwest fishermen and processors need CPS in their portfolios when there are favorable environmental conditions and when other fisheries do not provide adequate opportunity.

The EWG Report (Item 8, Regional mosaics, and page 14) describes one option for kicking off the Council's scenario planning activities using broadly focused, regionally-based scenarios. Scenarios could be crafted with different groups in mind, e.g. "small-scale fishermen" using multi-species harvest portfolios. California members of the CPSAS point out that a "three-legged stool" analogy is characteristic of California's historic wetfish fleet both on a "large and small scale basis." Northwest members likewise use multi-species harvest strategies. These do, and have, included various CPS.

The CPSAS below highlights key points that address the need for flexibility in the face of climate change.

- Streamlining the exempted fishing permit (EFP) process and the Terms of Reference, in order to conduct the research required to open a new fishery are both important, and should be pursued while retaining the legal and scientific review necessary to ensure adherence to both the Magnuson Act and to the goals and objectives articulated in the FMPs.
- The Council has the existing statutory and regulatory authorities to address fishery management in the context of climate change. Strategic planning is important but any planned future actions should recognize these existing mandates. It is essential to the fishing industry that the intent of these original statutory and regulatory provisions is maintained.

- Operate under the principle that any response to climate change must not undermine the goals and objectives, and the original rationale used to create our limited entry programs.

Flexibility in fishery management is more critical in the face of climate change, yet the task of regulating fisheries continues to become more complex and thus less flexible. This is a major concern for the fishing industry as it could constrain fishermen/processor income streams.

- Regarding the selection of topics for in-depth climate scenario investigation, we reiterate our requests to focus first on the most vulnerable species as outlined in the California Current Fish Vulnerability Assessment (Agenda Item I.1.a, Supplemental CPSAS Report 1, September 2017). Other scenario planning topics that could be both cross-cutting and helpful to CPS fisheries include a focused look at projected stock shifts in the face of changing ocean temperatures and ocean acidification/hypoxia impacts. The CPSAS also acknowledges and appreciates the CPSMT's recommendations to consider the increased frequency of Domoic Acid events that cause fishery closures, and an increase in abundance of Humboldt squid, which could impact the local prey base.

Finally, the CPSAS recommends the Council establish a small workgroup of advisory subpanel and management team members from the various fisheries to work with the EWG to provide fishery expertise and help develop scenario planning priorities.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

PFMC
03/07/19*