

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON  
THE ECOSYSTEM FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN (FMP)

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) reviewed the report prepared by its Ecosystem-Based Management Subcommittee (EMS) summarizing recommendations from a subcommittee meeting held on April 19-20, 2011. Dr. Selina Heppell, chair of EMS, presented the report to the SSC. The report provided recommendations on the potential ways of incorporating ecosystem science into single-species stock assessments, fishery management, and Council decision-making, with an emphasis on review processes that should be developed for ecosystem science tools and products.

The SSC endorses the report in general and makes the following recommendations:

- Incorporation of ecosystem considerations into management should continue to be an evolving process. All science can and should be reviewed and held to a high standard of scientific rigor, but the precise nature of those reviews should depend on specific applications.
- A possible framework for employment of an Ecosystem Fishery Management Plan (FMP) is one of advisory and science teams, similar to the existing FMPs. This should include an Ecosystem Technical Team and Advisory Team. Coordination with existing FMP teams is essential. This could be accomplished through joint appointment if time commitments are reasonable.
- A report on the state of California Current Ecosystem is available now to provide information on physical processes, habitat, and food web dynamics that are affecting Council-managed stocks. However, this information needs to be distilled into a useful product for Council review and discussion.
- A section on ecosystem considerations should be added to all stock assessments, starting with the 2013 assessment cycle. The detail and length of the section will vary and evolve over time. Stock assessment teams should include expertise in ecosystem processes to assist with this section development and stock assessment review.
- The SSC will need to modify Terms of Reference for stock assessment reviews to include reviews of ecosystem consideration sections of assessments and application of ecosystem processes in assessments and harvest control rules. Consideration of resources needed will be important to insure that STATs are not overcommitted.
- Workshops should be planned to discuss ecosystem models and their application to biological and socio-economic evaluations. Improved communication with developers of the California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment is desired to prioritize applications of the models to specific questions, such as cumulative effects evaluation and forecasting models for salmon.