

## ECOSYSTEM FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN

In September 2010, the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Pacific Council) heard a report from the Ecosystem Plan Development Team (EPDT) on the goals, purpose and need, and the regulatory and geographic scope of a proposed ecosystem fishery management plan (EFMP). In its discussion following the presentation, the Council remained supportive of moving forward with an EFMP, reduced the range of potential plan formats by opting not to pursue an omnibus FMP that would combine all of the existing FMPs into a single plan, and recommended the west coast Exclusive Economic Zone as the initial geographic range. The Council reserved the option for the EFMP to have regulatory authority and requested additional analyses before identifying specific goals, needs, and authorities under the plan. The Council asked the EPDT to review the Council's four FMPs to identify existing ecosystem-based principles and common management needs that could benefit from a coordinated, overarching EFMP framework and to provide background for a future discussion of the EFMP's regulatory authority. The Council also affirmed their guidance for regular informational updates on science in support of ecosystem-based management and the status of the California Current Ecosystem (CCE), as permitted by Council meeting agenda scheduling.

In November, the Council heard from Dr. Patricia Livingston, the Director of the Resource Ecology and Fisheries Management Division at the Alaska Fisheries Science Center and Chair of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council's (North Pacific Council) Scientific and Statistical Committee about initiatives to integrate ecosystem approaches within the Alaska fishery management process. Dr. Livingston provided an overview of North Pacific Council efforts to prevent overfishing, promote sustainable fisheries and communities, avoid impacts prohibited species, preserve the food web, and reduce habitat impacts through the incorporation of ecosystem-based management objectives. Trends in ecosystem indicators (i.e. population trends of apex predators and forage species) and fishing impacts on the ecosystem (i.e. total catch, effort, and discards) are reported in ecosystem considerations sections annual Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation documents.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has been working on an initiative to incorporate incorporating ecosystem principles in ocean and coastal resource management. An integrated ecosystem assessment (IEA) is a synthesis and quantitative analysis of information on relevant natural and socioeconomic factors in relation to specified ecosystem management goals and is an important element in the implementation of ecosystem approaches to management. NOAA has been working on an IEA focused on the west coast and the CCE and has published an information report to, in part, initiate dialogue and solicit input on future developed and application of the IEA (Agenda Item J.1.b, Attachment 1). At this meeting, Dr. John Stein, Acting Director of the Northwest Fisheries Science Center, and Dr. Cisco Werner, Director of the Southwest Fisheries Science will provide a brief overview of the west coast IEA initiative.

In response to Council guidance in September 2010, the EPDT has developed and will present a report that reviews the Council's four FMPs to identify existing ecosystem-based principles, common needs and potential benefits, and ways the developing ecosystem science can be brought into the Council management process (Agenda Item J.1.c, Attachment 1). The Ecosystem Advisory Subpanel (EAS) met on February 16, 2011 to review the report and develop its recommendations.

Regarding the purpose and need, the goals and objectives, and the regulatory scope of an EFMP, the EPDT and EAS reports from the September 2010 Council meeting are still relevant and serve as a useful reference for March. Specific to the Council's guidance to further explore the EFMP's regulatory authority, Chapter 5 from the EPDTs' September 2010 report "*Ecosystem Fishery Management Planning for U.S. West Coast Fisheries*" (September 2010, Agenda Item H.1.b, Attachment 1) is included for reference and the entire report is included on the March 2011 Briefing Book CD (Agenda Item J.1.c, Attachment 2). All reference materials from the Council's September 2010 session on this topic are posted on the Council web page. At this meeting the Council is tasked with reviewing new reports and recommendations of its Advisory Bodies and providing additional guidance on continued development of an EFMP.

### Council Task:

1. **Review and comment on the EPDT report, *Discussion Document: Assessing Ecosystem Policy Principles and Bringing Ecosystem Science into the Pacific Fishery Management Council Process*.**
2. **Provide guidance on the needs, goals, and objectives of the EFMP.**
3. **Provide guidance on the format and regulatory scope of the initial EFMP.**
4. **Provide feedback to NOAA on the west coast IEA.**
5. **Provide guidance and tasks on the next steps, future work, and schedule on EFMP development.**

### Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item J.1.b, Attachment 1: February 10, 2011 Cover Letter and IEA Executive Summary from Dr. John Stein and Dr. Cisco Werner.
2. Agenda Item J.1.c, Attachment 1: *Discussion Document: Assessing Ecosystem Policy Principles and Bringing Ecosystem Science into the Pacific Fishery Management Council Process*.
3. Agenda Item J.1.c, Attachment 2: Chapter 5 Excerpt from the September 2010 EPDT Report: *Ecosystem Fishery Management Planning for U.S West Coast Fisheries* (**full document available on the Council web page and the March 2011 Briefing Book CD**).
4. Agenda Item J.1.c, Supplemental EPDT Report.
5. Agenda Item J.1.d, Supplemental EAS Report.
6. Agenda Item J.1.e, Public Comment.

### Agenda Order:

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|---|--------------------------|
| a. Agenda Item Overview   | Mike Burner              |
| b. Integrated Ecosystem Assessments   | John Stein, Cisco Werner |
| c. Report and Recommendations of the Ecosystem Plan Development Team (EPDT) | Yvonne deReynier         |
| d. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities          |                          |
| e. Public Comment   |                          |
| f. Council Discussion   |                          |

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02/14/11