

## ECOSYSTEM PLAN DEVELOPMENT TEAM REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTION

At its September 2010 meeting, the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) received its first report from its Ecosystem Plan Development Team (EPDT,) *Ecosystem Fishery Management Planning for U.S. West Coast Fisheries* (September 2010 Agenda Item H.1.b, Attachment 1). That report discussed ecosystem fishery management planning generally, draft goals and objectives for a potential ecosystem fishery management plan (EFMP,) issues to consider for developing the regulatory scope of and management unit species for a potential EFMP, the geographic range and scale of an EFMP, and the state of ecosystem science. For March 2011, the Council tasked its EPDT with reviewing the Council's four fishery management plans (FMPs) to identify existing ecosystem-based management principles, and to scope common management needs that may benefit from a coordinated overarching Ecosystem Fishery Management Plan framework. The EPDT's March 2011 report, *Discussion Document Assessing Ecosystem Policy Principles and Bringing Ecosystem Science into the Pacific Fishery Management Council Process* (Discussion Document, Agenda Item J.1.c, Attachment 1), addresses those Council tasks as well as September 2010 comments received from the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee. This report complements the discussion document and focuses on potential next steps for Council action on ecosystem fishery management planning.

The discussion document provides EPDT suggestions on a variety of avenues for bringing ecosystem science information and research into the Council process. Because that report touches on the work of all of the Council's FMPs, the EPDT believes that review and comment from the Council's advisory bodies on the discussion document is essential to moving the Council's ecosystem fishery management planning process forward. Depending on Council direction, the EPDT anticipates working on its next Council assignments over spring and summer 2011, with its next face-to-face meeting to be held following the Council's June meeting. The EPDT provides detailed recommendations, below, but tentatively plans to:

- Receive comments on its March 2011 Discussion Document from Council advisory bodies, and document or process revision directions from the Council at the Council's June 2011 meeting.
- Report to the Council and its advisory bodies in September 2011 on developing ecosystem fishery management planning priority statements that the EPDT anticipates will both aid the development of an annual California Current Ecosystem report and in moving forward the Council's ecosystem policy priorities.

### EPDT Recommendations for Council Action

- Assign Council advisory bodies, including FMP management teams and advisory panels, to review the EPDT's March 2011 Discussion Document, as well as the September 2010 EPDT report and associated comments from Council advisory bodies, and provide comment to the Council by its June 2011 meeting. Comments should consider: 1) whether the EPDT's discussions of current ecosystem-based management measures within FMPs are complete and, if not, detail missing measures or concepts; 2) whether

the EPDT's proposed schedule (Table 4.1 in Discussion Document) for incorporating ecosystem considerations into stock assessments for selected species is feasible and, if not, suggest alternative schedules; 3) whether the EPDT's recommendations for research and information needed to bring additional ecosystem considerations into the Council process (Section 4.2 of Discussion Document) are comprehensive and, if not, provide additional suggestions.

- Request that the SSC particularly review Table 4.1 in the Discussion Document and comment on the appropriateness of revising stock assessment Terms of Reference, in consultation with management teams, to facilitate the participation of ecologists or other relevant experts on stock assessment teams to aid in ecosystem considerations development for stock assessments.
- Plan for Council input to NOAA's California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment, to help craft science products that will better inform Council conservation and management decision-making
- Request that the SSC begin planning for review of models in support of ecosystem-based management. The SSC typically reviews models and other science inputs to the Council process in the context of Council decisions. However, ecosystem models are new to the Council process and the initial model review process will require time for dialogue between the SSC and modelers.
- Provide discussion and guidance on the desired direction for ecosystem fishery management policy and assign EPDT policy and science analyses that could aid the Council in achieving that direction.

PFMC  
03/02/2011