

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON FISHERY ECOSYSTEM PLAN

The Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS) reviewed the draft Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) and commends the Ecosystem Plan Development Team (EPDT) for the significant body of work that this draft represents. The CPSAS supports Council action to adopt this draft for public review, and would like to provide feedback on how the document may be improved between now and the March 2013 meeting. Below is a summary of the broader, conceptual issues the CPSAS suggests could be clarified in the FEP.

It is unclear to the CPSAS how the FEP, integrated with the Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) and California Current (CC) Annual Report, will be used to inform in the management of CPS. Chapter 7 of the FEP proposes that the Council consider the FEP as effective for at least five years, i.e. 2013-2018, with an update process beginning in 2017. A more comprehensive explanation of the interaction amongst these documents could help clarify how ecosystem-fishery information, such as status, trends and possible trade-offs for dynamic species such as CPS will be considered between the year-year updates of the FEP.

Our understanding is that ecosystem models such as IEA and Atlantis may be able to suggest ecosystem-fishery trade-offs, but are not intended to determine explicit harvest quotas. In that regard, the CPSAS recommends that the EPDT provide a more detailed explanation of how the FEP document, as well as the IEA and CC Annual Report may be used by the management teams, advisory subpanels and Council.

In the discussion of low trophic level forage species, section 3.2.1.3 (page 18) the FEP could acknowledge findings from the Lenfest Forage Fish Task Force Report appendices (Figures E.5.1 and E.5.5) and other studies showing that CPS fisheries in the CC Ecosystem remove approximately two percent of the productivity of small and large planktivorous fishes. This information is important to consider in the context of future management of CPS and other 'forage' fisheries.

Chapter 6 of the FEP section 6.2.2 outlines science questions for future consideration related to the CPS Fishery Management Plan. The CPSAS notes that of the four issues listed for consideration, number 3 ("review and revise the climate-based factor in the harvest control rule for Pacific sardine") has been recommended by the CPSAS, Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT) and Scientific and Statistical Committee to be the initial focus of a harvest parameters workshop to be convened in early 2013. The outcomes from this workshop may help to complete item 2 ("developing climate-productivity relationships for Pacific sardine and other Coastal Pelagic Species"). Thus, number 3 under 6.2.2 may help inform number 2.

We recommend that bullet three under section 5.2 (Fish Habitat) include mention of ocean acidification. Also, under Section 6.2.2 (Future Ecosystem Considerations), number 1 should

include the potential effects of ocean acidification when considering the influence of climactic/oceanographic conditions on CPS.

Pacific sardine is currently mentioned in Chapter 5 under section 5.1.5 (Internationally- Managed Species), giving the impression that there is international management of Pacific sardines. However, the CPSAS points out that there is no treaty governing the international management of sardines in the CC Ecosystem. Nevertheless, we encourage the Council to promote international cooperation in the management of CPS with Mexico and Canada, in addition to any non-fishing related activities this section of the FEP may cover in the future.

We look forward to working with the EPDT in further developing this document.

PFMC

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