

## COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON CALIFORNIA CURRENT ECOSYSTEM

The Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS) reviewed the draft Annual State of the California Current Ecosystem (CCE) Report (Agenda Item K.3.a, Supplemental Attachment 1). We commend the joint effort of the Ecosystem Plan Development Team (EPDT) and Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) Teams to compile a condensed summary of information on ecosystem status and trends. Recognizing that this work is in its early stages, we would like to offer the following comments.

The discussion of basin-scale and regional climate indicators is beneficial to understand the physical forcing and variability inherent in the CCE. It would be helpful to mention the impacts of ocean acidification, relative to regional upwelling.

The CPSAS appreciates the attention given to CPS under Section 3.1., coastal pelagic species. As noted in the Annual Report, data presented in this section are from surveys that differ in their objectives and methodologies. The caveats highlighted in this section reduce the ability of these data sources to reliably estimate the abundance and diversity of these forage species. Should the Council wish to develop a more reliable index of Pacific sardine and other CPS, additional species should be enumerated as part of these surveys or additional analyses developed to allow for a more accurate estimation of the abundance of CPS and other forage species. Given the Council's interest in ensuring an adequate forage base, it would be helpful to include information illustrating the total removal of small and large planktivorous fish in the Annual Report.

Finally, in Section 4.1, total landings by major fisheries, we suggest revisiting the use of the term historic. As currently drafted, the report states that "Landings of coastal pelagic species were above historic levels over the last five years." The word "historic" is misleading. Historic [i.e. 1920s-1940s] landings of CPS were vastly larger than the current day fishery. The time series in this report began in 1981, during low biomass years and under a different fishery management program. The Amendment 8 created a significantly more precautionary harvest framework for CPS.

We appreciate the Council's and Teams' consideration of these comments and would once again like to acknowledge and thank the EPDT and IEA Teams for the tremendous time and efforts involved in compiling this report as well as the draft FEP and IEA.