



NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Action Memo

File Number:Cons 14-005

Agenda Date2/3/2014

Agenda Number:D-1

Eric Olson, Chairman
Chris Oliver, Executive Director

SUBJECT:
Ecosystem Approach Vision Statement - Review

ESTIMATED TIME:
2 hours

ACTION REQUIRED:
Review Ecosystem Approach Vision Statement, and adopt, if appropriate

BACKGROUND

In December 2013, the Council's Ecosystem Committee developed a draft Ecosystem Vision Statement for the Council's consideration. The Council reviewed the draft, and requested that it be put out for public review. The draft vision statement is intended to synthesize the Council's policy on ecosystem-based management, and to work in concert with existing comprehensive management objectives such as are included in the groundfish management approach (adopted through the Programmatic Groundfish SEIS). The draft approach includes three parts: a value statement, the vision statement, and an implementation strategy. The ecosystem approach has been posted on the Council's webpage, and at this meeting, the Council will consider whether to adopt the vision statement.

The Council's Ecosystem Committee is meeting on February 4, 2014, to review the ecosystem approach and public comment, as well as to discuss an action plan with respect to the approach. The Committee minutes will be available during the meeting.

The draft ecosystem approach is as follows:

Draft Ecosystem Approach for the NPFMC

VALUE STATEMENT

The Gulf of Alaska, Bering Sea, and Aleutian Islands are some of the most biologically productive and unique marine ecosystems in the world, supporting globally significant populations of marine mammals, seabirds, fish, and shellfish. This region produces over half the nation's seafood and supports robust fishing communities, recreational fisheries, and a subsistence way of life. The Arctic ecosystem is a challenging environment that is experiencing an unprecedented rate of loss of sea ice and other effects of climate change, and is highly vulnerable to anthropogenic disturbance. The North Pacific Fishery Management Council has an important responsibility to these resources, their current health and their long term sustainability for future generations.

VISION STATEMENT

The Council envisions vibrant sustainable fisheries which (1) are maintained by healthy, biodiverse, resilient marine habitats and ecosystems that provide benefits for harvesters, processors, and fishing communities, and support robust marine mammal and seabird populations and the subsistence way of life; and (2) are

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managed using a precautionary, transparent, and inclusive process that allows for an analysis of tradeoffs, accounts for changing conditions, and mitigates threats.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

It is the Council's intention that fishery management will explicitly take into account environmental variability and uncertainty, changes and trends in climate and oceanographic conditions, fluctuations in productivity for managed species and associated ecosystem components, be based on best available science (including local and traditional knowledge), and engage scientists, managers, and the affected public.

The vision statement shall be given effect through all of the Council's work, including long-term planning initiatives, specific fishery management actions, and science planning to support ecosystem-based fishery management.