

ECOSYSTEM WORKGROUP SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT ON RESEARCH AND DATA NEEDS

The Ecosystem Workgroup (EWG) discussed Research and Data Needs during its meeting on March 6, 2025, and reviewed [Agenda Item D.3.a, Supplemental SSC Report 1](#), from the Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council) November 2024 meeting. We appreciate the approach the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) has taken to consolidate and simplify the Research and Data Needs document, and recommend this serve as a public-facing landing page for the Council's Research and Data Needs process. The EWG also recommends that the Council's Research and Data Needs [database](#) continue to be updated and linked to the summary report, noting the value of having the full detail of a given proposal to support the summary report.

The EWG does note that the timing of the meetings to discuss and review the Council's Research and Data Needs fell outside of the times when the ecosystem advisory bodies normally meet, limiting our opportunities to review and engage. Looking ahead to the next Research and Data Needs review, the EWG recommends that the Council build towards that process with a series of topic-specific reviews. For example, the Council could task its advisory bodies with:

- Fishery management plan (FMP)-specific reviews of research and data needs (coastal pelagic species, groundfish, highly migratory species, and salmon);
- Consideration of economics and social science research and data needs; and
- Consideration of ecosystem science and ecosystem-based fisheries management research and data needs.

These topics align with the SSC's current roster of subcommittees and could be planned out over time to both improve discussions of science needed in support of management and to support the next revision of the Research and Data Needs document and/or database.

Suggested Additions to the Research and Data Needs Database/Priorities

As the EWG noted in our March 2025 report on the California Current Ecosystem Status Report ([Agenda Item F.1.b, Supplemental EWG Report 1](#)), the Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) index has become less correlated to local oceanographic conditions in the California Current Ecosystem (CCE) in recent decades. We would suggest that the database of priority science projects include an exploration of the Pan-Basin Warming Pattern, which may have surpassed the PDO in terms of influencing the warming patterns on our coast.

Environmental DNA (eDNA) approaches are increasingly applicable to fisheries and fisheries management. The EWG recommends the database include a project to explore application of eDNA to quantify the distribution and abundance of individual species as well as ecosystem dynamics more generally (e.g., predator-prey overlap).