



D2 Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS)

June 2023

Action Memo

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Action Required:

1. Receive PEIS presentation
2. Review Ecosystem Committee recommendations
3. If appropriate, adopt a purpose and need, alternatives, and identify next steps

Background

In February 2023, the Council initiated the process of considering a Programmatic EIS with the purpose of providing a comprehensive analysis of the cumulative impacts of Federal groundfish fisheries on the human environment given both ecosystem and management changes that have occurred since the last review in 2004. As guidance, the Council specified that ongoing Council efforts specifically tasked to create more climate-resilient federal fisheries (e.g., ACLIM 2.0, Climate Change Task Force, pending SSC workgroup on groundfish harvest control rules accounting for ecosystem change) should be incorporated as applicable. Additionally, the process should include opportunity for meaningful engagement of Alaska Native Tribes and stakeholders, through informal scoping, formal scoping as part of the NEPA process, and Tribal consultations conducted by NMFS. The Council noted that adoption of a final alternative would include updating the Council's current suite of 45 management policy objectives.

The Council tasked the Ecosystem Committee with developing recommendations on a purpose and need statement and alternatives using the above guidance. The Ecosystem Committee met on April 4th ([report](#) posted to the April agenda under staff tasking) and again on May 8th (report posted to this June eAgenda) to receive input on development of a purpose and need and alternatives for a Programmatic EIS, and to make recommendations to the Council. The Ecosystem Committee's ultimate recommendation for a purpose and need statement and alternatives is provided as a stand-alone attachment. The Committee recommends that the Council recommend NMFS initiate NEPA scoping to flesh out specific changes under the proposed alternatives.