

**Fisheries Information Committee
Major Meeting Outcomes
February 8, 2009
Sheraton Four Points Hotel
Los Angeles, California**

1. Fisheries Information Committee (FIC) and South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group (RSG) members, FIC coordinators and invited meeting guests began the meeting with introductions.
2. FIC members approved the January 10, 2009 meeting minutes and Diane Pleschner-Steele recapped recent actions by the RSG and others that were essential for work on reviewing/refining Marine Protected Area (MPA) proposals.
3. Dr. Carl Walters, PhD (Fisheries Centre, University of British Columbia), introduced the Equilibrium Delay-Difference Optimization Model (EDOM) to the group and discussed the model's objectives, data inputs and assumptions. The model's objectives and data inputs were included in the handout, "An Introduction to EDOM". Dr. Walters also offered several conclusions relative to MPAs, based on use of the model in other regions.
 - Assumptions:
 - EDOM will be used by the RSG and SAT to compare the proposed MPA plans and estimate the effects of alternative fishing closure patterns on fishing operations and distributions of indicator fish species.
 - Ecotrust socio/economic data (fishing patterns) have not yet been incorporated into the EDOM database.
 - The model's different fish databases, although titled with the names of specific fish, include habitat locations and abundance for groups of fish species with life histories similar to the fish species named in the titles.
 - Species distribution in the model is based on habitat types only, not fish catches or fishing patterns, with one exception: the squid fishery. The squid related data was based on proprietary information from the wetfish industry.
 - Conclusions/Findings:
 - The benefit that MPAs provide for managing fisheries depends on the species and the effectiveness of fishery management outside the MPAs. MPAs may benefit management of species that are relatively sedentary. These sedentary species are less productive than pelagic species and comprise a small fraction of the total biomass, especially in southern CA. MPAs are not effective in protecting pelagic species.
 - For MPAs to be effective, fish populations must be healthy within and outside the boundaries. EDOM can help address the net benefit of "spillover" and larval seeding from MPAs.
 - EDOM shows that fishing closures amounting to more than 20% to 25% of the fish habitat provide little benefit or effectiveness in protecting fish populations, but increase socio-economic impacts. The model shows that setting aside less area can also be effective in protecting fish populations.
 - For fisheries that are currently subject to closures amounting to more than 20% to 25% of the habitat or that are not overfished, EDOM demonstrates: a) additional closures may cause more gear compaction or concentration in areas available to

fishing, b) the economic impacts on the fishing fleet are significant, and c) the additional benefits to fish populations are minimal.

4. The FIC and RSG members, coordinators and guests discussed current draft MPA proposals and compared them in the EDOM model.
 - Lobster and crab fisheries would suffer the highest economic losses because at least 30% of the habitat is already closed to fishing. The closed areas are generally in Santa Monica Bay and Los Angeles/Long Beach harbors, around piers and jetties, in certain navigation channels and along the inside [i.e. mainland side] of Santa Catalina Island. Establishing more closures or MPAs would likely cause estimated economic losses in excess of 30% depending on the proposal.
 - The fish populations that would most benefit from MPAs would be those harvested by the sport fleet. The populations that would gain the least benefit would be pelagic species, lobster and crab.
5. Members discussed next steps for the upcoming February 10, 2009 RSG workshop, the March 3-4, 2009 RSG meeting and other scheduled meetings and deadlines.
6. It is expected the next FIC meeting will be scheduled in March or early-mid April. The date, time, location will be determined via electronic communications.