

Editor,

As a member of the Pacific Fishery Management Council, I'd like to comment on Fred Keeley's editorial. I am not, however, representing the Council in my comments.

The ocean is in crisis, says Keeley, in part due to overfishing, and Marine Protected Areas are the answer. Not true. There is no overfishing occurring in our local fisheries. Fishery management has become strongly science based and highly precautionary. So precautionary, in fact, that this is a major reason why fishing boats, fishermen and fish landings are all declining in California. It is not because there are no fish. With the exception of salmon, stocks are either healthy or rebuilding faster than expected. Salmon is not being over-fished; it is a spawning habitat problem.

Mr. Keeley claims that MPAs will protect ocean life and build resilience to climate change. Not true. MPAs will be affected equally by climate change as any other place; if anything, climate change will skew the scientific monitoring of MPAs. Also, virtually all of the species that dominate our California Current Ecosystem are highly mobile, which is why spatial MPAs provide limited benefit for only a few species. There is no habitat destruction occurring; Bottom trawling has been illegal in State waters since 1953.

Kathy Fosmark

373-5238

601-0559