What are Biological Goals and Objectives?

Biological goals and objectives (BGOs):

- Direct and focus HCP development and implementation
- Provide mechanism(s) to determine the success of the HCP
- Base the HCP on the biology of Covered Species
- Focus the HCP on the recovery of Covered Species

Hierarchy of goals, objectives, and conservation measures:

- **Goal**: Broad, guiding principles that describe desired conditions
- **Objectives**
  - Define the steps to achieve the goals
  - Provide direction for monitoring
  - SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Results-oriented, Time-fixed
- **Conservation Measures**
  - How to achieve the objectives
  - Complete description of specific actions implemented to support the HCP goals and objectives

Biological goals and objectives are:

- Broad, guiding principles for development and operation of the conservation plan
- Rationale for individual species mitigation and the overall conservation strategy
- Proportionate to the expected impacts of the proposed action
- Rationale for avoidance, minimization, and mitigation actions
- Descriptive of the desired future condition for Covered Species and their habitats
- Descriptive, clear, and understandable

Biological goals and objectives are not:

- Restatements of the incidental take permit issuance criteria in the Endangered Species Act
- Restatements of other regulations, policies, or guidance
- Permit terms and conditions
- A recovery plan for Covered Species (but BGOs should be consistent with existing recovery plans)
- Unrealistic, unclear, and vague

Source: HCP Handbook (USFWS and NMFS 2016)