

**HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON
 FUTURE COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA PLANNING**

The Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) reviewed the Council’s priority list of HMS management issues, and discussed our workload and the timing of the issues to be addressed. The HMSMT had its initial meeting with the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) to review albacore catch and effort data in response to the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) Resolution C-05-02, and proposes we have another joint meeting to continue discussions on albacore prior to the Council’s March 2007 meeting (tentatively scheduled for February 6-7, 2007).

A number of issues concerning the estimation of U.S. north Pacific albacore effort were discussed at the joint HMSMT/HMSAS meeting earlier this month, including questions about what time period should be used to characterize recent effort, whether any fisheries which catch albacore should be excluded from consideration, what type of model might be used to standardize effort across the various gears, and how a “band” of effort might be used to better reflect environmental conditions, economic fluctuations or other variable factors which affect effort. The Southwest Fisheries Science Center staff plans to use the best available north Pacific albacore catch and effort data to develop alternative approaches for presentation to the HMSMT and HMSAS at our proposed joint meeting in February of 2007.

With regard to the Council’s current three-meeting outlook, the timing of the issues, and the processes associated with addressing them, the HMSMT proposes this revised outlook:

Council Meeting	Routine Management Measures	Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs)	Management Issues
March 2007		Present final report on drift gillnet EFP; identify EFP modifications (if any) (preliminary action) Present draft environmental assessment (EA) for shallow set longline EFP (final action)	HMSMT and HMSAS update on U.S. north Pacific albacore effort (guidance)
April 2007		Present draft EA for drift gillnet EFP (final action)	
June 2007	Provide final management measures and draft EA for proposed drift gillnet turtle closure boundary (final action) Present draft 2006 SAFE	Consider EFP applications for 2008 (preliminary action)	Present alternatives to address yellowfin tuna overfishing (preliminary action)

HMSMT Recommendations:

1. Approve the proposed joint HMSMT/HMSAS meeting between November and March (tentatively scheduled for February 6-7, 2007); and

2. Provide guidance to the HMSMT on HMS workload priorities and the proposed schedule.

PFMC
11/13/06