

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

Pacific Coast Fisheries Information Network (PacFIN) Data Issues

The Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) would like to alert the Council to unresolved problems with coding of HMS gear types in the PacFIN database, which were discussed at their August 16, 2007 meeting in La Jolla, California. Working around the gear coding problems entails special programming to generate PacFIN reports by HMS management unit fishery as defined in the fishery management plan (FMP). It was noted two of the coding problems generally result in an understatement of drift gillnet effort and overstatement of pelagic longline effort. There are additional gear code issues, which concern the reporting of the albacore surface hook-and-line and purse-seine fisheries. Until these gear code issues are resolved, summary reports by HMS FMP fishery that would otherwise be posted on the PacFIN website cannot be automatically generated. Some HMSMT members noted that ideally, PacFIN records would be coded to associate each record with an HMS FMP fishery, or to otherwise indicate a non-HMS FMP fishery record.

The HMSMT requests the Council schedule this issue as an agenda item at a future Council meeting to fully air the problems outlined above. In the interim, the HMSMT requests the Council to send a letter to PacFIN decision makers detailing the gear coding problems and emphasizing the importance of resolving them; the HMSMT could provide the explanation of why we had to go this route.

Council Operating Procedure 20, Protocol for Consideration of Exempted Fishing Permits for
Highly Migratory Species Fisheries

The HMSMT notes that the schedule for Council decision making with respect to HMS exempted fishing permits, as identified in Council Operating Procedure (COP) 20, has not been followed to date. This schedule outlines preliminary Council action at the June meeting and final action at the September meeting. Because of the timing of fisheries in proposals thus far submitted, this schedule has not worked. The HMSMT recommends next time the Council schedules consideration of revision to the COPs, it takes up this matter. One option would be for the Council to simply strike language in the COP identifying the June and September meetings. Alternatively, language could be added to the COP allowing deviation from this schedule as circumstances warrant.

PFMC
8/24/07