

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE REPORT

The following provides updates and new information related to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Report on highly migratory species (Agenda Item H.1.b, NMFS Report).

Final Rule for Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) and Pre-Trip Notification Requirements for the Drift Gillnet Fleet Final Rule (updated information):

- This rule published in the *Federal Register* February 26, 2015 ([80 FR 10392](#))
- The final rule and supporting documents are available on the [West Coast Region website](#).
- OMB cannot approve the collection-of-information requirements under PRA until after a 60-day comment period, which began on February 26th, when the rule published.

Proposed Rule for Commercial Catch and Trip Limits for Pacific Bluefin Tuna Proposed Rule (updated information):

- This proposed rule published in the *Federal Register* March 9, 2015 ([80 FR 12375](#))
- The proposed rule and supporting documents are also available on the [West Coast Region website](#).
- The public comment period for this proposed rule closes on April 8, 2015, and a public hearing will be held on March 26, 2015, from 1p.m. to 4p.m. at the NMFS West Coast Region Long Beach office.
- In particular, NMFS is interested in hearing comments on the proposed 20 mt trip limit, as this component is new to the Pacific bluefin tuna catch management regime.

Endangered Species Act (ESA) Thresher Shark Petition (new information):

In August 2014, NMFS received a request to list the common thresher shark as threatened or endangered under the ESA. The petition claims that this species is threatened by overexploitation from commercial and recreational fishing—both as a target species and as bycatch—and, that the regulations to protect this species have been inadequate. Common thresher shark did experience historical overexploitation in the eastern Pacific Ocean (one part of its range), and has been rebuilding as a result of effective U.S. management. The species also experienced historical declines in other parts of the world where it is found, and in some of those places overexploitation continues. Because of the species' life history traits—long lived, low fecundity, late maturing—it is particularly vulnerable to overexploitation. Current conservation measures on the West Coast include measures to prevent bycatch and protect breeding females and pupping zones.

The NMFS Office of Protected Resources (OPR) reviewed the information presented in the petition and published a positive 90-day finding (i.e., the petition contained sufficient information for NMFS to begin a review and consider common thresher shark a candidate species) in the *Federal Register* on March 3, 2015 ([80 FR 11379](#)). NMFS OPR will now conduct a global status review of the species throughout its range to determine whether it warrants listing under the ESA. More information can be found on the [NMFS Office of Protected Resources website](#), including how to provide public comment and what types of information NMFS is seeking regarding the common thresher. The public comment period ends May 4, 2015.