

SCOPING OF AMENDMENT 4 TO THE FMP: AUTHORIZING A SHALLOW-SET  
LONGLINE FISHERY OUTSIDE OF THE EEZ

During and subsequent to the development of the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for West Coast Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species (HMS), the Council has considered authorizing a pelagic longline fishery targeting swordfish. The conventional method for targeting swordfish involves setting the gear at night at shallower depths; this technique is commonly referred to as shallow-set longline gear, defined as setting gear so the deepest point of the mainline between any two floats is 100 meters or less. Currently, the use of shallow-set longline gear is prohibited except when fishing under a western Pacific longline limited entry permit issued pursuant to 50 CFR 660.21, and authorized under the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council's (WPFMC) Pelagic Fishery Ecosystem Plan. In addition, the use of pelagic longline gear to target HMS is prohibited within the West Coast Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) (50 CFR 660.712(a)).

At this meeting, the Council will conduct scoping to determine whether to move forward to authorize a West Coast shallow-set longline fishery outside the West Coast EEZ. Attachment 1, the scoping information document, provides background on the history of this issue and a set of questions to facilitate scoping by the Council. The Council is currently scheduled to adopt a range of alternatives for this action at its November 2015 meeting. Therefore, the Council should provide guidance to its advisory bodies to assist them in developing alternatives for Council consideration at that meeting.

**Council Action:**

**Identify Issues to be Addressed in FMP Amendment and Provide Guidance for Developing Alternatives.**

**Reference Materials:**

1. Agenda Item G.3, Attachment 1: Scoping Information Document for Council Action to Authorize the Use of Shallow-Set Longline Gear outside the West Coast Exclusive Economic Zone under the Fishery Management Plan for West Coast Fisheries for Highly Migratory Species.

**Agenda Order:**

- G.3 Scoping of Amendment 4 to the FMP: Authorizing a Shallow-Set Longline Fishery Outside of the EEZ Kit Dahl
- a. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
  - b. Public Comment
  - c. **Council Action:** Identify Issues to be Addressed in an FMP Amendment and Provide Guidance for Developing Alternatives