

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE (NMFS) REPORT
ON HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES (HMS) ACTIVITIES

Proposed Rule Implementing Restrictions on Fishing for Sharks in the Eastern Pacific Ocean

On August 7, 2017, NMFS published a proposed rule ([82 FR 36724](#)) under the Tuna Conventions Act to implement Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) [Resolution C-16-05](#) (*Resolution on the Management of Shark Species*). The proposed rule would require purse seine vessel owners, operators, and crew to follow specified release requirements for sharks in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO). The rule would also prohibit longline vessels targeting tuna or swordfish in the EPO from using “shark lines”¹. The public comment period closes on September 6, 2017.

12-Month Finding on Petition to List Pacific Bluefin Tuna under the Endangered Species Act

On August 8, 2017, NMFS published its determination ([82 FR 37060](#)) on a petition received in June 2016 to list Pacific bluefin tuna as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. NMFS completed a comprehensive status review of the species in response to the petition. Based on the best scientific and commercial data available, including the status review report, and after taking into account the efforts being made to protect the species, including those by the Pacific tuna regional fisheries management organizations², NMFS has determined that listing of Pacific bluefin tuna is not warranted. NMFS concludes that Pacific bluefin tuna is not an endangered species throughout all or a significant portion of its range, nor is it likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range. More information, including the status review report and frequently asked questions, can be found on the NMFS West Coast Region website: http://www.westcoast.fisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries/migratory_species/pbt_esa_status_review.html

Pacific Offshore Cetacean Take Reduction Team (POCTRT) Meeting Update

The POCTRT met via webinar on June 15, 2017, to provide updates on recent POCTRT-related activities, review Take Reduction Plan goals and effectiveness of measures to meet those goals, as well as to present recent relevant research related to the drift gillnet fishery, swordfish management, and bycatch reduction. Presentations given during the webinar are provided in Agenda Item J.1.a, NMFS Report 2.

¹ *Shark line* is defined as a type of fishing gear used to target sharks and consisting of an individual hooked line or hooked lines attached to the floatline or directly to the floats of longline gear and deployed in the water column at depths shallower than the mainline.

² Catch limits by the IATTC, and catch and effort limits by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (see the status review report for an overview of fisheries management).