

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES REPORT

Upcoming Meetings:

NOAA Fisheries National Recreational Fisheries Summit (April 16-17, 2010). The Summit will be held April 16-17, 2010, in Alexandria, Virginia, and is part of the NOAA Fisheries Recreational Fishing Engagement Initiative. The objective of the Summit will be to bring together the saltwater recreational fishing community and NOAA Fisheries leadership to begin identifying issues of concern and collaborating on possible solutions.

External Review of the IATTC's Bigeye Tuna Stock Assessment (May 3-7 in La Jolla, Ca). The goals of the review are to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the IATTC's assessment method and assumptions, and to make recommendations that could improve the current methods. The review will be conducted by an expert panel. More details are available on the following IATTC website: <http://www.iattc.org/PDFFiles2/Invitation-BET-review-meeting-May2010ENG.pdf>.

RFMO Followup: Four tuna regional fishery management organization (RFMO) workshops developed out of the second joint meeting of the tuna RFMOs (Kobe II) in San Sebastian in 2009. Additional information on these meetings will become available on the following website: <http://www.tuna-org.org/meetings2010.htm#>.

- 1) **Meeting of Experts to Share Best Practices on the Provision of Scientific Advice (May 31-June 2 in Barcelona, Spain)**
- 2) **Improvement, harmonization, and compatibility of monitoring, MCS Measures (June 3-5 in Barcelona, Spain)**
- 3) **Management Issues Related to Bycatch (June 23-26 - Brisbane, Australia).** The Kobe II Bycatch Workshop is being co-hosted by the United States and the Pacific Island Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA). Workshop objectives are: 1) review available information on incidental catch of non-target species and juveniles of target species; 2) provide advice to tuna RFMOs on best practices, methods and techniques to assess and reduce the incidental mortality of non-target species, such as seabirds, turtles, sharks, marine mammals, and of juveniles of target species; 3) develop and coordinate relevant research programs and observer programs; and 4) make recommendations on mechanisms to streamline the work of tuna RFMO Working Groups in this field in order to avoid duplication.
- 4) **RFMO Management of Tuna Fisheries, particular emphasis on capacity (June 28-July 1 in Brisbane, Australia)**

Proposed Rules:

The Proposed Listing of Nine Distinct Population Segments of Loggerhead Sea Turtles as Endangered or Threatened. NMFS and USFWS have determined that the loggerhead sea turtle

is composed of nine distinct population segments (DPSs) that qualify as “species” for listing as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act, and have proposed to list two as threatened and seven as endangered. NMFS and USFWS will propose to designate critical habitat, if found to be prudent and determinable, for the two loggerhead sea turtle DPSs occurring within the United States, including waters of the West Coast Exclusive Economic Zone, in a subsequent Federal Register notice. NMFS and USFWS are seeking information and comments on whether the nine proposed loggerhead sea turtle DPSs qualify as DPSs and, if so, whether they should be classified as threatened or endangered as described in the “Listing Determinations Under the ESA”. Comments on this proposal must be received by June 14, 2010. Public hearing requests must be received by June 1, 2010. The proposed listing was published in the Federal Register on March 16, 2010, and is available at the following website: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2010/pdf/2010-5370.pdf>.