

NMFS Report Southwest Region

Catch Shares Workshop

NMFS Southwest Region and Southwest Fisheries Science Center hosted a workshop on catch shares as that management approach may relate to the west coast coastal pelagic species fisheries (CPS). The two and half day event was held in San Francisco on February 2-4, 2010. The purpose of the informational workshop was two-part. The first part was to bring together west coast individuals with a range of interests in CPS to learn more about different types of rights-based management programs implemented in other fisheries. Case studies were presented by economists, political scientists, and fisheries biologists with experience in implementing and evaluating catch share programs. The case studies included lessons learned in the West Coast groundfish trawl rationalization fishery, Chilean sardine fishery, Namibian fisheries, South Australian sardine fishery, New Zealand rock lobster fishery, and the Bering Sea pollock fishery. Presentations were also made on current conditions in the West Coast coastal pelagic species fishery, an analysis of price responses in the U.S. Pacific sardine fishery, the theories behind catch shares and fisheries management, and an overview of types of rights-based management programs.

The second part was to generate meaningful discussions and gauge current thinking on the utility of rights-based fisheries management for the U.S. west coast CPS fisheries. Participants interacted in panel discussions with the case study investigators and engaged in group discussions to consider pros and cons of rights-based management programs.

Throughout the workshop, an undercurrent of resistance to discuss catch shares management for the CPS fishery was present. Participants regularly commented that resource concerns were not an issue in the CPS fisheries. However, some individuals expressed concerns about overcapitalization and the existence of derby fishery conditions in years of low biomass. Catch shares and other allocation schemes were discussed as potential tools to improve fishery operations in low biomass years. Proceedings from the workshop are being prepared by NMFS and a spring release date is planned.

CPS Regulatory Activities

Annual Specifications for 2010 Pacific Sardine Fishing Season: On January 13, 2010, the proposed rule for the 2010 Pacific sardine annual specifications and management measures was published in the *Federal Register* (75 FR 1745). The comment period for this action ended on February 2, 2010. The final rule for this action is currently going through the rulemaking process and NMFS expects it to publish in the *Federal Register* in the near future.