

PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT OF THE HMS FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Situation: The Highly Migratory Species Plan Development Team (HMSPDT) will present a revised draft of the fishery management plan (FMP) for highly migratory species (HMS), and the HMS Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) will provide their comments on the draft FMP. The Council will consider adopting the draft for public review.

The FMP was extensively revised following Council guidance at the March 2001 Council meeting. The HMSPDT will highlight these changes and additions for the Council. Moreover, the HMSPDT will provide information to help the Council determine if the document is ready for public review.

National Marine Fisheries Service will speak to recent developments in the domestic legal context germane to West Coast HMS fisheries.

The draft FMP was developed during the last 17 months over the course of 11 HMSPDT meetings, five HMSAS meetings, and five Council meetings. During development of the draft FMP, public input has been highly encouraged. Generally, public involvement in the process (both in attendance at meetings and written correspondence) has been substantial.

The Council continues to receive numerous public comment letters (Exhibit F.2.e). As in the past, form-letters made up much of this correspondence. When multiple copies of the same letter were received, a single copy of the letter is included with a notation describing the total number received. The majority of the comments are in opposition to the use of pelagic longline gear inside the West Coast EEZ. As of May 29, 2001, the Council received approximately 380 new letters in opposition to the use of pelagic longline gear. This is in addition to the 1,083; 3,000; and 1,120 opposition letters received prior to the November 2000, September 2000, and March 2001 Council meetings, respectively.

Council Action:

1. Consider Adoption of Public Review Draft.

Reference Materials:

1. Supplemental HMSPDT Report (Exhibit F.2.c)
2. Supplemental HMSAS Report (Exhibit F.2.d)
3. Public Comment (Exhibit F.2.e)