

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON FUTURE
COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA PLANNING AND WORKLOAD PRIORITIES

The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) recommends that the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Pacific Council) allocate at least two hours on the March agenda for consideration of a proposed high-seas shallow-set longline fishery.

In the original fishery management plan, an offshore shallow-set longline fishery was included but rejected by National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) because of turtle impacts.

Given that the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (WPFMC) is moving forward with their own amendment revising their shallow-set longline fishery, it is timely and of utmost importance that the Pacific Council consider this issue soon.

Also, through the method by which NMFS considers “allowed turtle impacts,” any delay in consideration of this matter may allow WPFMC permitted vessels to utilize all turtle impacts without consideration of the West Coast fleet.

Finally, the Pacific Council needs to cooperate and coordinate with the WPFMC in developing a shallow-set longline fishery that is compatible and competitive with the Hawaii-based fishery.