

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL
RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE U.S. SECTION OF THE INTER-AMERICAN TROPICAL
TUNA COMMISSION (IATTC)

Bigeye and Yellowfin Tuna

Because U.S. west coast fisheries by the smallest purse seine vessels (Class I-V vessels) are a negligible contributor to the total fishing effort on the bigeye and yellowfin tuna stocks, further curtailment of these catches would have no practical effect on overfishing. For consideration of an exemption, the HMSAS recommends that the IATTC scientific staff provide a study of the annual catches of yellowfin tuna by purse seine fleets of all IATTC members that use Class I-V vessels for purposes of determining whether the total catch of such vessels represents a negligible contribution to the total fishing effort on the yellowfin stock.

Striped Marlin

Under Agenda Item J.2.a the HMSAS was provided with some excerpts on the 2006 status of striped marlin from the June 2007 IATTC meeting. In addition, NMFS provided a report on an updated stock status report on striped marlin that was completed in July 2007 that came to some different conclusions about both the composition and status of the stock.

Striped marlin is a very important highly migratory species stock for the recreational fishery in the jurisdiction of the Council. The HMSAS recommends that the Council in its recommendations to the U.S. Section of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission highlight the need for the best possible information on the status of striped marlin.

Conservation of striped marlin stocks is a growing concern among recreational anglers and that concern has manifested itself in an increasing use of a catch and release ethic and fishing practices such as the use of circle hooks to increase survivability of caught striped marlin.

North Pacific Albacore

The HMSAS unanimously passed the following motion concerning current levels of effort in the North Pacific Albacore fishery: The HMSAS requests that the Council ask the U.S. delegation to the IATTC to again request that all members of the IATTC report accurately and expeditiously the status of their nation's efforts to comply with the reporting of current levels of albacore fishing effort as described under the IATTC resolutions.