

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON
FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT 2: HIGH SEAS SHALLOW-SET
LONGLINE MANAGEMENT

The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) reviewed the HMS Management Team (HMSMT) report on the high seas shallow-set longline amendment. The HMSAS concurs that the HMSMT has covered the reasonable options to go out for public review.

The HMSAS would like to remind the Council that the Hawaiian longline fleet is currently proposing to increase their potential effort in the Eastern Pacific.

Also, the HMSAS notes that the Pacific Council's action is proposed as a transfer of opportunity from the gillnet fishery to longline.

A minority of the HMSAS (Meghan Jeans, Ocean Conservancy and Tom Raftican, United Anglers of Southern California) believe that the process of developing a management framework for a high seas shallow set longline fishery off the west coast of the United States should be discontinued. Rather than seeking to allow a high seas longline fishery, the Council and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) should maintain the current prohibition on shallow-set longlining east of 150° W longitude and/or strengthen this measure by prohibiting Hawaii longline permit holders from fishing in this area and landing their catch on the west coast. Should the Council and NMFS proceed with the development and analysis of the proposed new pelagic longline fishery, the analysis must comply with the mandates of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) mandate to manage marine resources sustainably for the benefit of the public. NMFS must better define the purpose and need for its proposal to allow the fishery and consider a broader range of alternatives to achieve the goal of providing more sustainable fishing opportunities while promoting the recovery of endangered and threatened sea turtles and over-exploited fish populations. We also encourage NMFS to prioritize the development of a coordinated management strategy for pelagic fisheries between the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) and the Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council (WPRFMC).

PFMC
9/9/08