

**HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON FINAL
 EXEMPTED FISHING PERMIT APPROVAL**

The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) recommends the Council approve all five exempted fishing permit (EFP) proposals because we feel that each proposal involves different gear types and geographical testing areas.

Table 15. Comparison of swordfish fisheries across performance metrics.

Fishery	Mt_{total} / take_{hp}	Mt_{total} / take_{total}	Profits / mt_{total}	Mt_{total} / vessel
CA DGN	129.5	4.6	2.3	13
CA DSLL	337	337	0.6	48.1
CA HPN	N/A	N/A	-31.5	2.3
HI SSLL	81.9	16.1	1.7	54.9
HI DSLL	147.1	29.7	2.8	67.7
ATL LL	5.4	4.3	2.6	44.6
ATL BG	N/A	N/A	2.9	1.9
CA SSLL [#]	7.2	2.9	2	47.9

[#]Fishery closed in 2004.

The above table (from H.4.b, HMSMT Report) shows how different gear types perform in the current HMS fisheries that either target swordfish or have significant landings of incidentally caught swordfish. The drift gillnet fishery compares favorably with other fisheries. Please note that the California Harpoon Fishery (CA HPN) has a negative profit (i.e., the fishery operates at an economic loss) based on the data that were analyzed.

Various types of fisheries from this chart are included in the EFPs that are proposed.

We feel that approving all five will help promote and enhance an economically sustainable domestic HMS fishery. The HMSAS has also vetted the fishermen and believe they are qualified. The Council might consider combining all five proposals into one EFP, as a cost saving measure and to avoid duplication of effort.

Recent stock assessments indicate that the swordfish stock, which is targeted off the U.S. West Coast, is underutilized. In order to encourage the rebuilding of the swordfish fishing fleet and recruitment of young fishermen into this fishery, we need to demonstrate an economically viable and environmentally sound fishery.

Utilizing all five proposals over the two-year period will also allow a good data set to inform future fishery management including indications whether protected species would be significantly affected.

Deep set Buoy Gear shows some promise as a new fishing gear but needs to be tested by more fishermen in the north and south. The HMSAS supports all three buoy gear EFP proposals. The data collected from the EFPs may help determine the economic feasibility of buoy gear.

Longline is a proven HMS fishing gear in Hawaii and the East Coast. Fishermen have made many improvements in reducing bycatch by using circle hooks and other technologies. We have three proposals that cover different types and areas for longline by commercial fishermen.

DGN is a proven fishing technique in California from the stand point of economic viability, environmental sustainability and being in compliance with all NMFS rules and regulations. EFP proposal #5 tests improvements in the gear since PLCA took effect. The applicants propose to test recent creative ideas.

The fishermen were asked to submit proposals for EFPs that will provide information on potential fisheries that are profitable, sustainable and will reduce impacts on species of concern. In our view, the scientists should analyze the relevant data and advise the Council accordingly.

PFMC
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