

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON  
FINAL APPROVAL OF RESUBMITTED EXEMPTED FISHING PERMIT (EFP)  
APPLICATION

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) reviewed the revised exempted fishing permit proposal (Agenda Item E.2, Attachment 1) for the drift gillnet swordfish fishery, submitted by the Alliance of Communities for Sustainable Fisheries (ACSF). At its March 2015 meeting, the SSC reviewed an earlier version of the ACSF proposal. This pilot study will provide useful information on catch rates for swordfish using the experimental gear. It is not designed to measure bycatch rates of protected or non-target species; however, bycatch information will be collected and this may identify fishing practices with high bycatch rates. The SSC notes that the proponents propose to evaluate several gear modifications such that “Each proposed gear modification will be tested separately on different sets so that the effects of different methods can be identified.” While this approach may detect differences among the gear modifications in swordfish catch rates, the proposed study will not conduct enough sets to detect differences among the gear modifications in their interactions with species with low bycatch rates. However, the pilot project has the potential to identify economically viable gear that could be used to quantify bycatch rates in a future, more comprehensive study.

PFMC  
06/14/15