

SWORDFISH MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN HARDCAPS

Since June 2014, the Council has been developing a management and monitoring plan (Plan) for swordfish fisheries managed under the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for West Coast Fisheries for U.S. Highly Migratory Species (HMS). One element of the Plan is to reduce bycatch in the California large mesh drift gillnet (DGN) fishery for swordfish and sharks. To this end the Council adopted ranges of alternatives for high priority protected species hard caps, bycatch performance objectives, and enhanced monitoring. A Council preliminary preferred alternative (PPA) for each range of alternatives was selected in September 2014. In March 2015, the Council tasked the Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) with analyzing a somewhat altered PPA offered by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) for hard cap management and bycatch performance objectives for selected marine mammals; the Council also assigned other analytical tasks. With regard to fishery monitoring the Council PPA establishes a 2018 goal for full monitoring of the fishery by supplementing human observers with electronic monitoring technology.

The attached HMSMT Report (Agenda Item E.3.a, HMSMT Report) updates the description and analysis of the alternatives from the previous HMSMT Report and provides analyses requested by the Council.

The attached NMFS Report (Agenda Item E.3.a, NMFS Report) is a memo from the Pacific Offshore Cetacean Take Reduction Team to Eileen Sobeck, Assistant Administrator, commenting on the Council's proposal for hard caps in the DGN fishery.

At this meeting the Council can further refine the ranges of alternatives including identifying a single PPA for each range.

Council Action:

Consider Swordfish Management Plan and Refine Alternatives for Hardcaps.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item E.3.a, NMFS Report: Pacific Offshore Cetacean Take Reduction Team Memo to Eileen Sobeck, Assistant Administrator for NOAA Fisheries on Pacific Fishery Management Council Proposed Hard Caps on Marine Mammal Bycatch in the Drift Gillnet Fishery.
2. Agenda Item E.3.a: HMSMT Report.
3. Agenda Item E.3.b, Public Comment. (*Full Version Electronic Only; The list of signatories to the Oceana comment letter*).

Agenda Order:

- E.3 Swordfish Management and Monitoring Plan Hardcaps
 - a. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Consider Swordfish Management Plan and Refine Alternatives for Hardcaps

PFMC
05/22/15