

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE (NMFS) REPORT
ON INTERNATIONAL HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES ACTIVITIES

Follow-up to North Pacific Swordfish Overfishing Determination Letter (see [NMFS Report 2, Agenda Item G.1.a](#))

The National Marine Fisheries Service recently determined that the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) swordfish stock is subject to overfishing; however, Figure 1 below demonstrates that U.S. vessels fishing for North Pacific swordfish do not typically fish the EPO stock. In 2012, U.S. catch of EPO swordfish was only 4 metric tons (mt),* compared to 1510mt† from the swordfish stock found in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.

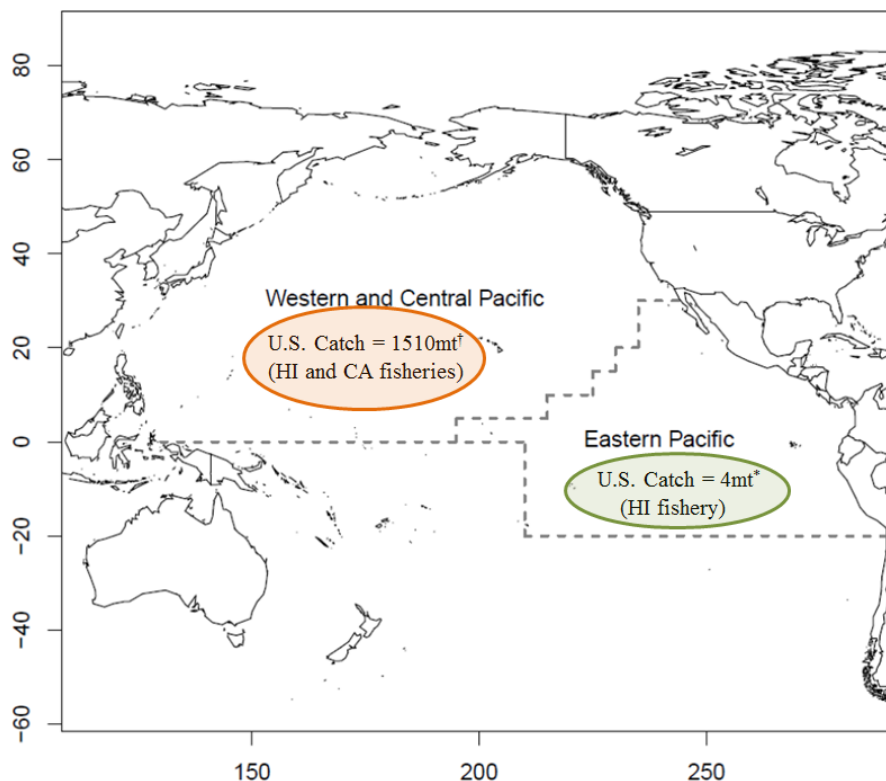


Figure 1. Two-stock structure for swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*) in the North Pacific Ocean, indicating separate stocks and associated level of U.S. catch in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) and in the Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO).‡

Update: Presidential Task Force on Combating Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing and Seafood Fraud

NMFS reported (see [NMFS Report 1, Agenda Item G.1.a, September 2015](#)) that the National Ocean Council Committee on IUU Fishing and Seafood Fraud (NOC Committee) is seeking public comment ([80 FR 45955, August 3, 2015](#)) on draft principles that may be used to

* National Marine Fisheries Service, Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center

† International Scientific Committee for Tuna and Tuna-like Species in the North Pacific Ocean. 2014. North Pacific Swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*) Stock Assessment in 2014. Report of the Billfish Working Group. July 16-22, 2014. Taipei, Chinese-Taipei.

‡ Same as above.

determine species at risk of IUU fishing and seafood fraud. In addition, the NOC Committee is seeking comment on a draft list of species at risk of IUU fishing and seafood fraud developed using the draft principles. The NOC Committee has extended the public comment period from September 2 to September 11, 2015 ([80 FR 50270, August 19, 2015](#)).

Mexico Receives Negative Certification under the High Seas Driftnet Fishing Moratorium Protection Act

Mexico was identified in the [2013 Biennial Report to Congress](#) for bycatch of protected living marine resources without a regulatory program comparable in effectiveness to that of the United States. On August 14, 2015, NMFS issued the Government of Mexico a [negative certification](#) for not adopting a regulatory program comparable in effectiveness to that of the United States to address bycatch of North Pacific loggerhead sea turtles in the Gulf of Ulla, Baja California Sur. This is the first negative certification that NMFS has issued for either IUU fishing or bycatch of a protected living marine resource under the Moratorium Protection Act. A negative certification will result in U.S. port access denial for some Mexican flagged fishing vessels and potential import restrictions on fish and fish products associated with the fishing activity for which Mexico was identified. NMFS is working in consultation with the Department of Homeland Security, the State Department, and the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative to finalize these measures. NMFS will consult closely with our Mexican partners throughout this process.