



Agenda Item F.3.a
Supplemental CA Lt. Governor Report
March 2016

GAVIN NEWSOM
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

February 26, 2016

Ms. Dorothy Lowman, Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council
7700 NE Ambassador Place, #101
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Mr. William W. Stelle, Jr.
Administrator, Northwest Region
NOAA Fisheries
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Dear Chair Lowman and Administrator Stelle,

I am writing to express my support for the authorization of deep-set buoy gear (DSBG) under the Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan.

The authorization of the DSBG comes at a critical time for the drift gillnet (DGN) fishery for swordfish in California. In September, the Council initiated hardcaps to minimize the incidental killing of whales, dolphins, other marine mammals and sea turtles (called bycatch) caused by the use of DGN fishing gear. The long-term economic and ecological impacts will be greatly reduced as a result of establishing hardcaps.

But we can also consider the preservation of the fishery by approving recent technological developments around sustainable fishing gear. Sustainably-caught swordfish allows fishermen to sell at a higher market price, while helping to improve the fishery's image by significantly reducing the death toll of marine mammals and sea turtles in our coastal waters.

Swordfish caught in Californian waters has been controversial for many years due to DGN fishing gear. The Ocean Protection Council funded a study to determine if the DSBG fishing gear would be a viable alternative to drift gillnets. The DSBG has shown positive results in effectively targeting swordfish while minimizing the collateral killing of whales, other marine mammals, and sea turtles. This sustainable fishing gear to catch swordfish is supported by fishermen, seafood buyers, chefs, and local business owners.

Although this is the smallest and most highly regulated Californian fishery, consumer-demand for swordfish remains high. Replacing DGN fishing gear with the DSBG, a sustainable alternative, demonstrates our commitment to preserve and protect the ocean's ecology.

As a father and a Californian, it is my hope that future generations will also have the opportunity to experience and enjoy the majesty of the humpback and other whales, marine mammals, and sea turtles that migrate along our coast.

Sincerely,


Gavin Newsom
Lieutenant Governor

