

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON FUTURE COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA AND WORKLOAD PLANNING

The Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) reviewed the Council’s Preliminary Year-at-a-Glance Summary ([Agenda Item I.3, Attachment 1](#)). Recognizing the heavy workload in the preliminary Highly Migratory Species (HMS) calendar for future Council meetings, and taking into consideration the Council’s March 2016 motion tasking the HMSMT to develop deep-set buoy gear (DSBG) alternatives, the HMSMT proposes a revised calendar for future HMS planning. The June agenda in Table 1 below is fully developed. The meetings for September 2016 through June 2017 show only the regularly scheduled items and those meetings provide opportunities for scheduling DSBG authorization and other Council HMS priorities.

June 2016	September 2016	November 2016	March 2017	June 2017
NMFS Report	NMFS Report	NMFS Report	NMFS Report	NMFS Report
International Issues	International Issues	International Issues	International Issues	International Issues
Preliminary EFP Review	EFP Final Recommendations			Preliminary EFP Reports
Scope Biennial Mgmt Measure Changes, SDC, & Ref. Pts.	Biennial Mgmt Measures ROA	Biennial Mgmt Measures FPA		Preliminary EFP Review
Deep-Set Buoy Gear Check-in				Scope Biennial Mgmt Measure Changes, SDC, & Ref. Pts.
HMS FMP Housekeeping Recommendations				
State of CA Current Ecosystem Report				
Swordfish Overfishing Response				

Table 1. Proposed calendar for future HMS planning.

Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs): The Council may receive new HMS EFP applications in June. Preliminary reports on ongoing EFPs are usually scheduled in June, per Council Operating Procedure 20 (COP 20). The Council received reports on ongoing EFPs at its March 2016 meeting to assist with scoping for DSBG. Additional EFP results are not expected before the June 2016 Council meeting, so this item may not be necessary on this agenda. Preliminary EFP reports will be required again in June 2017, according to COP 20. Final written EFP reports are due to the Council in September per COP 20. Final HMS EFP reports will not be submitted in September 2016 because the EFPs are ongoing.

Biennial Management Measures: The HMSMT does not expect any actions under this agenda item in June 2016.

Deep-Set Buoy Gear: In June, the HMSMT recommends a check-in with the Council for guidance and future scheduling of DSBG scoping. The HMSMT identified several DSBG topics that are ready for scoping, including permits, training, gear configurations, concurrent gear use, monitoring or observer coverage, and logbooks ([March 2016 Agenda Item F.3.a , Supplemental HMSMT Report 2](#)). Of these topics, the HMSMT anticipates focusing on permitting issues and identifying specific questions for Council guidance. In addition, we anticipate providing comment on scoping the remaining topics for Council consideration.

Federal HMS Permit: Per Council discussion in March 2016, the HMSMT would include this as part of the DSBG range of alternatives. The Federal HMS permit would be stricken from the calendar and considered under the DSBG authorization action.

HMS FMP Housekeeping: The HMS FMP contains a number of items that have changed since its adoption. Housekeeping changes can be addressed when the Council considers amending the FMP for another purpose, such as the DSBG authorization. For example, some references to state regulations, management unit stock structures, and MSY values are currently incorrect. In June or a subsequent meeting, the HMSMT would provide a list of potential housekeeping measures for Council consideration and guidance on any that may not meet the standards for a housekeeping change.

Authorizing Shallow-Set Longline (SSLL) Outside the EEZ: The HMSMT recommends that this issue not be scheduled for June. Scoping for this action was postponed at the September 2015 Council meeting. The Council could revisit this action when the Council next discusses its draft Swordfish Management and Monitoring Plan. Alternatively, the Council could reschedule SSLL scoping for when results are available from Council-recommended EFPs using longline gear inside the EEZ. If EFP results are promising, the Council could consider authorizing longline both inside and outside of the EEZ at the same time. If EFP results are not promising or sufficient, the Council could go ahead with scoping for SSLL outside the EEZ alone.

Swordfish Management and Monitoring Plan: Much of the plan has to do with the suite of gears authorized under the HMS FMP. Further development of the plan may be put on hold while ongoing actions regarding these gears progress.

Albacore Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE): The HMSMT anticipates completing work leading up to the joint HMSMT/HMSAS webinar on albacore MSE, as well as completing the product as a result of the meeting.

Scheduling of Spring Meeting for HMS: The HMSMT does not see an advantage to moving the spring meeting from March to April because additional information on the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission will likely not become available in that extra time period.

PFMC

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