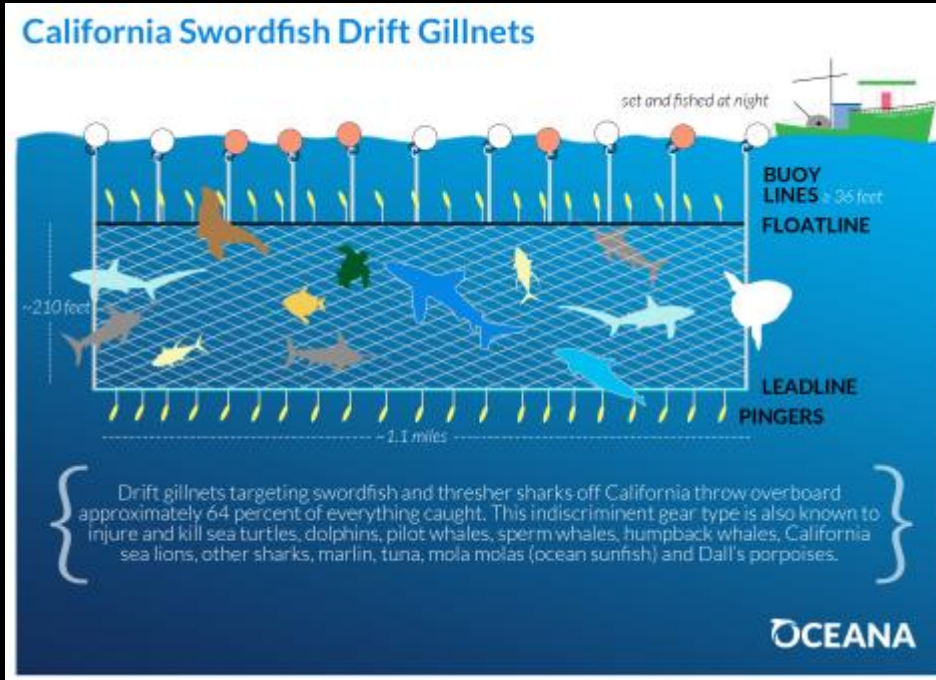


Deep-Set Buoy Gear HMS FMP Amendment

Public Comment - Agenda Item D.5

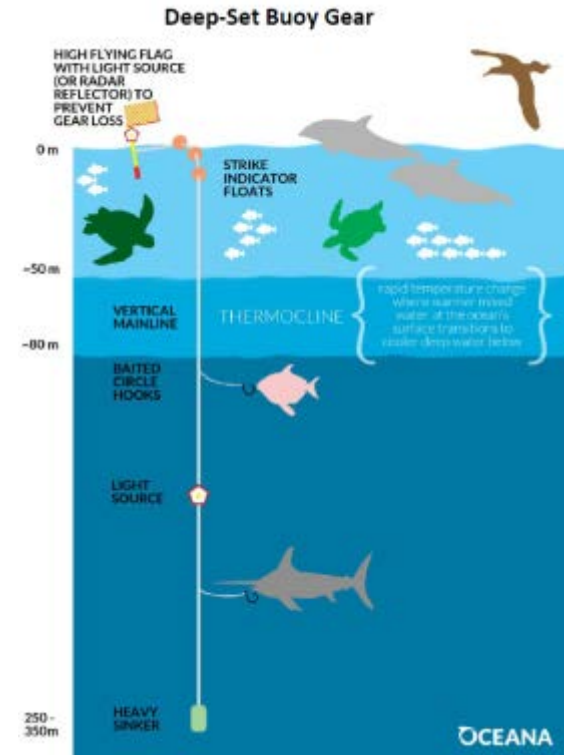
Geoff Shester, Ph.D.
June 24, 2016

Night



Drift gillnets

- Surface fishing at night
- 64% discard rate
- More cetacean bycatch than all other US West Coast and Alaska fisheries combined
- Frequent interactions with protected species



Deep-set buoy gear

- Deep fishing in day
- 97% marketable species
- Minimal bycatch mortality
- No protected species mortality to date
- Profitable, higher value catch

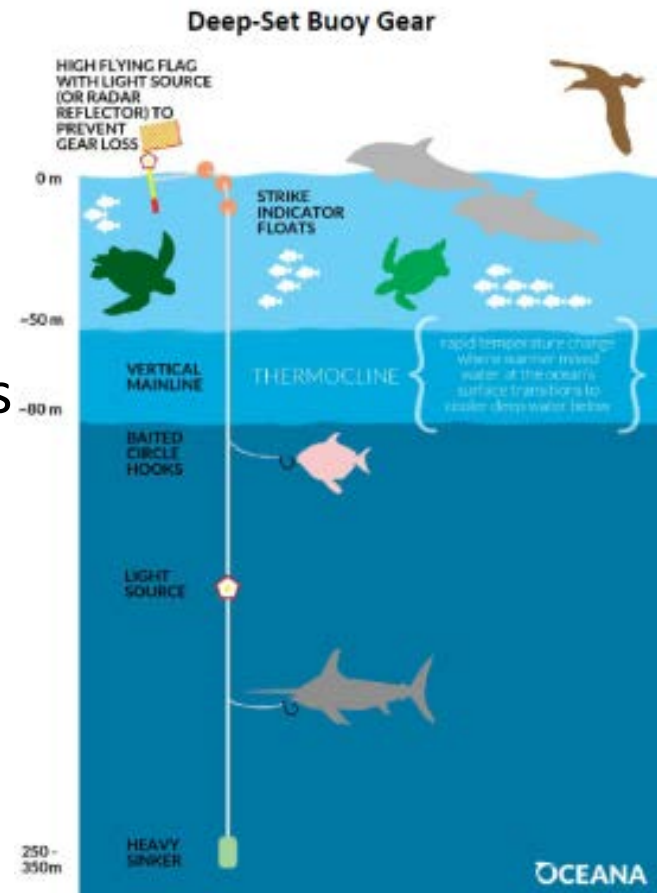
Purpose and need

- Swordfish Management & Monitoring Plan
 - Support economically viable West Coast swordfish fishery
 - Reduce protected species bycatch
 - Reduce unmarketable finfish catch
- DSBG authorization provides opportunity:
 - Incentivize voluntary transition from DGN to DSBG
 - Provide new fishing opportunity, increase swordfish landings
 - Provide compensation for moving away from DGN



Authorize Deep-Set Buoy Gear

- Gear configuration should match EFPs
 - (max 10 pieces of gear/ permit; active tending, etc.)
- Time-area closures
 - Provide DSBG access to PLCA, federal waters, prevent targeting other species
- Monitoring
 - Pilot initial observer program to confirm bycatch remains low
 - Explore electronic monitoring
- Potential training on effective use



Permitting Considerations

- Phased approach to permitting DSBG
 - Prevent gear conflicts
- Initial permits should be issued based on:
 - Participation in DSBG EFPs
 - DGN permit holders
 - Harpooners with recent swordfish landings
- DSBG permits should be transferable to other HMS permit holders
- Future modifications to DSBG (i.e., linked buoy gear) would be tied to same DSBG permits
- DGN permits become non-transferable and/or sunset



Permit Trade-ins

Analyze a suite of voluntary options for DGN permit holders:

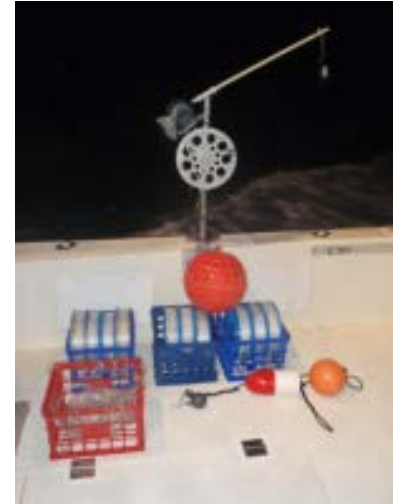
Keep DGN Permit
(status quo)

Keep DGN & Purchase a Buoy
Gear Permit

Exchange DGN Permit for
Multiple Buoy Gear Permits

Concurrent & Future Actions Outside FMP Amendment

- Transition fund (Ocean Protection Council)
 - Observer/Monitoring costs
 - Further experiments
 - Training
 - Gear acquisition/vessel conversion
 - Depends on fishermen support
- Loans for new gear (California Fisheries Fund)
- Move toward electronic monitoring (funding sources available)
- Future EFPs: Further improvement to DSBG design (linked buoy gear)
- Marketing efforts for DSBG
- Continue efforts toward import restrictions for swordfish fisheries not meeting U.S. standards





Summary



- DSBG has proven to be a clean, profitable way to increase local swordfish landings
- Opportunity to meet multiple Council goals
- Reasonable Range of Alternatives should include
 - DSBG authorization
 - Phased permitting system linked to DGN
 - Incentives for voluntary gear transition/trade-in
 - DGN permit sunset / non-transferability
- Request HMSMT flesh out and analyze these elements