

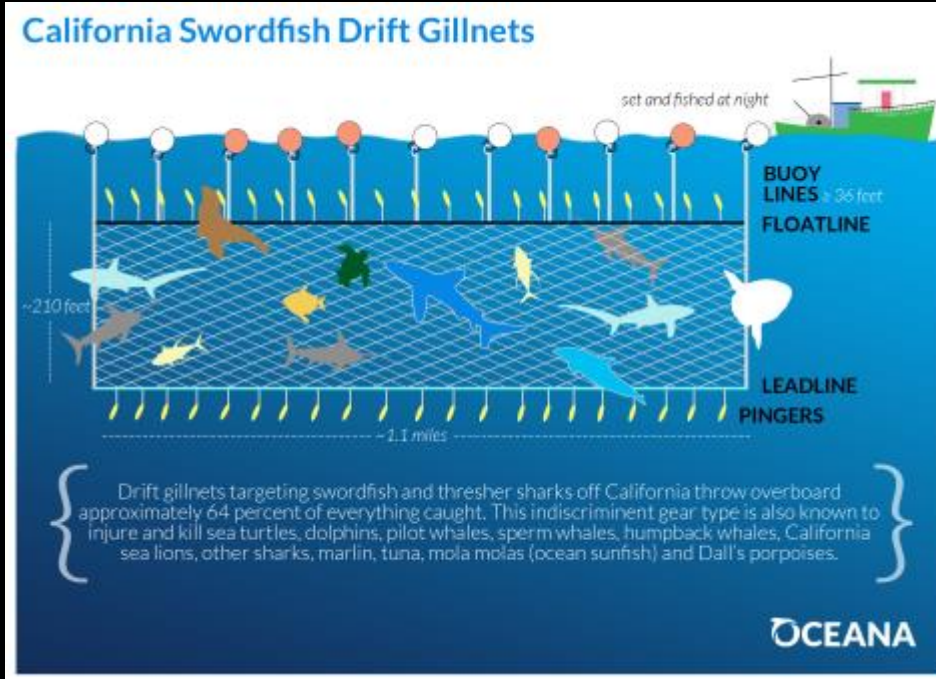
Deep-Set Buoy Gear Authorization and Future EFPs

Comments on Agenda Item J.4

Geoff Shester

September 19, 2016

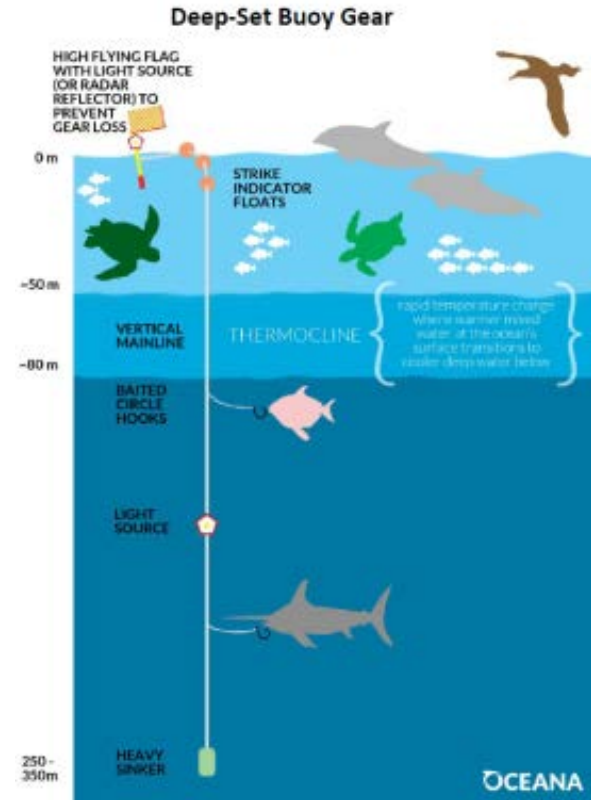
Night



Drift gillnets

- Surface fishing at night
- Among highest discard rates in US
- More cetacean bycatch than all other US West Coast and Alaska fisheries combined
- Only MMPA Category I fishery on US West Coast

Day



Deep-set buoy gear

- Deep fishing in day
- 97% marketable species
- Active tending → Minimal bycatch mortality
- Profitable, higher value catch

A Comprehensive Vision

- Implement DGN hard caps and monitoring (*PFMC Motion Sept 2015*)
- Permitting:
 - Limit effort by issuing federal DGN permits to active fishermen based on bycatch reduction goals (*SMMP*)
 - Authorize and permit DSBG as successfully tested (*PFMC Motions in Nov. 2015 and March 2016*)
 - Enable voluntary DGN permit trade-ins for DSBG permits (*SMMP*)
- New EFPs to explore Linked Buoy Gear and new areas
- Import standards/restrictions through MSA and MMPA

All these can and should happen concurrently as a package

Authorizing and Permitting DSBG

- Use configuration and areas as fished in previous EFPs by PIER and others
- Develop range of alternatives for issuing a small initial set (10-20) of permits to:
 - EFP participants
 - DGN fishermen willing to trade-in DGN permit
- Allow/encourage voluntary federal DGN permit trade-ins for DSBG permits

Why DSBG Authorization Should Not Be Delayed

- Risky to invest in new gear that isn't authorized (gear costs are non-trivial)
- EFPs are time/resource intensive for fishermen and management teams
- EFP participants must pay for observer coverage
 - Future funding from NMFS/NGOs uncertain
- Maintaining price premium:
 - Marketing requires steady effort with confidence in future supply
- No current incentive to switch gears
- Increase US West Coast swordfish production

Further EFPs for DSBG

- Build on existing EFP configuration by adding additional hooks (test linked buoy gear)
- Explore use of buoy gear in new areas (outside Southern California)
- Continue active tending requirements as currently required in existing EFPs
- Upon completion of future EFPs, consider amending definition of DSBG in HMS FMP to allow newly tested gear configurations to be authorized
- New DSBG EFPs can occur simultaneously while existing DSBG is authorized