

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON  
LEGISLATIVE REPORT

The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) believes that it is important to manage our fisheries with science and collaborations by the Council and not through politics. Issues concerning science-based fisheries should be under the auspices of the Council and National Marine Fisheries Service, which are recognized as the U.S. agency for assuring fisheries sustainability in federal waters. The following is a partial quote from Alaskan Senator Dan Sullivan (bold text by HMSAS for emphasis).

**Statement of Senator Dan Sullivan on S. 2773, the Driftnet Modernization and Bycatch Reduction Act, Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation: Sept. 5, 2018.**

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“Enacting the Driftnet Modernization and Bycatch Reduction Act would lead to the phase-out and replacement of large mesh driftnets in U.S. waters, essentially forcing certain Southern California fishermen to close-up shop or use less efficient, and unproven gear. **The Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act (MSA), manages fisheries in the federal waters of the United States, including the fishery impacted by this legislation.**

**The MSA set-up eight Regional Fishery Management Councils who manage the fisheries off America’s coasts in a science-based and open and transparent stakeholder driven process. The purpose of this structure was to separate fish politics from science, allowing those closest to the fisheries, rather than someone back in Washington D.C, to make decisions regarding allocations, harvest rates, gear types, etc.**

**This management structure, along with the guiding principles of the MSA—the 10 national standards laid-out in the law—are the true hallmarks of the MSA.**

**National Standard Nine requires that bycatch be minimized “to the extent practicable.” Further, the Marine Mammal Protection Act and its Take Reduction Plans and Teams are already in place to address the interactions and conflicts between fishing and marine mammal conservation. That is in addition to the restrictions of the Endangered Species Act. The MSA has resulted in the world’s best managed fisheries, and in this case, the Pacific Fisheries Management Council, rather than Congress, is the most appropriate venue for the issues this bill addresses to be resolved.”**