



April 2019 PFMC Agenda Item D.7 Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning

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Purpose of the Swordfish Management and Monitoring Plan

- Support the economic viability of the swordfish fishery so that it can meet demand for a fresh, high quality, locally-caught product.

Source: https://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/G7_Att1_Swordfish-Plan_fromSept2015BB_Jun2018BB.pdf

Atlantic Swordfish Buoy Gear

- Heavy exploitation of swordfish in the Atlantic Ocean during 1980s – early 1990s led to an overfished state in both the North Atlantic and South Atlantic stocks (ICCAT, 2009).
- High levels of juvenile bycatch in certain areas (in particular, the Florida Straits between Florida, Cuba, and the Bahamas) was considered as a major detrimental factor for the stock sustainability. Responding to national and international calls for the conservation, United States NOAA NMFS introduced in 2000-2001 several Regulatory Amendments to the 1999 HMS FMP applying three time-area closures to U.S. domestic pelagic longline fisheries to reduce bycatch of billfish and undersized swordfish, including the Florida Straits.
- *Swordfish buoy gear was developed in the United States in 2003 in the Florida Straits to take advantage of the concentration of large swordfish relatively close to shore*, and in part as an alternative to gear which was banned in the area in 2001.
- *Starting in 2006, swordfish buoy fishing gear is officially authorized* by U.S. domestic regulation within waters of U.S. jurisdiction.
- *Current regulation allows a maximum 35 buoys* (i.e., individual free-floating pieces of gear) per vessel with maximum 2 hooks per buoy in the Gulf of Mexico and along east coast of USA, including those areas closed for pelagic longline fisheries (NOAA, 2011).

Source: [http:// www.iotc.org/ sites/ default/ files/ documents/ 2014/ 01/ IOTC-2013-WPEB09-41.pdf](http://www.iotc.org/sites/default/files/documents/2014/01/IOTC-2013-WPEB09-41.pdf)

Atlantic Swordfish Buoy Gear Effort and Landings

Table 5.24 Reported Buoy Gear Effort (2012-2016)

Specifications	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Number of vessels	55	46	39	37	42
Number of trips	688	629	467	353	337
Average buoy gears deployed per trip	14.1	17.95	20.9	21.1	23.6
Total number of set hooks	11,639	12,557	10,740	8,267	8,588
Average number hooks per gear	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1

Source: Unified Data Processing

Table 5.25 Reported Buoy Gear Landings (lb dw, 2012-2016)

Species	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Swordfish	178,088	140,038	114,153	85,304	94,451
Dolphin	1,324	486	996	216	733
Oilfish	719	693	362	490	121
Shortfin mako shark	2,295	1,194	1,117	932	1,709
Wahoo	163	70	35	45	58
Bigeye tuna	0	0	0	0	0
Blacktip shark	38	0	13	0	0
King mackerel	56	134	143	29	323
Yellowfin tuna	0	0	0	0	0
Hammerhead shark	400	0	0	0	0
Silky shark	120	0	0	0	0
Greater amberjack	0	0	0	0	0
Bonito	54	0	0	0	0
Blackfin tuna	97	32	84	189	96

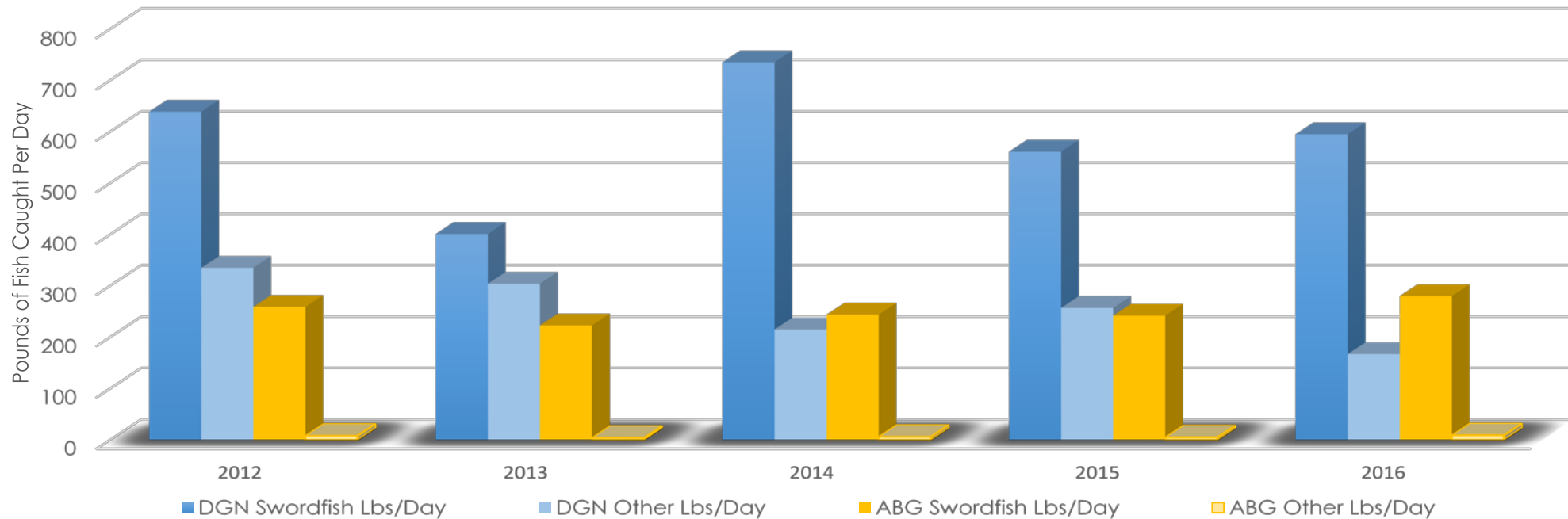
Source: Unified Data Processing

- Average number of vessels – **43.8**
- Average number of buoys per trip – **19.5**

Source: 2017 Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report for Atlantic Highly Migratory Species

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/2017-stock-assessment-and-fishery-evaluation-safe-report-atlantic-highly>

Pounds of Swordfish and Other Fish Caught Per Day Pacific Drift Gillnet (DGN) vs. Atlantic Buoy Gear (ABG)



Year	DGN Swordfish Lbs ¹	DGN Other Lbs ¹	DGN Sets ²	DGN Swordfish Lbs/Day	DGN Other Lbs/Day	ABG Swordfish Lbs ³	ABG Other Lbs ³	ABG Trips ³	ABG Swordfish Lbs/Day	ABG Other Lbs/Day
2012	260,586	136,686	408	639	335	178,088	5,266	688	259	8
2013	224,430	169,756	559	401	304	140,038	2,609	629	223	4
2014	278,884	81,571	379	735	215	114,153	2,750	467	244	6
2015	212,084	97,003	378	561	257	85,304	1,901	353	242	5
2016	424,609	119,050	714	595	167	94,451	3,040	337	280	9

¹ Summaries of Commercial Fishery Catch, Revenue, and Effort (PacFIN data) Table 12 <http://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/HMS-SAFE-Table-12.htm>

² California/Oregon Drift Gillnet Observer Data

https://www.westcoast.fisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries/wc_observer_programs/sw_observer_program_info/data_summ_report_sw_observer_fish.html

³ 2017 Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report for Atlantic Highly Migratory Species <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/2017-stock-assessment-and-fishery-evaluation-safe-report-atlantic-highly>

SSLL Effects on Sea Turtles, 2004-2018

Injury Category		Green sea turtle (%)	Leatherback sea turtle	Loggerhead sea turtle	Olive Ridley sea turtle	Grand Total
Dead				2 (1)		2 (1)
Injured	Entangled	2 (1)	3 (1)	9 (3)	1 (0)	15 (5)
	External	4 (1)	89 (30)	87(29)	5 (2)	185 (62)
	Insertion Not Visible	-	1 (0)	18 (6)	-	19 (6)
	Insertion Visible	2 (1)	8 (3)	31 (10)	1 (0)	42 (14)
	Jaw	2 (1)	4 (1)	30 (10)	3 (1)	39 (13)
Grand Total		10 (3)	105 (35)	175 (59)	10 (3)	302

From Tables 51 and 52 (2019 Draft Biological Opinion)

The Hawaii SSL Fishery is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of endangered and threatened sea turtles, sharks and rays!

Viewing Western Pacific Re...

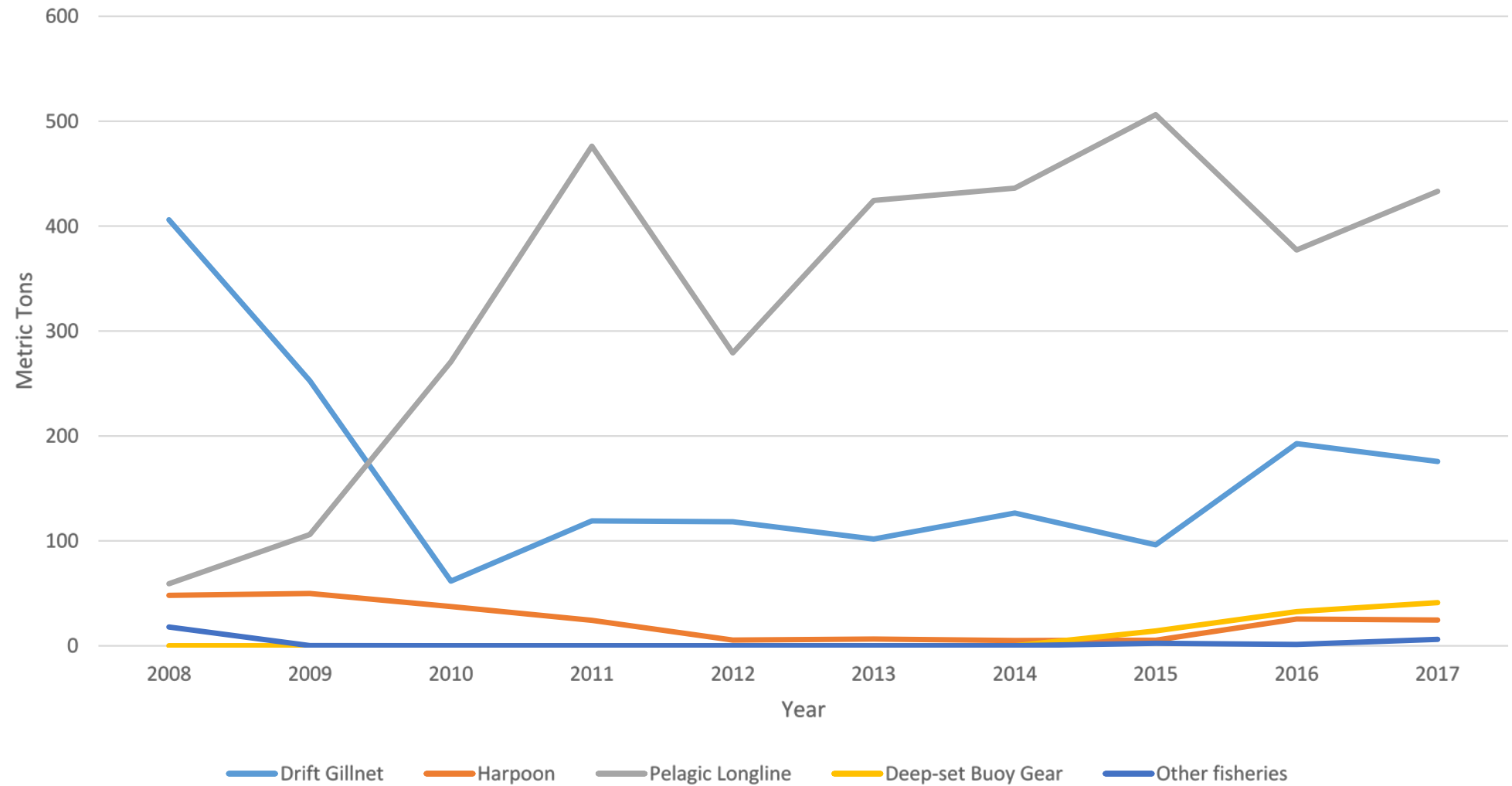
CONCLUSION

After reviewing their current status, the environmental baseline for the action area, the effects of the proposed action and the cumulative effects, it is NMFS' biological opinion that NMFS' continued operation of the HI SSL fishery **is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the following species** under NMFS' jurisdiction:

Endangered leatherback sea turtles, endangered loggerhead sea turtles (North Pacific DPS), threatened green sea turtles (Eastern Pacific, Central North Pacific, East Indian-West Pacific, Southwest Pacific DPS), endangered green sea turtles (Central West Pacific and Central South Pacific DPS), threatened olive ridley sea turtles and olive ridley sea turtles from the endangered Mexico breeding population, threatened oceanic whitetip sharks, threatened manta rays, and threatened Guadalupe fur seals.

Source: 2019 Biological Opinion

West Coast Swordfish Landings by Fishery, 2008-2017



Source: June 2018 PFMC Meeting Briefing Book

https://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/G7_Att2_Landings_of_swordfish_2008-2017_Jun2018BB.pdf

Purpose of the Swordfish Management and Monitoring Plan

- Support the economic viability of the swordfish fishery so that it can meet demand for a fresh, high quality, locally-caught product.

Source: https://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/G7_Att1_Swordfish-Plan_fromSept2015BB_Jun2018BB.pdf

Summary

- The Shallow-Set Longline (SSLL) fishery operating on the high seas is the bulk of the west coast swordfish landings in recent years.
- So, what we are really talking about when we say no to exploring scoping of a SSLL fishery outside the EEZ is the Council not engaging in the management of a fishery that has increasingly grown into the Eastern Pacific in recent years and that the West coast buyers have either depended on, or are coming to depend on for domestic swordfish landings.
- Support Scoping of SSLL in June 2019
- If not, then support SSLL in November 2019 (due to geographical location)
- In that case, support taking up DGN hard caps June 2019



**THANK
YOU**

