

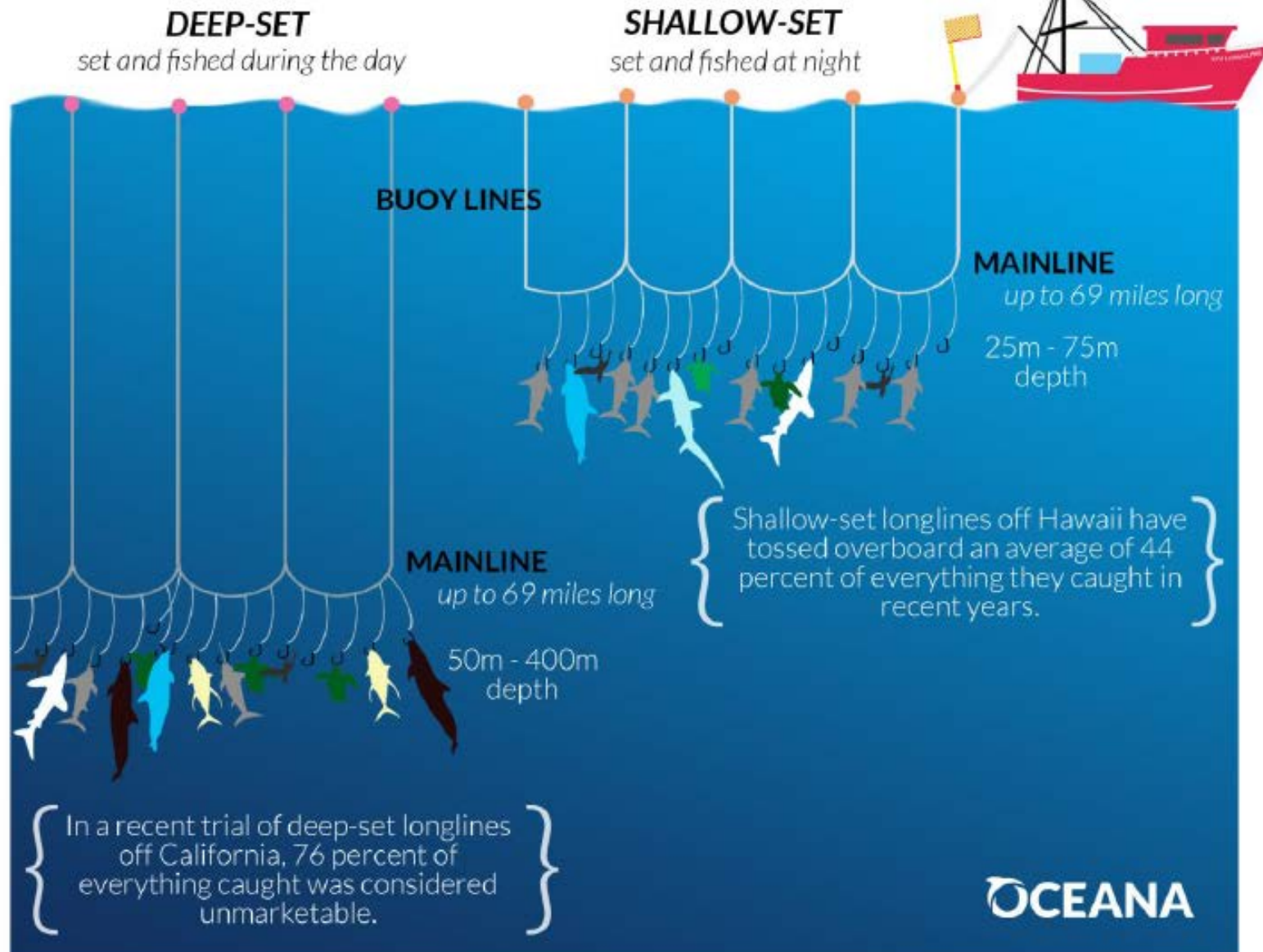
Opposition to West-Coast Permitted Pelagic Longlining

Geoff Shester, Oceana

Open Public Comment, Agenda Item B.1



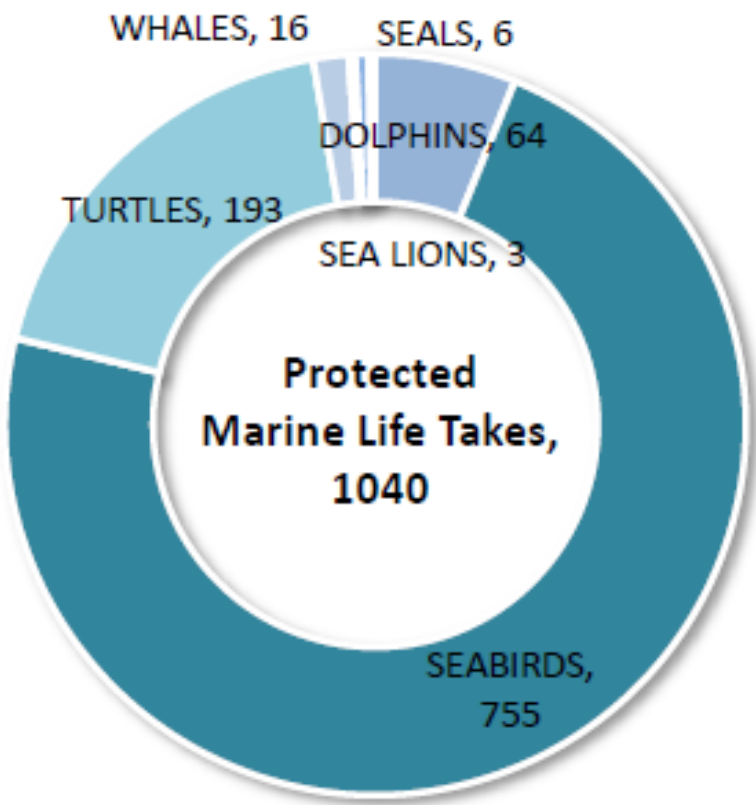
Pelagic Longlines



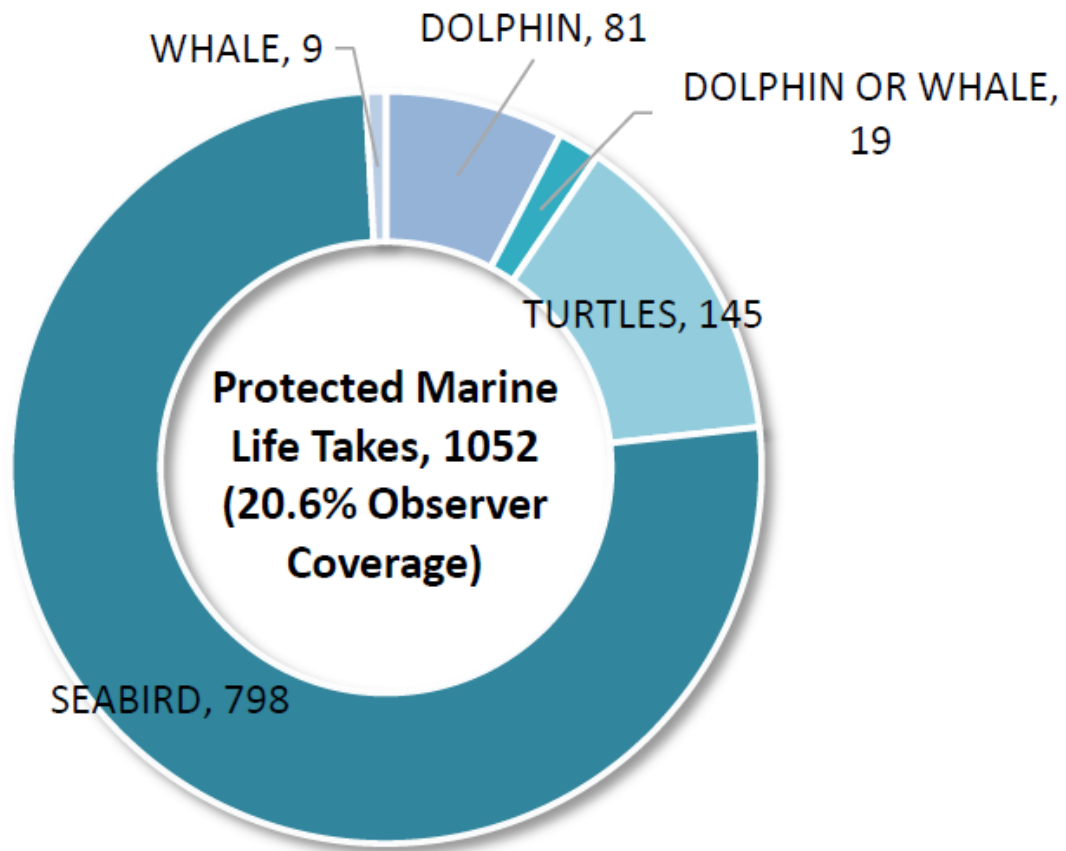
24,494 United States residents opposed new pelagic longlines in 2017 letter to PFMC

Both shallow-and deep-set longlines off Hawaii discard important and iconic marine life accidentally caught during fishing, including sea turtles, sharks, whales, albatrosses, and dolphins.

Hawaii Shallow-set Longline Fishery Takes



Hawaii Deep-set Longline* Fishery Takes



Source: NMFS Observer Program 2007-2017

*Note HI DSL is only Category I fishery in Pacific Ocean under MMPA

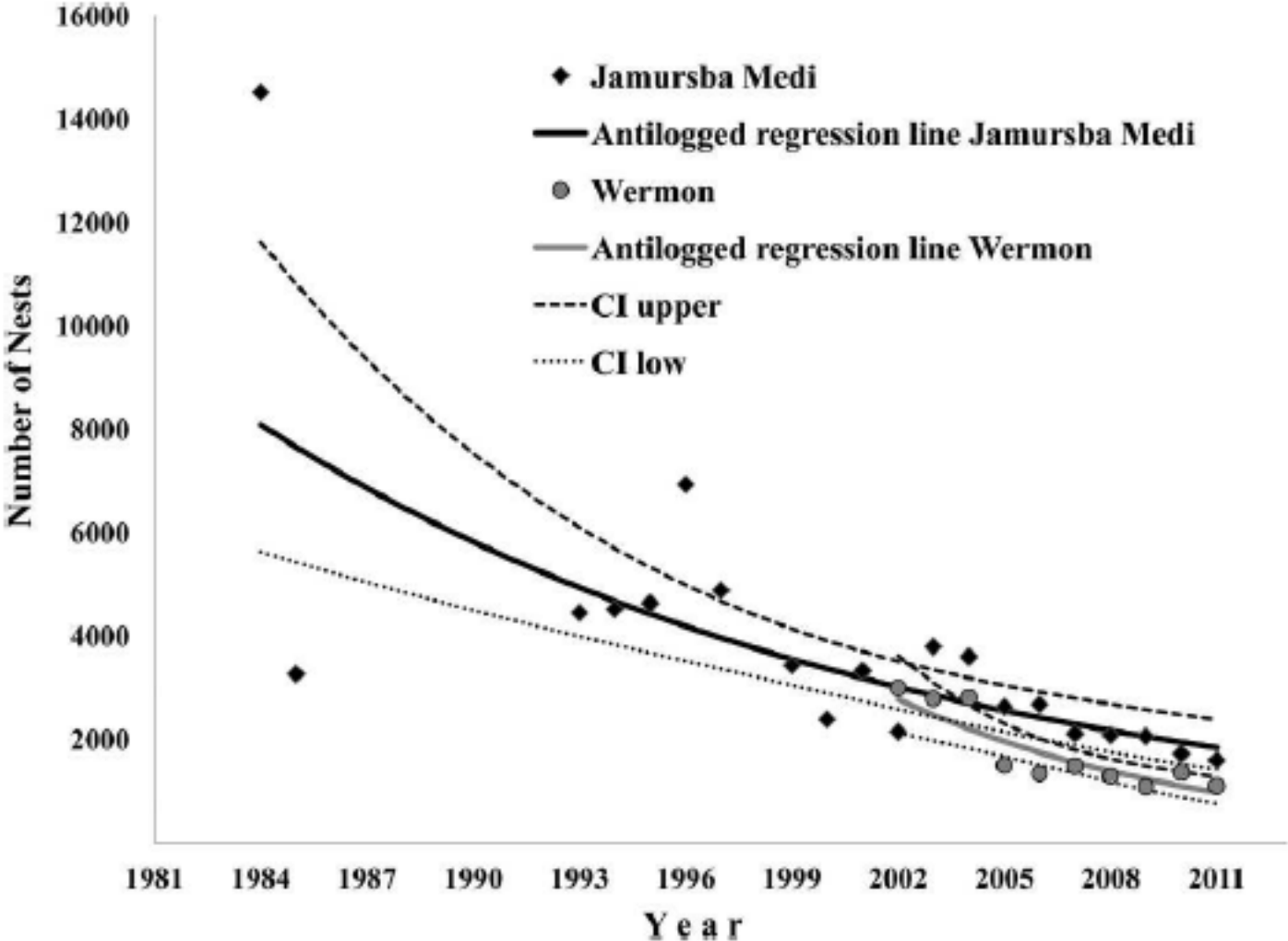




© NOAA, 2013. An endangered Pacific leatherback sea turtle ensnared by a Hawaii-based shallow-set longline.

Pacific leatherback sea turtles

Pacific leatherback nests at 2 key index beaches in Indonesia



85% decline in 3 decades, Tapilatu et al. 2013

NMFS Species in the Spotlight – “Most likely to go extinct in the near future”

3.7% decline per year off California

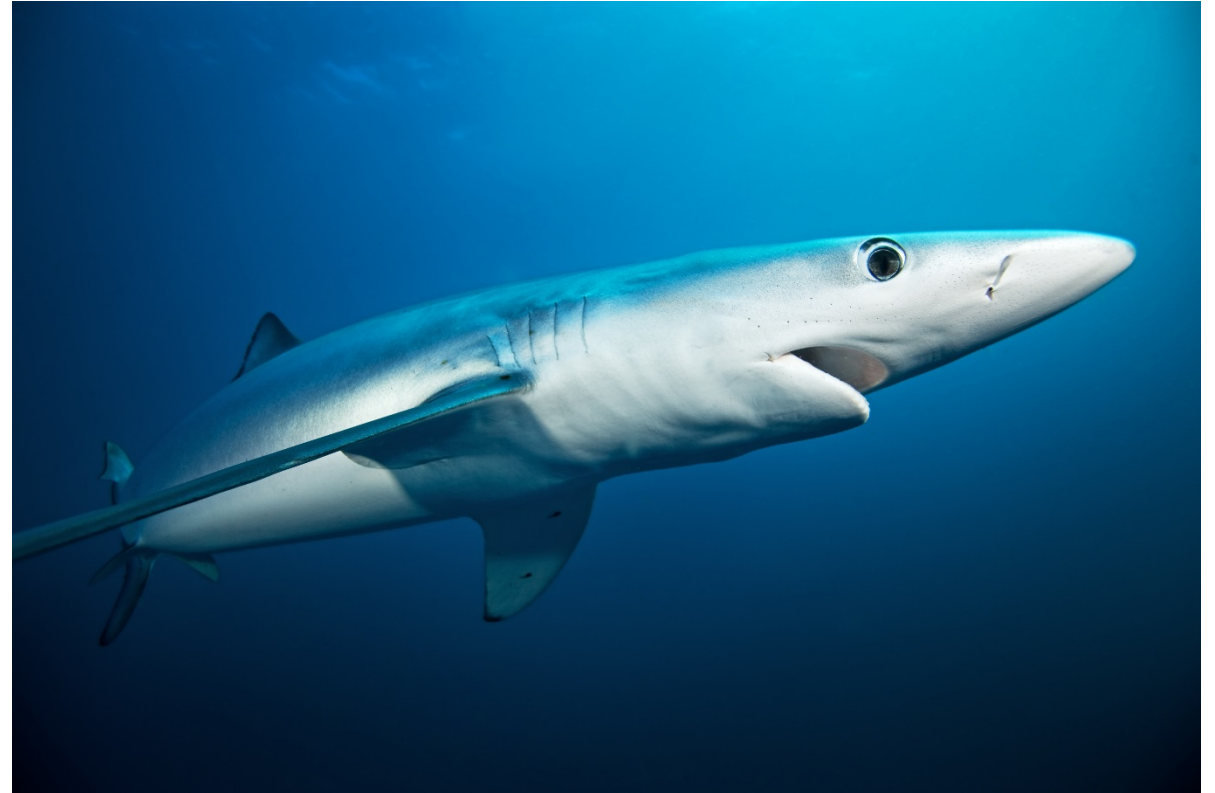
Benson et al. 2018. A LONG-TERM DECLINE IN THE ABUNDANCE OF LEATHERBACK TURTLES, *DERMOCHELYS CORIACEA*, AT A FORAGING GROUND OFF CALIFORNIA, USA

1 sea turtle mortality in US West Coast EEZ every 6 years will delay recovery

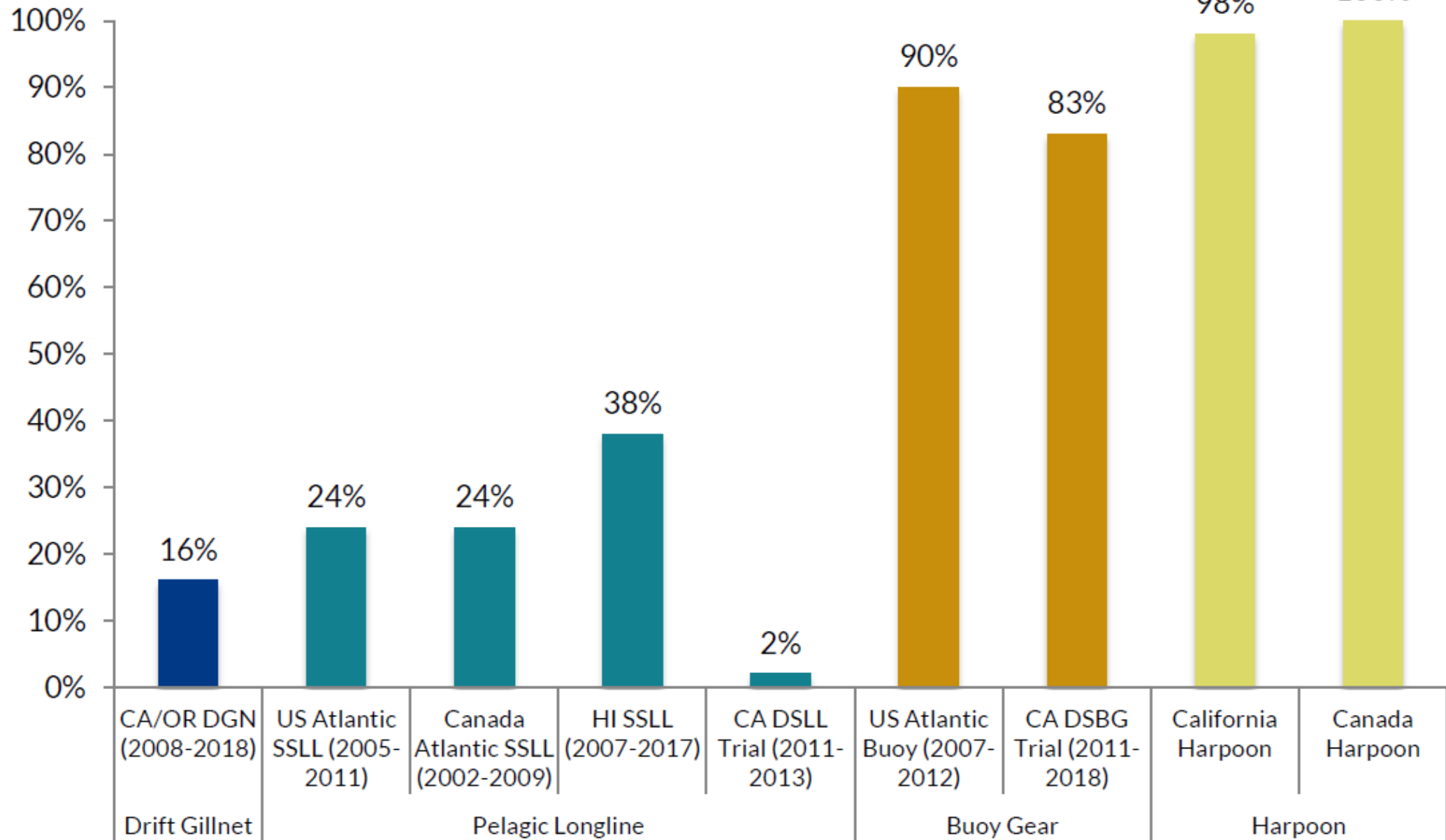
-Curtis et al. 2015. Estimating Limit Reference Points for Western Pacific Leatherback Turtles (*Dermochelys coriacea*) in the U.S. West Coast EEZ

Concerns with shark bycatch in pelagic longlines

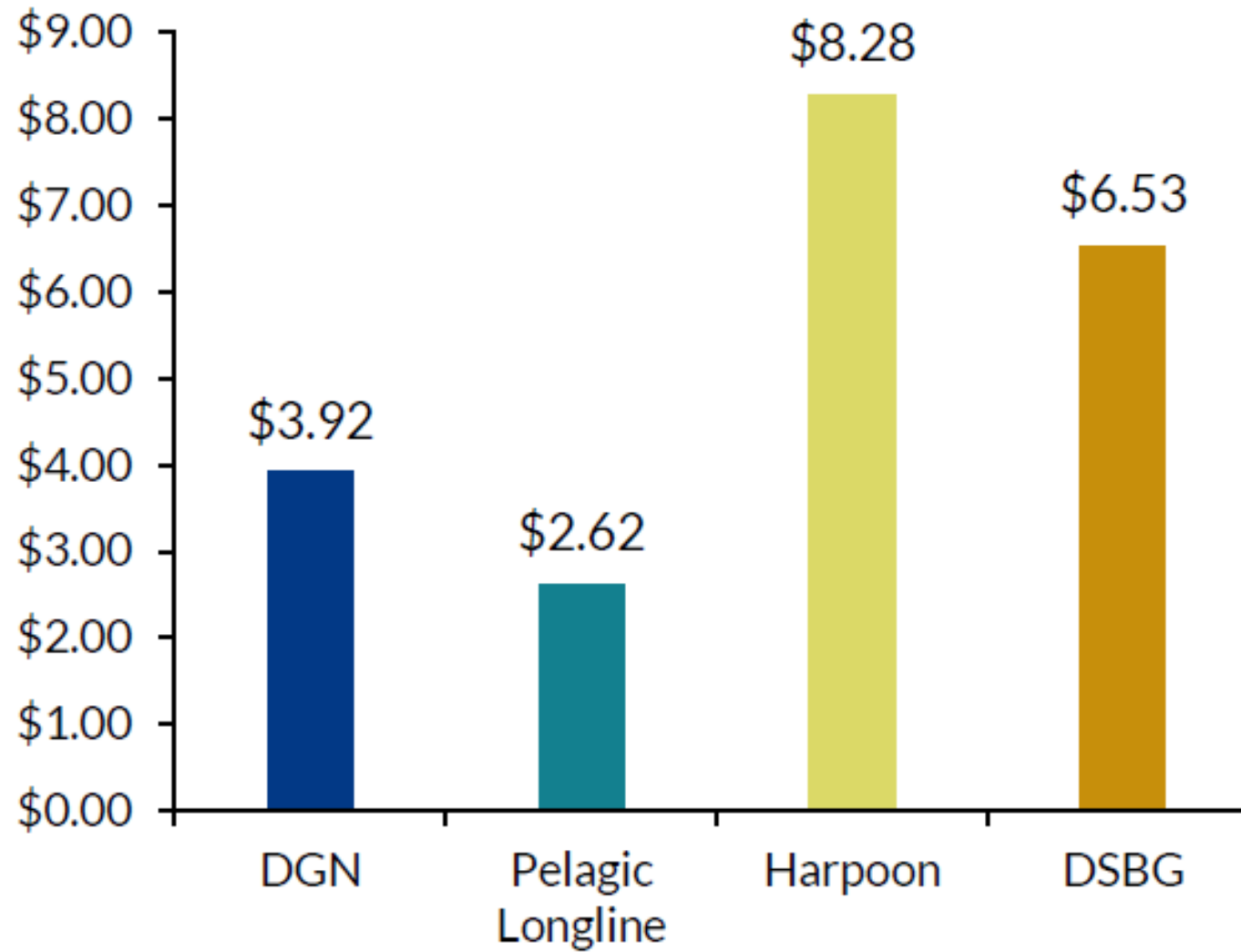
- Pelagic longlines have high catch rates of rare and unmarketable sharks
- 2011 NMFS experiment with DSLL off California: 42 blue sharks caught per swordfish
- US West Coast is internationally important nursery ground for blue sharks, white sharks, and other migratory sharks



Percentage of total catch that is swordfish

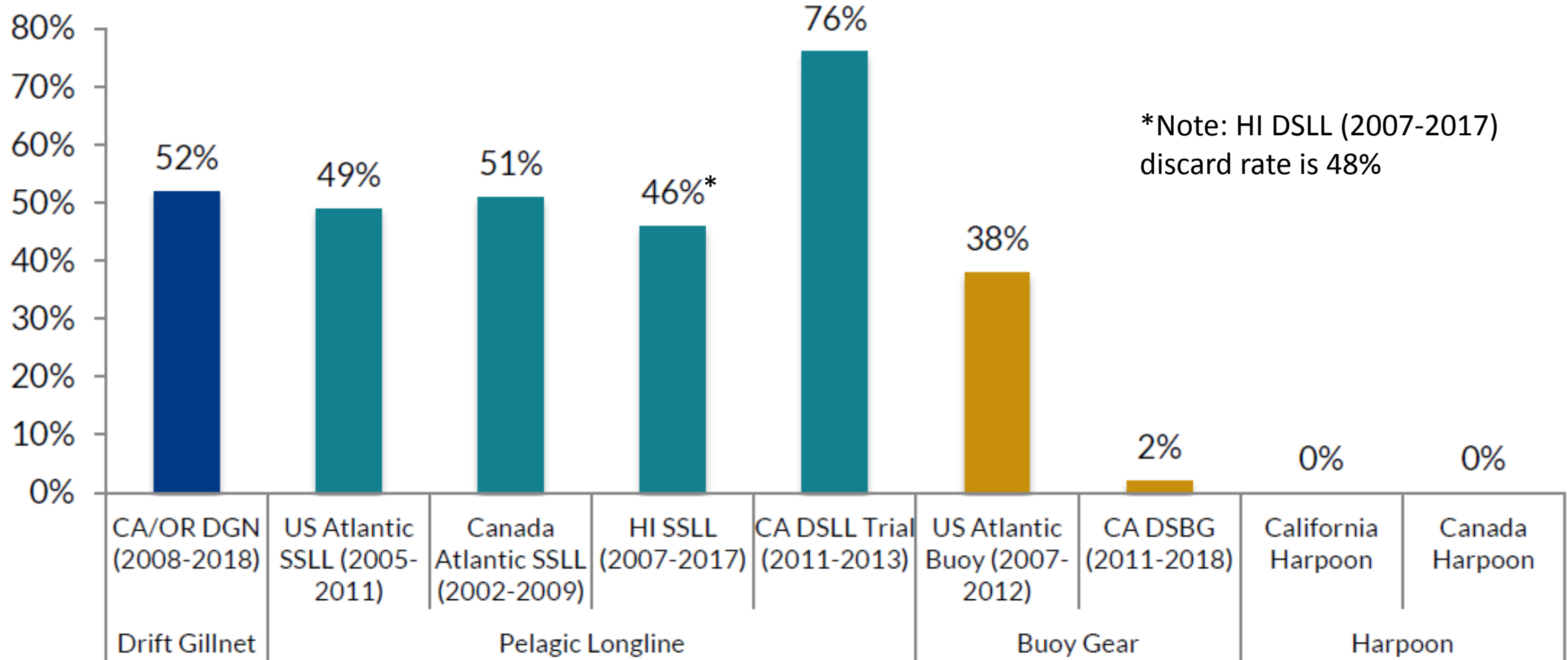


Average ex-vessel price per pound



Source: PFMCI. Swordfish Landings by fishery, 2008-2017. June 2018.
Agenda Item G.7 Attachment 2

Swordfish fishery discard rates



No Need for Action

- California fishermen already participate in Hawaii longline fishery outside EEZ, opportunity already available to purchase permits
- Deep set buoy gear provides profitable way to increase domestic West Coast swordfish fishing

Summary of Our Requests

- Remove scoping a West Coast permitted pelagic longline fishery outside the EEZ from all future Council agendas
- Do not issue or solicit any new pelagic longline EFPs
- Oppose any effort to reintroduce pelagic longlines inside the US EEZ
- Focus on authorizing and scaling up deep-set buoy gear, including linked buoy gear