

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON LEGISLATIVE
MATTERS

The Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) wishes to respond to the letter submitted by the Honorable Rob Bishop, Republican Leader, House Committee on Natural Resources. In the letter, Congressman Bishop asks the Council for an analysis of the current state of “*alternative fishing practices that minimize the incidental catch of living marine resources.*” The development and continued experimental use of deep-set buoy gear (DSBG) in California has demonstrated this to be a low-bycatch fishing method for targeting swordfish. However, the HMSMT agrees with the HMS Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) that DSBG may not be a viable economic alternative to large-mesh drift gillnet (DGN) gear. The reasons for this are well-outlined in the Supplemental HMSAS Report 1 under agenda item C.2. The HMSAS also notes that while longlines are another alternative gear that could be used to reduce bycatch compared with DGN gear, the authorization of longline gear is unlikely to take place in the timeframe of H.R. 1979.

PFMC
09/16/19