

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON LEGISLATIVE
MATTERS INCLUDING THE MODERNIZING RECREATIONAL FISHERIES
MANAGEMENT ACT REPORT TO CONGRESS

The Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) reviewed and discussed Section 201 of the [2018 Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Management Act](#) (Act). The Act requires National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to consult with the Regional Fishery Management Councils and their Scientific and Statistical Committees (SSCs), and Interstate Fisheries Commissions on cooperative data collection with states, and to facilitate greater incorporation of data, with a focus on recreational fisheries, from state agency and non-government organization sources into fishery management decisions. Upon review of the NMFS draft report to Congress ([Agenda Item I.1 Attachment 2](#)), the HMSMT provides the following comments.

The HMSMT would like to highlight some important HMS-specific data and procedure needs. First, given the use of private docks and marinas by private HMS recreational vessels, the HMSMT supports continued efforts to increase in-person shoreside survey coverage and further the use and refinement of Marine Recreational Information Program recreational HMS data collection methods to more accurately account for catch in this recreational fishery sector. The HMSMT also recommends continued efforts to incorporate HMS recreational data and observations into international HMS stock assessments. For example, aerial surveys for HMS, similar to those conducted for coastal pelagic species, potentially could provide a science-based method to evaluate anecdotal information about abundance and also address the lack of fishery independent data cited by the SSC ([Agenda Item I.1.b Supplemental SSC Report 1](#)). Lastly, the HMSMT agrees with the SSC that the existing [PFMC Research and Data Needs Report](#) contains a comprehensive summary of HMS research priorities and data needs that might be used to inform a revised version of the report to Congress.

PFMC
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