HIGHERLY MIGRATORY SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE REPORT

The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel received a preview of the presentation given by Ms. Jenny Suter of Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission on Observing Unobserved Fishing Characteristics in the Drift Gillnet Fishery for Swordfish. We appreciate the work done and thank the authors for their efforts. We wish to highlight just a few points made in the Report.

- On Page 17 – “…we observed little statistical evidence of differences between observed and unobserved trips (in the DGN [drift gillnet] fishery), neither for vessels that periodically carried observers nor for vessels that were never observed.”

- On Page 17 – “These observations support the notion that the drivers of selecting fishing locations may have been relatively persistent, regardless of observer presence.”

- On Page 18 – “…environmental conditions may serve as a more predictable driver of fishery behavior than observer or VMS [vessel monitoring system] coverage.”

We believe the Report provides sufficient evidence supporting the conclusion that observer bias in the drift gillnet fishery is not occurring. As such, current levels of observer coverage are adequate.

PFMC
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