

Groundfish Endangered Species Workgroup Report

Pacific Fishery Management Council Meeting

Workgroup's Objectives

1. Was the incidental take amount exceeded?
2. Does new information reveal effects not previously considered?
3. Make recommendations for future reports to improve bycatch estimates
4. Propose conservation and management measures to minimize bycatch of listed species

General Findings and Comments

- None of the incidental take amounts were exceeded
- No new information was identified that would reveal effects not previously considered
- Several recommendations for future reports
- Support for more permanent industry member position
- Support for fixed-gear logbook

Fishing Effort Report

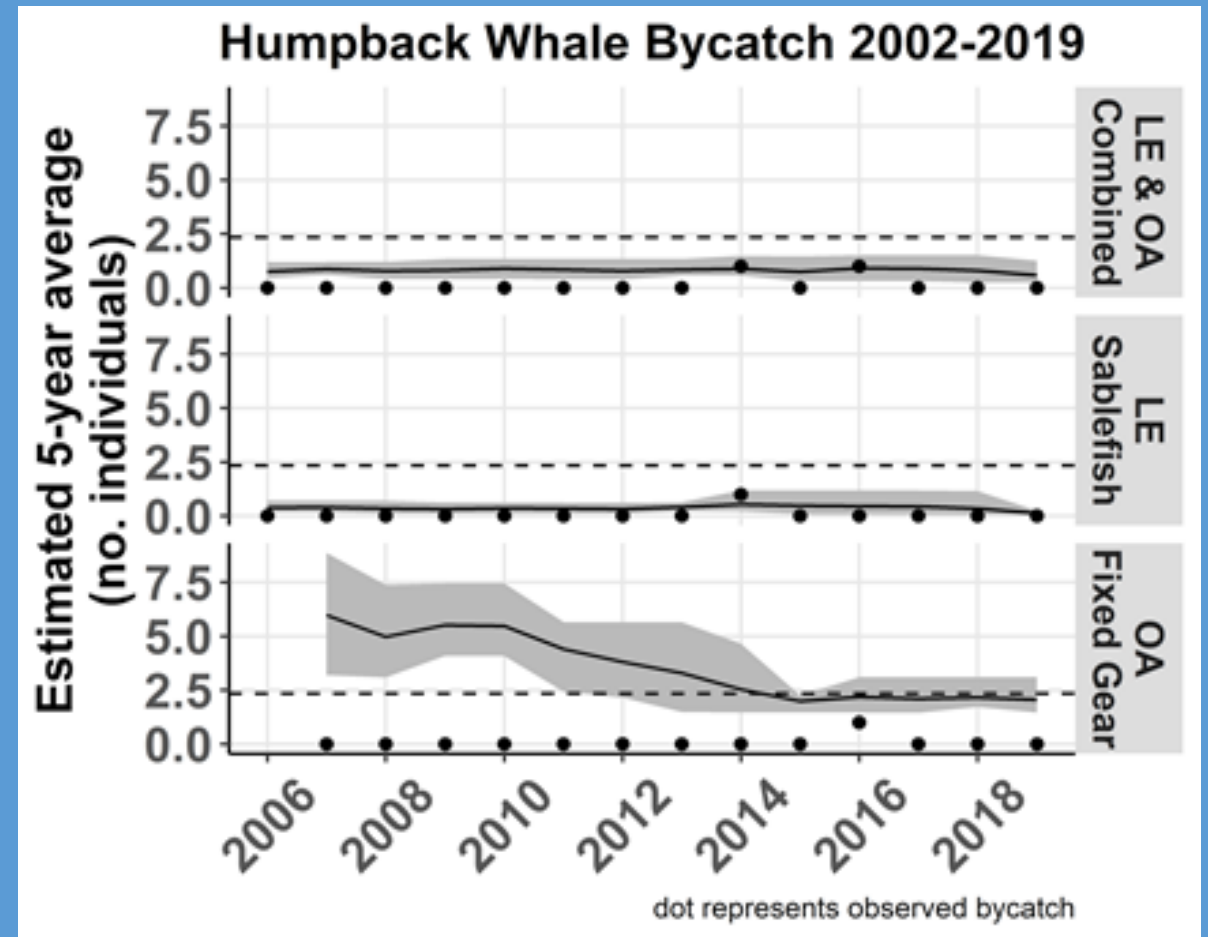


- Midwater rockfish trawl sector's landings doubled between 2017 and 2018.
- Fleet-wide pots use decreased in 2018 and had slight rebound in 2019.

Changes notable but do not warrant a new look at the BiOps

Humpback Whales

- Estimate: 5-year average of 2.16 whale/year.
- Future reports to check-in on sablefish pot fishing effort distribution off CA/OR vs. WA



Humpback Whales

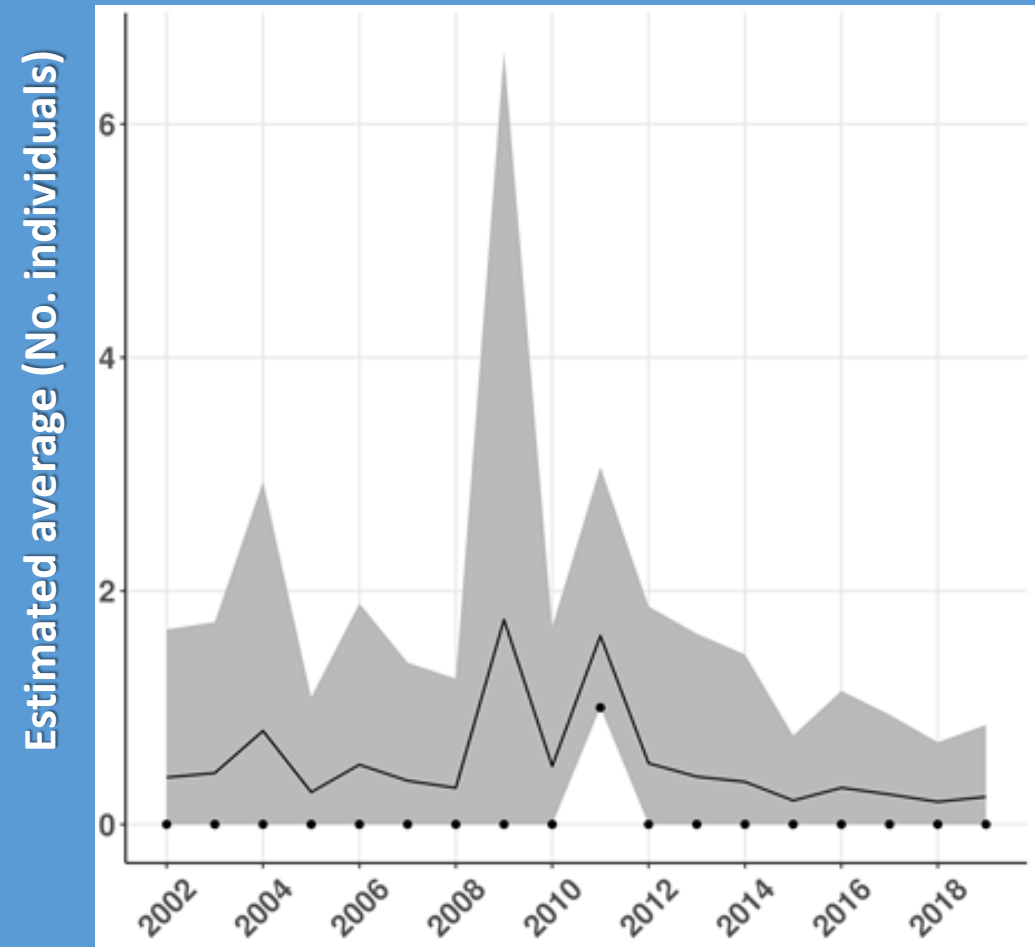


- **No Workgroup recommendations**
- Support for workshops and robust industry engagement
- Conservation/management measures for potential further development
 - a. Changes to the gear configuration regulations to allow vessels to voluntarily use 1 buoy line instead of 2 buoy lines.
 - b. Explore electronic monitoring in the LE pot fishery to increase coverage and reduce uncertainty.
 - c. Investigate the use of AIS beacons to get near real time gear location information.

Short-tailed albatross



- No STAL takes documented in 2018-2019
- Fleet-wide estimates of mean bycatch ranged from 0.2 to 1.8 STAL/year



- Dots = observed STAL bycatch
- Black line = estimated mean
- Grey area = 95% confidence interval

Short-tailed albatross

Cooperative Research Update

- Research demonstrates risk of trawl gear to STAL is significantly less
- NMFS to convene a public meeting/workshop to present results
- Concentrating research resources on floating longline gear
 - NMFS, Oregon Sea Grant, Industry project funded for 2022



Short-tailed albatross

Telemetry and observer data

- No sightings south of 36° N. latitude in U.S. waters since 2011.
- No new observations or telemetry data south of 36° N. latitude.
- Workgroup requests guidance from the Council on if we should review and summarize telemetry and observer data south of 36° N. latitude in future reports.



Short-tailed albatross



Workgroup recommends:

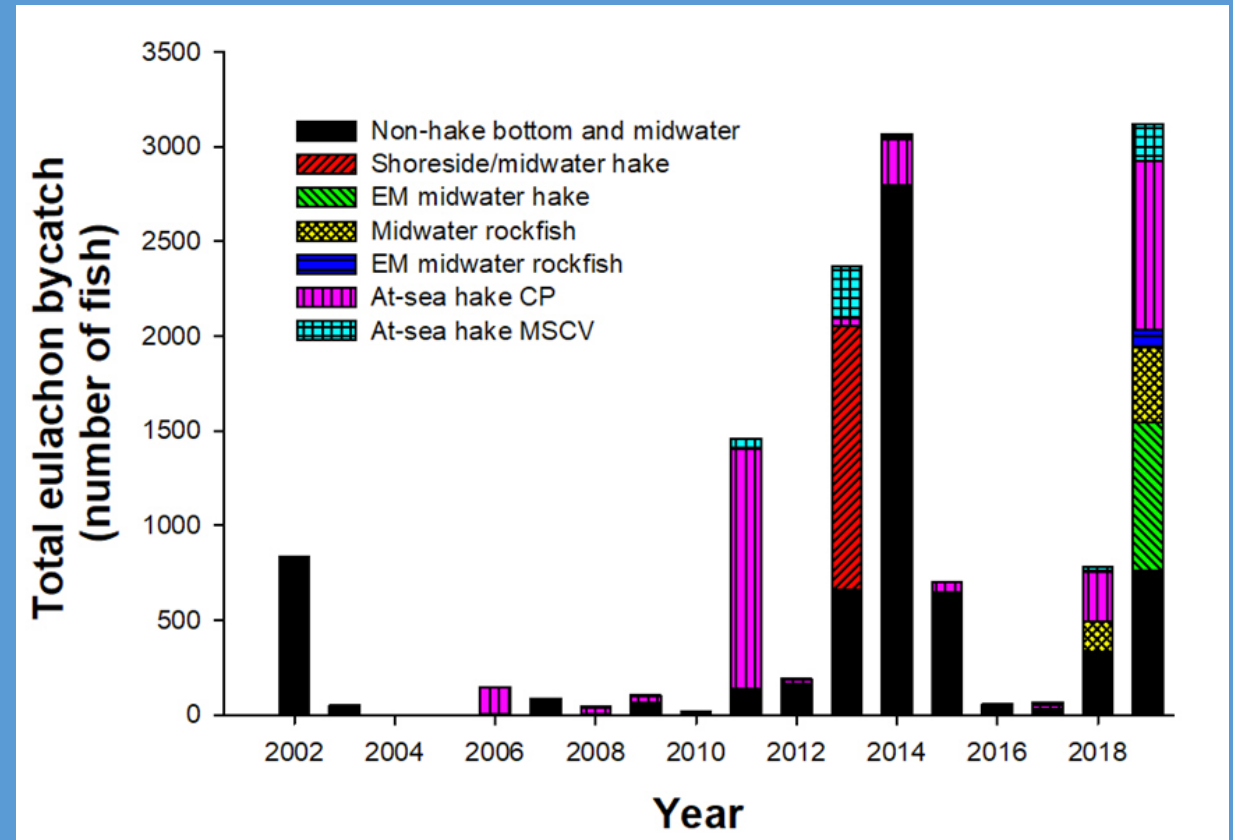
- Council support efforts that explore ways to improve streamer lines or gear configuration for the purpose of mitigating seabird interactions.
- Council encourage industry participation in cooperative research to test alternative mitigation measures for floated longline gear that are designed to further reduce bycatch of seabirds

Eulachon

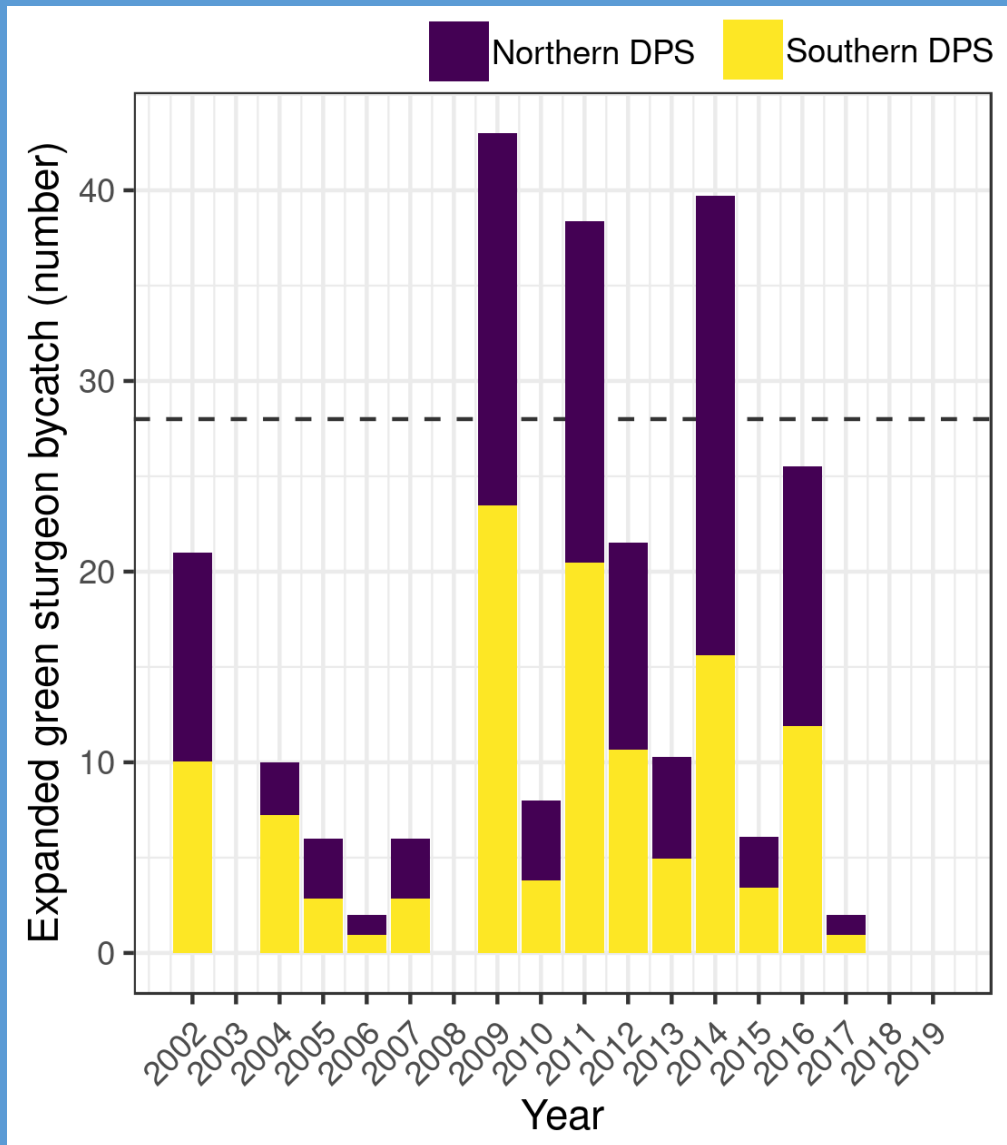


- Increase in bycatch parallels recent increases in adult abundance estimates
- Bycatch under precautionary and reinitiation thresholds for 2018 and 2019
- Workgroup recommends the Council express support for the continued funding of the Columbia River spawning stock biomass survey

Total expanded eulachon bycatch (numbers) in federally-managed West Coast groundfish fisheries 2002-2019. EM, electronically monitored; CP, catcher processors; MSCV, mothership-catcher vessels.



Green Sturgeon



- Southern DPS
 - 0-12 encounters per year (2015-2019)
- **No Workgroup recommendations**
- Bycatch in directed Pacific Halibut fishery



DPS bycatch in federal fisheries 2002–2019

horizontal dashed line = annual ITS threshold (28 Southern DPS individuals)

Leatherback Sea Turtles

- No observed bycatch from 2015-2019
- Concern for declining trend in population



- Workgroup recommends the Council explore ways to support recovery at RFMO



Questions

