

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON
FUTURE COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA AND WORKLOAD PLANNING

The Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) reviewed the proposed scheduling of HMS agenda items on the Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council's) Preliminary Year-at-a-Glance (YAG) Summary (Agenda Item E.7, Attachment 1) and offers the following comments for Council consideration.

Assuming a Hard Caps agenda item in November, the HMSMT considered the need for some preliminary analysis *"to develop a final range of alternatives [ROAs] for adoption by the Council"*. Based on discussion at this meeting, the HMSMT interpretation of this assignment is to identify suboptions for closure periods described in the preliminary ROA adopted during the June meeting, but not produce an in-depth analysis.

The November 2021 meeting is timely for informing National Marine Fisheries Service workload planning for the upcoming year, as the Swordfish Management and Monitoring Plan (SMMP) is a useful tool for identifying Council priorities for the YAG. Additionally, it would be ideal from a workload perspective to avoid having the SMMP scheduled during meetings to consider a preliminary preferred alternative or final preferred alternative for Hard Caps, during which time the HMSMT would need to furnish the Council some detailed analyses. Given these considerations, refocusing SMMP discussions on the identification of Council priorities for swordfish monitoring and management could serve the Council better.

The HMSMT notes that in November of 2019, the Council tasked the HMSMT to provide more information and analysis on three topics of interest under the SMMP related to bycatch and bycatch mitigation in fisheries that supply swordfish to the U.S. West Coast. The HMSMT has made progress towards completing these tasks and could present the results to the Council in November. The HMSMT is concerned that continued delay of the SMMP agenda item would result in the information becoming out-of-date.

The HMSMT had a discussion with Southwest Fisheries Science Center Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) modeler Desiree Tommasi of a Shiny app under development to communicate the results of the albacore MSE with stakeholders. The HMSMT plans to schedule a joint session with Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel members at the November 2021 Council meeting to provide an orientation to the app and solicit their suggestions on its further development and future implementation.

HMSMT Recommendations:

- Include the SMMP as an HMS agenda item at the November 2021 Council meeting.
- If the SMMP is rescheduled for a later meeting, avoid scheduling it at the same meeting as drift gillnet hard cap agenda items.