

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL  
REPORT ON SWORDFISH MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN

The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) received a briefing from Brett Wiedoff, Council Staff, and Amber Rhodes, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), on the Swordfish Management and Monitoring Plan (SMMP). The HMSAS sees merit in continuing to move forward with the development of this document.

We acknowledge changes have occurred regarding the swordfish (SWO) fishery off the U.S. west coast since this subject was last discussed. Regardless, the HMSAS is supportive of efforts to consider approaches to increase opportunities to access an under-utilized resource.

We discussed the potential options raised in the [Swordfish Management and Monitoring Plan Discussion paper](#). We support an approach based largely on the first bullet point. **We recommend the Council schedule further scoping by the advisory bodies with the intent to inform discussion at a future Council meeting [timing TBD] to update and revise the SMMP to establish clear goals and guide SWO fishery development and management.** We suggest this may be best accomplished by scheduling a workshop in advance of any Council meeting to address this.

With the overarching goal in mind, we do provide some recommendations on more specific actions:

- Goal 3 of the SMMP includes the reduction of reliance on imported seafood. The [Supplemental NMFS Report 1](#) includes useful information on domestic harvest, but does not provide any information on imports of swordfish. **We recommend the Council request NMFS include information on SWO imports over time frames similar to those included in the NMFS Report.** This will provide the ability to judge whether that specific goal is being achieved.
- **We recommend the Council continue to support SWO gear testing via exempted fishing permits (EFPs) as part of the SMMP. The HMSAS recommends that any new SWO EFPs should adopt known best practices (circle hooks, types of bait, etc.), have active tending and require 100 percent observer coverage.** NMFS can support this through an analysis of current gear types utilized in other areas (Hawaii, East Coast, and throughout the world). We note that on September 5<sup>th</sup>, the [Hawaiian shallow-set and deep-set longline fisheries achieved MSC certification](#). This in addition to the MSC certified U.S. North Atlantic swordfish, yellowfin, and albacore tuna fishery. These steps are needed to generate baseline data on performance of the new gears and to develop techniques that can result in increased domestic supply of SWO and other marketable species while minimizing bycatch in the CA current ecosystem.
- **We recommend the Council consider creation of performance standards for SWO gear(s) that perform well in EFPs and may warrant consideration as an authorized gear under the HMS Fishery Management Plan.**

- **We recommend the Council prioritize NMFS complete DSBG authorization as a fishery and continue to support modifications to standard DSBG via new EFPs to optimize outcomes.**
- **We recommend consider more support for gears currently utilized to harvest SWO off the U.S. West Coast.**

PFMC  
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