

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

The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) offers the following comments on Agenda Item I.1. – NMFS Report.

Pacific Bluefin Tuna (PBF):

The HMSAS remains concerned about the status of the U.S. West Coast PBF fishery. Last year, the [U.S. had a catch limit of 523mt, yet only harvested 363mt](#). This despite an abundance of opportunity and availability for U.S. harvesters. We acknowledge that this year may be different given the increase in the initial trip limit to 30 mt. We suspect that next year will begin the process of considering the domestic harvest strategy for 2025 and beyond and look forward to those conversations in hopes of incentivizing the purse seine fleet(s) to help the U.S. attain its share of the Eastern Pacific Ocean PBF harvest.

Driftnet Modernization and Bycatch Reduction Act:

The HMSAS highlights that the Secretary of Commerce is required to implement a transition program to facilitate that phase-out that includes the adoption of alternative fishing practices and issuance of grant awards to eligible permit holders. We look forward to future Council discussions on what those alternative fishing practices may be for drift gillnet fishermen and vessels. It stands to reason that alternative fishing practices should be economically viable for those who will be impacted by the legislation.

PFMC
03/08/23