

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE (NMFS) REPORT ON
HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES (HMS) ACTIVITIES

DSBG Application Update

The initial application period for deep-set buoy gear (DSBG) limited entry (LE) permits was open from June 7 to August 7, 2023. All data used to qualify applicants under Tiers 1 through 8 were also “frozen” on August 7. We received 91 applications for DSBG LE permits under Tiers 1-8. Individuals who did not apply for Tiers 1-8 during the initial application period can apply under Tier 9 on a first-come-first-served basis at a later date. This date will be announced by NOAA Fisheries in the Federal Register.

DSBG EFP Data Summary

In past years, NMFS provided a detailed summary of DSBG EFP performance, including catch by species and gear configuration, at each June Council meeting. In 2021, we began the process of moving our DSBG database into PacFIN’s APEX system, which also required new protocols for troubleshooting and completing quality control checks. Thus, EFP reports were not available in June 2022 or June 2023. We have since finished integrating DSBG data into PacFIN and completing quality control checks of the reports.

In the tables and figures below, we provide an updated, full summary of catch and observer coverage for 2015 through 2022. Table 1 and Figures 1 and 2 include a summary of all DSBG EFP effort. Table 2 and Figures 3 and 4 summarize the standard buoy gear (SBG) configuration specifically. Table 3 and Figures 5 and 6 summarize the linked buoy gear (LBG) configuration.

Table 4 and Figures 7 through 9 summarize DSBG effort by year and gear configuration, as well as observer coverage rates.

Finally, Table 5 summarizes total annual DSBG swordfish catch (expressed in metric tons of landed¹ weight), fleetwide revenue, and the average price per pound. The table does not include landings of swordfish caught with other gears on DSBG trips, or revenues from species other than swordfish. The large majority of revenues from DSBG trips (around 99 percent) are from swordfish.

¹ Note that these landed weights are approximate and based on converting round weights reported in PacFIN by a conversion factor of 0.6935. This is a conventional ratio that NMFS used for converting swordfish round and landed weights in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analyses of DSBG authorization.

Table 1. DSBG EFP Catch by Species and Year, 2015-2022 (All Gears)

Summary of Reported DSBG Catch, 2015-2022								
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<i>Swordfish</i>	136	474	552	652	1112	1280	460	211
<i>Bigeye Thresher Shark</i>	66	57	35	36	41	50	15	3
<i>Blue Shark</i>	3	4	2	3	6	17	5	10
<i>Unidentified Thresher Shark</i>	0	1	1	1	2	18	0	0
<i>Shortfin mako shark</i>	0	0	0	2	3	1	0	0
<i>Pelagic thresher shark</i>	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
<i>Unidentified shark</i>	0	0	0	2	3	2	0	0
<i>Common thresher shark</i>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
<i>Unidentified Mako Shark</i>	0	1	0	0	0	5	0	0
<i>Salmon Shark</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
<i>Sevengill Shark</i>	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
<i>Sixgill Shark</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
<i>Northern elephant seal</i>	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
<i>Loggerhead sea turtle</i>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
<i>Humboldt squid</i>	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Giant squid</i>	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Opah</i>	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Escolar</i>	4	4	3	4	13	4	1	2
<i>Common Mola</i>	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
<i>Pacific Hake</i>	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
<i>Unidentified Rockfish</i>	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
<i>Yelloweye Rockfish</i>	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Vermillion Rockfish</i>	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0
<i>Bluefin Tuna</i>	0	0	0	0	0	5	4	0
<i>Yellowfin Tuna</i>	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
<i>Oilfish</i>	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
<i>Unknown</i>	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Total Days Fished	132	283	324	626	752	1082	675	411

Figures 1 & 2. DSBG Catch Composition Summary (All Gear Configurations)

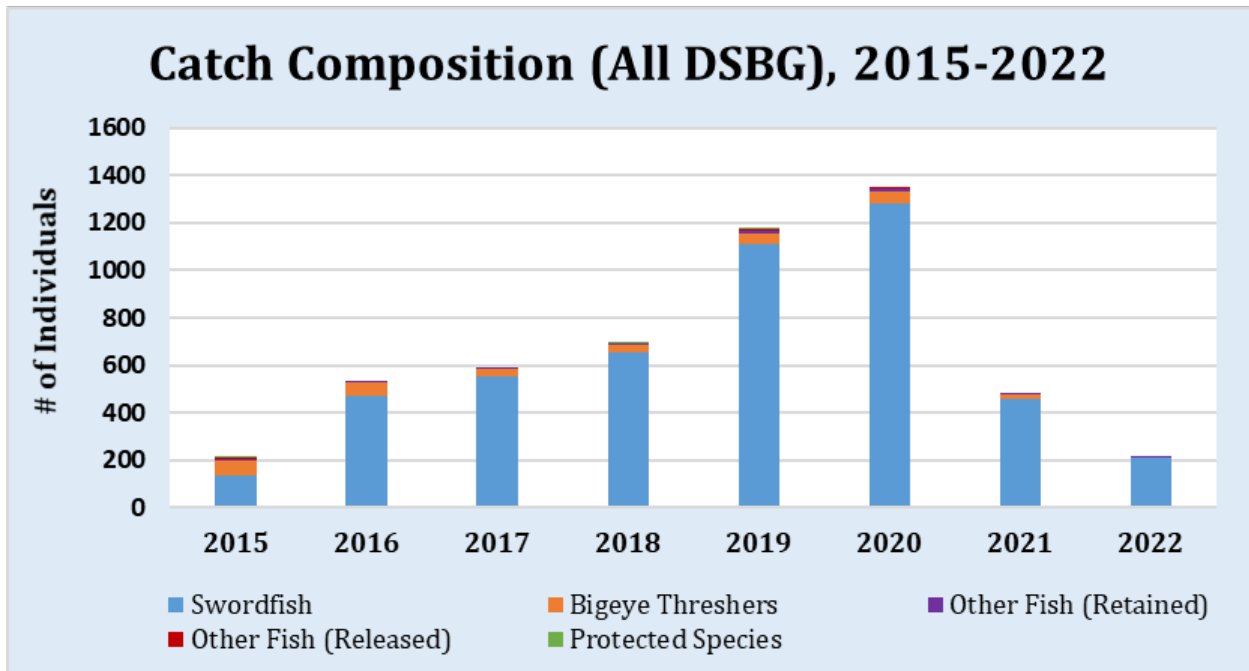
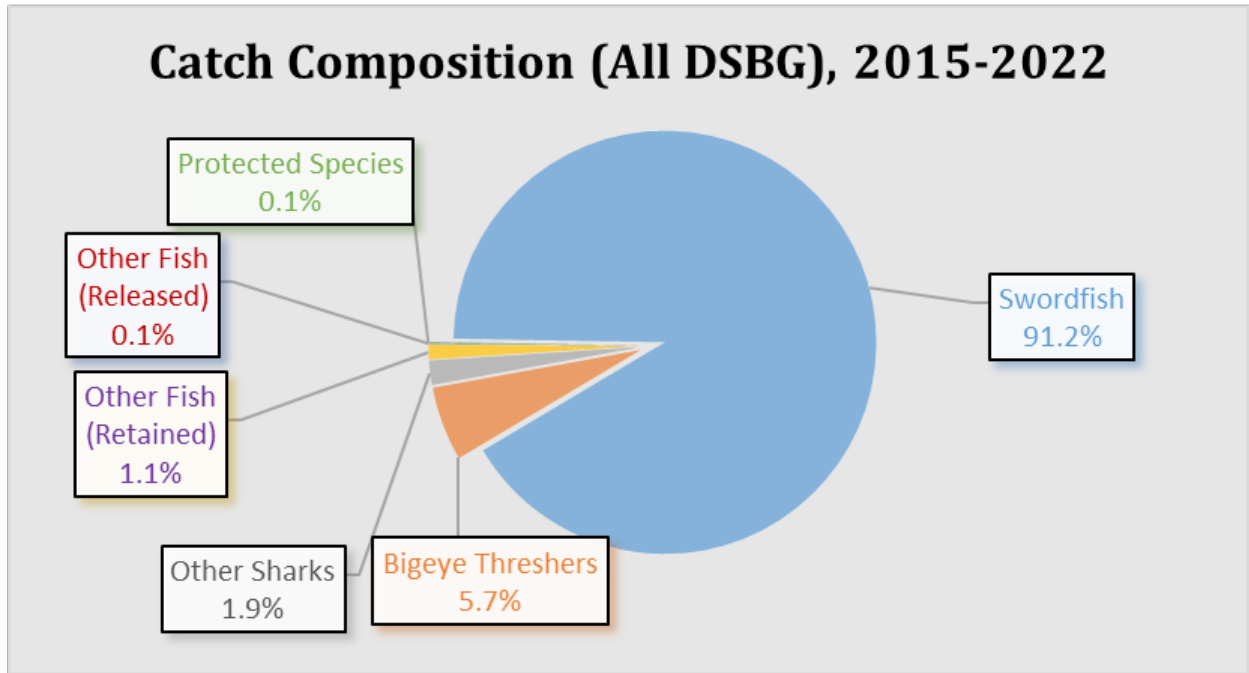


Table 2. SBG Catch by Species and Year, 2015-2022

Summary of Reported SBG Catch, 2015-2022								
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<i>Swordfish</i>	136	474	552	604	1063	1255	447	211
<i>Bigeye Thresher Shark</i>	66	57	35	34	40	50	15	3
<i>Blue Shark</i>	3	4	2	1	6	17	5	10
<i>Unidentified Thresher Shark</i>	0	1	1	1	2	18	0	0
<i>Shortfin mako shark</i>	0	0	0	1	3	1	0	0
<i>Pelagic thresher shark</i>	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
<i>Unidentified shark</i>	0	0	0	2	3	2	0	0
<i>Common thresher shark</i>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
<i>Unidentified Mako Shark</i>	0	1	0	0	0	5	0	0
<i>Salmon Shark</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
<i>Sevengill Shark</i>	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
<i>Sixgill Shark</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
<i>Northern elephant seal</i>	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
<i>Loggerhead sea turtle</i>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
<i>Humboldt squid</i>	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Giant squid</i>	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Opah</i>	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Escolar</i>	4	4	3	4	10	3	1	2
<i>Common Mola</i>	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
<i>Pacific Hake</i>	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
<i>Unidentified Rockfish</i>	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
<i>Yelloweye Rockfish</i>	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Vermillion Rockfish</i>	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0
<i>Bluefin Tuna</i>	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	0
<i>Yellowfin Tuna</i>	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
<i>Oilfish</i>	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
<i>Unknown</i>	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Total Days Fished	132	283	324	582	714	1067	667	411

Figures 3 & 4. SBG Catch Composition Summary

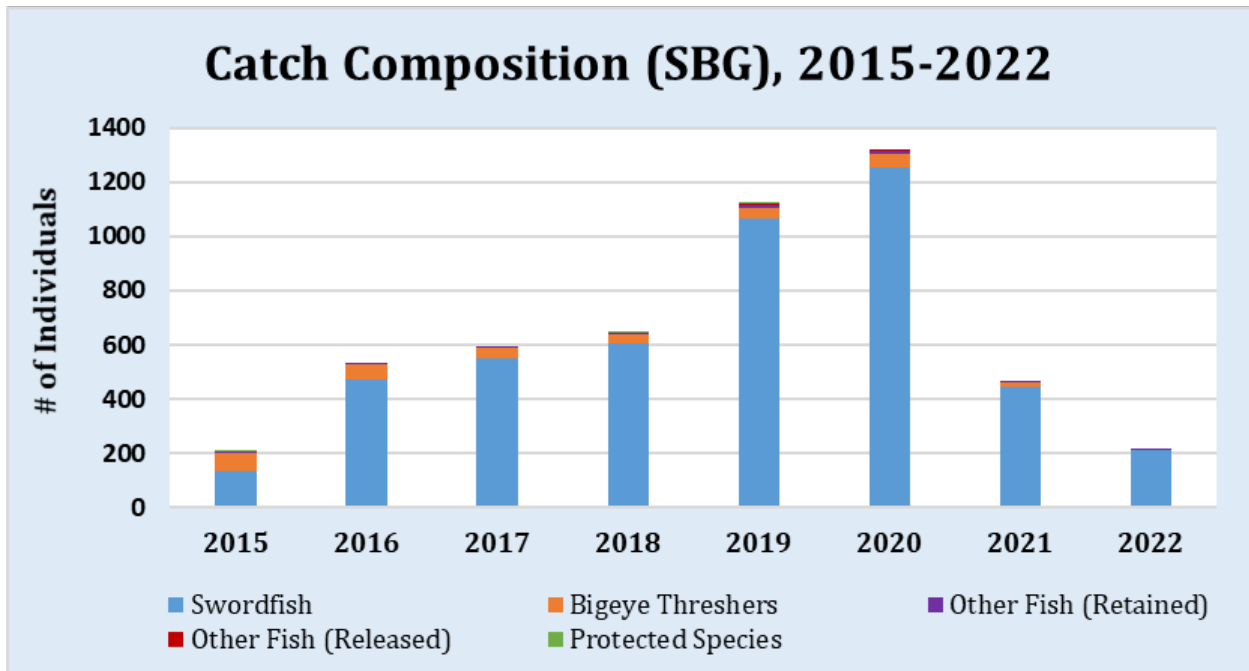
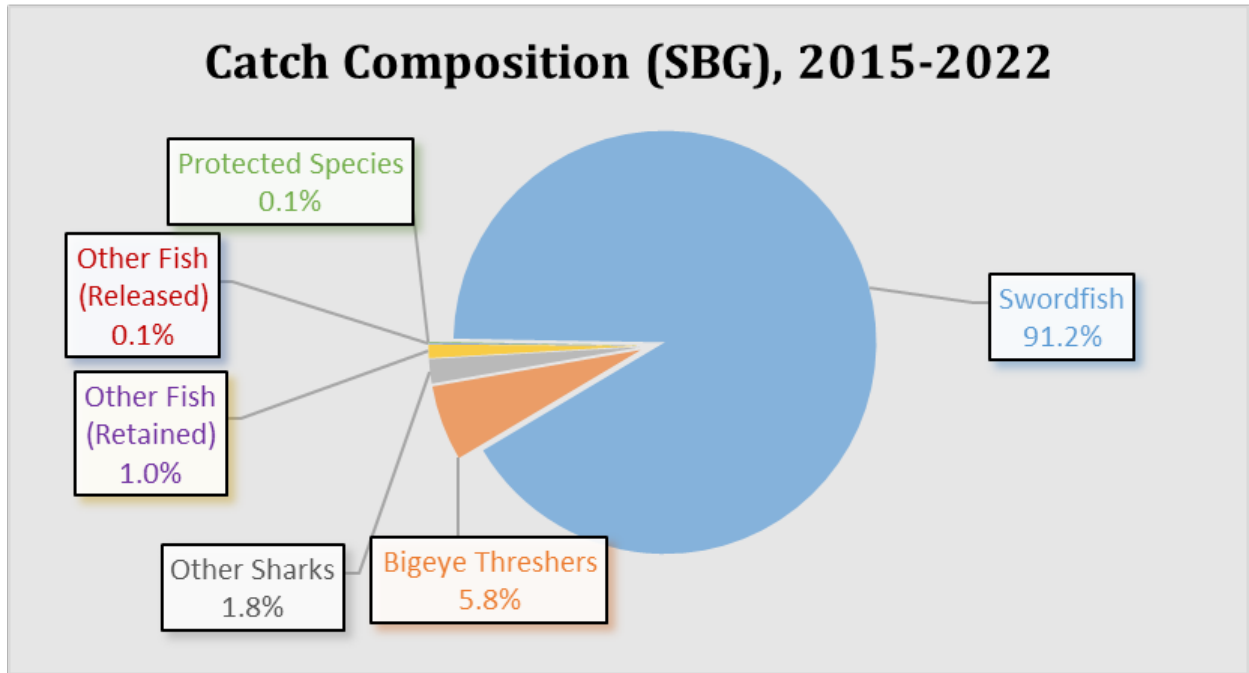


Table 3. LBG EFP Catch by Species and Year, 2015-2022

Summary of Reported LBG Catch, 2015-2022								
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<i>Swordfish</i>	0	0	0	48	49	25	13	0
<i>Bigeye Thresher Shark</i>	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0
<i>Blue Shark</i>	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
<i>Unidentified Thresher Shark</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Shortfin mako shark</i>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
<i>Pelagic thresher shark</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Unidentified shark</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Common thresher shark</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Unidentified Mako Shark</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Salmon Shark</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Sevengill Shark</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Sixgill Shark</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Northern elephant seal</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Loggerhead sea turtle</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Humboldt squid</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Giant squid</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Opah</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Escolar</i>	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0
<i>Common Mola</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Pacific Hake</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Unidentified Rockfish</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Yelloweye Rockfish</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Vermillion Rockfish</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Bluefin Tuna</i>	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
<i>Yellowfin Tuna</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Oilfish</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Unknown</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Days Fished	0	0	0	44	38	15	8	0

Figures 5 & 6. LBG Catch Composition Summary

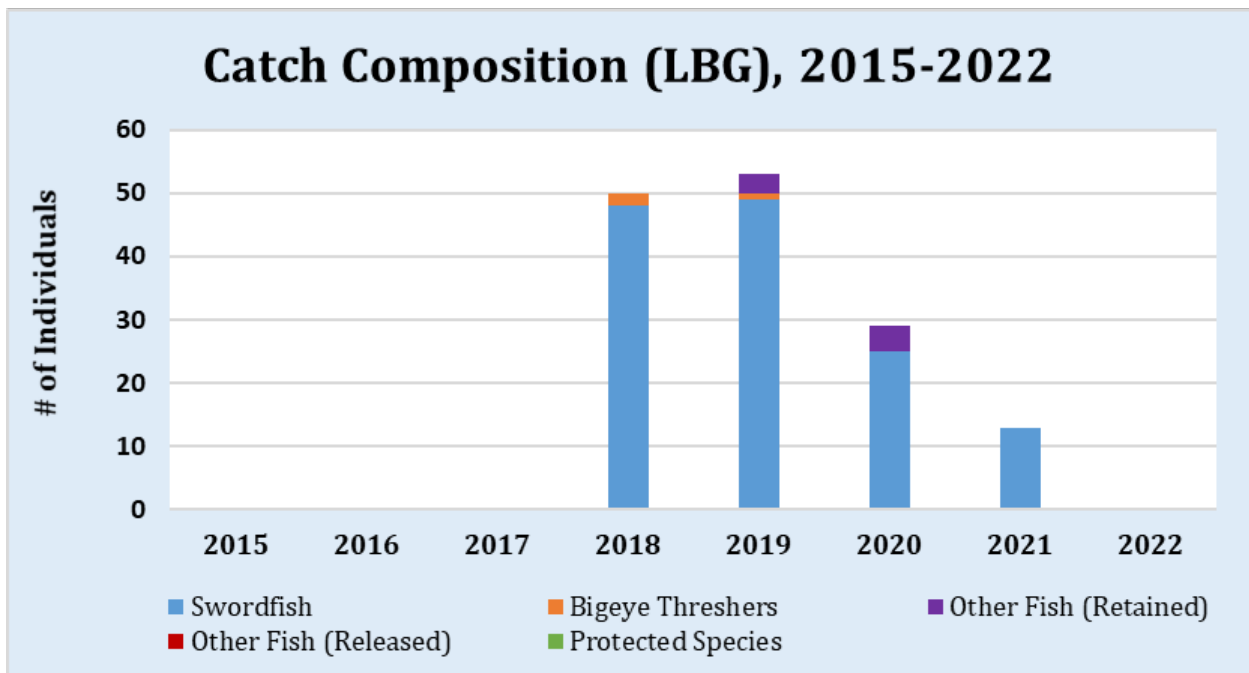
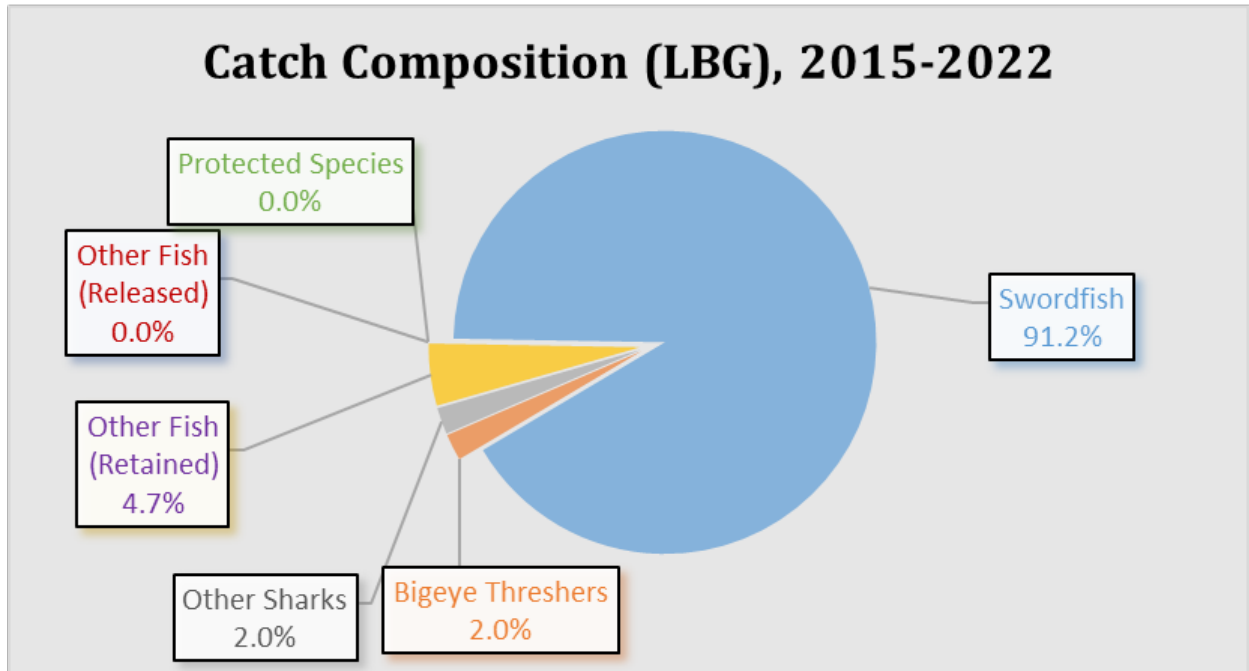
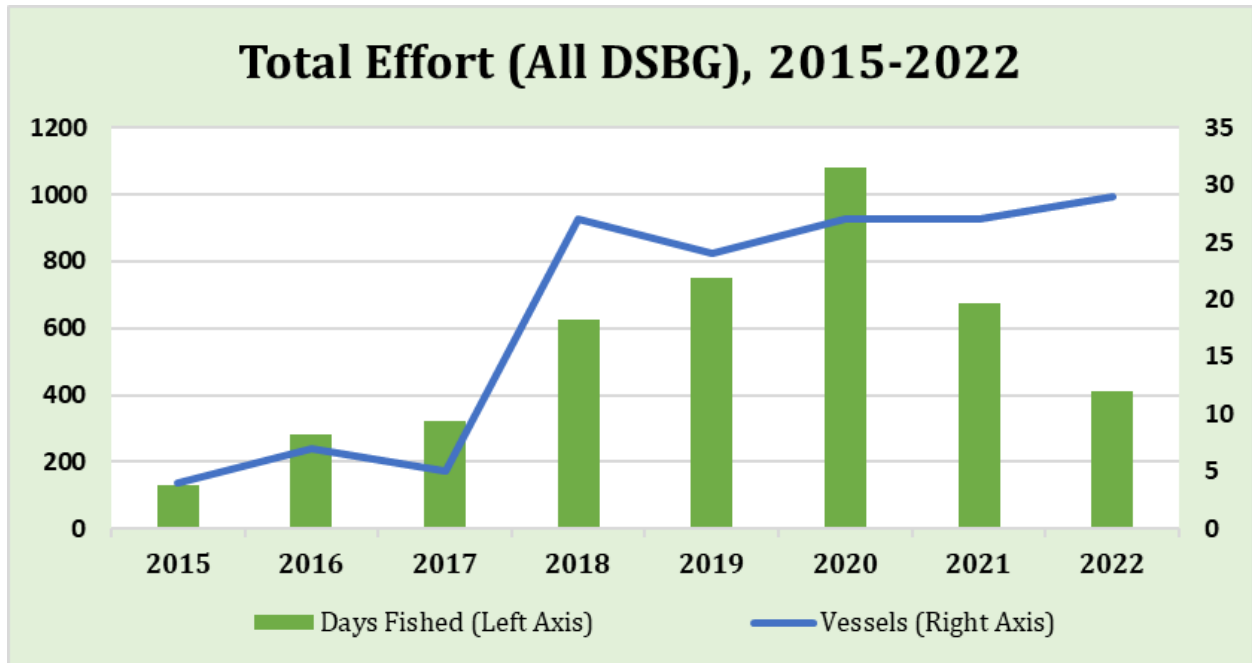


Table 4. Summary of Effort and Observer Coverage by Gear Type, 2015-2022

	DSBG Effort by Gear Type, 2015-2022								
	<i>Number of Vessels</i>			<i>Total Days Fished</i>			<i>Observer Coverage</i>		
	SBG	LBG	All DSBG	SBG	LBG	All DSBG	SBG	LBG	All DSBG
2015	4	0	4	132	0	132	100%	N/A	100%
2016	7	0	7	283	0	283	100%	N/A	100%
2017	5	0	5	324	0	324	100%	N/A	100%
2018	25	5	27	582	44	626	83%	100%	84%
2019	24	5	24	714	38	752	42%	96%	44%
2020	27	4	27	1067	15	1082	19%	7%	19%
2021	27	2	27	667	8	675	22%	0%	22%
2022	29	0	29	411	0	411	32%	N/A	32%

Figure 7. Total DSBG Effort, 2015-2022



Figures 8 & 9. DSBG Effort by Gear Type, 2015-2022

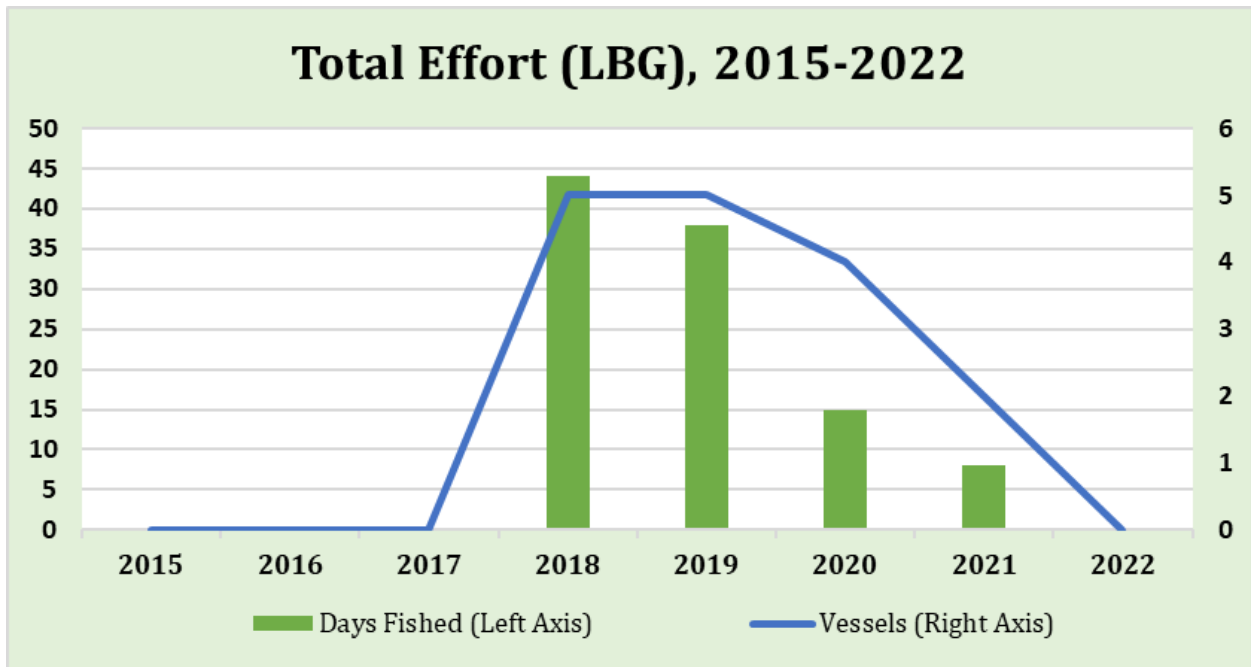
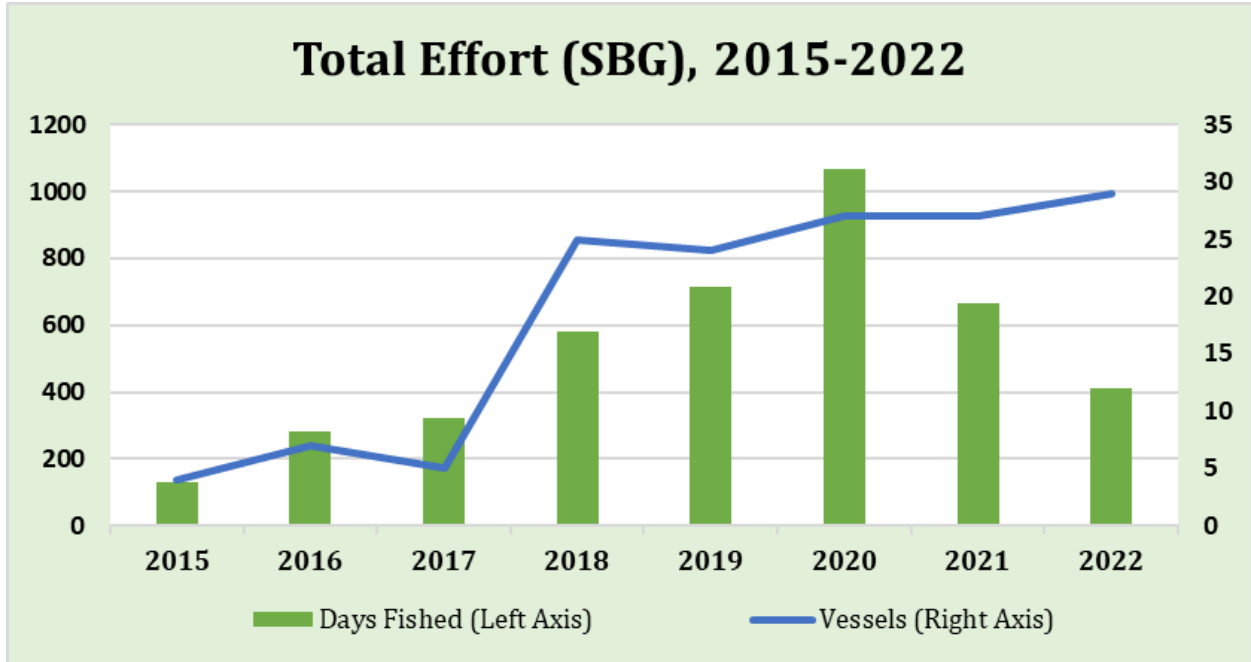


Table 5. Annual DSBG EFP landings, revenue, and price per pound.

	Landed Weight (mt)	Revenue	\$/Pound
2015	7.94	\$105,294	\$6.02
2016	28.30	\$448,252	\$7.19
2017	30.42	\$440,234	\$6.56
2018	41.50	\$557,434	\$6.09
2019	66.16	\$819,025	\$5.62
2020	84.38	\$1,032,820	\$5.55
2021	35.55	\$596,484	\$7.61
2022	18.05	\$335,014	\$8.42
TOTAL	312.31	\$4,334,558	\$6.30