

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM
REPORT ON ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT

The Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) received an update from Council staff and the Southwest Fisheries Science Center on the status Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) review.

The HMSMT discussed potential Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC) for HMS, and concluded that the available data do not support their designation. Most HMS switch prey, depending on availability of forage species, throughout a large range of habitats in the California Current. Therefore, there is no evidence that there are any specific geographic locations to which feeding is limited and would warrant HAPC designation. While some shark pupping occurs in a large portion of the Southern California Bight, these areas likely shift with dynamic ocean conditions and therefore are not suitable for designation as geographically static HAPCs.

The HMSMT recommends that Council adopt the proposed modifications in [Attachment 1](#) and [Attachment 2](#) for public review once the recommendations in the Habitat Committee and Scientific and Statistical Committee's reports under this agenda item have been incorporated and the following edits are made:

- change the map for Common Thresher Shark EFH from 100 miles to 100 *nautical* miles,
- change references of "Northern Bluefin Tuna" to "*Pacific* Bluefin Tuna," and
- use two colors for each of the species' distribution maps (i.e., one for global and another for EFH).

PFMC
09/12/23