

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON HMS ROADMAP WORKSHOP - FINAL PLANNING

Recommendations

The Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) requests that the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council):

1. Discuss and provide input and guidance on the outstanding sub-action items from the Swordfish Management and Monitoring Plan (SMMP),
2. Discuss and provide input and guidance on inclusion of the drift gillnet transition, program in the HMS Roadmap or the workshop,
3. Discuss and provide input and guidance on draft HMS Roadmap goals provided in this report, as these goals are fundamental to a focused and successful workshop, and
4. Discuss and provide input and guidance on draft HMS Roadmap action items.

Outstanding SMMP Sub-Actions

In its November report ([Agenda Item F.3.a HMSMT Report 1](#)), the HMSMT created a table of the action and sub-action items from the SMMP, and designated them as Complete, Relevant, No Longer Relevant, or Needs Council Discussion, and requested the Council provide guidance on those in the last category. The HMSMT, again, requests the Council address these items to provide clarity and to assist planning of the HMS Roadmap and the related workshop agenda. For reference, the remaining items are provided in a summary table below.

Action	Sub-action	Description	Status
A.	3.	Increase fishery monitoring (<i>for the DGN fishery</i>)	Needs Council discussion
E.	1.	Revisit 2009 proposed action to authorize SSSL outside the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)	Needs Council discussion
	2.	Revisit FMP prohibition on PLL inside EEZ	Needs Council discussion
	3.	Consider qualification criteria for Fed LE SSSL permit	Needs Council discussion

During the SMMP action status designation process, the HMSMT identified sub-action A.4 (Estimate rare event bycatch if not 100% monitoring) as Relevant until the Drift Gillnet (DGN) fishery is terminated through the Driftnet Modernization and Bycatch Reduction Act (Driftnet Act). However, following the Council’s guidance in June of 2023 to discontinue estimation of finfish bycatch, the HMSMT views this sub-action as No Longer Relevant since estimations for marine mammal and sea turtle bycatch are completed by the Southwest Fishery Science Center staff. The HMSMT summarizes these estimates for the Council, but produces no additional analyses. The HMSMT has removed this sub-action from the list drafted for the HMS Roadmap and replaced it with sub-action item 1c, which captures the current reporting procedure followed by the HMSMT.

The HMSMT recommends the Council discuss and provide input and guidance on the outstanding sub-action items from the SMMP and whether they should or should not be incorporated into the HMS roadmap.

Gillnet Transition Program Under the Driftnet Act

In addition to the above remaining SMMP sub-action items, the Council recently discussed a DGN transition program as required by the Driftnet Act during the September 2023 Council meeting (Agenda Item I.4). To date, the HMSMT has not received any direction as to whether this topic should be considered in the context of the Roadmap. However, Council input on the connection of this topic to the HMS Roadmap document could further benefit planning and the related workshop agenda.

The HMSMT recommends the Council discuss and provide guidance on how or if to incorporate the Driftnet Act in the HMS Roadmap or the workshop.

HMS Roadmap Goals

At the November Council meeting, the Council requested the HMSMT consider edits and comments from both the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) report submitted under that agenda item ([Agenda Item F.3.a](#)), as well as public comment, and bring the Council proposed revisions to the HMS Roadmap goals in March.

Revisions to the HMS Roadmap goals were made during the HMSMT's January 2024 webinar. These revisions consider the original SMMP goals, the intent behind edits proposed in the HMSMT Report 1 from November ([Agenda Item F.3.a](#)) which were developed by the HMSMT and the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS), public comment, and proposed edits from the CDFW report. While considerable time was dedicated to these revisions, the HMSMT may provide further revisions to the goals in a supplemental report to address additional feedback received in response to this report, as well as explanation of the reasoning behind specific word and phrasing choices.

The original goal C combined two distinct concepts, thus it was decided that splitting it into two separate goals better captured the intent of each component of the original goal and allowed for action items to better inform each aspect differently. The HMSMT believes that the second idea (included below as goal E) could also fit as an action item for which sub-actions could be developed to implement the ideas behind it, should the Council desire it to be an actionable item instead of a goal. The revised goals are:

- A. Support innovation and development of multi-species HMS fishing methods for West Coast based vessels to meet the demand for swordfish and other marketable species.
- B. Support and test fishing practices that have the potential to be economically viable while also minimizing unmarketable, prohibited, and protected species bycatch.
- C. Support the economic viability of West Coast HMS fisheries for swordfish and other marketable species for a diverse range of HMS fishing methods.

- D. Promote Climate-Ready Fisheries and fisheries resilience by supporting flexibility in management to account for changes in HMS distributions, ecosystems, and the communities dependent on HMS fisheries.
- E. Engage traditional fishery participants to preserve knowledge and bolster resilience in future fisheries (formerly second half of goal C).

The HMSMT recommends the Council discuss and provide input and guidance on draft HMS Roadmap goals provided above, as these goals are fundamental to a focused and successful potential workshop.

HMS Roadmap Action Items

The action items provided under the draft goals in the HMSMT’s November 2023 report on HMS Roadmap Workshop Planning ([Agenda Item F.3.a](#)) represented results of brainstorming between the HMSMT and HMSAS at their September 2023 joint meeting. While grouping these items under the proposed goals allowed for consideration of all ideas and to ensure that all goals were supported by multiple possible action items, the HMSMT discussed other ways to organize these items moving forward. Since many of the action items could address multiple goals, the HMSMT combined them into a single list and attempted to group similar actions together while ensuring that each one supported at least one of the HMS Roadmap’s goals, as indicated at the end of each action and summarized in Table 1. The HMSMT also discussed whether goal E (formerly the second half of goal C) could be an action item instead of as a goal. If it were an action item, the HMSMT identified it as supporting goals A, B, C & D.

- 1a:** For the drift gillnet fishery, continue to review bycatch estimates against performance standards for specified marine mammals and sea turtles; monitor annual finfish retention rate and observed take of specified species. (Goal B)
- 1b:** Increase fishery monitoring (Needs Council discussion – remaining from SMMP). (Goal B)
- 1c:** Report annual rare-event bycatch estimates for the DGN fishery against Council performance metrics (rephrase of SMMP sub-action item A.4). (Goal B)
- 2a.** Evaluate the need for bycatch monitoring, performance standards, and finfish retention rates in other HMS fisheries and under EFPs. (Goals A, B & C)
- 2b:** Define acceptable levels of bycatch/bycatch mortality. (Goal B)
- 2c:** Evaluate bycatch levels relative to a multispecies index of harvest in the context of population levels, economic impacts, fleets, and fishing effort levels including comparisons with importing HMS caught by foreign fleets. (Goals A, B & C)
- 2d:** Support ongoing efforts to develop and implement electronic monitoring. (Goals B, D & E)
- 3a:** Consider mechanisms for bycatch accountability. (Goals B, C, D & E)
- 3b:** Test individual accountability management approaches. (Goals B, C, D & E)
- 4a:** Addressing sources of swordfish supply, including domestic and foreign caught HMS and the potential to mitigate conservation impacts and reduce the trade deficit. (Goals A, B, C & E)
- 4b:** Document sources of swordfish supply, including domestic and foreign caught HMS. (Goal A, B)

- 4c:** Identify ways to mitigate negative impacts on conservation by reducing the trade deficit. (Goals B, C & E)
- 5a:** Evaluate the harvest levels and market demand of HMS to develop a list of priority species for development of alternative fishing practices. (Goals A, B, C, D & E)
- 5b:** Evaluate producer and consumer surplus in HMS fisheries. (Goals A, C & E)
- 5c:** Define harvest goals for target species. (Goal A)
- 5d:** Increase future participation in underutilized HMS fisheries. (Goals B, C, D & E)
- 6a:** Develop an EFP program to meet Council management and data needs. (Goals A, B, C, D & E)
- 6b:** Develop criteria for “alternative fishing practices that minimize the incidental catch of living marine resources” in the context of multi-species fishing methods. (Goals A, B, D & E)
- 6c:** Support EFPs that seek new approaches to achieve economic viability with minimal conservation impacts. (Goals B, C, D & E)
- 6d:** Evaluate currently authorized Deep-Set Buoy Gear and consider whether these configurations could be scaled-up (additional pieces of gear, different sized footprints, use of satellite buoys, etc.) under EFPs. (Goals A, B, C & E)
- 6e:** Use EFPs to explore the feasibility of fishing practices and/or management strategies which utilize relevant components of pelagic longline gears for increased HMS production while limiting bycatch. (Goals A, B, C & E)
- 6f:** Development of economic index for multispecies fishery production, as a metric for comparing multispecies swordfish harvest methods. (Goals A & D)
- 7a:** Identify fleets, fishing practices or gears that may be more flexible and/or adaptable given climate change. (Goals A, B, C, D & E)
- 7b:** Evaluate climate impacts of alternative fishing practices. (Goals B, D & E)
- 8a:** Promote resilience in community-level benefits from HMS fisheries. (Goals D & E)
- 8b:** Identify characteristics or resources that would position communities to support HMS fisheries given climate change. (Goals D & E)
- 8c:** Understanding impacts of potential competing current and future marine uses (i.e. offshore wind, aquaculture, etc.) to HMS fisheries. (Goals D & E)

Table 1: Summary of action items which support each of the five draft HMS Roadmap goals.

Goal A	Goal B	Goal C	Goal D	Goal E
	Action 1a Action 1b Action 1c			
Action 2a Action 2c	Action 2a Action 2b Action 2c Action 2d	Action 2d	Action 2d	Action 2d
Action 3a Action 3b	Action 3a Action 3b		Action 3a Action 3b	Action 3a Action 3b
Action 4a Action 4b	Action 4a Action 4b Action 4c	Action 4a Action 4c		Action 4a Action 4c
Action 5a Action 5b Action 5c	Action 5a Action 5d	Action 5a Action 5b Action 5d	Action 5a Action 5d	Action 5a Action 5b Action 5d
Action 6a Action 6b Action 6d Action 6e Action 6f	Action 6a Action 6b Action 6c Action 6d Action 6e	Action 6a Action 6c Action 6d Action 6e	Action 6a Action 6b Action 6c Action 6f	Action 6a Action 6b Action 6c Action 6d Action 6e
Action 7a	Action 7a Action 7b	Action 7a	Action 7a Action 7b	Action 7a Action 7b
		Action 8a Action 8b Action 8c	Action 8a Action 8b Action 8c	Action 8a Action 8b Action 8c

The HMSMT recommends the Council review provide input and guidance on draft HMS Roadmap action items.

Additional Considerations

During its January webinar, the HMSMT also discussed:

- drafting a more detailed HMS Roadmap workshop agenda in case a facilitator is not provided for the workshop, and

- draft definitions for terms/phrases identified as benefiting from inclusion in a Terms Appendix for the HMS Roadmap.

The HMSMT plans to provide further recommendations on these topics, as well as more background on the phrasing of goals in this report, in a supplemental report.

PFMC
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