

## HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON MARINE PLANNING

The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) received an update on Marine Planning items from Mike Conroy during our virtual meeting before the March Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) meeting. After discussion, **the HMSAS recommends the following:**

1. The Council approves the Draft comment letter responding to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's (BOEM) Notice of Intent (NOI) to Prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) for offshore wind energy leasing offshore Oregon and submit to BOEM.
2. The Council tasks the Marine Planning Committee (MPC) and Habitat Committee with developing a comment letter on the California Energy Commission's Assembly Bill 525 (AB 525) Draft Strategic Plan for Offshore Wind Development.
3. The Council tasks the MPC with continuing to work on a document focused on potential coastwide, long term, cumulative effects analysis for the future of offshore wind off the Pacific Coast.

The HMSAS appreciates the role of the MPC in keeping the Council family informed and updated on new activities planned for the waters we depend upon.

### **BOEM's NOI to prepare an EA for leasing off Southern Oregon**

The HMSAS appreciates the Draft letter's concerns about finalizing the Wind Energy Areas (WEAs) while so many issues remain unaddressed. We remain concerned about the potential impacts to the albacore fishery given the dependence on some of the areas included in the Final WEAs as noted in your comment letter on the Draft WEAs.

### **AB 525 Draft Strategic Plan for Offshore Wind Development**

The HMSAS strongly supports the Council submitting a comment letter. The areas identified as suitable sea space include important fishing grounds for albacore; and in recent years a growing recreational fishery for Pacific bluefin tuna. The California Energy Commission would greatly benefit from the Council's expertise as it contemplates finalizing this Report.

### **MPC Roadmap**

The HMSAS appreciates the intent and purpose of this effort and wholeheartedly supports this effort moving forward. Our members, and those we represent, are overwhelmed with all that is transpiring, and the demands it is placing on our communities, regarding offshore wind off the west coast. This centralized repository of information will be an invaluable resource for us and other members of the Council family moving forward.