

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT ON HMS ROADMAP WORKSHOP REPORT AND NEXT STEPS

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) reviewed the action items developed by the Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) and Advisory Subpanel, as last presented in March 2024 HMSMT Report 1 ([Agenda Item I.3.a](#)). The work the HMS advisory bodies completed lays a solid foundation for further consideration and development of action items by which the Council can support the adopted HMS Roadmap goals, but these actions are still in need of revision and refinement.

CDFW is providing recommended deletions and modifications aimed at clarifying the intent and more accurately capturing the work being considered. The majority of action items marked for deletion are either no longer necessary or applicable to HMS fisheries after the sunset of the drift gillnet fishery (DGN), redundant and addressed in other action items, or do not provide anything actionable for the Council to implement or utilize. Specific explanations are included below after deleted items. For action items 2c, 4c, and 6f, further HMSMT explanation of the intent of the action is necessary. As written, they are unclear as to what is being proposed, how the action would be completed, and how it would be applicable to HMS management. Lastly, we propose adding action 7c as a revision to action item b.(v) in the HMSMT's November 2023 Report 1 ([Agenda Item F.3.a](#)) which was omitted in the March 2024 HMSMT report but supports the Roadmap's goals and IRA project 3. CDFW recommends using the following edits as guidance for eventual finalization in the Roadmap but is not requesting full Council concurrence or adoption at this time.

HMS Roadmap Action Items

1a: For each June meeting through 2027, ~~the drift gillnet fishery~~ continue to review annual drift gillnet fishery bycatch estimates against performance standards for specified marine mammals and sea turtles; and 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)
- [this was specific to the DGN fishery]~~

1c: For each June meeting through 2027, ~~R~~report annual rare-event bycatch estimates for the ~~DGN drift gillnet 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 for protected and non-marketable species to be used in evaluation and management of HMS EFPs and authorized fisheries. (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)~~
- [unclear on meaning of this action]

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)~~
- [Individual accountability should not be needed for ongoing or newly developed gears]

4a: ~~Addressing~~ Document sources of U.S. swordfish supply, ~~including~~ considering all 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)~~ - [included above in 4a]

~~4c: Identify ways to mitigate negative impacts on conservation by reducing the trade deficit. (Goals B, C & E)~~
- [unclear on meaning of this action]

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)~~
- [not necessary to achieve goals]

5c: Define harvest goals for target HMS species within internationally agreed to catch limits. (Goal A)

5d: Increase ~~future participation in~~ the use of EFPs to explore new fishing methods and gear types to more fully access underutilized HMS fisheries. (Goals B, C, D & E)

6a: Develop ~~an set of EFP program~~ standardized requirements, review criteria, and performance metrics 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)~~
- [included in 6c]

6c: ~~Support~~ Define “economic viability” and “minimal conservation impacts” for the development of EFPs that seek utilizing 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~~ existing gear types 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)~~
- [unclear on the meaning of this action]

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)~~
- [the impact of individual fisheries on climate is nearly impossible to ascertain and depends on many factors outside Council control]

7c: Evaluate the utility of dynamic ocean modeling, such as EcoCast, to reduce interactions with protected species in HMS fisheries and potential improvements under EFPs.

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~~ Consider impacts of potential competing current and future marine uses (i.e. offshore wind, aquaculture, etc.) ~~to~~ in HMS fisheries management. (Goals D & E)