

## HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON HMSAS NMFS REPORT

The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) engaged in a discussion with Amber Rhodes and Karter Harmon from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on the NMFS Report, Agenda Item F1.

The HMSAS is encouraged by the apparent interest in Deep Set Buoy Gear (DSBG) permits as is evidenced by the 39 applications received for the current pool. We remain concerned about the inability to issue permits to all who submitted applications. Last year, of the seventy-five DSBG permit holders, only thirteen (13) made landings. If permit holders do not participate in the fishery, they should be replaced by individuals who seek to enter the fishery.

The HMSAS appreciates NMFS issuance of exempted fishing permits (EFPs) for mid-water snap gear and extended linked buoy gear and is looking forward to seeing how those EFPs perform this summer. The Final Environmental Impact Statement inclusion of an adaptive management program should allow for increased flexibility for data collection and analysis.

Last year roughly 73 metric tons (mt) of swordfish were landed in west coast ports in California, Oregon, and Washington. This includes participants in the Hawaiian Longline fishery and west coast based longline vessels fishing on the high seas. DSBG accounted for 5.6mt while Drift Gillnet contributed 16mt. Total imports of swordfish into the west coast were roughly 1,900 mt. In 2000, the U.S. harvested 5,606 mt of swordfish from the Eastern Pacific Ocean. There is clearly a market for swordfish and we should prioritize fulfilling this demand from our harvesters. The issuance of the aforementioned EFPs and work underway by the Fishery Innovation Workgroup, are important steps to increase our domestic production.

PFGC  
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