

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON DRIFT GILLNET  
(DGN) PERFORMANCE METRICS

The DGN fleet, since 1990 has undergone extensive change. Most of the changes imposed were designed to reduce bycatch and have proven effective. So much so, that the 2018 List of Fisheries reclassifies the California thresher shark/swordfish drift gillnet ( $\geq 14$  inches mesh) from a category I to Category II fishery – the latter which represents fewer interactions. The fishery (and larger ecosystem) has benefitted from: the Take Reduction Team, acoustic pingers, net-extendors, larger mesh, time and area closures – all of what have resulted in reduced interactions with marine mammals and other protected species and other species of concern. The Performance Metric numbers included in Table 1 of [Agenda Item G.3.a, HMSMT Report 1](#) was established based on 2004 - 2014 catch information. The Performance Metrics components are based on recent catch data after most of the bycatch reduction had already been achieved by the DGN fleet. Please consider that the catch for elephant seals can be explained by an increase in their population. Furthermore, the catch of hammerhead sharks likely increased because of warm water that has persisted in the Southern California Bight. The gray whale interaction is the first observed in 5 years.

Going forward, further reduction of bycatch in this Category II fishery may be difficult to achieve. The fishery is willing to explore new technologies such as EcoCast which could result in less interactions with these stocks. This necessarily requires further studies and science. Most of the species listed are increasing and are so varied and numerous that, depending on water temperatures and other oceanic conditions, interactions with a few of the species, during any particular year, are bound to exceed the performance metrics.

The metrics were originally based on a simple extrapolation. The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel supports the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Highly Migratory Species Management Team recommendations to replace the ratio estimator method of setting performance metrics.

If there is a delay in providing a better estimate, the Council can consider the raw data in year 1 followed by the better estimate methodology in year 2.

PFMC  
06/10/18