

## SWORDFISH MANAGEMENT DATA REPORT AND FUTURE MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

In September 2011 the Council received a report from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on the results of a 2-day informational workshop they hosted in San Diego, California, on May 10-11, 2011, titled *U.S. West Coast Swordfish Workshop: Working Towards Sustainability*. In response, The Council directed the Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) and Advisory Subpanel to provide the following information to inform a decision on whether to change the current west coast swordfish fishery:

1. All relevant new information on bycatch and bycatch mitigation in swordfish fisheries, including the amount and reasons for changes in bycatch in the Hawaii-based longline fishery since 2000, and information about new gears, such as the buoy-based gear used in Florida area fisheries;
2. Current research on the distribution of sea turtles and their critical habitat off the west coast and its relevance to potential fishery management changes, including a change to the configuration of the Pacific Leatherback Conservation Area; and
3. Based on the information in 1 and 2 above, comparisons of protected species bycatch estimates between current, status quo west coast swordfish fisheries, the gear types described above, fisheries in place at the time of HMS Fishery Management Plan adoption and possible future fishery designs.

The HMSMT met January 10-12, 2012, to design a report for the Council on this topic and plan its completion. Their report will be provided as a supplemental attachment.

NMFS met with west coast swordfish fishermen to listen to their views on possible regulatory changes to the fishery. The NMFS Report summarizes these discussions.

Mr. John Harder, albacore troll fisherman, and Teri Shore on behalf of the Turtle Island Restoration Network submitted public comment letters for this agenda item.

### **Council Action:**

**Consider Available Management Data and Determine Whether or Not to Proceed Toward Developing a West Coast Fishery.**

### **Reference Materials:**

1. Agenda Item B.3.b, NMFS Report on West Coast Swordfish Fishery.
2. Agenda Item B.3.b, Supplemental HMSMT Report on Management Options for West Coast Swordfish Fisheries.
3. Agenda Item B.3.c, Public Comment.

### **Agenda Order:**

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities

Kit Dahl

- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Consider Available Management Data and Determine Whether or Not to Proceed Toward Developing a West Coast Fishery

PFMC  
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