

BAROTRAUMA WORKSHOP REPORT AND POTENTIAL USE OF RECOMPRESSION CATCH-AND-RELEASE SURVIVAL ESTIMATES

A workshop to discuss how to improve survival of released fish that suffer barotrauma was convened in Portland, Oregon on May 8-9, 2012. There was a particular focus on how to improve survival of released rockfish caught using recreational hook-and-line gear using descending devices that enable fish to be released at depth. This allows recompression of expanded gasses that cause barotrauma in fish species that cannot quickly acclimate to the change in depth that occurs when fish are caught and quickly brought to the surface. Studies have shown there is both short and long-term survival of some of these fish when they are released at depth using descending devices.

Workshop participants recommended that the use of descending devices to mitigate the effects of barotrauma in released fish should be done routinely as a best practice. Specifically, fish that suffer barotrauma during capture should ideally be released at the depth of capture as quickly as possible with minimum handling. Studies have shown that water temperature, time on deck, and how released fish are handled influence survival rates. Participants also recommended that management systems give survival credit in fisheries where descending devices are used. The challenges will be how to educate anglers on how to use these devices properly, how to shape management systems to provide an appropriate survival credit when these devices are used, and how to determine appropriate survival rates for species that suffer barotrauma when these devices are used from the research conducted to date.

Attachment 1 provides the recommendations of participants in this year's Portland barotrauma workshop and those from the national barotrauma workshop convened last year in Atlanta, Georgia. Attachment 2 is an annotated bibliography of key research conducted on barotrauma and recompression effects on rockfish species. Attachment 3 provides slides of a PowerPoint presentation on venting and recompression of rockfish given by Dr. Alena Pribyl at the Portland barotrauma workshop (the original PowerPoint presentation available on the briefing book CD and online at pcouncil.org).

The Council task at this meeting is to provide guidance on how to best integrate the use of descending devices to recompress rockfish that suffer barotrauma in the west coast management system. The Council should consider the advice of the SSC on the science that informs this issue and GMT, GAP and public advice on how to shape the management system to reduce discard mortality of released rockfish.

Council Action:

Provide guidance on how to integrate the use of descending devices and recompression survival rates into the management of west coast rockfish.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item D.2.a, Attachment 1: Summary recommendations of participants at the 2012 Portland, Oregon and 2011 Atlanta, Georgia barotrauma workshops.
2. Agenda Item D.2.a, Attachment 2: Annotated bibliography of research conducted on barotrauma and recompression of rockfish species caught and released using hook-and-line gears.
3. Agenda Item D.2.a, Attachment 3: Slides from a PowerPoint presentation given by Dr. Alena Pribyl at the Portland barotrauma workshop entitled, "Venting and Recompression: Techniques and Appropriate Uses."

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview John DeVore
- b. Workshop Report Dan Wolford
- c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- d. Public Comment
- e. **Council Action:** Review Recompression Methods and Survival Information and Provide Guidance on its Integration into Council Management

PFMC
05/31/12