

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
SSC Ecosystems Subcommittee (ESC)
Meeting Notes
January 18, 2010

Subcommittee Chairman Jason Link opened the meeting at 3:00 p.m. Other SSC ESC members on the call were John Boreman, Ed Houde, Cynthia Jones, Wendy Gabriel and Yan Jiao. Others participants included Rick Robins, Gene Kray, Lee Anderson, Tom Hoff and Rich Seagraves.

J. Link gave an overview of the agenda and discussed the need to define the role of the ESC within the Council process and the need to discuss the TORs as they are currently worded.

Gene Kray noted that the Council's Ecosystems and Ocean Spatial Planning (EOSP) Committee will be forming a subcommittee to evaluate and prioritize the recommendations which resulted from the Habitat and Ecosystems Workshop held recently in Virginia Beach, VA. It would be useful if a member or two from the ESC could participate in that process. The plan is to form the subcommittee at the February Council meeting and then meet in early March to prioritize the recommendations from the workshop. J. Link volunteered to serve on the new subcommittee; an open invitation exists for any other SSC member to participate; if any SSC member would like to participate, please let J. Link and R. Seagraves know by Feb. 28, 2011. R. Robins noted that John Boreman gave a very concise summary and synthesis of the scientific issues identified at the workshop - this would be good starting point for the new EOSP subcommittee to begin their deliberations. The plan is to form the subcommittee at the February Council meeting and to convene the group in early March.

E. Houde asked about the Council expectations relative to the timeframe for each TOR. [The ESC TORs were distributed prior to the call and are both archived and available upon request.] R. Robins responded that there are short and long term objectives for ecosystem based fishery management embedded in the TORs. The primary short term question is how do we incorporate ecosystem considerations/objectives in the current quota setting process (TOR 2)? TORs 1 and 4 should be viewed as short term goals to be done within 9 to 12 months, and TOR 3 should be done in 12-18 months. TOR 5 relates to long term transition to a fully operational ecosystem based approach to fishery management.

The national SSC meeting, to be held in October, is being hosted by the Council. That meeting was identified as an opportunity to showcase work done on TORs 1, 2 and 4.

E. Houde noted that the Council has taken some small incremental steps to address ecosystem based management in the past. He recommended that any materials relating to previous deliberations of the Council in this regard be made available.

Action Item # 1: Tom Hoff will circulate the Ecosystem Report, and any related documents, completed by the Council a number of years ago.

J. Link noted that the role of the SSC's ESC is to provide suggestions about the Council's ecosystem goals and objectives with emphasis on determining what is scientifically feasible given current state of knowledge and data limitations. In the near term, TOR 2 involves determining how the Council can utilize additional ecosystem level information to better set ABCs and ACLs.

L. Anderson noted that the best place to incorporate ecosystem information is in the stock assessments. J. Link agreed and pointed out that his group has been active in incorporating predator/prey interactions in a number of recent stock assessments. More environmental/climate considerations are also planned. In addition, they are also developing a parallel process for ecosystem modeling to help improve the assessment process as well as explore more ecosystemic reference points (part of TOR 1)

R. Robins noted that Council in other regions have utilized additional buffers in setting ABCs for ecologically important prey species and the performance of these approaches should be evaluated. E. Houde noted that we need to develop principles to define these buffers. For example, the SSC might recommend maintaining prey species at a level higher than Bmsy.

J. Link asked if that is what the Council is looking for? R. Robins responded yes but the Council is also interested in methods which could be used on the management side to maintain ecosystem structure and function. Thus, it was agreed that the ESC should work in the assessment process and the ABC process to identify, establish and incorporate these ecological principles.

J. Boreman noted that other countries around the world (e.g., New Zealand and Australia) have been implementing ecosystem based management approaches and we should begin to develop a clearinghouse of information for reference.

Action Item #2: R. Seagraves to canvass other Councils and regional fisheries commissions relative to their activities/programs/FMPs in the area of ecosystem based fishery management.

Action Item #3: ESC members to send any ecosystem based management literature/reference/bibliographies they have to Seagraves for archiving. It was suggested to contact Fred Serchuk for additional literature as well.

J. Link recommended that the committee defer discussion on TOR 5 until the Council's concept/interpretation of ecosystem based fishery management is more fully developed. All on the call concurred.

L. Anderson suggested that the ESC could focus in the near term on multi-species management issues that the Council currently faces such as the issue of bycatch of shad

and river herring in the federally managed small mesh fisheries (e.g., mackerel and herring, interactions among butterfish and squid). J. Link noted that he would work closely with Gene and his Committee to keep the lines of communication open particularly on this issue.

The ESC briefly discussed the white paper developed by the NEFMC SSC on ecosystem based approaches to management. L. Anderson thought that the paper was fine conceptually but the approach raises a number of novel policy and legal questions. E. Houde noted that the white paper was a strategic document but that the Council will have take smaller, more tactical steps initially. The development of a full scale ecosystem based fishery management system is a much longer term exercise (the ESC agreed by consensus with that sentiment).

Action Item # 4: By end of March, ESC to meet and identify a list of specific suggestions for TOR 1 (to be presented to the Council in April) based off of coordination with and evaluation of the list provided by the EOSP. J. Link to provide an initial draft compiled from interactions with the EOSP prior to that meeting.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Silver Spring, MD 20910

COMMERCIAL LANDINGS OF BLUEFIN TUNA As of December 31, 2010

Weekly Quota Report

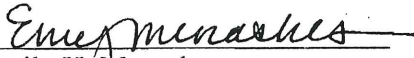
Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Landing Data between 01/01/2010 and 12/31/2010.

Category	Sub Category	Current Year 2010				Previous Year 2009		
		Count of Fish	Avg Weight (lb)	Gross Weight (mt)	Quota Final (mt)	Count of Fish	Avg Weight (lb)	Gross Weight (mt)
General		3076	378.7	528.4	538.9	1488	483.7	326.5
	Handline	22	268.5	2.7		1	276.0	.1
	Harpoon	89	262.0	10.6		175	310.9	24.7
	Rod and Reel	2,965	383.0	515.1		1,312	506.9	301.7
Harpoon		157	258.9	18.4	44.6	311	293.4	41.4
Longline		405	483.1	88.8	100.0	605	476	130.6
	North	225	440.6	45.0	55.0	402	421.8	76.9
	South	180	536.3	43.8	45.0	203	583.2	53.7
Trap					1.1			
Purse Seine					212.8			
	Giant							
	Large Medium							
Reserve					70.3			
Total:		3,638	385.2	635.6	967.7	2,404	457.2	498.5

NOTE

- This report SHOULD NOT be considered useful for real time catch monitoring purposes. It only includes landings reported to NMFS to date.
- These numbers are considered preliminary and are subject to change.

This notice is a courtesy to Atlantic tuna fisheries interests to keep you informed about your fishery. Official notice of Federal fishery actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of the Federal Register. To view catch statistics from previous months, please visit http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/hmsdocument_files/Tuna.htm or contact Brad McHale at (978) 281-9260.


Emily H. Menashes
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries

JAN 11 2011
Date

Summary of the 2010 ICCAT Annual Meeting

The 17th Special Meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) was held in Paris, France, November 19-27, 2010. It was preceded by a two-day meeting of the ICCAT Compliance Committee. Thirty-five of ICCAT's 48 members attended the meeting along with five non-member governments, four intergovernmental organizations, and 23 nongovernmental organizations as observers. Many U.S. objectives were achieved during the demanding 11-day meeting. The U.S. Delegation was led by NOAA Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Fisheries Russell F. Smith, III. Randi Parks Thomas and Ellen Peel, the respective U.S. Commercial and Recreational Commissioners, also represented the United States at the meeting. The Commissioners were supported by a strong U.S. delegation composed of private and public sector representatives. The United States advocated for the establishment of sustainable, science based management measures for both the eastern and western stocks of bluefin tuna, bigeye tuna, North Atlantic swordfish, marlins, and several species of shark. We also pressed for strong measures to address bycatch of endangered sea turtles and enhance the compliance system in ICCAT to hold parties accountable to ICCAT's rules. A brief summary of key issues follows:

Bluefin tuna: Modest reductions in the TACs for both the eastern and western bluefin tuna stocks were agreed. The TAC for the eastern stock was set at 12,900 mt until it is changed, which is a reduction of 600 mt from the 2010 TAC of 13,500 mt. The new TAC has a 67% probability of rebuilding the stock by 2023, the end of the rebuilding period. This reduction is in addition to existing quota paybacks for previous overharvests by the EU and Tunisia. Thus, the total catch in 2011 and 2012 should be below 11,500 mt. The eastern bluefin tuna measure also contains a new allocation arrangement that reflects a decrease for Algeria and corresponding increases for Libya, Turkey, and Egypt. For several years both Libya and Turkey had expressed strong interest in greater shares of this resource with Egypt being less vocal. Turkey had formally objected to the allocation arrangement after it was adopted in 2007. Turkey has indicated that the small increase it received this year is still too low and that it will again object to the allocation scheme. Algeria also expressed concern about the reallocation of its previous share and indicated an intention to lodge an objection to the recommendation. In addition to the adoption of a lower total catch level and a new allocation arrangement, ICCAT tightened monitoring and control measures for the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean fishery, including requiring observers on towing vessels that deliver bluefin tuna to farms.

Western Atlantic bluefin tuna management negotiations were extremely difficult. Two of the three major harvesters (Japan and the United States), supported by the EU, were seeking reductions in the TAC given the need to balance the competing assessment results due to the recruitment assumptions used for this stock. On the other hand, Canada argued for an increase in the TAC and sought additional measures which seemed intended solely to disadvantage portions of the U.S. fishery. This negotiation went very late into the meeting and the end result was a measure that reduced the TAC from 1,800 mt to 1,750 mt for 2011 and 2012, incorporated the three minor harvesters (UK-Bermuda, France-St. Pierre and Miquelon, and Mexico) into the allocation table at their current quota levels, added some reporting obligations (in particular a requirement to provide provisional monthly catch reports to the Secretariat), and continued a bilateral quota transfer arrangement from Mexico to Canada (i.e., 86.5 mt in both 2011 and 2012).

While the United States and some other ICCAT members were supportive of even stronger conservation actions to account more fully for uncertainties in the status of the resource and increase the probability and rate of bluefin tuna stock growth and recovery, the agreed TACs for both stocks are within the range of scientific advice and are expected to support continued growth of both stocks if compliance with agreed rules remains strong.

North Atlantic Swordfish: Although no new stock assessment was conducted for North Atlantic swordfish in 2010, management measures were ending this year and had to be reconsidered. North Atlantic swordfish is fully rebuilt largely due to the sacrifices of U.S. fishermen, and a high priority for the United States was to protect its current allocation of the resource. We also sought to reduce the TAC in order to increase the probability that the stock would remain in its rebuilt condition. After intensive negotiations, a one year extension of the 2009 management measure was adopted with a status quo TAC of 13,700 mt and no change to the U.S. allocation. Further, several developing states will now receive allocations from the TAC where previously they were fishing on quota underharvests from past years. All parties are to submit fishery management/development plans, which are to include information on the history of their fishery, how parties monitor and control their fisheries, and how they take into account ecosystem considerations. The Commission agreed to establish a multi-year management plan in 2011 based on these reports and on ICCAT's allocation criteria. The next stock assessment is not scheduled to occur until 2012, however. In the meantime, SCRS has been charged with developing a limit reference point (LRP) for the North Atlantic Swordfish stock, which would be used to trigger a rebuilding plan in the future should biomass decrease to a level approaching the LRP.

Bigeye tuna: The EU and Japan proposed a comprehensive management plan for bigeye tuna that included an improved time/area closure in the Gulf of Guinea, clearer capacity limits, and stronger MCS measures. Negotiations on this proposal almost came to fruition but broke down at the end of the meeting. The stated reason by the EU was that the MCS measures, in particular the proposal for a regional observer program in the Gulf of Guinea, had become too weak and they pulled the recommendation from consideration. Instead, ICCAT agreed to roll over the existing measures for the 2011 fishing season and return to the matter at next year's meeting. Ghana was particularly concerned by this action as the EU/Japan proposal would have provided some relief from their quota compliance difficulties. The management measures that were rolled over, however, could worsen this situation for Ghana. Taiwan, who was seeking to add 15 vessels to its Atlantic bigeye tuna fleet due to piracy in the Indian Ocean, was authorized a fleet increase of 7 additional vessels for 2011.

Sea Turtles: The United States introduced a binding recommendation to reduce the impact of fishing operations on sea turtles and mandate reporting of interactions with sea turtles in ICCAT fisheries. Co-sponsors of the turtle proposal included Belize, Brazil, Canada, China, Cote D'Ivoire, Japan, Morocco, Senegal, South Africa, Turkey, and Uruguay. The measure specifically requires that (1) purse seine vessels avoid encircling sea turtles to the extent practicable and release turtles that are encircled or entangled, including on FADs; (2) that pelagic longline vessels carry on board safe handling, disentangling and release equipment capable of releasing sea turtles in a manner that maximizes the probability of survival; and (3) that fishermen on pelagic longline vessels use the equipment and be trained in its proper use. In addition, SCRS is to advise the Commission on approaches for mitigating sea turtle bycatch in ICCAT fisheries for appropriate action by the Commission based on data and information to be compiled by the ICCAT Secretariat, including that provided by ICCAT members, no later than 2012. Further, SCRS is to initiate an assessment of the impact of the incidental catch of sea turtles resulting from ICCAT fisheries no later than 2013. The proposal was adopted by consensus.

Billfish: Brazil introduced a proposal to strengthen the conservation of blue marlin by requiring additional landings reductions (from the current 50% reduction to 67%). This would have made the reduction requirements for blue marlin equivalent to that already in place for white marlin. As there was no new assessment for marlins and some parties have concerns about the existing management approach, Brazil's proposal was not adopted. Instead, ICCAT agreed to extend the current conservation measures for blue marlin and white marlin through 2011 and to review the matter after the blue marlin stock assessment next year. Brazil also proposed a measure to reduce mortality of sailfish, which required live release in pelagic longline fisheries and 95% release in recreational fisheries. The measure was not adopted, in part due to the fact that the measure did not address artisanal fisheries, which are responsible

for the majority of sailfish mortality. Some developing states also expressed concern that the proposal would restrict the ability of their longline vessels to harvest sailfish, as this species is an important source of food and is sold in local markets.

Sharks: ICCAT took a number of conservation actions with respect to several shark species. These included:

Atlantic Shortfin Mako shark: A U.S. proposal to reduce mortality of Atlantic shortfin mako sharks by establishing catch limits for both the North and South Atlantic stocks was not adopted. ICCAT also failed to adopt a revised measure that limited the scope of the recommendation to only the North Atlantic stock. The Commission, however, did adopt a measure on shortfin mako that reinforces the existing requirements to reduce mortality on the North Atlantic stock of shortfin mako and requires reporting on actions taken in this regard for review by the Compliance Committee. The adopted measure also underscores obligations to report data on shortfin mako stocks to SCRS and further prohibits parties that do not report Task I data from being allowed to retain this species. A stock assessment for both North and South Atlantic shortfin mako sharks will be conducted in 2012. The SCRS is also tasked with completing a shark identification guide in 2011.

Oceanic Whitetip shark: ICCAT adopted a measure that prohibits retention of oceanic whitetip sharks caught in association with ICCAT fisheries and requires parties to collect and report the number of discards and releases of this species.

Hammerhead sharks: ICCAT adopted a measure to prohibit retention of all species of hammerhead sharks (with the exception of bonnethead sharks) that are caught in association with ICCAT fisheries with limited exceptions for developing countries that rely on sharks as an important food source. Parties taking advantage of this exception must ensure that these sharks and their parts do not enter international trade. Given the coastal nature of hammerhead sharks, a statement was included in the record noting that several ICCAT members, including the United States, consider that this measure does not apply to directed fisheries prosecuted in coastal waters.

Porbeagle shark: The EU proposed a prohibition on the retention of porbeagle sharks, which the United States supported. Canada, however, argued for an exception for its directed fishery on the Northwest Atlantic stock, noting that Canadian management measures are based on the results of the 2009 stock assessment. After vigorous debate, Canada indicated a willingness to consider some reduction in its national quota for this stock. While many parties expressed flexibility with regard to this issue, consensus could not be reached and the proposal was not adopted.

Thresher sharks: The EU proposed a prohibition on the retention of common thresher sharks. The proposal was not adopted as there were questions about the scientific basis for the proposal. Regarding bigeye thresher, Mexico withdrew its claim to the exception adopted last year that allowed Mexico to harvest up to 110 animals in its coastal fishery.

Compliance Committee and Permanent Working Group: A number of significant actions occurred in these bodies, including:

COC Operations: Under U.S. leadership, there was a continued emphasis on compliance. Potential infractions were reviewed on a member-by-member basis, facilitating a comprehensive review of compliance with reporting requirements and the implementation of monitoring and control measures. While some improvements were noted, many parties did not fully meet their obligations, including to provide data to ICCAT's scientific committee or provide fishery management reports to the Commission. In some cases, countries were forced to deduct overharvests from their future quotas. In the end, the COC

recommended that new letters be sent to all but two parties, including 23 letters of identification under ICCAT's trade measures recommendation and 23 letters of concern. The United States will receive another letter of concern from ICCAT, this time for difficulties associated with implementation of the swordfish statistical document program. The letters require a written response to the Commission on how implementation of measures will be improved in 2011. There was also a commitment by countries to take stronger action in the future if situations of non-compliance continue. To this end, the COC discussed proposals for a schedule of sanctions and procedures to establish a small working group or task force to recommend actions according to the schedule. Additional discussion on these topics is needed and may occur intersessionally in 2011.

Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance (MCS): ICCAT considered several MCS matters this year. Significantly, ICCAT adopted a proposal establishing minimum standards for national observer programs, which will help to ensure that important scientific information is collected in ICCAT fisheries. In particular, parties must ensure at least 5% coverage on their purse seine, pelagic longline, and baitboat fleets using an effort measurement rather than by number of vessels.

ICCAT considered a draft Port State Measures proposal that was developed intersessionally in 2010. While some progress was made in resolving some issues that resulted in some brackets in the text of the draft recommendation being removed, significant differences of view still exist on some issues, including with respect to the scope of the proposal. No consensus could be reached and the issue was deferred until next year.

Finally, ICCAT considered proposals to expand the bluefin tuna catch documentation scheme (CDS) to several other species, including sharks, and to develop an electronic bluefin tuna CDS. Regarding the EU and Japan proposals to expand catch document programs to other species, there was limited interest in moving forward for a number of reasons, including implementation problems associated with current catch and trade tracking programs, the lack of analysis demonstrating the need for expansion at this point in time, and the burden associated with developing new paper-based programs. Thus, little progress was made in this area. The U.S. strongly supported movement toward electronic systems as a first step in any effort to expand the coverage of ICCAT's CDS. In that regard, an EU proposal for development of an electronic bluefin tuna CDS received broad support and work will be undertaken intersessionally on this matter, with the intent of having a fully operational system by 2012. The electronic system will require detailed documentation of bluefin tuna beginning at the point of landing and following the product through international trade and will further assist in the fight against IUU fishing. It is envisioned that the program will enable verification of the legitimacy of the product in near real-time, reduce the burdens on the seafood industry, governments, and the ICCAT Secretariat associated with a paper-based system, and make it more difficult for bad actors to falsify catch documents.

Plenary Issues

Panel Restructuring: ICCAT has been considering how it might restructure the work of its panels to make the flow of its work more efficient. In particular, the issues covered by Panel 4 have expanded significantly as work on shark and bycatch issues has increased. Several options have been considered, including creating a new Panel to cover shark and bycatch issues explicitly or reorganizing the species covered in the existing four panels. Given that adding an additional panel has cost implications for the ICCAT membership, it was agreed that reorganizing the existing panels as follows would be preferred:

- Panel 1: Tropical tunas (i.e., no change)
- Panel 2: Northern and Southern Bluefin and Albacore tunas
- Panel 3: Sharks and bycatch species (formerly Southern bluefin and albacore tunas)
- Panel 4: Swordfish and billfish

All parties agreed in principle with this new arrangement, which would go into effect at the 2012 meeting since elections are scheduled to occur next year. At the request of Japan, a final decision on this arrangement was deferred until the 2011 meeting.

Kobe 2 Cross-tuna RFMO bycatch working group: The Commission endorsed the creation of this working group and agreed that ICCAT participation should include the SCRS Chairman and the chairs of both the shark and ecosystem working groups. With respect to the hiring of a permanent bycatch coordinator within the Secretariat, this matter will be taken up when the 2011-12 biennial budget is considered at the 2011 ICCAT meeting.

Data Confidentiality: ICCAT adopted the SCRS proposed guidelines on data confidentiality. Adoption of these guidelines was particularly important to improve access to cannery and other data by the SCRS. The guidelines specify that CPC's will provide data to the extent consistent with their national confidentiality requirements and it was noted that they may need to be revised once ICCAT has gained some experience in their use.

Recreational Working Group: ICCAT noted that not many countries had provided the required report on their recreational fisheries. The Chair indicated his intent to reach out to countries to improve this situation and to focus on capacity building activities. Pending this work, it was agreed that there was no pressing need for a second meeting of this working group in the near term.

2011 ICCAT Meetings: ICCAT tentatively agreed to hold its next annual meeting November 11-19, 2011, and again to have a two-day meeting of the Compliance Committee just prior to the start of the Commission meeting (i.e., November 9-10). The location of the 2011 ICCAT meeting has not yet been determined. If no party offers to host, the meeting will take place in Madrid, Spain. ICCAT agreed to hold two intersessional meetings in 2011. As has been the case for the last two years, the Compliance Committee will convene before the start of the eastern bluefin tuna fishing season to review the fishery rules for the year and consider any salient compliance issues for that fishery. While it was agreed that bluefin tuna will be the focus of the special COC meeting, the EU stressed that compliance issues related to other ICCAT fisheries and issues should also be considered. Tentative dates for this meeting are February 21-25, 2011, in Madrid, Spain. Finally, the Future of ICCAT Working Group will meet late March or mid-May in Madrid, Spain, to begin a review of the ICCAT Convention with an eye towards potential amendments, as well as to consider other pending issues not resolved in 2010.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
 NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
 Silver Spring, MD 20910

Atlantic Swordfish Landings Update: Commercial and Recreational 2010 Fishing Year

The table below provides preliminary landings estimates and remaining quotas as of November 30, 2010, in pounds (lb) and metric tons (mt) dressed weight (dw) for the Atlantic swordfish fisheries for the 2010 fishing year. Landings are estimated using commercial dealer reports and reports by anglers in the HMS Non-Tournament Recreational Swordfish and Billfish Landings Database and the Recreational Billfish Survey. Please note that these estimates are subject to late reporting and do not include discards. As specified in § 635.27(c)(i)(B), all recreational landings are counted against the incidental quota. On September 21, 2010, NMFS published a final rule (75 FR 57407) to adjust the 2010 baseline quota for 2009 underharvests. The table below provides both the baseline and adjusted 2010 quotas.

	Baseline Quota	Adjusted Quota		Landings	Percent of Baseline Quota Taken	Percent of Adjusted Quota Taken
	mt dw	mt dw		mt dw (lb dw)		
NORTH ATLANTIC SWORDFISH						
Directed Fishery First Season (Jan 1, 2010 – June 30, 2010)	1,094.8	1,829.2	Commercial Landings	730.9 (1,611,442)	66.8%	40.0%
Directed Fishery Second Season (July 1, 2010 - Dec 31, 2010)	1,094.8	1,829.2	Commercial Landings	565.5 (1,246,803)	51.7%	30.9%
Incidental Fishery (annual quota)	300	300	Commercial Landings	12.4 (27,231)	8.9%	8.9%
			Recreational Landings	14.3 (31,438)		
Total	2,937.6*	4406.4*		1323.1 (2,916,914)	45.0%	30.0%
SOUTH ATLANTIC SWORDFISH						
Directed Fishery (annual quota)	75.2	75.2	Commercial Landings	0.2 (400)	0.3%	0.3%

*Includes 448.1 mt dw allocated to the reserve; 150.4 mt dw North Atlantic swordfish quota may be caught between 5 degrees North latitude and 5 degrees South latitude



This notice is a courtesy to Atlantic swordfish fishery interests to keep you informed about your fishery. Official notice of federal fishery actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of the Federal Register. To view catch statistics from previous months, please visit http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/hmsdocument_files/SWORDFISH.htm#Landings or contact Steve Durkee at (202) 670-6637.

for James P. Burgin

Emily Menashes
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries

01/22/11
Date

SIGN UP FOR ATLANTIC HMS NEWS
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<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/newslist/>

Commercial North Atlantic Swordfish landings in dressed weight (pounds) for fish from North of 35N and South of 35N. All Swordfish are from North of 5N.

Area	Month	Directed					Incidental			Monthly Total	
		Longline	Harpoon	Hand Line	Rod & Reel	Buoy Gear	Total	OtterTrawl	Other		Total
N of 35N	Jan-10	8,593	0	0	0	0	8,593	0	0	0	8,593
N of 35N	Feb-10	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0
N of 35N	Mar-10	2,067	0	0	0	0	2,067	127	0	127	2,194
N of 35N	Apr-10	8,938		0	0	0	8,938	0	0	0	8,938
N of 35N	May-10	29,353	0	0	0	0	29,353	0	0	0	29,353
N of 35N	Jun-10	149,872	0	0	0	0	149,872	915	0	915	150,787
S of 35N	Jan-10	174,344	0	0	1,752	16,961	193,057	0	0	0	193,057
S of 35N	Feb-10	263,157	0	0	1,207	10,574	274,938	0	128	128	275,066
S of 35N	Mar-10	281,348	0	0	2,375	5,192	288,915	0	0	0	288,915
S of 35N	Apr-10	282,652	0	0	3,146	5,750	291,548	0	130	130	291,678
S of 35N	May-10	244,446	0	0	4,047	3,012	251,505	0	0	0	251,505
S of 35N	Jun-10	104,333	0	0	3,985	4,338	112,656	0	0	0	112,656
Gear Total		1,549,103	0	0	16,512	45,827	1,611,442	1,042	258	1,300	1,612,742
											Six Month Total

Area	Month	Directed					Incidental			Monthly Total	
		Longline	Harpoon	Hand Line	Rod & Reel	Buoy Gear	Total	Otter Trawl	Other		Total
N of 35N	Jul-10	143,618	0	0	0	0	143,618	6,987	0	6,987	150,605
N of 35N	Aug-10	91,947	284	0	0	0	92,231	8,564	0	8,564	100,795
N of 35N	Sep-10	297,206	0	0	0	0	297,206	7,236	0	7,236	304,442
N of 35N	Oct-10	200,387	0	0	0	0	200,387	2,821	0	2,821	203,208
N of 35N	Nov-10	30,911	0	0	0	0	30,911	323	0	323	31,234
N of 35N	Dec-10									0	
S of 35N	Jul-10	37,904	0	0	2,148	1,930	41,982	0	0	0	41,982
S of 35N	Aug-10	83,389	0	0	3,402	5,458	92,249	0	0	0	92,249
S of 35N	Sep-10	58,626	0	0	2,212	20,237	81,075	0	0	0	81,075
S of 35N	Oct-10	60,792	0	0	8,531	37,565	106,888	0	0	0	106,888
S of 35N	Nov-10	134,846	0	0	6,009	19,401	160,256	0	0	0	160,256
S of 35N	Dec-10									0	
Gear Total		1,139,626	284	0	22,302	84,591	1,246,803	25,931	0	25,931	1,272,734
											Six Month Total

2,858,245
Yearly Directed

27,231	2,885,476
Yearly Incidental	Yearly Total

Commercial South Atlantic Swordfish landings in dressed weight (pounds). All Swordfish are from South of 5N.

	Jan-10	Feb-10	Mar-10	Apr-10	May-10	Jun-10	Jul-10	Aug-10	Sep-10	Oct-10	Nov-10	Dec-10
Directed	0	0	0	400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

400
Yearly Total

Unadjusted 2010 Fishing Year Quota (unadjusted for underharvest in 2009)

North Atlantic Swordfish Directed Quota:	1 Jan, 2010 -30 June, 2010	2,413,596
	1 July, 2010 - 31 Dec, 2010	2,413,596
	Annual Total	4,827,192
North Atlantic Swordfish Incidental Quota:	Annual Total	661,380
South Atlantic Swordfish Directed Quota:	Annual Total	165,786



NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



Contact: Monica Allen
301-713-2370

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 12, 2011

NOAA Will Work With Six Identified Nations to Address Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing

Six previously identified nations take corrective action

NOAA today submitted a report to Congress identifying six nations – Colombia, Ecuador, Italy, Panama, Portugal, and Venezuela – whose fishing vessels engaged in illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing in 2009 and/or 2010.

This opens the way for continued consultations between the U.S. government and each of the nations to encourage them to take action to stop IUU fishing by their vessels.

In this report, NOAA also announces that the six previously identified nations (China, France, Italy, Libya, Panama, and Tunisia) have addressed the instances of illegal fishing described by the United States in the 2009 report to Congress. These nations applied penalties to the vessels in question or adopted laws to strengthen control of their fishing fleets or both. Each has received a positive certification as a result of their actions.

The nations identified in today's report had fishing vessels that did not comply with measures agreed to under various international fishery management organizations, such as closed fishing seasons, vessel registry lists, and a ban on the use of driftnets. Other violations included illegal gear modifications, fishing without authorization, and possession of undersized bluefin tuna.

While Italy and Panama took corrective actions for illegal fishing identified in the 2009 report, other vessels from these countries still engaged in IUU fishing, which included illegal use of driftnets and fishing in an area when it was closed to purse seine nets.

If a nation fails to take appropriate action to address the instances of illegal fishing described in the report, that nation's vessels may be denied entry into U.S. ports and the President may prohibit imports of certain fish products from that nation or take other measures.

"We are encouraged that the nations identified in 2009 have taken significant actions to address illegal fishing by their vessels, and we are now reaching out to the six countries identified in today's report," said Russell Smith, NOAA deputy assistant secretary for international fisheries. "Illegal fishing must be stopped as it subjects our fishermen to unfair competition and undermines efforts to sustainably manage the valuable fish stocks around the world that so many communities depend on for food and jobs."

Annual global economic losses due to IUU fishing are estimated to be as high as \$23 billion.

Today's decisions follow two years in which NOAA's Fisheries Service, working with the U.S. Department of State, conducted extensive outreach at bilateral and multilateral meetings to inform fishing nations of potential U.S. actions to combat IUU fishing. NOAA is addressing the problem of IUU fishing through the international provisions of the U.S. Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act.

The act amends the High Seas Driftnet Moratorium Protection Act, which requires the United States to strengthen international fishery management organizations and address IUU fishing activities and the unintended catch, or bycatch, of protected living marine resources. Specifically, the Moratorium Protection Act requires the Secretary of Commerce to identify those foreign nations whose fishing vessels are engaged in IUU fishing, and what actions those nations have taken to end the practice.

Today's identifications of countries will be followed by consultations to urge these nations to adopt effective measures to combat IUU fishing. Following consultations, NOAA will formally certify whether each of the six nations have addressed the IUU fishing activities of their vessels.

The latest report to Congress also includes information on multilateral efforts to improve stewardship of international marine resources. To read the report, go to <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/msa2007/intlprovisions.html>

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Visit us at <http://www.noaa.gov> or on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/usnoaagov>.

- Are the requirements in the rule clearly stated?
- Does the rule contain technical language or jargon that isn't clear?
- Would a different format (grouping and order of sections, use of headings, paragraphing) make the rule easier to understand?
- Would more (but shorter) sections be better?
- Could we improve clarity by adding tables, lists, or diagrams?
- What else could we do to make the rule easier to understand?

If you have any responses to these questions, please include them in your comments on this proposal.

J. Privacy Act

Anyone is able to search the electronic form of all comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an organization, business, labor union, etc.). You may review DOT's complete Privacy Act statement in the *Federal Register* published on April 11, 2000 (Volume 65, Number 70; Pages 19477–78) or you may visit <http://www.dot.gov/privacy.html>.

List of Subjects in 49 CFR Part 575

Consumer protection, Incorporation by reference, Motor vehicle safety, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Tires.

In consideration of the foregoing, NHTSA proposes to amend 49 CFR Part 575 as follows:

PART 575—CONSUMER INFORMATION

1. The authority citation for part 575 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 32302, 32304A, 30111, 30115, 30117, 30123, 30166, and 30168, Pub. L. 104–414, 114 Stat. 1800, Pub. L. 109–59, 119 Stat. 1144, Pub. L. 110–140, 121 Stat. 1492, 15 U.S.C. 1232(g); delegation of authority at 49 CFR 1.50.

2. Revise Appendix D to § 575.104 to read as follows:

§ 575.104 Uniform tire quality grading standards.

* * * * *

Appendix D—User Fees

1. *Use of Government Traction Skid Pads:* A fee of \$125 will be assessed for each hour, or fraction thereof, that the traction skid pads at Goodfellow Air Force Base, San Angelo, Texas are used. This fee is based upon the market price of the use of the traction skid pads.

2. Fee payments shall be by check, draft, money order, or Electronic Funds Transfer

System made payable to the Treasurer of the United States.

3. The fee set forth in this Appendix continues in effect until adjusted by the Administrator of NHTSA. The Administrator reviews the fee set forth in this Appendix and, if appropriate, adjusts it by rule at least every 2 years.

Issued on: January 10, 2011.

Claude Harris,
Acting Associate Administrator for
Enforcement.

[FR Doc. 2011–643 Filed 1–12–11; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–59–P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 635

[Docket No. 101029546–0547–01]

RIN 0648–BA39

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Bluefin Tuna Bycatch Reduction in the Gulf of Mexico Pelagic Longline Fishery

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Proposed rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS proposes to require the use of “weak hooks” in the Gulf of Mexico (GOM) pelagic longline (PLL) fishery. A weak hook is a circle hook that meets NMFS' current size and offset restrictions for the GOM PLL fishery, but is constructed of round stock wire that is thinner-gauge than the circle hooks currently used, *i.e.*, no larger than 3.65 mm in diameter. Weak hooks can allow incidentally hooked bluefin tuna (BFT) to escape capture because the hooks are more likely to straighten when a large fish is hooked. Requiring weak hooks in the GOM will reduce bycatch of BFT, allow the long-term beneficial socio-economic benefits of normal operation of directed fisheries in the GOM with minimal short-term negative socio-economic impacts, and have both short- and long-term beneficial impacts on the stock status of Atlantic BFT, an overfished species. Since 2007, NMFS has conducted research on weak hooks used on PLL vessels operating in the GOM to reduce the incidental catch of large BFT during directed PLL fishing for other species. Preliminary results show that the use of a weak hook can significantly reduce the amount of BFT caught incidentally

by PLL vessels in the GOM. The purpose of the proposed action is to reduce PLL catch of Atlantic BFT in the GOM, which is the only known BFT spawning area for the western Atlantic stock of BFT. This action would be consistent with the advice of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) Standing Committee for Research and Statistics (SCRS) that ICCAT may wish to protect the strong 2003 year class until it reaches maturity and can contribute to spawning. The purpose is also to allow directed fishing for other species to continue within allocated BFT sub-quota limits. This measure would be consistent with the 2006 Consolidated Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP), including the BFT rebuilding program.

DATES: Written comments will be accepted until February 12, 2011. NMFS will hold three public hearings on this proposed rule on February 7, 2011, in Silver Spring, MD; February 9, 2011, in Panama City, FL; and February 10, 2011, in Kenner, LA to receive comments from fishery participants and other members of the public regarding this proposed rule. An operator-assisted conference call will be held to receive comments, only on this proposed rulemaking, from HMS Advisory Panel members on February 8, 2011. This is not an HMS Advisory Panel meeting, and the conference call will be open to members of the public, who may observe and comment to the extent time permits. Please see the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this proposed rule for specific dates, times, and locations.

ADDRESSES: The public hearings will be held in Maryland, Florida, and Louisiana. Please see the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section of this ANPR for specific dates, times, and locations.

You may submit comments, identified by 0648–BA39, by any one of the following methods:

- Electronic Submissions: Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>
- Fax: 301–713–1917, Attn: Margo Schulze-Haugen
- Mail: 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Please mark the outside of the envelope “Comments on the Proposed Rule to Reduce Bluefin Tuna Bycatch in the Gulf of Mexico.”
- Instructions: No comments will be posted for public viewing until after the comment period has closed. All comments received are a part of the public record and generally will be

posted to <http://www.regulations.gov> without change. All Personal Identifying Information (e.g., name, address) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit Confidential Business Information or otherwise sensitive or protected information.

NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter N/A in the required fields, if you wish to remain anonymous). You may submit attachments to electronic comments in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dianne Stephan by phone at 978–281–9260 or Randy Blankinship by phone at 727–824–5399.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Atlantic tunas are managed under the dual authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) and the Atlantic Tuna Conventions Act (ATCA), which authorizes the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) to promulgate regulations as may be necessary and appropriate to implement recommendations of ICCAT. The authority to issue regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Act and ATCA has been delegated from the Secretary to the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA (AA). On May 28, 1999, NMFS published in the *Federal Register* (64 FR 29090) final regulations, effective July 1, 1999, implementing the Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Tunas, Swordfish, and Sharks (1999 FMP). On October 2, 2006, NMFS published in the *Federal Register* (71 FR 58058) final regulations, effective November 1, 2006, implementing the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP, which details the management measures for Atlantic HMS fisheries including the PLL fishery.

Background

NMFS is issuing a proposed rule that would require the use of “weak hooks” by PLL vessels fishing in the GOM. A weak hook is a circle hook that meets NMFS’ current size and offset restrictions but is constructed of round wire stock that is thinner-gauge (*i.e.*, no larger than 3.65 mm in diameter) than the circle hooks currently used in the PLL fishery. The purpose of the proposed action is to reduce PLL catch of Atlantic BFT in the GOM, which is the only known BFT spawning area for the western Atlantic stock of BFT. This measure would also be consistent with the ICCAT SCRS advice that ICCAT may wish to protect the strong 2003 year class until it reaches maturity and can contribute to spawning. Implementation

of weak hooks in the GOM PLL fishery by spring 2011 is important because the strong 2003 year class is beginning to enter adulthood, and it is likely that some of them will begin to spawn in the GOM this spring. Also, reducing the incidental BFT catch in the GOM may enable the PLL fishery to continue to operate year-round by increasing the likelihood that landings and dead discards will remain below the quota. The proposed rule would require a new gear technology that could allow the GOM PLL fleet to continue routine directed fishing operations (*e.g.*, yellowfin tuna (YFT) and swordfish) while decreasing the numbers of incidentally caught BFT. Weak hooks can allow incidentally hooked BFT to escape capture because the hooks are more likely to straighten when a large fish is hooked, thus releasing the fish.

This action is necessary to achieve domestic management objectives under the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and to implement the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP, including goals to rebuild stocks and end overfishing. Atlantic BFT has historically been documented as overfished with overfishing occurring. Since 1998, an ICCAT rebuilding plan, which was implemented in the Consolidated HMS FMP, has been in place with the goal of rebuilding the western BFT stock by 2019. Strict quotas and domestic regulations have been in place to achieve this goal, including a prohibition on all directed fishing on BFT in the GOM in recognition that is the sole known spawning area for the western BFT stock. Although directed fishing for BFT is prohibited in the GOM, the incidental catch of BFT has become an area of heightened concern due to the status of the stock and mortality of incidentally caught spawning BFT in the directed PLL fishery that targets YFT and swordfish. Furthermore, a recent stock assessment conducted by ICCAT’s SCRS in October 2010, shows that a strong 2003 year class is expected to begin to contribute to an increase in spawning biomass after several years. In particular, the SCRS notes “that the 2010 assessment is the first time that this strong 2003 year-class has been clearly demonstrated, likely as a result of age assignment refinements resulting from the growth curve and additional years of data; more observations from the fishery are required to confirm its relative strength. A further concern is that subsequent year-classes, although even less well estimated, are the lowest observed values in the time series. The Commission may wish to protect the 2003 year class until it reaches maturity

and can contribute to spawning.” While the increased presence of spawning BFT in the GOM could provide a positive impact on the stock, PLL interactions with spawning BFT could also be expected to increase with the higher number of fish in this year class. This could lead to increased incidental catches (and discards) of BFT, potentially diminishing the reproductive impact of this large year class to the western BFT stock.

Several other factors have also heightened concern about BFT recently, such as the April 2010 Deepwater Horizon/BP oil spill in the GOM and potential impacts on BFT, particularly in the GOM. In addition, some environmental groups have called for the suspension of the entire Atlantic BFT fishery and the creation of a permanent BFT sanctuary in the GOM spawning area. In May 2010, the Center for Biological Diversity petitioned NMFS to list BFT as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act and to designate critical habitat for the species. NMFS published a 90-Day Finding on the Petition to List Atlantic Bluefin Tuna as Threatened or Endangered under the Endangered Species Act on Sept. 21, 2010 (75 FR 57431). The analysis of that petition is ongoing.

Tuna researchers working on tagging projects in the GOM have noted that almost all BFT caught by PLL vessels are dead due to the high metabolic stress endured during capture from the warm water. Promising research results, from an experiment (the weak hook study) conducted by the NMFS Harvesting Systems and Engineering Branch, Pascagoula, MS, have found over the past 3 years that the weak hook, which is designed to bend under pre-determined loads, could potentially result in the quick release of large BFT, as well as some large pelagic sharks in PLL fisheries. The PLL vessel operators and owners involved in the study have shown support for use of weak hooks. Initial results show the potential for increasing the biomass of the western BFT stock in the short- and long-term with some potential adverse impacts to directed fisheries (*i.e.*, approximately a 7 percent reduction in YFT and 41 percent reduction in swordfish retained for sale).

On an annual basis, ICAAT issues the United States its BFT quota, which is further divided among fisheries under the Consolidated HMS FMP. Under the Consolidated HMS FMP, PLL vessels are currently allocated 8.1 percent of the available landings quota for the incidental retention (and dead discards) of BFT while directing on other target

Executive Summary

In reauthorizing the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act in 2006, Congress called attention to the need for international cooperation to address fishing activities that have a deleterious effect on sustainable fisheries worldwide. Congress directed the Executive Branch to strengthen its leadership in improving international fisheries management and enforcement, particularly with regard to illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, and to fishing practices such as bycatch that may undermine the sustainability of living marine resources. Congress also required the Secretary of Commerce to identify countries whose fishing vessels were engaged in these activities, and to consult with those countries on improving their fisheries management and enforcement practices.

In the 2009 Report to Congress, the Commerce Department surveyed U.S. efforts to date to carry out these mandates and identified six countries as having engaged in IUU fishing during the preceding two years: France, Italy, Libya, Panama, People's Republic of China, and Tunisia. Alleged violations of international conservation and management measures formed the basis for each of the identifications.

This report (in Part IX.A beginning on page 67) details the consultations with those countries over the past two years. As required by the reauthorization statute, it also contains the National Marine Fisheries Service's certification that each of the six has provided evidence of corrective action with respect to the offending activities, or has credibly disputed the basis of the original identifications. For each of the verified violations, the countries took punitive action against the vessels involved or against persons committing similar violations. The identified countries also produced evidence of their laws and regulations, some of them recently adopted, and of recently enhanced monitoring, reporting, and enforcement activities – all aimed at combating IUU fishing by vessels flying their flags. In short, the identification/certification process in 2009-2010 worked as Congress intended, to improve compliance with international fisheries measures.

This report (in Part IX.B.3 beginning on page 92) also contains NMFS's identification of six countries as having been engaged in IUU fishing during 2009 or 2010: Colombia, Ecuador, Italy, Panama, Portugal, and Venezuela. As in 2009, the identifications are based on violations of international measures, not on overfishing of shared stocks or on fishing practices destructive of vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs).

Colombian vessels fished in both 2009 and 2010 in violation of resolutions of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC). Several purse seine vessels flagged to Ecuador fished in the IATTC Convention Area in 2009 without authorization or otherwise in violation of IATTC resolutions. One Ecuadorian-flagged vessel increased its capacity, contrary to an IATTC resolution. Several Panamanian-flagged vessels were reported to have engaged in IUU fishing activities during 2009, in violation of IATTC conservation and management measures. Several vessels flagged to Venezuela were reported to have fished during IATTC purse seine closure periods in 2009, in violation of IATTC resolutions.

During 2009 and 2010, many vessels flagged to Italy again fished in violation of a recommendation of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) that prohibits the use of driftnets for fisheries on large pelagic species, including swordfish and bluefin tuna, in the Mediterranean. These repeat driftnet infractions seem to indicate the need for additional measures to deter this type of IUU activity, including, *inter alia*, implementation of stronger sanctions permissible under Italian law, such as suspension of fishing authorization or licenses.

Two vessels flagged to Portugal engaged in IUU fishing activities during 2010 by violating conservation and management measures of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO).

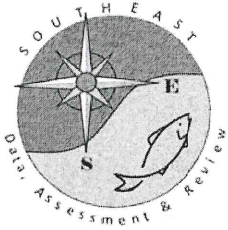
NMFS considered 12 other countries for identification during the reporting period, but consultations with those nations indicate corrective actions have already been taken to address the IUU fishing activities of concern, or the allegations of IUU fishing information were refuted (beginning on page 99).

As in 2009, NMFS is not identifying any countries for fishing activities involving the bycatch of protected living marine resources. See page 91.

This report also contains updates on U.S., regional, and global efforts to combat IUU fishing and to minimize bycatch of protected species. Among the most important developments in the past two years are the following:

- Adoption of the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, in November 2009. One of the Agreement's objectives is to eliminate "ports of convenience" that serve as safe havens for IUU vessels and as portals for illegally harvested fish to enter the stream of commerce. See page 22.
- Recommendations by an FAO Technical Consultation in November 2010 that the Committee on Fisheries should launch the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels, beginning with Phase I (2011-2013) during which the largest vessels would enter the record. See page 33.
- Completion of the convention establishing the South Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Organization (SPRFMO), whose objective is to conserve and manage non-highly migratory fish stocks and protect vulnerable habitats and biodiversity in the South Pacific. See page 37.
- Expansion of the negotiations to establish a new RFMO in the North Pacific, to cover a wider geographic area (all high seas areas of the North Pacific) and include additional countries and entities, as well as agreement by negotiators on interim measures with regard to bottom fishing and steps to protect VMEs. See page 38.

- Entry into force on August 27, 2010, of the Antigua Convention, with improved enforcement provisions to combat IUU fishing as well as new measures to minimize impacts on bycatch species and conserve marine ecosystems. See page 39.
- Continuation of the “Kobe Process” to coordinate management and conservation efforts among the five tuna RFMOs, with a second meeting in San Sebastian in 2009 and four important workshops during 2010. The United States will host the third meeting in San Diego in July of 2011. See page 42.
- Development of the International Guidelines on Bycatch Management and Reduction of Discards, which will be presented to the FAO Committee on Fisheries in early 2011. See page 44.
- Convening of the Kobe II Bycatch Workshop (K2B), a component of the Kobe Process, in June 2010, to address bycatch in tuna fisheries and recommend measures for adoption by the tuna RFMOs. See page 45.
- Completion of a Memorandum of Understanding for Migratory Sharks in February 2010, to coordinate international action on the threats faced by sharks. See page 50.



SEDAR

SouthEast Data, Assessment, and Review

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MEMORANDUM

TO: SEDAR 21 Participants and Interested Parties

From: Julie A. Neer, Ph.D.

RE: SEDAR 21 HMS sandbar and dusky pre-review assessment reports

Date: January 17, 2011

The SEDAR 21 HMS Sandbar and Dusky assessment reports are now available on the SEDAR website under SEDAR 21 Assessment Workshop:
(http://www.sefsc.noaa.gov/sedar/Sedar_Documents.jsp?WorkshopNum=21&FolderType=Assessment).

These are pre-review drafts of the reports that may be modified for peer review based on comments received. SEDAR will be accepting public comment on the assessment report between January 18, 2011 and February, 2011. Please see the "Guidelines for Submitting Written Public Comment" on the first page of the reports for more details on how to submit comments.

Comments for the SEDAR 21 sandbar and dusky shark stock assessments may be submitted to the following:

Email:

Sedar21comments@safmc.net

Address:

SEDAR 21 AW Comments
4055 Faber Place Dr., Suite 201
North Charleston, SC 29405

Fax: (843) 769-4520

For more information please contact SEDAR Coordinator Julie A. Neer at julie.neer@safmc.net or (843) 571-4366.





Atlantic Shark Commercial Fishery Update

Below are the preliminary landings estimates in metric tons (mt) and pounds (lb) dressed weight (dw) for the Atlantic Shark commercial fisheries from **January 1, 2010, through December 31, 2010**. The preliminary landings estimates include landing reports received through December 31, 2010. The landings presented below are total landings reported through the Pelagic Dealer Compliance (PDC), and the Accumulated Landings System (ALS). Landings within the shark research fishery were determined from trip tickets provided to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) by scientific observers. The estimates include landings by state-only permitted vessels, federally permitted vessels, and the 2010 shark research fishery participants.

The preliminary 2010 commercial shark fishing season landings.

Species Group	Region	Season Opening Dates	2010 Quota	Estimated Landings	% of Quota
Non-Sandbar Large Coastal Sharks	Gulf of Mexico	February 4 (Closed: Mar 17 ¹)	390.5 mt dw (860,896 lb dw)	426.8 mt dw (940,885 lb dw)	109%
	Atlantic	July 15 (Closed: Dec 5 ²)	169.7 mt dw (374,121 lb dw)	174.3 mt dw (384,256 lb dw)	103%
Shark Research Fishery Quota (Non-Sandbar LCS)		January 5 (Closed: Oct 12 ³)	37.5 mt dw (82,673 lb dw)	34.1 mt dw (75,276 lb dw)	91%
Shark Research Fishery Quota (Sandbar only)	No regional quotas	January 5	87.9 mt dw (193,784 lb dw)	Inside SRF 64.6 mt dw (142,434 lb dw)	80%
				Outside SRF ⁶ 0.4 mt dw (793 lb dw)	
Non-Blacknose Small Coastal Sharks	No regional quotas	June 1 (Closed: Nov 2 ⁴)	221.6 mt dw (488,539 lb dw)	150.6 mt dw (331,943 lb dw)	68%
Blacknose Sharks			19.9 mt dw (43,872 lb dw)	14.9 mt dw (32,825 lb dw)	75%
Blue Sharks	No regional quotas	January 5	273 mt dw (601,856 lb dw)	4.1 mt dw (9,121 lb dw)	2%
Porbeagle Sharks		January 5 (Closed: Sept 4 ⁵)	1.5 mt dw (3,307 lb dw)	1.7 mt dw (3,788 lb dw)	114%
Pelagic Sharks Other Than Porbeagle or Blue		January 5	488 mt dw (1,075,856 lb dw)	130 mt dw (286,457 lb dw)	27%

¹ Fishery closed at 11:30 p.m. local time on March 17, 2010 (75 FR 12700).

² Fishery closed at 11:30 p.m. local time on December 5, 2010 (75 FR 75416).

³ Fishery closed at 11:30 p.m. local time on October 12, 2010 (75 FR 62690).

⁴ Fishery closed at 11:30 p.m. local time on November 2, 2010 (75 FR 67251).

⁵ Fishery closed at 11:30 p.m. local time on September 4, 2010 (75 FR 53871).

⁶ These landings are from state landings, unverified landings and/or unclassified sharks.



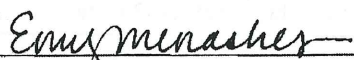
The estimated landings for the non-sandbar LCS in the Gulf of Mexico region decreased by 2.3 mt dw when compared to the landings used in the 2010 final shark specifications (75 FR 250, January 5, 2010). This decline is due to normal quality control procedures that occur when updated data is supplied. Additionally, since the last landings update used in the 2010 final shark specifications, the Atlantic non-sandbar LCS landings were exceeded by 4.6 mt dw. NMFS intends to adjust the 2012 quotas for non-sandbar LCS in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic regions to account for these changes, as appropriate.

Quotas and opening dates for the 2011 commercial shark fishing season.

Species Group	Region	2011 Annual Quota	Season Opening Dates
Non-Sandbar Large Coastal Sharks	Gulf of Mexico	351.9 (775,740 lb dw)	March 1, 2011
	Atlantic	190.4 (419,756 lb dw)	July 15, 2011
Non-Sandbar LCS Research Quota	No regional quotas	37.5 (82,673 lb dw)	January 1, 2011
Sandbar Research Quota		87.9 (193,784 lb dw)	January 1, 2011
Non-Blacknose Small Coastal Sharks		314.4 (693,257 lb dw)	January 1, 2011
Blacknose Sharks		19.9 (43,872 lb dw)	January 1, 2011
Blue Sharks		273 (601,856 lb dw)	January 1, 2011
Porbeagle Sharks		1.6 (3,479 lb dw)	January 1, 2011
Pelagic Sharks Other Than Porbeagle or Blue		488 (1,075,856 lb dw)	January 1, 2011

This notice is a courtesy to the HMS fishery participants to help keep you informed about your fishery. For further information on this landings update or the closure, contact Karyl Brewster-Geisz or Guý DuBeck at 301-713-2347. The information will also be posted on the HMS website at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms>.

JAN 24 2011


 Emily Menashes
 Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries

Date _____

SIGN UP FOR ATLANTIC HMS NEWS
 -- An electronic newsletter informing you of the latest HMS-related actions --
<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/newslist/>