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Office of
Sustainable
Fisheries

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Advisory Panel

HMS Management Overview

September 6, 2017

Goal of Presentation

Brief update of recent actions

Defer issues to be discussed later in meeting:

- Pelagic Longline Closed Area Research Exempted Fishing Permit
- Final Amendment 10 on Essential Fish Habitat
- HMS Recreational Issues
- Upcoming Rulemakings – Charter/Headboat permitting, Individual Bluefin Quota accountability, commercial shark closures
- Atlantic bluefin tuna management and Amendment 7 implementation
- Ongoing management issues – Pelagic Longline, Bluefin Tuna
- Caribbean management updates

Rulemaking/Operations

Since the May 2017 AP meeting:

- 2 rules: Proposed rule on 2018 shark specifications; Final Rule on quota adjustments for Swordfish/Albacore/Bluefin tuna Reserve (soon)
- Inseason actions:
 - LOTS of BFT inseason quota transfers & retention limit adjustments
 - Commercial aggregated large coastal shark & hammerhead retention limit adjustment; Closure of western Gulf of Mexico blacktip, aggregated large coastal & hammerhead sharks
 - Swordfish General Commercial retention limit adjustment
- Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs): Pelagic Longline Closed Area Research EFP issued; White Shark comment period; 33 EFPs, Scientific Research Permits, & Letters of Acknowledgement, and 5 shark research fishery permits (to date)
- 263 HMS tournaments registered (2017 to date)
- 27 Shark ID & Protected Species workshops conducted (2017 to date)
- ~5,665 people receiving Atlantic HMS News – new email system

Shark 2018 Specifications Proposed Rule

- Proposed rule published on August 22, 2017 (82 FR 39735)
- Would open all shark management groups ~January 1, 2018
- All proposed quotas are the annual base quotas except the following quotas that are increased due to underharvest:
 - Western Gulf of Mexico (wGOM) Blacktip: 347.2 mt dw (765,392 lb dw)
 - Eastern GOM Blacktip (eGOM): 37.7 mt dw (83,158 lb dw)
 - GOM Smoothhound: 504.6 mt dw (1,112,441 lb dw)
 - Atlantic Smoothhound: 1,802.6 mt dw (3,973,902 lb dw)
- Proposed retention limits eGOM = 50; wGOM = 45; Atl = 25
- Comments are due by September 21, 2017

www.regulations.gov/#!/docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2017-0069

Quota Adjustments – SWO/NALB/BFT Reserve

- Temporary final rule expected to publish soon
- Adjusts the northern albacore (NALB) baseline quota for 2017 with available underharvest of the 2016 adjusted U.S. NALB quota
 - **Adjusted 2017 NALB quota: $527 \text{ mt} + 131.75 \text{ mt} = 658.75 \text{ mt ww}$.**
- Adjusts the North swordfish (NSWO) and south swordfish (SSWO) baseline quotas for 2017 based on available underharvest from the 2016 adjusted U.S. quotas and international quota transfers
 - **Adjusted 2017 NSWO quota: $2,937.6 - 18.8 + 440.6 = 3,359.4 \text{ mt dw}$.**
 - **Adjusted 2017 SSWO quota: 75.1 mt dw**
- Augments the 2017 bluefin tuna (BFT) Reserve category quota with available underharvest of the 2016 adjusted U.S. BFT quota.
 - **Adjusted 2017 BFT Reserve category quota is now 156.38 mt**

National Policy Updates

- Allocation Criteria – no updates at this time
- National Standard 1 Guidelines - internal discussions underway; anticipate regular check-ins with AP as actions progress
- Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management (EBFM) Implementation Roadmap
- Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology (SBRM) final rule/implementation
- National Bycatch Reduction Strategy Implementation Plan

National Policy Updates - EBFM

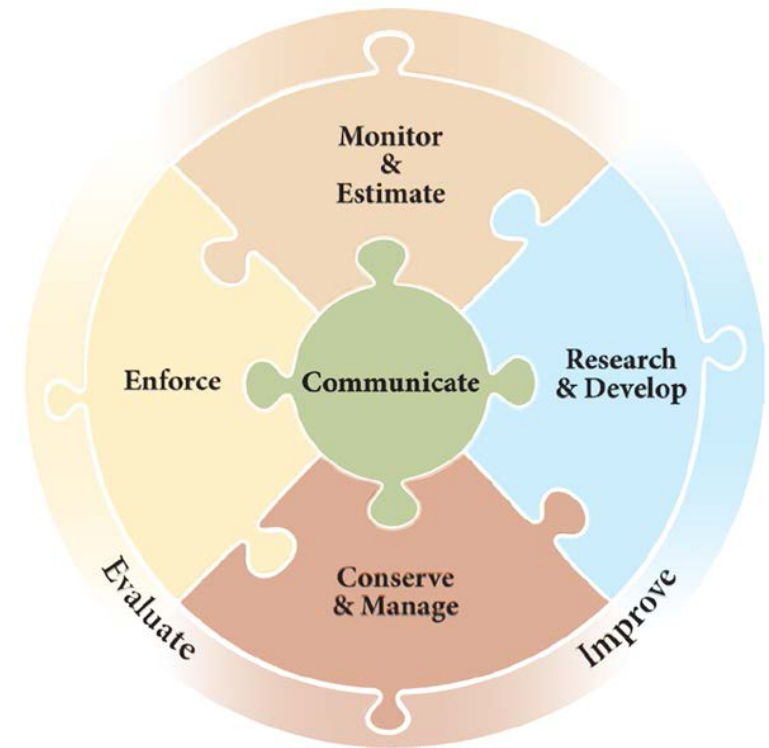
- EBFM Policy and Road Map released in 2016
- HMS Division staff are drafting a Road Map Implementation Plan, as discussed at May AP meeting
 - HMS Division staff are participating in a national workgroup to coordinate plans
- Draft implementation plan anticipated in summer 2018- will share with the AP –likely at spring 2018 meeting
- Deadline for final implementation plans is December 2018

National Policy Updates - SBRM

- HMS Division staff completed a review of the SBRM final rule & 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP
- Initial determination is that an FMP amendment is likely needed to add descriptions of SBRM for spearfishing, buoy gear, and greenstick; however, rulemaking is not expected
- In the near-term, we will update/expand SBRM descriptions/bycatch data in the annual SAFE Report to keep information up-to-date and address certain requirements of the SBRM rule (e.g., consideration of data uncertainty and other considerations)
- All FMPs must be consistent with the SBRM rule by Feb 2022
- Anticipate regular check-ins with AP as any amendment progresses

National Bycatch Reduction Strategy

- 5 objectives
 - Monitor and Estimate
 - Conduct Research
 - Conserve and Manage
 - Enforce
 - Communicate
- Actions & subtasks for each objective
- HMS Regional Implementation Plan
 - Waiting on finalization of National Implementation Plan
 - Planning to share HMS draft plan with AP in winter/spring



Landings & Tournaments Updates

Species	Link to Landings Information / Updates
Swordfish	http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/news/news_list/2017/8/swo_landings_081617.html
BAYS tunas	http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/species/tunas/landings/bays_landings.htm
Sharks	http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/news/news_list/2017/8/shk_landings_update_082517.html
Bluefin tuna	http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/species/tunas/landings/bft_landings.html
Billfish	http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/species/billfish/landings/index.html
Tournaments	http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/compliance/tournaments/index.html
Tuna Info	https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/



Exempted Fishing Permit Updates

Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Association

- Application received June 19, 2017
 - Requests exemption to retain bluefin tuna on vessels with unauthorized gear onboard and use electronic monitoring (EM) for monitoring/compliance
 - Notice of Receipt/Request for comments published July 14, 2017
- Summary of major comments:
 - Some comments oppose issuance of an EFP stating that applicants should be held to current regulations
 - Others opposed due to increase in effort concerns
 - Groundfish fishermen are supportive and would like diversified trips; incentives for EM onboard
- Status: In review

Exempted Fishing Permit Updates con't

Specific White Shark Research Notice of Intent (82 FR 12340)

- Published Mar 2, 2017; Comment period ended April 3, 2017
- 722 comments received; most were form letters in support of OCEARCH
- Other commenters had concerns about handling and release of sharks by researchers; requested that all research use circle hooks only, no J hooks
- Two commenters did not support issuance of any EFPs

Status:

- NMFS is providing Letters of Acknowledgement to research vessels and issuing EFPs to private vessels
- NMFS does not have authority to regulate shark research on research vessels
 - We are continuing to receive requests to regulate certain white shark tagging activities despite lack of authority

General Category Cost Earnings Study

- One year cost-earnings logbook study of the Atlantic Tunas General Category (January -December 2018)
- Purpose: Estimate economic activity of HMS fishing under Atlantic Tunas General Category quota
- Atlantic Tunas General Category and HMS Charter/Headboat permit holders with recent history of commercial bluefin tuna landings will be selected for reporting
- Charter/Headboat permit holders added based on feedback received at Spring AP meeting

General Category Study Timeline

- NMFS will send notification letters in October 2017
- Participation required if selected per HMS regulations (see 635.5(a)(1) *Logbooks*)
- Selected vessels will report via electronic logbook:
 - Trip reports for each trip landing or targeting HMS including cost-earnings data
 - No HMS Fishing reports for each month they do not take a trip targeting HMS
 - Final survey of annualized expenses (e.g., vessel costs, insurance, etc.) conducted in early 2019
- Final report targeted for summer/fall 2019

International Updates

ICCAT Commission Meeting - November

- Assessments and new measures for bluefin tuna (western & eastern), swordfish (North & South), shortfin mako (North & South)
- Potential re-evaluation of bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, and/or sailfish measures if total allowable catches were exceeded
- Convention amendment
- New Executive Secretary/Elections

International Trade Updates

Seafood Import Monitoring Program (SIMP)

- Will be effective January 1, 2018
- Will expand IFTP to include BAYS tunas and require electronic reporting for imports of these species (additional guidance will be available closer to implementation)

International Trade Data System (ITDS)

- Effective September 20, 2016
- All trade documentation due at the time of filing must be submitted electronically
- International Trade Permit renamed “International Fisheries Trade Permit (IFTP)” and broadened to include all frozen and processed tuna, and Chilean Seabass/Patagonian Toothfish

Electronic Bluefin Tuna Catch Document

- Effective June 30, 2016; all Atlantic BFT must be documented electronically through ICCAT eBCD system

ESA Updates – Biological Opinions

- On August 27, 2014, NMFS published a final rule to list 20 coral species as threatened under the ESA; 7 of these species are distributed in U.S. Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean waters
- NMFS reinitiated ESA consultation on these coral species, and the newly listed Western and Central Atlantic DPS of scalloped hammerhead for all HMS fisheries (including pelagic longline fishery for which consultation had already been reinitiated) on October 30, 2014
- Consultation ongoing now for all HMS fisheries

Sharks - ESA Petitions & CITES

Oceanic Whitetip Shark - ESA

- Positive 90-day finding on a petition to list the species range-wide 1/12/16; Comment period closed 3/14/16
- Status review found listing may be warranted; Proposed rule to list oceanic whitetip sharks globally published 12/29/2016 & comment period closed 3/29/2017

Silky & Thresher Sharks - CITES

- Will be included in Appendix II as of October 4, 2017
- Export of these species will require a CITES permit
- Working with U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service on implementation

DWH Oil Spill Restoration

Oceanic Fish Restoration Project (OFRP) in the Gulf of Mexico

- 7 vessels participated in the PLL repose and alternative gear program (March - June 2017)
- Application period for 2018 will begin in early fall
- More information at <http://www.nfwf.org/pll/Pages/home.aspx>



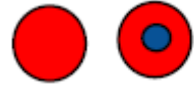


Open Ocean Trustee Implementation Group (OO TIG)

- Public request for ideas for restoration projects for the 2017-2020 planning years; request period ended May 15, 2017
- Project ideas being screened and evaluated
- More information at <http://www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov/restoration-areas/open-ocean>

Reporting, Permitting, & Other Issues

- Electronic HMS logbook pilot complete, expected to be ready for use on a voluntary basis in 2018
- SouthEast For-Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting (SEFHIER) – charter/headboat electronic reporting for Gulf and South Atlantic Council fisheries. HMS Division staff are participating in NMFS implementation team
- Landing tuna “chunks” – requirement to land tuna in specific condition to meet minimum size measurements is resulting in shark-damaged carcasses that meet the minimum size being discarded

Previous AP suggestions

- ~45 requests for regulatory changes summarized and discussed at May 2017 meeting
- AP dot prioritization exercise by member sector:
 - Commercial 
 - Recreational 
 - Academia 
 - Environmental 
 - States/Councils/Commissions 
- Dot prioritization exercise meant to be one input from the Panel – NOT a vote – for Agency consideration

May 2017 AP Dot Exercise



Requests for Regulatory Changes Atlantic Highly Migratory Species - Combined

Place Dots Here	Individual Bluefin Quota (IBQ)-specific
	Revise IBQ accountability (e.g., end of year/quarterly/other vs. trip-level) to increase flexibility
	Allow carryover of IBQ balance at the end of the year to increase flexibility
	Revisit/remove GRA performance criteria
	Provide flexibility for disaster sets
	Reallocate quota shares/revise IBQ share tier allocations

Place Dots Here	Non-IBQ
	Revise/remove time/area closures to increase access to fishing grounds, especially access to Charleston Bump
	Remove June Northeast Closure as redundant with IBQ requirements
	Revise/remove weak hook requirements in the Gulf of Mexico
	Reduce observer requirements
	Revisit the Draft A7 alternative to allow access to closed areas when an observer is onboard
	Allow EM hard drives to be sent in periodically (vs each trip)
	Support access to Windward Passage
	Support rebranding of fishery
	Revisit/remove demersal vs pelagic indicator species for closed area monitoring
	Reduce number of different places dealers have to report bluefin landings (IBQ vs SAFIS)



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Requests for Regulatory Changes Atlantic Highly Migratory Species - Combined

Place Dots Here	No Action
	Status quo: no changes

Place Dots Here	General HMS
	Allow use of bait nets
	Allow filleting at sea of bigeye and albacore tunas
	Revisit policy of requiring researchers to be on board as condition of Exempted Fishing Permits

Place Dots Here	Bluefin: General Category
	Modify subquota allocations; allow fishing of "January" subquota until met (vs. March 31); do not manage by seasons/subquotas
	To reduce post-release mortality: Prohibit use of treble hook lures or implement lure size limit
	To reduce post-release mortality: Establish minimum line sizes
	To reduce post-release mortality: Establish minimum size reel and rod combinations
	To reduce post-release mortality: Require single barbless hooks
	To reduce post-release mortality: Establish a maximum number of releases
	To reduce post-release mortality: Establish maximum fight time

Place Dots Here	Other—Write In: Combined
	Ability to clean Atlantic sharpnose sharks at-sea
	More refined approach (more science) on prohibited sharks
	Non-permitted (in-state) - no workshop requirement
	Expand temporal/spatial boundaries of A7 Gulf of Mexico closure (BFT)
	Deepwater Shark Management
	Education
	70% trigger - greater protection for hammerheads
	More prohibited species
	Caribbean shark assessment and conservation



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Requests for Regulatory Changes Atlantic Highly Migratory Species - Combined

Place Dots Here	Bluefin: Harpoon Category
	Modify large medium (73-<81") BFT daily retention limit (2-4) inseason so that it is equivalent to General category limit (max 5)
	Change start date to May 1 (from June 1); do not manage via season open/close dates

Place Dots Here	Bluefin: Charter/Headboat
	Create two Charter/Headboat (CHB) permits - one that allows for sale of HMS and one that does not allow for sale of HMS - to address USCG commercial fishing vessel safety exam requirements
	Authorize use of harpoon gear on CHB-permitted vessels to increase utilization of CHB vessels, (currently authorized only for General and Harpoon category-permitted vessels; NMF's proposed but did not finalize a similar request in 2008)

Place Dots Here	Purse Seine
	Reallocate quota of non-fishing participants to other categories (currently can lease to PS and PLL)
	Allow permanent sale of quota by Purse Seine participants (vs. limited to leasing)

Place Dots Here	Pelagic Longline Overall
	Revise or remove regulations impacting ability to catch swordfish quota
	Increase equity in requirements for all commercial categories



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Requests for Regulatory Changes Atlantic Highly Migratory Species - Combined

Place Dots Here	Shark
	Allow recreational landing of sharks on Atlantic tunas General category-permitted vessels (currently must have an HMS Angling or CHB category permit)
	Change commercial fishery closure trigger to 90%
	Allow large shark carcasses to be cut in half, particularly in the commercial fishery, to allow for sharks to fit into hold fully
	Remove species (e.g., bignose, night) from prohibited species list
	Allow sandbar shark quota to be fully used; Provide sandbar shark retention limit to entire fleet
	Allow shark retention under the Caribbean Small Boat Permit, especially Caribbean reef and sharpnose sharks

Place Dots Here	Swordfish
	Remove upgrading restrictions for Swordfish Handgear Limited Access permits
	Increase retention limit for Swordfish General Commercial Permit in the Florida Swordfish Management Area
	Increase swordfish retention under the Caribbean Small Boat Permit

Place Dots Here	Billfish
	Require circle hooks when fishing for billfish with natural/artificial baits all the times (not just in tournaments)
	Remove the circle hook/bait requirement for billfish tournaments



Looking Ahead

Upcoming Dates:

- 2018 shark specifications comment period ends September 21
- ICCAT Advisory Committee meeting – October 17 & 18
- Annual ICCAT meeting – November 14 - 22

Upcoming Final Actions:

- Shark 2018 specifications

Upcoming Proposed Rules/Actions/Notices:

- Charter/Headboat permitting proposed rule
- IBQ accountability proposed rule
- Commercial shark closures proposed rule
- South Atlantic Climate Action Plan

Communication Goal: No Surprises

- Goals for All
 - Advisors/Public aware, informed, and engaged
 - Agency aware, informed, and engaged
- AP Member Role
 - Listen and Engage in Discussions
 - Share with Your Constituents
 - Bring Ideas to and Advise Agency
- Agency Role
 - Ensure compliance with all domestic & int'l requirements
 - Raise Issues and Inform AP and Public
 - Listen and Engage in Discussions
 - Make Decisions Considering Feedback

Conclusion/Looking Forward

In conclusion,

- We are covering a lot of ground at this meeting
- Operational activities require substantial agency resources

Looking forward,

- We value your input & want your input on priorities & potential solutions

Questions?

Thank you!