



**NOAA  
FISHERIES**

Highly  
Migratory  
Species  
Management  
Division

# Requests for Regulatory Changes

Presented to the HMS Advisory Panel

May 2017



**NOAA FISHERIES**

# Background

- HMS Management Division staff have received a variety of requests on a wide range of topics over the last several months/years
- This presentation tries to capture this input from:
  - HMS AP members (during & outside meetings)
  - Regional Fishery Management Councils
  - Commercial and recreational fishermen & groups
  - Interested members of the public
- It is a summary for discussion purposes and not a comprehensive list



# Requests for Regulatory Changes: Pelagic Longline

## Overarching:

- Revise or remove regulations impacting ability to catch swordfish quota
- Increase equity in requirements for all commercial categories

## 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

# Requests for Regulatory Change: PLL cont

## 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 spp for closed area monitoring
- Reduce number of different places dealers have to report bluefin landings (IBQ vs SAFIS)



# Requests for Regulatory Changes: Bluefin

## Harpoon category:

- Modify large medium (73-<81") BFT daily retention limit inseason so that it is equivalent to General category limit) (*current range 2-4; would require a change so that range maximum is 5, like for General category*)
- Change start date to May 1 (*from June 1*); do not manage via season open/close dates
- Others?



# Requests for Regulatory Changes: 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
  - Establish minimum line sizes
  - Establish minimum size reel and rod combinations
  - Require single barbless hooks
  - Establish a maximum number of releases
  - Establish maximum fight times
  - Others?

# Requests for Regulatory Changes: 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; NMFS proposed but did not finalize a similar request in 2008*)
- Others?

# Requests for Regulatory Changes: 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*)
- Reconsider viability of this gear type for bluefin tuna
- Others?



# Requests for Regulatory Changes: 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
- Others?



# Requests for Regulatory Changes: 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
- Others?

# Requests for Regulatory Changes: Billfish

- Require circle hooks when fishing for billfish with natural natural/artificial baits all the times (not just in tournaments)
- Remove the circle hook/bait requirement for billfish tournaments
- Others?

# Requests for Regulatory Change: General

- 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
- Others?

Questions? Comments?

