

## Take Reduction Planning

[www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/interactions/trt/](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/interactions/trt/)

**Purpose:** MMPA section 118 specifies that NOAA Fisheries develop and implement take reduction plans (TRPs) to assist in the recovery or prevent the depletion of strategic marine mammal stocks that interact with [Category I and II fisheries](#). NOAA Fisheries convenes take reduction teams (TRTs) to develop such TRPs.

A strategic stock is one which:

- is listed as endangered or threatened under the [ESA](#),
- is declining and likely to be listed as threatened under the ESA,
- is listed as depleted under the [MMPA](#), or
- has direct human-caused mortality which exceeds the stock's Potential Biological Removal (PBR) level.

The PBR for a marine mammal stock is the maximum number of animals, not including natural mortalities, that may be removed from that stock, while allowing the stock to reach or maintain its optimum sustainable population.

**Goals:** The immediate goal of take reduction plans is to reduce, within six months of its implementation, the incidental serious injury or mortality of marine mammals from commercial fishing to levels less than PBR. The long-term goal is to reduce, within five years of its implementation, the incidental serious injury and mortality of marine mammals from commercial fishing operations to insignificant levels approaching a [zero serious injury and mortality rate](#), taking into account the economics of the fishery, the availability of existing technology, and existing state or regional fishery management plans.

**Process:** Take reduction teams consist of a balance of representatives from the fishing industry, fishery management councils, state and Federal resource management agencies, the scientific community, and conservation organizations.

Once NOAA Fisheries publishes notice to establish and convene a TRT, the team has 6 months to develop a draft TRP. The MMPA states that a TRP must be developed by consensus and then submitted to NOAA Fisheries. NOAA Fisheries has 60 days to publish a draft TRP, including any proposed changes to the plan. The public then has an opportunity to review the plan and provide comments on the draft TRP and the proposed regulations for implementing the TRP. If a TRT cannot reach consensus on a draft plan, the TRT can document the range of possibilities considered and both majority and minority views. If a TRT does not submit a draft TRP, NOAA Fisheries has 8 months from the date the TRT was formed to develop a proposed plan and implementing regulations. NOAA Fisheries may use the TRT's deliberations as the basis for a proposed plan. After the close of the comment period on a proposed TRP and implementing regulations, NOAA Fisheries has 60 days to publish a final TRP and regulations to implement that TRP. After each TRP is finalized, the TRT and NOAA Fisheries meet periodically to monitor implementation of the plan.

**Content:** Each take reduction plan must include:

A review of the final stock assessment report for each marine mammal addressed by the TRP and any substantial new information;

An estimate of the total number and, if possible, age and gender, of animals from the stock that is incidentally killed or seriously injured each year during the course of commercial fishing operations, by fishery;

Recommended regulatory or voluntary measures for the reduction of incidental mortality and serious injury; and

Recommended dates for achieving the specific objectives of the plan.

**The following additional information can be found at:**  
<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/interactions/trt/>

Development of a Process for the Long-term Monitoring of MMPA Category I and II Commercial Fisheries

Take Reduction Team Negotiation Process Evaluation

Differentiating Serious and Non-Serious Injury of Marine Mammals Taken Incidental to Commercial Fishing Operations: Report of the Serious Injury Workshop, 1-2 April 1997, Silver Spring, Maryland. (NMFS-OPR-13) 48p. (January 1998)