

**CA Yellowtail, Barracuda, and White Seabass Drift Gillnet (mesh size  $\geq 3.5$  in and  $< 14$  in)  
Fishery**

**Fishing gear type:** Gillnet

**Current category:** Category II\*

**Basis for current classification on the LOF:** Based on analogy to the Category II “CA halibut/white seabass and other species set gillnet ( $>3.5$  in mesh)” fishery, which is classified as a Category II based on the level of serious injury or mortality of humpback whales (CA/OR/WA stock). The fisheries operate in similar areas and similar seasons, thus it is reasonable that either fishery may cause serious injury or mortality of humpback whales.

**Current list of marine mammal species/stocks injured/killed:** CA sea lion, U.S.; Long-beaked common dolphin, CA; Short-beaked common dolphin, CA/OR/WA.

**Estimated number of current participants:** 30

**Take Reduction Teams/Plans that affect this fishery:** None.

**Year added to the LOF:** 2003

**Category when originally listed:** Category II

**Basis for original classification on the LOF:** Based on analogy with other drift gillnet fisheries and the potential to entangle marine mammals.

**Estimated number of participants when originally listed:** 24

**Past names, if any:** CA yellowtail, barracuda, and white seabass drift gillnet (mesh size  $>3.5$  in and  $< 14$  in) (until 2008); CA yellowtail, barracuda, white seabass, and tuna drift gillnet (mesh size  $>3.5$  in and  $< 14$  in) (until 2007).

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**Gear description/method for fishing:** Small mesh drift gillnets are up to 6,000 ft (1,829 m) long and are set at the surface. This is generally a night time fishery with nets usually set around sunset and hauled around sunrise. The mesh size depends on target species and is typically 6.0-6.5 in (15-16.5 cm). When targeting yellowtail and barracuda, the mesh size must be  $\geq 3.5$  in (9 cm); when targeting white seabass, the mesh size must be  $\geq 6$  in (15.2 cm). From June 16 to March 14 not more than 20 percent, by number, of a load of fish may be white seabass with a total length of 28 in (71 cm). A maximum of ten white seabass per load may be taken, if taken in gillnet or trammel nets with meshes from 3.5-6.0 in (9-15 cm) in length.

**Target species:** This fishery targets primarily yellowtail and white seabass, and secondarily barracuda, with target species typically determined by market demand on a short-term basis.

**Spatial/temporal distribution of effort:** The fishery operates year-round, primarily south of Point Conception with some effort around San Clemente Island and San Nicolas Island.

**Levels of observer coverage each year<sup>†</sup>:** Observer coverage for 2002, 2003, and 2004, was 11.5%, 10.4%, and 17.6%, respectively. There was no observer coverage in this fishery between 2004-2009.

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\* The fishery is classified by analogy to other gear types or fisheries that are known to cause mortality or serious injury of marine mammals.

<sup>†</sup> Observer coverage levels include the latest information reported in the most current final Stock Assessment Reports (SAR).

**Management and regulations:** This fishery is a limited entry fishery with various gear restrictions and area closures managed by the CA Department of Fish and Game. Targeting tuna with this type of gear was effectively prohibited in April, 2004, under the Pacific Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan (HMS FMP).

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### **History of Changes on the LOF**

#### 2011 LOF:

- Added a superscript “2” after to denote that this fishery is classified by analogy to the Category II “CA halibut/white seabass and other species set gillnet (>3.5 in mesh)” fishery. The fisheries operate in similar areas and similar seasons, thus it is reasonable that either fishery may cause serious injury or mortality of humpback whales.
- Removed superscript “1” after long-beaked common dolphins (CA) in the list of species/stocks killed/injured in this fishery. The level of mortality and serious injury of long-beaked common dolphins no longer exceeds 1% of the stock’s PBR.
- Estimated number of participants reduced from 24 to 30.

#### 2008 LOF:

- NMFS proposed to elevate this fishery to Category I based on observer documented interactions with long-beaked common dolphins (CA) in 2003-2004. The draft 2007 SARs reported 17 documented takes, with the estimated annual mortality was 9 dolphins, or 82 % of PBR (PBR= 11). However, during the public comment period for the draft 2007 SARs, errors in the observer coverage were found. The correct levels of observer coverage for 2002, 2003, and 2004, were 11.5%, 10.4% and 17.6%, respectively. Based upon these observer coverage levels, the revised mean annual serious injury or mortality of long-beaked common dolphins (CA) in this fishery is 4.7 animals/year, which is 43% of the stock’s PBR. Therefore, this fishery remained classified as Category II.
- Removed the superscript "2" after the fishery in the Table 1 on the LOF. The fishery is no longer classified by analogy to other drift gillnet fisheries, but is classified based on takes of long-beaked common dolphins (CA). Therefore, added a superscript "1" after long-beaked common dolphins (CA) indicating that takes of this stock are driving the classification of the fishery.
- Renamed "CA yellowtail, barracuda, and white seabass drift gillnet (mesh size  $\geq 3.5$  in. and  $< 14$  in.)" to be consistent with the minimum mesh size allowed in this fishery as defined by the CA Fish and Game Code.

2007 LOF: Renamed from “CA yellowtail, barracuda, white seabass, and tuna drift gillnet (mesh size >3.5 in and < 14 in)” fishery to "CA yellowtail, barracuda, and white seabass drift gillnet (mesh size >3.5in. and < 14 in.)" fishery because targeting tuna with this type of drift gillnet was effectively prohibited in 2004 under the HMS FMP.

2006 LOF: Added a superscript “2” after this fishery in Table 1, indicating that the fishery is classified by analogy.

2005 LOF: Added CA sea lion (U.S.), long-beaked common dolphin (CA/OR/WA), and short-beaked common dolphin (CA/OR/WA) to the list of species/stocks killed/injured in this fishery as a result documented interactions in observer data obtained since 2002.