High Seas Pacific Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fisheries

Fishing gear type: Drift gillnet, longline, purse seine, pot, handline/pole and line, liners not elsewhere identified, and multipurpose vessels.

Current category: Category II- drift gillnet, pot, handline/pole and line, liners not elsewhere identified, and multipurpose vessels. Category III - purse seine, longline, troll.

Basis for current classification on the LOF:

The pot, handline/pole and line, liners not elsewhere identified, and multipurpose vessel components are classified as Category II due to the lack of specific information on marine mammal abundance and interactions with fisheries on the high seas.

The drift gillnet component is classified as Category II because it is an extension of the Category II "CA thresher shark/swordfish drift gillnet (≥14 in. mesh)" fishery operating within U.S. waters, and is not a separate fisheries. The gear used, fishing methods, and target species are the same, and drift gillnet vessels targeting Pacific HMS regularly cross into the high seas, and back, when fishing.

The longline, purse seine and troll components are classified as Category III because they are extensions of the "CA pelagic longline," "CA tuna purse seine," and "AK North Pacific halibut, AK bottom fish, WA/OR/CA albacore, groundfish, bottom fish, CA halibut non-salmonid troll" fisheries operating within U.S. waters, and are not a separate fisheries. The gear used, fishing methods, and target species are the same, and longline, purse seine, and troll vessels targeting Pacific HMS regularly cross into the high seas, and back, when fishing.

Current list of marine mammal species/stocks injured/killed:
Drift gillnet[*]*:* Humpback whale (CA/OR/WA); Long-beaked common dolphin, CA; Northern right-whale dolphin, CA/OR/WA; Pacific white-sided dolphin, CA/OR/WA; Risso's dolphin, CA/OR/WA; Short-beaked common dolphin, CA/OR/WA.
Pot: Undetermined
Handline/pole and line/Pole and Line: Undetermined.
Liners not elsewhere identified: Undetermined.
Multipurpose vessels: Undetermined.
Longline: None documented in the most recent 5 years of data.
Purse Seine: None documented.
Troll: None documented.

Estimated number of current participants[†]: Pot- 3; Longline- 85; Handline/pole and line- 30; Liners not elsewhere identified- 1; Multipurpose vessels- 5; Drift gillnet- 4; Purse Seine- 7; Troll- 258.

Take Reduction Teams/Plans that affect this fishery: Drift gillnet gear used in this fishery is subject to the Pacific Offshore Cetacean Take Reduction Plan (POCTRP) regulations (50 CFR 229.31).

Year added to the LOF: 2009

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[*] The drift gillnet component of this high seas fishery is partially an extension of the Category II "CA thresher shark/swordfish drift gillnet (≥14 in. mesh) fishery" operating within U.S. waters; the purse seine component is an extension of the Category III "CA tuna purse seine fishery" operating with U.S. waters; the longline component is an extension of the Category III "CA pelagic longline fishery," which does not operate in U.S. waters but lands catch on the U.S. West Coast; and the troll component is an extension of the Category III "AK North Pacific halibut, AK bottom fish, WA/OR/CA albacore, groundfish, bottom fish, CA halibut non-salmonid troll" fishery. Therefore, the list of marine mammal species killed/injured in this fishery is identical to the list of those injured/killed in the U.S. waters component of these fisheries, minus coastal stocks, because these marine mammal species/stocks are also found on the high seas and the fisheries remain the same on both sized of the Exclusive Economic Zone boundary. Therefore, the high seas components of these fisheries pose the same risk to marine mammals as the fisheries operating in U.S. waters.

[†] The number of vessels and participants operating in the Pacific HMS High Seas fishery do not necessarily represent additional fishers than those accounted for in fisheries operating within U.S. waters. Many fishers holding Pacific HMS high seas fishing permits also fish within U.S. waters and are included in the numbers of estimated vessels and participants operating within those fisheries. The number of participants listed represents only the number of permits for the high seas component of the fishery.

Category when originally listed: Category I- drift gillnet; Category II- gillnet, longline, trawl, purse seine, pot, handline/pole and line, seine-handline/pole and line, liners not elsewhere identified, and multipurpose vessels

Basis for original classification on the LOF:

The drift gillnet component of this high seas fishery was classified as a Category I because it is an extension of the Category I "CA/OR thresher shark/swordfish drift gillnet (≥14 in. mesh) fishery" operating within U.S. waters, and not a separate fishery. The gear used, fishing methods, and target species are the same, and longline vessels targeting Pacific HMS regularly cross into the high seas, and back, when fishing.

The gillnet, longline, trawl, purse seine, pot, handline/pole and line, seine-handline/pole and line, liners not elsewhere identified, and multipurpose vessel components were classified as Category II due to the lack of specific information on marine mammal abundance and marine mammal-fishery interactions on the high seas. Category II is the appropriate classification for new fisheries on the LOF for which there is little information on which to base a classification.

The troll component of this fishery is classified as a Category III because it is an extension of the Category III "AK North Pacific halibut, AK bottom fish, WA/OR/CA albacore, groundfish, bottom fish, CA halibut non-salmonid troll" fishery operating in U.S. waters, and is not a separate fishery. The gear used, fishing methods, and target species are the same, and longline vessels targeting Pacific HMS regularly cross into the high seas, and back, when fishing.

Estimated number of participants when originally listed: Drift gillnet- 5; Gillnet- 1; Trawl- 14; Purse Seine- 5; Pot- 8; Longline- 56; Handline/pole and line/Pole and Line- 18; Seine-Handline/pole and line- 1; Liners not elsewhere identified- 3; Multipurpose vessels- 9; Fishing vessels not elsewhere identified- 2; Troll-222.

Past names, if any: None.

Gear description/method for fishing: The Pacific HMS high seas fisheries are virtually the same as fisheries targeting Pacific HMS within U.S. waters. Authorized gear include surface hook-and-line (including troll, rod and reel, handline/pole and line, albacore jig, and live bait), harpoon (non-mechanical), drift gillnet (14 in (35.5 cm) stretch mesh or greater), pelagic longline, and purse seine (including ring, drum, and lampara nets). Pacific HMS incidentally caught by unauthorized gear may be landed under certain circumstances.

Target species: Pacific HMS fisheries target tunas (North Pacific albacore, yellowfin, bigeye, skipjack, and bluefin), billfish (striped marlin), sharks (common thresher, pelagic thresher, bigeye thresher, shortfin mako, and blue), swordfish, and dorado (i.e., dolphinfish) using several gear types. Species prohibited in Pacific HMS fisheries include any salmon species, great white shark, basking shark, megamouth shark, and Pacific halibut.

Spatial/temporal distribution of effort: The fishery management area for Pacific HMS covers U.S. waters from the U.S.-Mexico border to the U.S.-Canada border, and the adjacent high seas. The high seas components of Atlantic HMS fisheries are extensions of various Category I, II, and III fisheries operating in U.S. waters.

Levels of observer coverage each year[‡]:

Observer coverage for the Category III ''CA thresher shark/swordfish drift gillnet (≥14in. mesh)'' (between 20%-23% from 2000-2008), Category III "CA tuna purse seine" (no current observer coverage), and the Category III "CA pelagic longline" (mandatory 100% coverage since 2004) fisheries operating in U.S. waters extend into the high seas. Observer data are not available for the other gear types used in the Category II Pacific HMS high seas fisheries.

Management and regulations:

Fisheries targeting Pacific HMS are managed under regulations implementing the Fishery Management Plan for U.S. West Coast Fisheries for HMS, adopted in April 2004. The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) regulations (50 CFR 660, subpart K) address the target fish species as well as species protected by the Endangered Species Act and the Marine Mammal Protection Act. The MSA regulations lay out

[‡] Observer coverage levels include the latest information reported in the most current final Stock Assessment Report (SAR).

multiple restrictions for fishing for Pacific HMS with longline gear. Vessels fishing longline gear may not target HMS within U.S. waters. Targeting swordfish with shallow set longline gear or possessing a light stick on board the vessel west of 150° W. long. and north of the equator is prohibited. From April 1–May 31, longline gear is prohibited in the area bounded on the south by the equator, north by 15° N. lat., east by 145° W. long., and west by 180° long. Longline vessels must have a valid protected species workshop certificate onboard, along with safe handling and release tools for sea turtles and seabirds.

Along with the MSA requirements, drift gillnet fishing for Pacific HMS is managed under the MMPA through the POCTRP (50 CFR 229.31). The POCTRP regulations require multiple gear modifications from the May 1–January 31 fishing season, including a requirement that all extenders (buoy lines) be at least 6 fathoms (36 ft; 10.9 m) in length, all floatlines be fished at a minimum of 36 ft (10.9 m) below the surface, and all nets have operational pingers to a water depth of a least 100 fathoms (600 ft; 182.9 m). Also, all drift gillnet vessel operators must attend skipper education workshops before each fishing season.

History of Changes on the LOF

<u>2012 LOF:</u>

- Elevated the drift gillnet component of this high seas fishery as a Category II because it is an extension of the "CA thresher shark/swordfish drift gillnet (≥14 in. mesh)" fishery operating within U.S. waters, and is not a separate fishery. The gear used, fishing methods, and target species are the same, and drift gillnet and purse seine vessels targeting Pacific HMS regularly cross into the high seas, and back, when fishing. The portion of this fishery operating within U.S. waters was reclassified as a Category II in the 2012 LOF.
- To correct an error in the 2011 LOF, NMFS reclassified the longline component of this high seas fishery as a Category III because it is an extension of the "CA pelagic longline" fishery operating within U.S. waters, and is not a separate fishery. The gear used, fishing methods, and target species are the same, and longline vessels targeting Pacific HMS regularly cross into the high seas, and back, when fishing. The portion of this fishery operating within U.S. waters was reclassified as a Category III in the 2011 LOF, but the high seas portion inadvertently remained a Category II in Table 3.
- Removed the trawl component of this high seas fishery. There are no active HSFCA permits for this gear type in this fishery.
- Added humpback whale (CA/OR/WA) from the list of species/stocks incidentally killed/injured in the drift gillnet portion of this fishery. This stock was added from the portion of this fishery operating in U.S. waters (the "CA thresher shark/swordfish drift gillnet (≥14 in. mesh)" fishery). Since this fishery is an extension of the fishery operating in U.S. waters, the stock is also added to this fishery.
- To correct an error in the 2011 LOF, NMFS removed Risso's dolphin (CA/OR/WA) from the list of species/stocks incidentally killed/injured in the longline component of this fishery. This stock was removed from the portion of this fishery operating in U.S. waters (the "CA pelagic longline" fishery) in 2011, but was inadvertently retained in Table 3. Since this fishery is an extension of the fishery operating in U.S. waters, the stock is also removed from this fishery.
- Pot: Estimated number of participants was updated from 7 to 3.
- Longline: Estimated number of participants was updated from 75 to 85.
- Handline/pole and line: Estimated number of participants was updated from 25 to 30.
- Multipurpose: Estimated number of participants was updated from 7 to 5.
- Purse seine: Estimated number of participants was updated from 8 to 7.
- Troll: Estimated number of participants was updated from 271 to 258.

<u>2011 LOF:</u>

- Reclassified the drift gillnet and purse seine components of this high seas fishery as a Category III because they are extensions of the "CA thresher shark/swordfish drift gillnet (≥14 in. mesh)" and "CA tuna purse seine" fisheries operating within U.S. waters, and are not a separate fisheries. The gear used, fishing methods, and target species are the same, and drift gillnet and purse seine vessels targeting Pacific HMS regularly cross into the high seas, and back, when fishing. The portions of the fisheries operating within U.S. waters were reclassified as a Category III in the 2011 LOF.

- Removed short-finned pilot whale (CA/OR/WA) from the list of species/stocks incidentally killed/injured in this fishery. This stock was removed from the portion of this fishery operating in U.S. waters. Since this fishery is an extension of the fishery operating in U.S. waters, the stock is also removed from this fishery.
- Trawl: Estimated number of participants was updated from 3 to 2.
- Longline: Estimated number of participants was updated from 62 to 75.
- Handline/pole and line: Estimated number of participants was updated from 22 to 25.
- Troll: Estimated number of participants was updated from 249 to 271.

2010 LOF:

- Drift gillnet: Estimated number of participants was updated from 5 to 4.
- Trawl: Estimated number of participants was updated from 14 to 3.
- Purse seine: Estimated number of participants was updated from 5 to 8.
- Pot: Estimated number of participants was updated from 8 to 7.
- Longline: Estimated number of participants was updated from 56 to 62.
- Handline/pole and line: Estimated number of participants was updated from 18 to 22.
- Liners not elsewhere identified: Estimated number of participants was updated from 3 to 1.
- Multipurpose vessels: Estimated number of participants was updated from 9 to 7.
- Gillnet: Removed from the LOF. The HSFCA permit for this fishery expired and was not renewed.
- Seine-handline: Removed from the LOF. The HSFCA permit for this fishery expired and was not renewed.
- Fishing vessels not elsewhere identified: Removed from the LOF. The HSFCA permit for this fishery expired and was not renewed.
- Troll: Estimated number of participants was updated from 222 to 249.