

Science, Service, Stewardship



Highly Migratory Species Advisory Panel HMS Management Overview

April 3, 2014

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Goal of Presentation

- Brief update of recent actions
- Updates on previous AP recommendations
- Defer issues to be discussed later in meeting:
 - Bluefin tuna Draft Amendment 7
 - Bluefin tuna 2014 proposed specifications
 - Shark Amendments 5b & 6
 - HMS recreational issues
 - HMS Research Plan
 - National vessel monitoring system proposed rule
 - ESA potential listings
 - CITES implementation



Rulemaking/Operations Update

Since the September 2013 AP meeting:

- Published two final rules on VMS and final SHK specifications
- Published two comment period extensions for Amendment 7 on bluefin tuna management
- Held 11 public hearings total on Amendment 7 and consulted with NEFMC, GMFMC, and SAFMC
- Oversaw 13 workshops
- Conducted the HMS For-Hire Cost and Earnings Study

In 2014, so far:

- Issued 14 EFPs, SRPs, & LOAs
- Issued 5 shark research fishery permits; some changes this year
- Registered 97 HMS tournaments
- ~4,650 people receiving Atlantic HMS News



13-09 Rebuilding Program for Western Bluefin Tuna (WBFT)

- One-year rollover of 1,750-mt TAC (inclusive of dead discards)
 - Expected to allow for continued stock growth under both the low and high recruitment scenarios
 - U.S. baseline quota continues to be 923.7 mt
 - Total U.S. quota, including 25 mt to account for bycatch related to pelagic longline fisheries in the Northeast Distant gear restricted area, continues to be 948.7 mt
- Maintains school BFT tolerance of no more than 10% by weight
 - (U.S. 2011-2012 average was 6.3%; preliminary 2013 est.: 3.3%)
- Maintains 10% cap on underharvest carried forward (U.S. = 94.9 mt)



13-09 Rebuilding Program for Western Bluefin Tuna (WBFT)

- Calls on each CPC to prepare research plans to develop BFT fishery independent indices of abundance and share them by April 30 .
- WBFT CPC scientists will exchange views on the plans prior to the 2nd Working Group of Fisheries Managers and Scientists in Support of the WBFT Stock Assessment, in July 2014.
- Maintains quota transfer provisions (for cooperative research only) of up to:
 - 86.5 mt MEX to CAN; 8 mt UK to US; 8 mt FRA to CAN
- Prohibits the sale of recreationally harvested fish of any size
- Reiterates existing requirement that all vessels use a data recording system.



Bluefin Tuna 2014 (to date)

2014 Specifications

- Proposed rule will publish on April 4, 2014; comment period will close on May 5, 2014; conference call/webinar on April 16 from 2 to 4 p.m.

2014 Inseason Actions:

- General category daily retention limit of 2 large medium/giant BFT for “January” subperiod (78 FR 77362, Dec. 23, 2013)
- General category “January” subperiod closed March 21 (79 FR 15924, March 24, 2014)



13-05 Rebuilding Program for North Atlantic Albacore

- Continues the 2010-2019 rebuilding program
- Maintains annual TAC at 28,000 mt for 2014-2016
 - U.S. quota continues to be 527 mt
- Maintains:
 - Limit on underharvest that can be carried forward: 25% of initial quota (and clarified must be used within 2 years from year of catch)
 - Japan's bycatch limit of 4% of bigeye tuna catch
- Calls on the SCRS to continue development of limit reference points and harvest control rules
- U.S. quota will be implemented as part of Amendment 7



13-02 North Atlantic Swordfish

- Maintained TAC at 13,700 t through 2016; total allocated is 15,345 t
- U.S. North Atlantic swordfish quota unchanged (3,907 mt ww)
- Carry over limit for CPCs with quotas greater than 500 t decreased from 25% to 15%, beginning in 2015; all other CPCs = 50%
- 25 t annual transfer from U.S. to Mauritania to help them develop their swordfish fishery
- CPCs must submit fishery management plans by Sept 15 each year
- Retained U.S. ability to harvest up to 200 mt of quota between 5 deg. N & 5 deg. S
- Calls on the SCRS to continue development of limit reference point and harvest control rules



13-03 South Atlantic Swordfish

- Maintained TAC at 15,000 t through 2016
- U.S. South Atlantic swordfish quota unchanged (100 t)
- U.S. can carry over underharvested quota up to 100 t
- Annual transfer of United States underharvest to other CPCs unchanged, as follows:
 - 50 t to Namibia
 - 25 t to Cote d'Ivoire
 - 25 t to Belize



2014 Swordfish Specifications

Proposed rule on swordfish quotas should publish in spring

SWO SPECS	2013	2014
NSWO Base	2,937.6 mt dw	2,937.6 mt dw
NSWO Adjusted	3,559.2 mt dw	3,653.2 mt dw*
SSWO Base	75.2 mt dw	75.2 mt dw
SSWO Adjusted	75.2 mt dw	75.1 mt dw

* The 2014 NSWO adjusted quota increased because the 150 mt transfer to Morocco is eliminated



2013 ICCAT Recommendations -- Operations & Rulemaking

- Recommendation 13-10 on biological sampling of prohibited shark species
 - Will submit research plans for prohibited shark species sampling by Atlantic HMS observers to SCRS
- Recommendation 13-13 on Unique Vessel Identifiers for vessels on the ICCAT authorized vessel list starting January 2016
 - Working on domestic rulemaking to make HMS regulations consistent with ICCAT Recommendations on Port State Measures, Transshipment, and Unique Vessel Identifiers
- Recommendation 13-17 on eBCD
 - Working on rulemaking to require the use of the eBCD system, as part of the International Trade Data System (ITDS) rulemaking



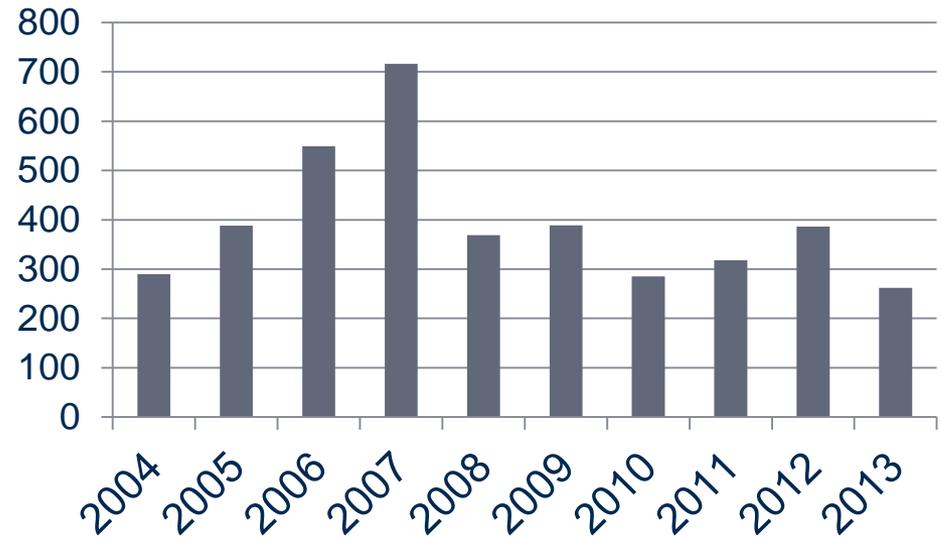
Shark 2014 Specifications

- **Final rule published November 26 (78 FR 70500)**
 - Opened all shark management groups on January 1, 2014, except that the aggregated Atlantic large coastal shark & hammerhead shark management groups will open June 1
 - Adjusted the Gulf of Mexico blacktip shark and non-blacknose SCS management group quotas based on underharvest in 2013
 - Adjusted the regional blacknose shark management group quotas over a five-year timeframe based on an overharvest in 2012
 - Adjusted the porbeagle shark quota to complete accounting for overharvests from 2013 and previous fishing years



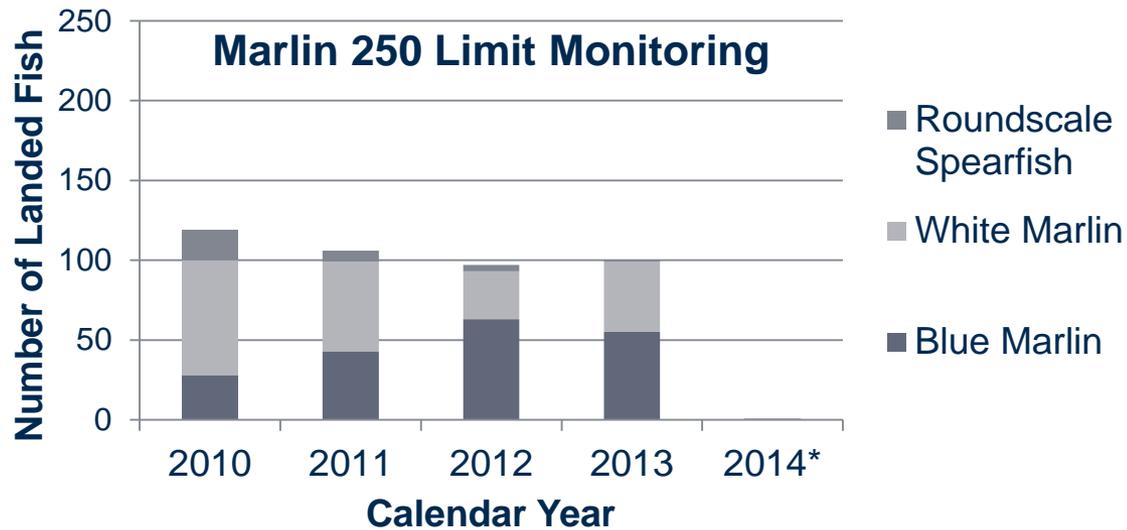
Recreational Swordfish Landings

Year	Non-tournament Landings
2004	290
2005	388
2006	549
2007	716
2008	369
2009	389
2010	285
2011	318
2012	386
2013	262
2014	40





Recreational Billfish Landings

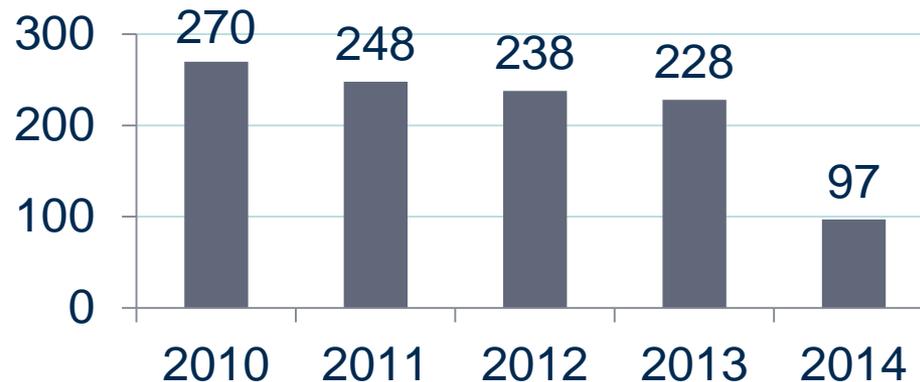


	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014*
Blue Marlin	28	43	63	55	0
White Marlin	72	56	30	44	1
Roundscale Spearfish	19	7	4	1	0
Sailfish	185	166	159	169	46

* Preliminary



Tournaments Update



Program Restructuring – Final Goal: Online Registration and Reporting

- Step 1 underway: Merging HMS and Recreational Billfish Survey databases
- How electronic can we go? Tourney Operator Survey says:
 - 63 respondents (87% 3+ years of operating tournaments)
 - Email registration reminders (58% prefer) – continue mailing USPS
 - Email confirmation (79% prefer) – option given on current form
 - Online registration (97% would)
 - Online catch reporting (95% would)

Please e-mail Katie.Davis@noaa.gov with further comments.



Electronic Dealer Reporting (eDealer)

- HMS dealers (~450) electronically submit all landings data* or weekly negative reports.
- HMS Mgmt. Division staff evaluate reporting compliance on a weekly basis and notify all dealers with late or missing reports via email and/or certified letter/ follow-up phone call.
- eDealer system generates monthly shark and swordfish commercial landings reports.

*except bluefin tuna



Litigation update

- **Humane Society of United States v. NMFS**
 - Alleges Agency violated Administrative Procedure Act by not putting porbeagle sharks on prohibited species list
 - Court granted summary judgment for the United States on Jan 29, 2014; Magnuson-Stevens portion of case dismissed; Endangered Species Act portion of case ongoing



Shark Conservation Act of 2010

- On May 2, 2013, NMFS published a proposed rule to implement the Shark Conservation Act of 2010 for sharks harvested seaward of state waters.
- NMFS is working with states to determine if their shark fin possession bans conflict with the MSA.
- Letters between NMFS and the States of California, Washington, and Maryland that document no conflict with MSA are available on the NMFS website.
- We continue to review proposed rule comments and coordinate with other States with laws banning possession of shark fins.



Shark Conservation Act of 2010 con't

- The Shark Conservation Act of 2010 includes smooth dogfish-specific provisions that exempt that fishery from the finning prohibition under certain limited conditions.
- NMFS is developing a proposed rule to implement these provisions in a separate action.
 - Proposed rule is expected late summer/early fall



Billfish Conservation Act of 2012

- Prohibits sale of billfish (marlins, spearfish, sailfish)
 - Does not include swordfish
 - Includes exemptions for US-caught/landed in Hawaii or Pacific Insular areas and foreign caught & exported or retained in Hawaii or Pacific Insular areas
- ANPR comment period closed July 3, 2013
 - 19 comments received; most supportive and asking for clarification/modification of exemption
- Proposed rule in development; expected fall 2014



Operations/Other



- Continued coordination with Councils & Commissions; ASMFC for sharks
- Louisiana greenstick gear study underway through FY14
- ICCAT submissions: BFT monthly landings, BET/YFT vessel lists, changes to HMS permitted vessels monthly
- ICCAT electronic Bluefin Tuna Catch Document (e-BCD) system in progress; rulemaking part of ITDS
- Caribbean Council closures – Abrir la Sierra, Bajo de Sico, Tourmaline Bank
- New website format (more at end)



HMS Workshops

Protected Species Safe Handling, Release, and Identification Workshops

- For Swordfish and Shark longline and gillnet vessel owners and operators
- Angler Conservation Education (ACE) continuing to conduct ~ 24 workshops annually
- Certificates expire after 3 years, so most attendees are renewing
- Schedule published quarterly

Atlantic Shark Identification Workshops

- For Atlantic Shark dealers
- Eric Sander continuing to conduct ~ 12 workshops annually
- Certificates expire after 3 years, so most attendees are renewing
- Schedule published quarterly



Pelagic Longline - 2004 Biological Opinion

- NMFS has requested re-initiation of Section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species Act
 - Sea turtle takes lower than specified in the ITS; however...
 - Mortality rate and total mortality estimates for leatherback sea turtles exceeded the specified RPA level
 - Changes in information about leatherback and loggerhead populations
 - New information about sea turtle mortality
- While the mortality rate measure needs to be re-evaluated, this does not affect the overall ability of the RPA to avoid jeopardy
- New BiOp is anticipated in future



Pelagic Longline - 2004 BiOp con't

During consultation, NMFS will:

- Increase education efforts with PLL fishery through protected species handling & release workshops and other outreach, including HMS Advisory Panel membership
- Encourage PLL fishers to:
 - Use whole finfish for bait
 - Avoid threading baits on hooks (putting hook through bait more than once)
 - Use larger hooks (>18/0) as much as possible
- Encourage avoidance of fishing with PLL in water $\geq 68^{\circ}$ F



Pelagic Observer Program Reporting Changes

- As a result of a referral by DOC Office of Inspector General, NOAA conducted an administrative inquiry of observer program policies and procedures, focusing on but not limited to violation reporting and observer safety.
- This investigation was concluded on in January 2013 and resulted in a number of required actions directed to NMFS' SEFSC Observer Programs.
- Effective January 2014, SEFSC Fisheries Observers are required to document and report any and all known or potential fisheries violations as well as Marine Pollution (MARPOL) violations to their observer program staff.
- SEFSC Observer Program Staff are required to provide this information to the appropriate enforcement authority.
- Neither the observers nor the observer program staff has any discretion regarding the reporting requirement; all decisions regarding subsequent investigation and enforcement actions are the responsibility of the enforcement authority.



Looking Ahead – 2014

- ICCAT support – spring & fall Advisory Committee meetings, Annual meeting (November)
 - Measures for bluefin tuna, sharks?, trade?
- Upcoming Proposed Rules:
 - 2014 Swordfish & Bluefin tuna specifications
 - Shark Conservation Act and Smoothhounds
 - Shark Amendments 5b and 6
 - International UVI, port state measures, transshipment
 - National VMS
 - 2015 Shark specifications
- Upcoming Final Rules:
 - Bluefin Tuna Amendment 7



Suggestions from Prior AP meetings Underway

- ✓ Improve dealer reporting, i.e., electronic reporting on a real time basis (*eDealer final rule/implementation*)
- ✓ Consider catch shares for sharks (*Amendment 6 discussion*)
- ✓ Adjust regulations to address bluefin tuna discards (*Amendment 7 discussion*)
- ✓ Work with states on recreational tagging programs (tag issuance, data collection, and enforcement) (*Pilot in MA, LPS redesign*)
- ✓ Conduct research in the Mid-Atlantic Bottom Longline closed area (*ongoing in shark research fishery*)
- ✓ Investigate electronic monitoring technology through pilot studies (*Bycatch Reduction Engineering Project*)



Suggestions from Prior AP meetings Under Consideration

- Permit-Related Suggestions
 - Re-issue lapsed permits; Use or lose permit requirement; Reopen Swordfish handgear permits; Allow permit leasing
 - ✓ Establish gear-based permits or Limited Access Privilege Programs (*Amendment 7 discussion*)
 - ✓ Create Swordfish General category permit (*Final Amendment 8*)
- Create placards for other HMS species



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 continue to require substantial agency resources

Looking forward,

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

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the NOAA Fisheries website. The address bar shows the URL www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/index.htm. The page features a top navigation bar with links for NOAA HOME, WEATHER, OCEANS, FISHERIES, CHARTING, SATELLITES, CLIMATE, RESEARCH, COASTS, and CAREERS. A search bar is located on the right side of this bar. Below the navigation bar is the NOAA Fisheries logo and the text "NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION".

The main content area has a secondary navigation bar with links: Sustainable Fisheries Home, Atlantic HMS Home, Species, Documents, News, Compliance, Related Topics, and Advisory Panels. Below this, a breadcrumb trail reads "Fisheries Home » Sustainable Fisheries » Atlantic HMS". The main heading is "Atlantic Highly Migratory Species".

The central focus is a featured article titled "Atlantic HMS Advisory Panel Meeting". It includes a photograph of a meeting in progress. Below the photo, the text reads: "On April 3-4, 2014, NOAA Fisheries will hold a meeting of the Atlantic HMS Advisory Panel. Read More...". To the right of the article title are four small numbered buttons (1, 2, 3, 4).

On the left side of the page, there is a vertical menu with the following items: Fisheries Home, About Us, Programs, Regions, Science Centers, Partners, Congress, Fisheries Resources, Educators and Students, News & Multimedia, and Get Involved. Below this menu is a sign-up section for "FishNews" and "Sign up for the Atlantic HMS News List".

On the right side, there is a "Latest News" section with the following entries:

- 03/24/2014 Notice of Initiation of 5-Year Essential Fish Habitat Review for Atlantic Highly Migratory Species and Request for Information
- 03/24/2014 Atlantic Shark Commercial Fishery Landings Update Through March 18, 2014
- 03/19/2014 NOAA Fisheries Closes Atlantic Bluefin Tuna General Category Fishery
- 03/18/2014 Atlantic Billfish Recreational Landings Update - 4th Quarter 2013

 A "More News..." link is located below these entries.

At the bottom of the page, a paragraph of text reads: "The Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Management Division manages a number of fish species in U.S. Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico waters known as highly migratory species (HMS). These fish—tuna, sharks, swordfish, and billfish—live throughout the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico and often migrate long distances. Because these species are on the move, the HMS Management Division is responsible for..."



Questions?

Thank you!