



NOAA
FISHERIES

National Bycatch Update

March 2016

HMS Advisory Panel Meeting



Topics

- New NOAA Fisheries web content
- Draft National Bycatch Reduction Strategy
- Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology (SBRM)



NMFS Bycatch Website



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Now Accepting Public Comment on the Draft National Bycatch Reduction Strategy

**Comment Period closes June 3, 2016*

Hot Topics

- **COMMENT NOW:** Proposed Rule: Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology
Comment period closes 4/25/2016
- **NEW:** National Bycatch Report Update 2
- **NEW:** Action Plan for Fish Release Mortality Science
- **NEW:** 2014 BREP Report to Congress
- 2016 BREP Funding Opportunity now open!
- Perspectives on Bycatch
- About the Bycatch Reduction Engineering Program

News & Multimedia

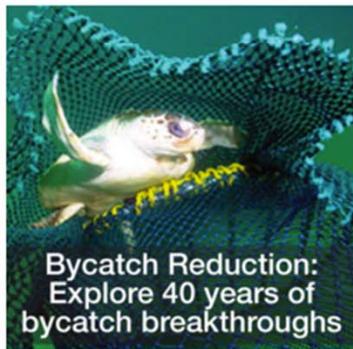
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www.fisheries.noaa.gov/sfa/bycatch



NOAA FISHERIES

Bycatch Breakthroughs

Bycatch Breakthroughs - A Brief History

NOAA Fisheries' 40 year commitment to addressing bycatch

NOAA Fisheries and our partners have over four decades of experience managing **bycatch** in U.S. fisheries. We've found success through a variety of innovative approaches. While bycatch remains a challenge in some fisheries, we continue to seek cooperative solutions to managing our ocean resources sustainably.

Here are a select few of the most important breakthroughs in bycatch reduction in U.S. fisheries over the last 40 years.

- 1972 - "Dolphin safe" movement helps usher in landmark protections
- 1982 - An industry first: fleet-wide bycatch limits
- 1989 - Introducing the TED (Turtle Excluder Device)
- 1994 - Creating a forum to develop bycatch solutions
- 1996 - Minimizing bycatch becomes a national standard
- 1999 - NOAA establishes National Observer Program

40 Years of Bycatch Reduction

The timeline illustrates key milestones in bycatch reduction:

- 1970:** NOAA Fisheries is established.
- 1972:** Congress passes the Marine Mammal Protection Act.
- 1973:** Congress passes the Endangered Species Act.
- 1972-1973:** New "Dolphin-Safe" standards for the tuna industry reduce dolphin bycatch by more than 99 percent.
- 1980s:** NOAA works with the commercial shrimp industry to develop "Turtle Excluder Devices" (TEDs).
- 1982:** Chinook salmon bycatch limits are put in place for foreign trawlers in the Bering Sea.
- 1989:** Federal regulations requiring the widespread use of TEDs go into effect.
- 1994:** Congress establishes the National Marine Mammal Take Reduction Program.
- 1996:** Congress amends the Magnuson-Stevens Act to require bycatch to be minimized to the extent practicable.
- 1997:** NOAA Fisheries begins requiring groundfish hook-and-line vessels in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands and the Gulf of Alaska to use seabird avoidance measures.
- 1999:** NOAA establishes National Observer Program.
- 1999:** NOAA Fisheries and partners prove streamer lines to be nearly 100% effective in reducing seabird bycatch.
- 2003:** Congress passes the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act (MSRA).
- 2004:** The MSRA requires establishment of a Bycatch Reduction Engineering Program.
- 2006:** Based on NOAA research, the U.S. begins requiring the use of circle hooks and finfish bait to reduce sea turtle bycatch.
- 2010:** "Weak" hook reduces bluefin tuna bycatch in yellowfin tuna fishery.
- 2010:** U. of Mass. Dartmouth School for Marine Science and Technology helps scallop fishermen share real-time data to avoid yellowtail flounder bycatch "hotspots."
- 2014:** With funding from NOAA's Bycatch Reduction Engineering Program, scientists use LED lights to reduce bycatch of threatened Columbia River smelt by more than 90%.

Perspectives on Bycatch

**NOAA FISHERIES**
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

40 YEARS MAGNUSON STEVENS ACT
A Journey to Sustainable Fisheries
#MSA40—LEARN MORE

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Bycatch Bites

*Bycatch—animals that fishermen don't want, cannot sell, or are not allowed to keep—comes in many different forms and affects people in different ways. We asked a few of these people for their perspectives on **bycatch**. Read them below.*



Steve Withuhn
Captain, Top Hook Fishing Charters
New York

"Fishing is about bending the rods, education and giving my customers a good experience. If I don't have product in the water, I'm out of business. I care about bycatch because you can't just push a button and make more fish. So I make sure conservation is part of the experience. That means we don't take more fish than we need, and make sure the fish we release to swim away, don't float away. One thing we do is use release tools to make sure fish pulled up from deep water survive. I'm in this for the long-haul."



Marydele Donnelly
Director of Int'l Policy, Sea Turtle Conservancy
Florida

"Many fisheries produce bycatch when they accidentally capture non-target species like sea turtles. Bycatch is a terrible waste, and it's bad for the health of the oceans. I've worked to reduce sea turtle bycatch for more than 30 years because sea turtles are magnificent animals in their own right and integral to healthy marine ecosystems. Today many fixes to reduce sea turtle bycatch are available but not all are used as extensively as they should be. One thing the U.S. has done well is to push the..."

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http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/stories/2016/02/bycatch_bites.html

Overview of the Strategy



INTRODUCTION

NOAA Fisheries' core mission is to promote productive and sustainable fisheries and improve the recovery and conservation of protected resources—all backed by sound science and an ecosystem-based approach to management. One key aspect of fulfilling this mission is reducing bycatch. This National Bycatch Reduction Strategy is intended to guide and coordinate our efforts to reduce bycatch and bycatch mortality in the coming years.

What is bycatch?

Bycatch occurs when fishing operations unintentionally catch and discard fish, cause unobserved injury and mortality, or interact with living marine resources such as marine mammals, sea turtles, seabirds, protected fish,



http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/fisheries_eco/bycatch/strategy.html

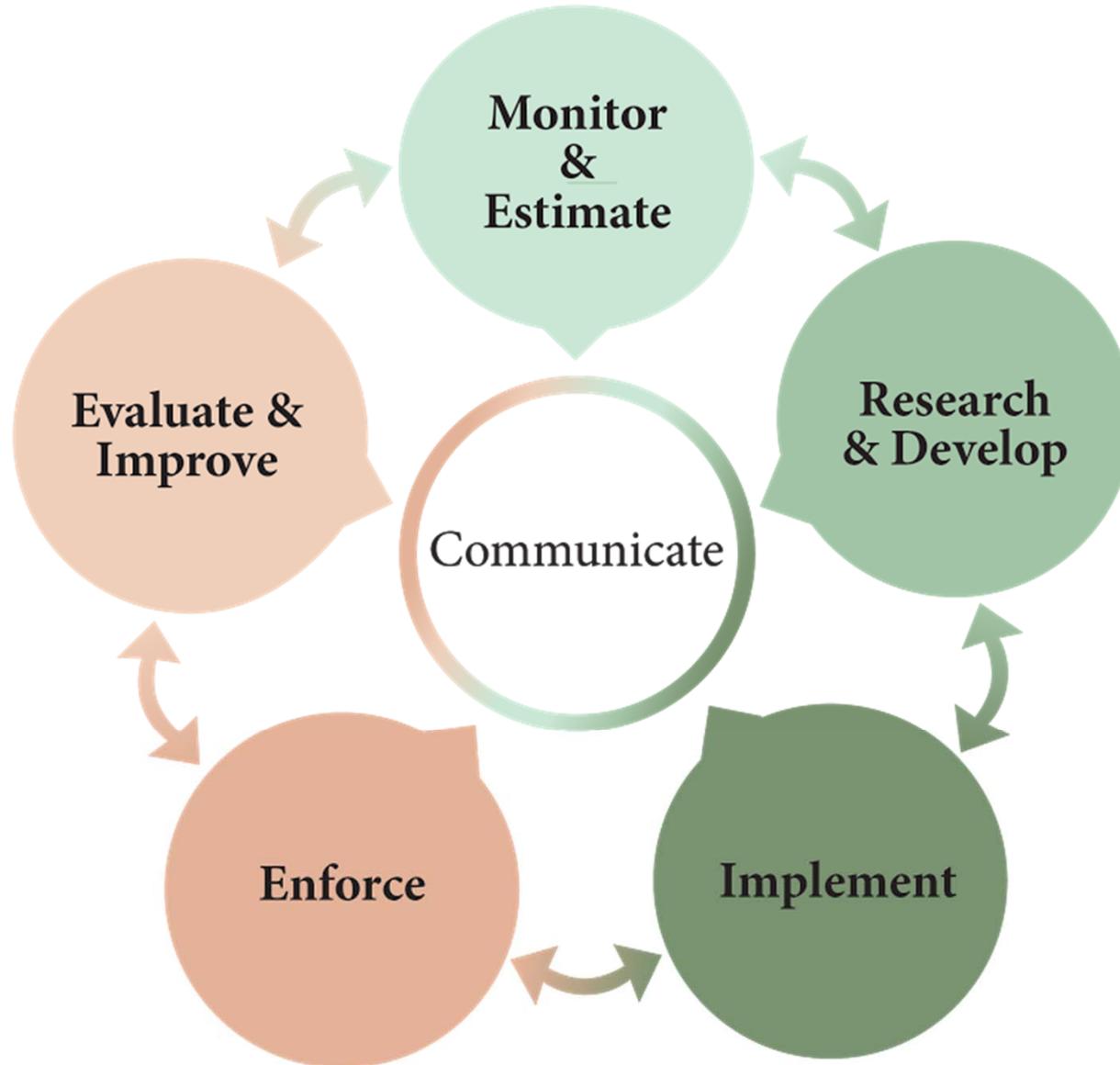
National Bycatch Strategy Goal

To guide and coordinate NOAA Fisheries' efforts under the MSA, MMPA, ESA, and other relevant mandates to reduce bycatch and bycatch mortality and encourage utilization of discards to maintain sustainable fisheries while conserving and recovering protected species.

What is Bycatch?

- Bycatch occurs when fishing operations unintentionally catch and discard fish, cause unobserved injury and mortality, or interact with living marine resources.
- “Reducing bycatch” refers to efforts that minimize bycatch or that minimize the mortality, serious injury, and impact of bycatch that does occur. This also encompasses efforts to encourage utilization of fish that may otherwise be discarded.

National Bycatch Strategy-Logic Model:



Objectives

1. Strengthen monitoring and data collection programs
2. Clarify bycatch research needs and support research programs



Objectives



3. Improve discard and take estimates
4. Improve management measures

Objectives

5. Strengthen coordination with law enforcement
6. Improve communication and engagement



National Bycatch Strategy Implementation

- National and Regional Action Plans will be developed in coordination with partners and stakeholders to identify priority actions.
- Action plans will guide efforts across the agency to ensure a coordinated, transparent effort to achieve goal of the Strategy.

National Bycatch Strategy Next Steps

- The draft Strategy is available online.
- Comments will be accepted until June 3, 2016.
- You can submit comments to nmfs.bycatch@noaa.gov

The screenshot shows the NOAA Fisheries website page for the National Bycatch Strategy. The page features a navigation menu on the left with categories like 'Fisheries Home', 'About Us', 'Programs', 'Regions', 'Science Centers', 'Partners', 'News & Multimedia', 'Fisheries Resources', 'Congress', 'Educators and Students', 'Get Involved', and 'Forms'. The main content area is titled 'National Bycatch Strategy' and includes a commitment statement: 'NOAA Fisheries is committed to minimizing bycatch in U.S. fisheries. While we've made great progress, there is more to do. We have developed a draft National Bycatch Reduction Strategy, and we want your input.' Below this, it lists six broad program areas: Monitor and Estimate, Research and Development, Implement and Manage, Evaluate and Improve, Enforce, and Communicate. A circular diagram illustrates the interconnected nature of these six areas. At the bottom, there is a 'Submit Comments' section with a text box and a 'GO' button, and a 'Public Webinars' section.

Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology (SBRM) Proposed Rule

- Magnuson Steven's Act (MSA) Section 303(a)(11) requires FMPs to establish standardize reporting methodologies to assess the amount and type of bycatch in a fishery.
- Purpose is to articulate an interpretation of the basic requirements of the SBRM provision of the MSA to promote transparency and consistency.

SBRM – Key Components

- Defining “standardized reporting methodology” as applicable only to the definition of “bycatch” in the MSA.
- Clarified procedures for establishing, documenting, and reviewing SBRMs under the MSA.
- Mechanisms for ensuring operational and implementation flexibility within the available budget.

Definitions

- *Standardized reporting methodology* means an established procedure or procedures used to collect, record, and report bycatch data in a fishery or subset of a fishery.
- “Standardized” procedures may vary from one fishery to another but must provide a consistent approach for collecting, recording and reporting bycatch data.

Purpose of SBRM

- To inform the assessment of the amount and type of bycatch occurring in the fishery for use in developing conservation and management measures that, to the extent practicable, minimize bycatch and bycatch mortality.

Contents of FMPs

All FMPs:

- Must clearly describe a standardized reporting methodology
- Must explain why the methodology will provide the data appropriate to assess the amount and type of bycatch occurring in the fishery
- May incorporate by reference existing analyses or other documents.

Required Factors

- Data resulting from the SBRM must be useful in meeting its purpose. This requires Councils to consider:
 - Conservation and management objectives related to bycatch
 - Data quality associated with the methodology
 - Bycatch characteristics of the fishery (e.g. amount and importance of bycatch in the fishery)
- Councils must also consider feasibility.

Additional Factors

- Councils may also consider:
 - Overall magnitude and/or economic impact of the fishery
 - Scientific methods and techniques available to improve bycatch estimates

Adaptable Implementation

- FMPs may include a process for adjusting the implementation of the methodology
- The process must specify the types of adjustments to be used (changes in intensity or frequency of data collection and reporting)
- Must describe limits of use such a process and how the Council will determine a reevaluation of the methodology is warranted

Review

- All FMPs must be consistent with this rule within five years of finalizing the rule
- Councils should periodically review SBRMs at least every five years

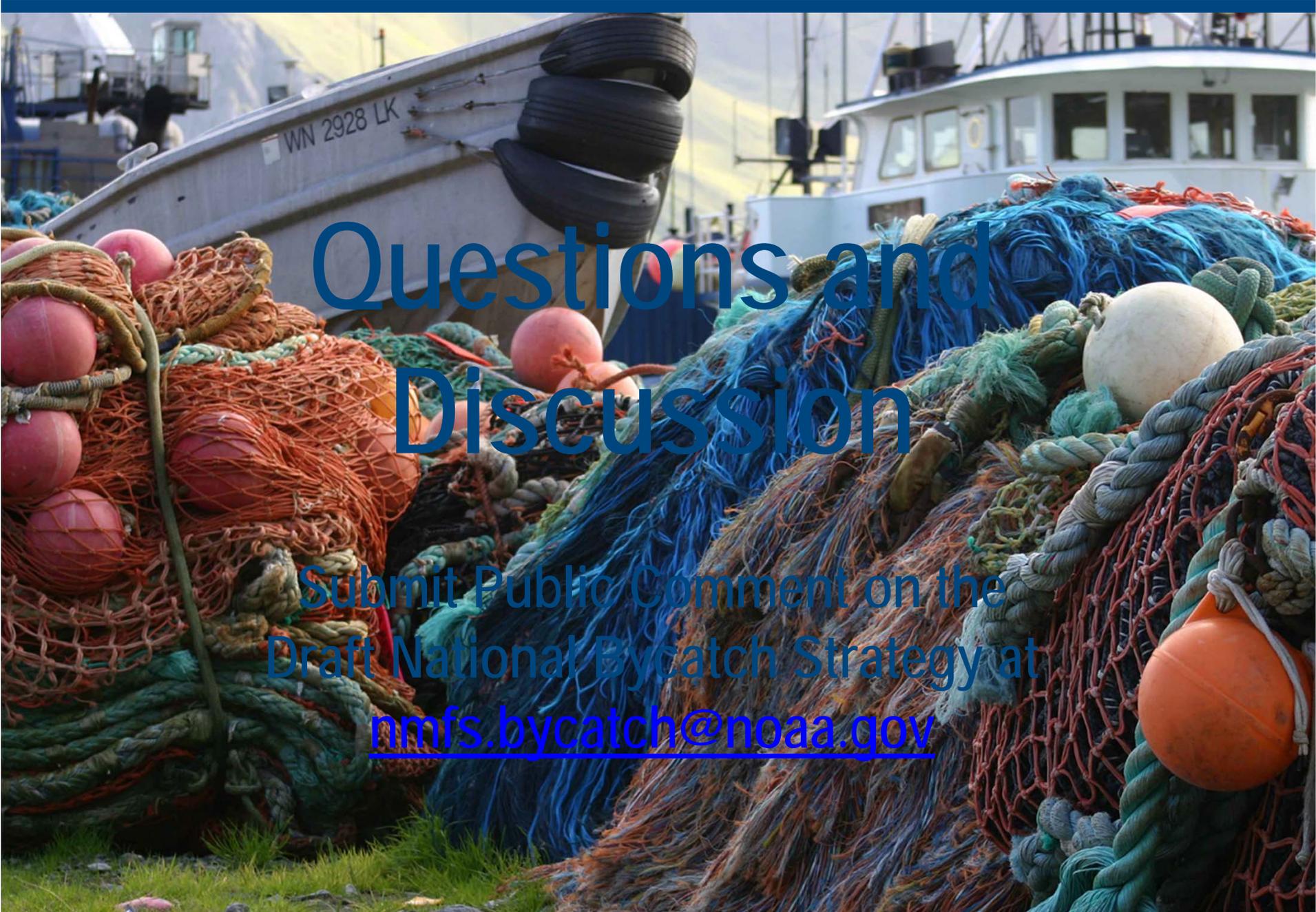
Expected Effect

- Improved clarity and transparency of the basic requirements to establish SBRMs under MSA
- Greater clarity about the policy choices made by the Council to establish an SBRM that is appropriate for assessing bycatch and that is feasible with available funding

Other bycatch activities

- Action Plan for Fish Release Mortality Science
- Bycatch Reduction Engineering Report to Congress
- Bycatch Reduction Engineering 2016 Grant Cycle (underway)
- National Bycatch Report – online update

http://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/sfa/fisheries_eco/bycatch/index.html



Questions and Discussion

Submit Public Comment on the
Draft National Bycatch Strategy at
nmfs.bycatch@noaa.gov

