

HMS AP Summary

April 15-17, 2008

Silver Spring, MD

Caveats

- This is only a summary
- It does not cover every point made by every AP member
- If we missed something you feel is significant, please let us know
- A more in-depth written summary will be coming

Upcoming Actions

- Scoping:
 - SCS Amendment 3
- Proposed Rules:
 - Greensticks/Harpoon/Turtle tether gear
 - EFH Amendment 1
- Public Hearings:
 - Pelagic longline permit/workshop proposed rule
 - International Trade permit
- Final Rules:
 - Shark Amendment 2
- Pelagic Longline Research
- Permit Reform Actions
- Caribbean Area Actions

HMS To Do List

- Provide information on Council training at the next AP meeting
- Put all AP presentations on the HMS website
- Send compliance guide to all permit holders, especially commercial and CHB sectors
- A few other things specific to issues in following slides (e.g., updates on PLL research, permit reform ideas)

AP Comments: Amendment 2

- Issues that need clarification:
 - closure likelihood of non-sandbar fishery
 - overall reduction in quotas
 - regions for SCS
 - state prohibition of dusky sharks for EFPs
 - amount of quota taken in state waters
 - research shark fishery (applications, ability to fish, meet research requirements)
- Need new assessments using all data
- Concern/praise for change in porbeagle
- Concern/praise for fins attached measure

AP Comments: PLL Update

- Would like frequent, quality controlled updates on data
- Concerns:
 - Not making as many sets as planned
 - Should have allowed more vessels to participate
 - Number of observers available - stretched resource
 - Hook size in research not used throughout fleet
 - Tracking days at sea
- Results:
 - compare results inside and outside closed areas now
 - compare to bycatch data pre-closure; don't raise the bar
- Interest in learning more about weak hook study
- Sea turtle population appears to be increasing
- Communicating regulations in appropriate language
- Possible new fishing method near oil rigs

AP Comments:

Tuna Longline/Workshop

- For and against re-issuing 40 LL permits
 - concern it's an economic benefit for those vessels (they'll just sell the permit)
 - newer entrants paid for the permit
 - permits will end up in FL handgear fishery; won't catch enough of the quota
 - those vessels were forced out of fishery
 - it's ok if they sell permit to someone else who will fish
- Concern about impact on shark ID workshop issue and ability of dealers to sell/buy sharks in a closed region
- Many issues linked to permit reform issue

AP Comments: Permit Reform

- Issue: Confusion with permits
 - One centralized permitting location
 - Standardized permit; standardized renewal time period
- Issue: Need to catch full swordfish quota
 - use it or lose it with hardship allowed (permits re-issued)
 - provisional permits - maybe combine with leasing
 - remove latent effort; re-issue permits to vessels that will fish
 - remove or change GRT restriction to allow for offshore fishing
 - monitor to ensure capacity/TAC not exceeded
 - change chartering regulations
 - issue the 40 but don't allow them to be sold
 - come up with a proactive plan to change based on stock status
 - review permits and status every 1-2 yrs
 - reserve category
 - match number of permits to the quota
 - improve marketing

AP Comments: International Trade Permits

- Lots of new, confusing acronyms
- Fin traders (import, export, re-export) should report
- Concern about U.S. re-exporters needing to increase steps in reporting because other countries are not tagging
- Need to extend comment period and hold more hearings

AP Comments: Caribbean Issues

- Working on outreach especially regarding sale of marlin
- Question about likelihood of enforcement
- Need to ensure whatever is done does not affect mainland vessels
- Consider giving Caribbean its own shark quota
- Concern that FADs are increasing and need to monitor fishing in all sectors
 - FADs should not be in billfish spawning areas
- Question on confidence in landing estimates
- Why aren't there dealers?

AP Comments: Tuna Update

- For and against removing regulations to allow fishermen to catch quota (e.g., allow fishing year round, increase PLL catch limit)
- Discussion on where and when fish of different sizes are in different areas
- Questions on number of permits and availability of effort data
- Are size changes a year class going through the fishery?
- Contact Dick Stone/Ron Salz to help with cooperative research on conversion factors
- Include number of dockside intercepts in SAFE Report
- Is there fishery independent data available?
- U.S. has cleaner fishery than other countries; don't want quota to go to other countries
- Are the trends indicative of bad things to come or of a changing fishery?
- Questions on large and small scale abundance levels and distribution

AP Comments:

Greenstick/Harpoon/Turtle Tether

- Concern about hook type and size
- PLL vessels should be allowed to use greenstick gear same as others (incidental catch requirements)
- Concern about harpoon on CHB
- Concern about J hooks allowance on Atl. Tunas Longline vessels and implications for blue marlin fishery
- Want more information on status of sea turtle bycatch on LL vessels and need for tether/ninja sticks
- Support for greenstick authorization for general category and CHB vessels

BOLOs

(Be on the lookout)

- Marine Recreational Info Program
- MSRA:
 - ACLs,
 - National Standard revisions,
 - NEPA,
 - IUU/bycatch certification
- ICCAT

Reminders...

- Travel vouchers: April 25
- Comments by:
 - International Trade Permit – May 5
 - Tuna Longline Permit/Workshop - May 12
 - Amendment 2 FEIS – May 19
 - Greenstick and Gear ~ late May

- THANK YOU!
- AP Members
- Staff

Have a safe trip home.