

HMS Management Overview

HMS Advisory Panel

April 15-17, 2008

Silver Spring, MD

Rulemaking/Operations Update

- Since the October 2007 AP meeting,
 - Billfish Tournament Circle Hook requirement effective
 - Published 3 proposed rules with 2 more in progress
 - Published 2 final rules
 - Continued work on Draft EFH Amendment 1
 - Released Final Shark Amendment 2 EIS
 - Prepared NOIs for Small Coastal Shark Amendment 3 & Caribbean Amendment 4
 - Issued 28 EFPs, SRPs, & LOAs to date
 - Oversaw 64 workshops to date
 - ~2,200 people receiving Atlantic HMS News to date

EFH Amendment 1

- Phase 1 of EFH 5-year review – Consolidated HMS FMP; presented updated data
- Phase 2 updates EFH and considers measures to minimize fishing impacts
 - NOI to prepare EIS published Nov 7, 2006
 - Scoping at March & Oct 2007 AP meetings
- Target for proposed rule fall 2008
 - Delays due to inclusion of data beyond EEZ, incorporation of new approach, staff resources

Shark Amendment 2

- New assessments for LCS, sandbar, blacktip, dusky, & porbeagle sharks
- NOI to prepare EIS published Nov 7, 2006; scoping meetings held Jan 2007
- Proposed rule & DEIS published July 27
 - Public hearings, Council & ASMFC mtgs Aug & Sept
 - Comment period extended until Nov 2; reopened until Dec 17
- FEIS delivered to EPA April 11
- Final rule ~ late spring 2008

- Florida fisheries disaster declaration request

Shark 2008 1st Season

- Proposed rule pub Oct 1; final rule pub Nov 29
- Closed all LCS fisheries until SHK A2 is effective
 - 1st and 2nd seasons
 - Accounts for extensive overharvests in 1st seasons of SATL in 2006/2007 & Gulf in 2007
 - 278% in SATL in 2006; -112 mt available 2007; 16 mt landed
 - 300% in GOM in 2007
- SCS and pelagics opened Jan 1; open May 1 with baseline quotas
- Litigation from Southern Offshore Fishing Assoc

Swordfish Revitalization

- Final rule published June 7, 2007
 - Increased retention limits for commercial incidental, Charter/headboat & Angling category permit holders
 - Eased PLL vessel upgrading restrictions & eliminated horsepower limit
 - Mailed permit holders letter with new upgrade limits
 - 45 days to submit written documentation of any discrepancies
 - 25 letters received
- Continuing comments that final rule will not address swordfish underharvests sufficiently
- Chartering permit request

Tuna LL Permit Renewal/ SHK Dealer Workshop

- Proposed rule pub Apr 11; hearings first week in May; comment period closes May 12
- Would eliminate “sunset” provision for Tuna LL permit but maintain requirement for SWO & SHK limited access permits
- Would require SHK dealers, if a proxy is sent, to be certified for each location *where sharks are received*

Bluefin Tuna 2008 Specs

- Proposed rule pub Oct 2; final rule pub Dec 31
- Established baseline quotas w/ 50% rollover cap
- General category June-Aug limit of 3 large medium/giant per day
- Angling category limit of 1 school and 2 large school/small medium per day
- Inseason action Feb 8 reducing large school/small medium limit to 1 per day
 - Lg school/Sm medium 2007 landings ~2.5x subquota
 - Angling category 2007 landings 175% quota

Bluefin Tuna

- Gulf of Mexico 100% observer coverage
 - PLL vessels; goal to obtain comprehensive view of stock & fishery on spawning grounds
 - March 9 – June 9
- International assessment June
- International mgmt measures major focus at ICCAT in Nov

International Trade Permit

- Proposed rule pub Apr 4; comment period May 5; hearings end of Apr
- Replace ICCAT bluefin tuna statistical document (BSD) with catch document (BCD)
- Require SHK fin exporters/importers to obtain ITP
- Require U.S. resident agent obtain ITP
- Adjust reporting deadlines; implement MSRA definition of import; harmonize tariff codes

Greensticks, Harpoon on CHB, & Sea Turtle Control Device

- Greensticks
 - FMP clarified use of greenstick gear; discussed at March & Oct AP meetings
- Harpoons on Charter/HeadBoats for BFT
 - Consider industry request to authorize harpoon gear for bluefin tuna on CHB
- Sea Turtle Control Device
 - Require sea turtle control device (previously recommended) in longline fisheries
- Proposed rule next week
- Final rule ~ summer 2008

Swordfish 2007 Specs

- Proposed rule pub June 18; Final rule pub Oct 5
 - U.S. TAC maintained at 3,907 mt
 - Carryover cap of 50% of original quota
 - Transfer 25 mt to Canada
 - Transfer provision of up to 15% TAC allocation
- International mgmt measures to be reviewed at ICCAT in Nov
- Starting 2008 specs to adjust for underharvest
 - Landings 26.5% of quota in 2007; 3.6% 2008 to date

Workshops

- Protected Resources Handling & Release
 - Pelagic & bottom longline & shark gillnet vessel owners & operators
 - Required for permit renewal starting in 2007
 - 46 workshops held to date
 - 998 (including 122 grandfathered) certificates issued
- Shark Carcass Identification
 - Shark dealer modification proposed
 - Required as of Jan 2008
 - 18 workshops held to date
 - 218 certificates issued
- Outreach
 - Certified mailing & press release when HMS FMP final rule published; directed mailings to permit holders quarterly; HMS workshops webpage; list serve notices; fact sheets

Exempted Fishing Permits

- 2008 to date – total 28
 - 14 EFPs
 - 3 Scientific Research Permits
 - 5 SHK display
 - 6 SHK letters of acknowledgement
- 2006 37 total; 2007 38 total
- All require some level of analysis

Pelagic Longline Research

- BWFA Closed Area EFP Request
 - Notice denying EFP request published Aug 9

- NMFS decision to conduct rigorous scientific research on bycatch reduction measures via contract
 - Comment period November
 - Notice announcing intent to conduct research pub Jan 4

- 4 trips completed to date; 1 underway

Litigation

- Blue Ocean Institute BFT closure in Gulf of Mexico
 - Administrative record contested; Agency prevailed
 - Briefing complete; awaiting Court decision
- Southern Offshore Fishing Assoc 1st 2008 shark season rule
 - In briefing cycle

Operations/Other

- SCS Amendment 3 NOI pub soon
 - Rebuilding plan for blacknose sharks
- Caribbean Amendment 4 NOI pub soon
- White marlin ESA listing not warranted
- 2008 tournaments registered: 159
- 2008 non-tournament landings (to date)
 - 91 SWO; 2 BUM; 1 WHM; 81 SAI
- HMS EN working group: February 2008

Suggestions from Oct AP meeting: Completed

- ✓ Provide ARC w/full suite of gear
- ✓ Include SWO rec landings in updates
- ✓ Provide AP meeting summary more quickly
- ✓ Provide clarification on 5% SHK finning ratio
- ✓ BFT Effort controls - discontinue RFDs

Suggestions from Oct AP meeting: Underway

■ Permits:

- Renew/issue lapsed permits
- Allow permit leasing
- Establish gear-based permits
- Use or lose permit requirement
- Reopen SWO handgear permits
- Create SWO General category permit
- Eliminate triple permit requirement for squid trawlers

■ Do time/area research

■ Create BLF recreational landings update

Suggestions from Oct AP meeting: Underway

- Authorize green-stick gear for tunas, inc. BFT
 - Consider some geographical restrictions for green-stick
 - Clearly define green-stick gear to minimize confusion
 - Review definition of longline to avoid problems with greenstick gear
- Authorize harpoon for use on CHB
 - Consider gear stowage provisions for harpoons on for-hire trips
- Require gears to restrain turtles; one may be sufficient
- Allow landings of blacktip, spinner, & bull sharks in recreational fishery
- Improve education for SHK recreational species ID
- Improve SWO marketing

Suggestions from Oct AP meeting: Under Consideration

- Allow chartering arrangements of foreign vessels to catch U.S. quota
- EFH: establish BFT HAPC in Gulf of Mexico & explore use of CPUE data
- Change CHB SWO retention limit to 1/person
- Improve dealer reporting, i.e., electronic reporting
- Require circle hooks on buoy gear
- Revisit and consider adjusting PLL incidental catch limits to reduce BFT dead discards

Conclusion/Looking Forward

- Rulemaking schedule is quite full
- Operational activities continue
- Your input is valued
- We need you to take the information from the AP meeting back to your constituents & give us feedback