

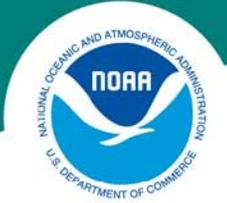
Science, Service, Stewardship



Swordfish Fishery Update

HMS Advisory Panel Meeting
September 30, 2008

**NOAA
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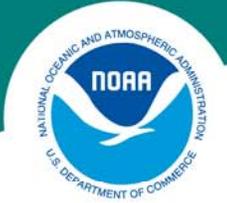
Outline

- History of the Fishery
- History of Regulations
- Quotas and Landings
- Fishery Statistics
- Recent Revitalization Actions: Regulatory and Non-Regulatory
- Looking Forward



History of U.S. Swordfish Fishery

- Pre-1960's: Until 1962, virtually all U.S. swordfish were caught by handline or harpoon; fishing occurred between N.Y. and Canada during summer months.
- 1960's – U.S. commercial fishery develops as spotter planes and pelagic longline (PLL) gear introduced.
- 1970's - Recreational rod and reel fishery develops in Florida, while commercial fishery continues to slowly grow. In 1971, FDA mercury restrictions constrain commercial landings until 1978 when mercury action level is increased.

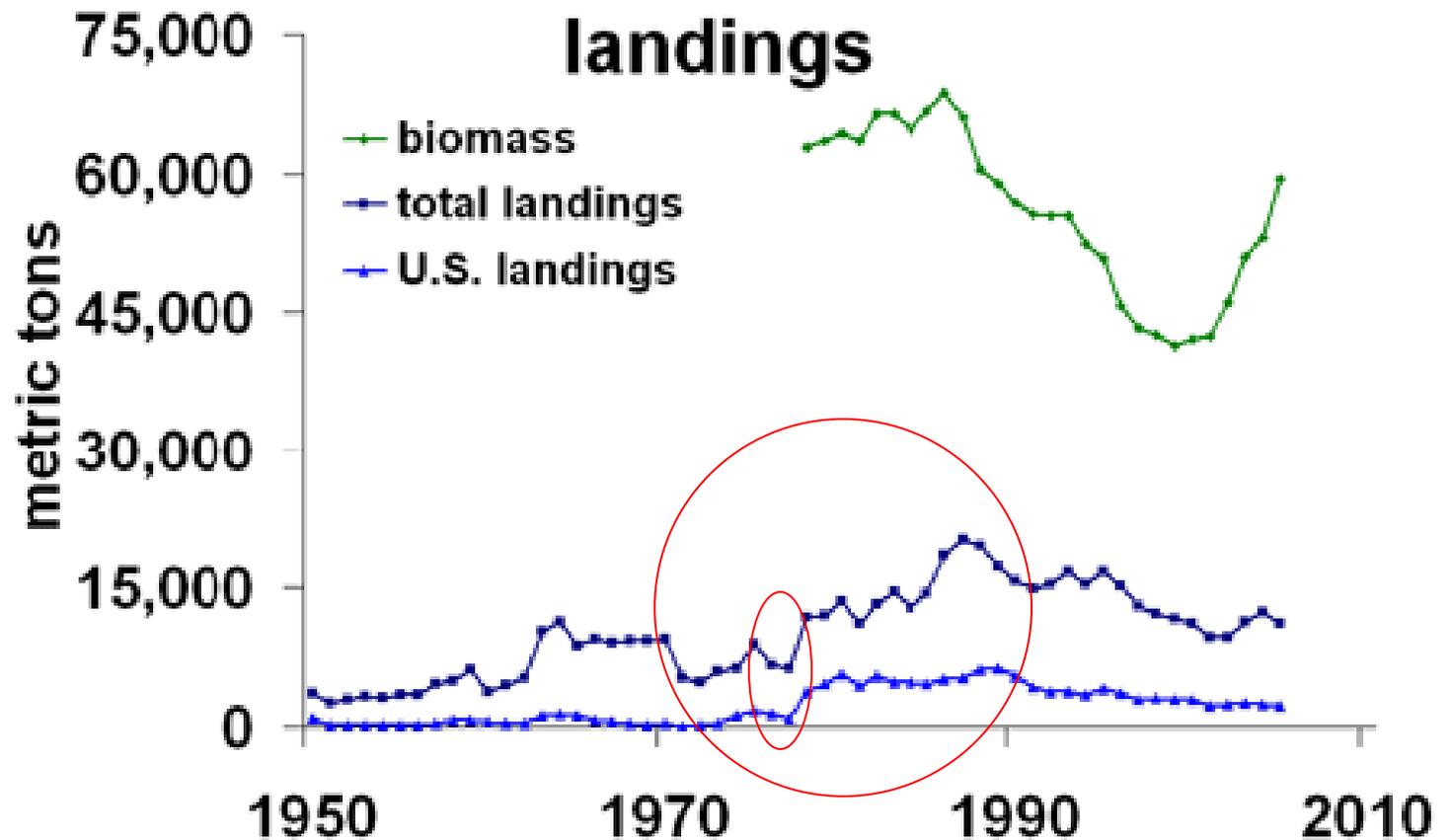


History of U.S. Swordfish Fishery (1980's)

- 1980 – 1985: Significant expansion of commercial fishery as larger NE vessels fish from Gulf of Mexico to FL Keys; Smaller FL vessels expand to Carolinas and Mid-Atlantic; Smaller vessels operate up and down coast; some vessels venture to Grand Banks. Recreational effort decreases significantly.
- 1985 – 1989: Domestic landings increase & then remain steady before peaking in late 80's. Foreign landings increase. Commercial permits required in 1984. First swordfish FMP implemented in 1985 (Joint Council effort, SAFMC took lead).



North Atlantic swordfish biomass and landings



Source: ICCAT 2006 Atlantic SWO Stock Assessment Report



History of U.S. Swordfish Fishery (1990's)

- Biomass continues to decline
- International ICCAT management begins (1990)
- Number of SWO permit holders peaks to 1,531 (1995)
- Landings begin to decline
- Heightened interest from NGOs (Give swordfish a break campaign)
- Prohibition on drift nets (1999)
- **HMS FMP developed (1999)**
 - Limited Access introduced
 - VMS and Dealer reporting
 - Called for NMFS to negotiate international rebuilding plan



ICCAT Recommendations (1990's)

- Rec. 90-02: Reduce mortality on fish more than 55 lb by 15%, prohibit landing SWO less than 55 lb w/ 15% tolerance
- Rec. 94-14: Established TACs for 1995 and 1996
- Recs. 95-10 & 95-11 : Min. size with 15% tolerance or abide by 119 cm min. size with no tolerance, over and under harvest measures
- Rec. 96-07: Established TACs for 1997, 1998, 1999
- Rec. 99-02: Established 10-year rebuilding plan, lowered U.S. TAC for next 3 yrs to 2,951 mt ww (2,219 mt dw)



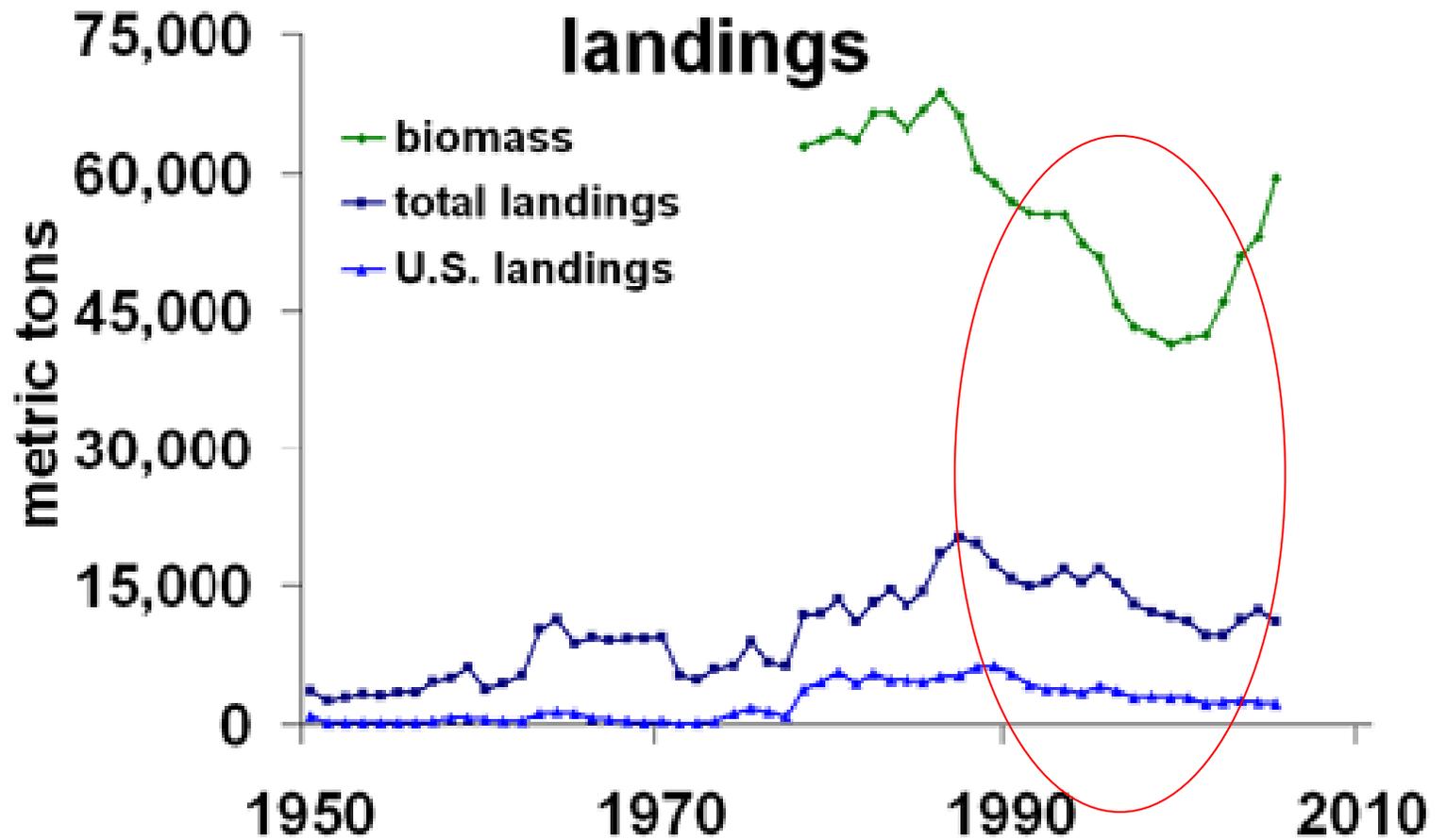
U.S. SWO Quota & Landings 1995-1999

Year	U.S. Quota	U.S. Landings*
1995	3,970 mm ww (2,985 mt dw)	4,026 mt ww (3,027 mt dw)
1996	3,500 mt ww (2,632 mt dw)	3,559 mt ww (2,676 mt dw)
1997	3,277 mt ww (2,464 mt dw)	2,987 mt ww (2,249 mt dw)
1998	3,190 mt ww (2,398 mt dw)	3,058 mt ww (2,299) mt dw)
1999	3,103 mt ww (2,333 mt dw)	2,908 mt ww (2,186 mt dw)

* As reported in SCRS/2006/015 Atlantic Swordfish Stock Assessment /calendar year



North Atlantic swordfish biomass and landings



Source: ICCAT 2006 Atlantic SWO Stock Assessment Report



History of U.S. Swordfish Fishery (2000's)

- 2000: Regulatory Amendment to 1999 FMP
 - Prohibited live bait in GOM
 - Closed three PLL areas to reduce bycatch of all species including undersized SWO: Desoto Canyon, Nov. 2000; Charleston Bump & Florida East Coast, March 2001.
- 2000 – 2002: Protected resources concerns
 - Portion of NED closed
 - Dip Nets and line cutters required



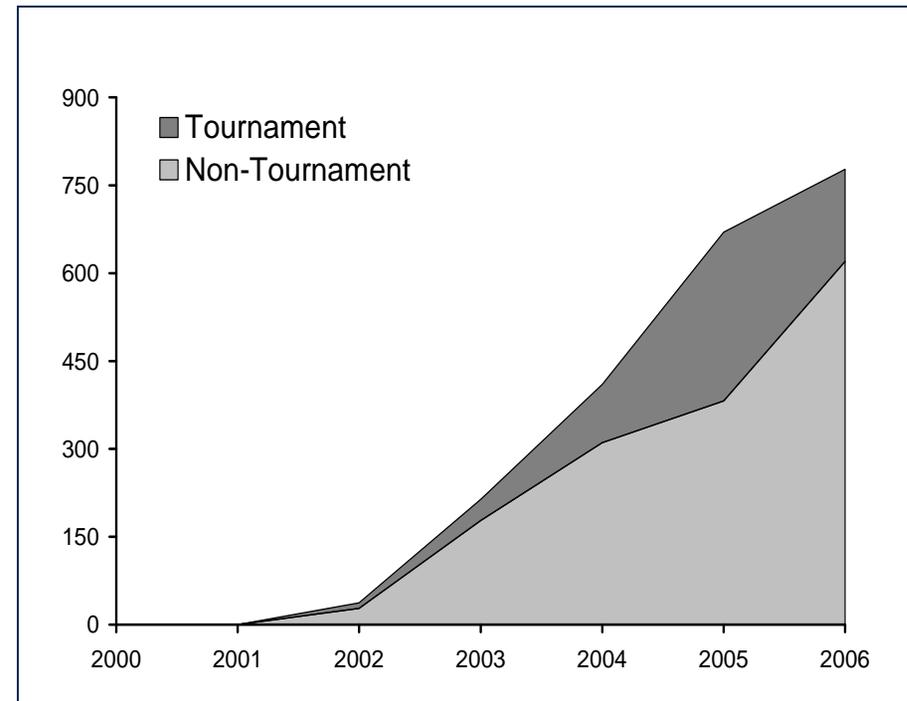
History of U.S. Swordfish Fishery (2000's)

- 2002: NED closure, corrodible non-stainless steel hooks, posting of sea turtle handling guidelines
- 2001-2003: NED Joint NOAA/Industry Research
- 2002-2003: Mandatory HMS Angling Permit & Recreational Reporting requirements



History of U.S. Swordfish Fishery

- Following Florida East Coast closure in 2001, recreational fishermen experience increased catches of SWO with rod and reel gear
- SWO tournaments were being held in increasing numbers in Florida

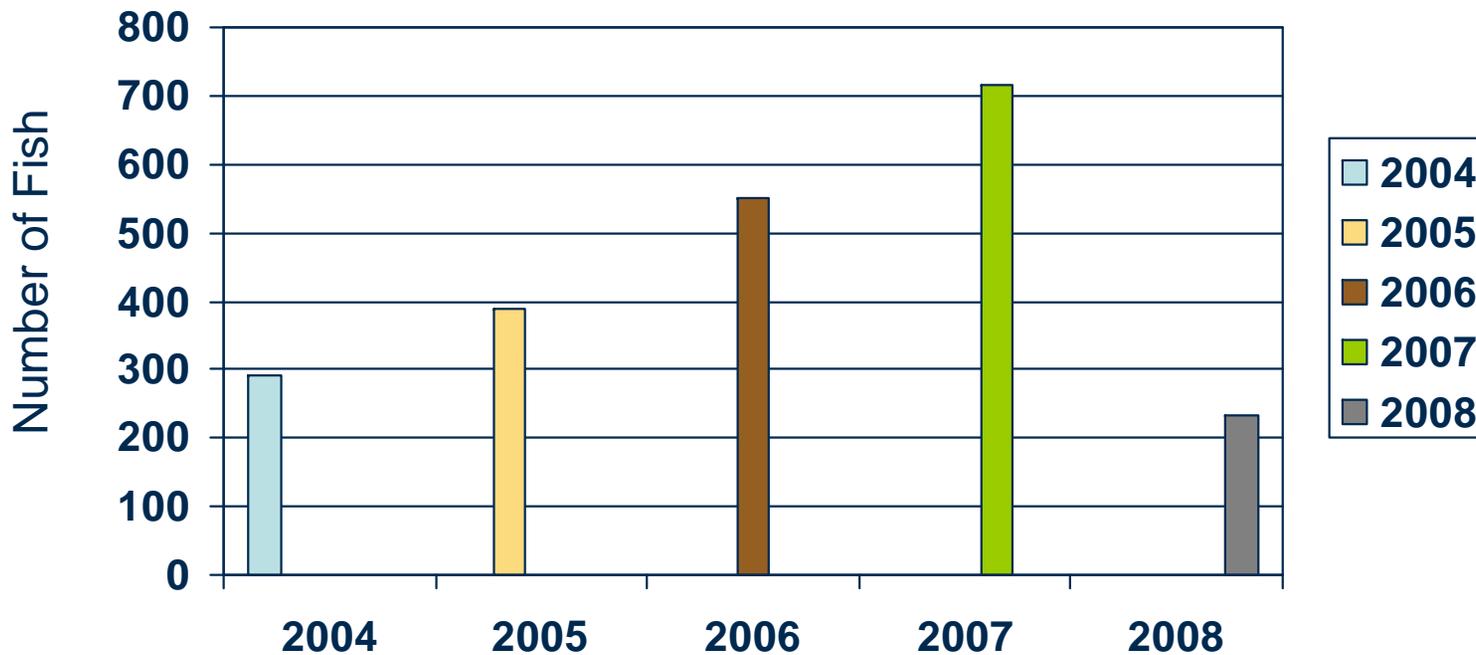


Number of swordfish reported landed by Florida recreational rod-and-reel anglers by Fishing Year. *Landings for FY 2002 and 2006 are incomplete.



History of U.S. Swordfish Fishery

- Recreational landings of swordfish in Florida increased from 2001-2007

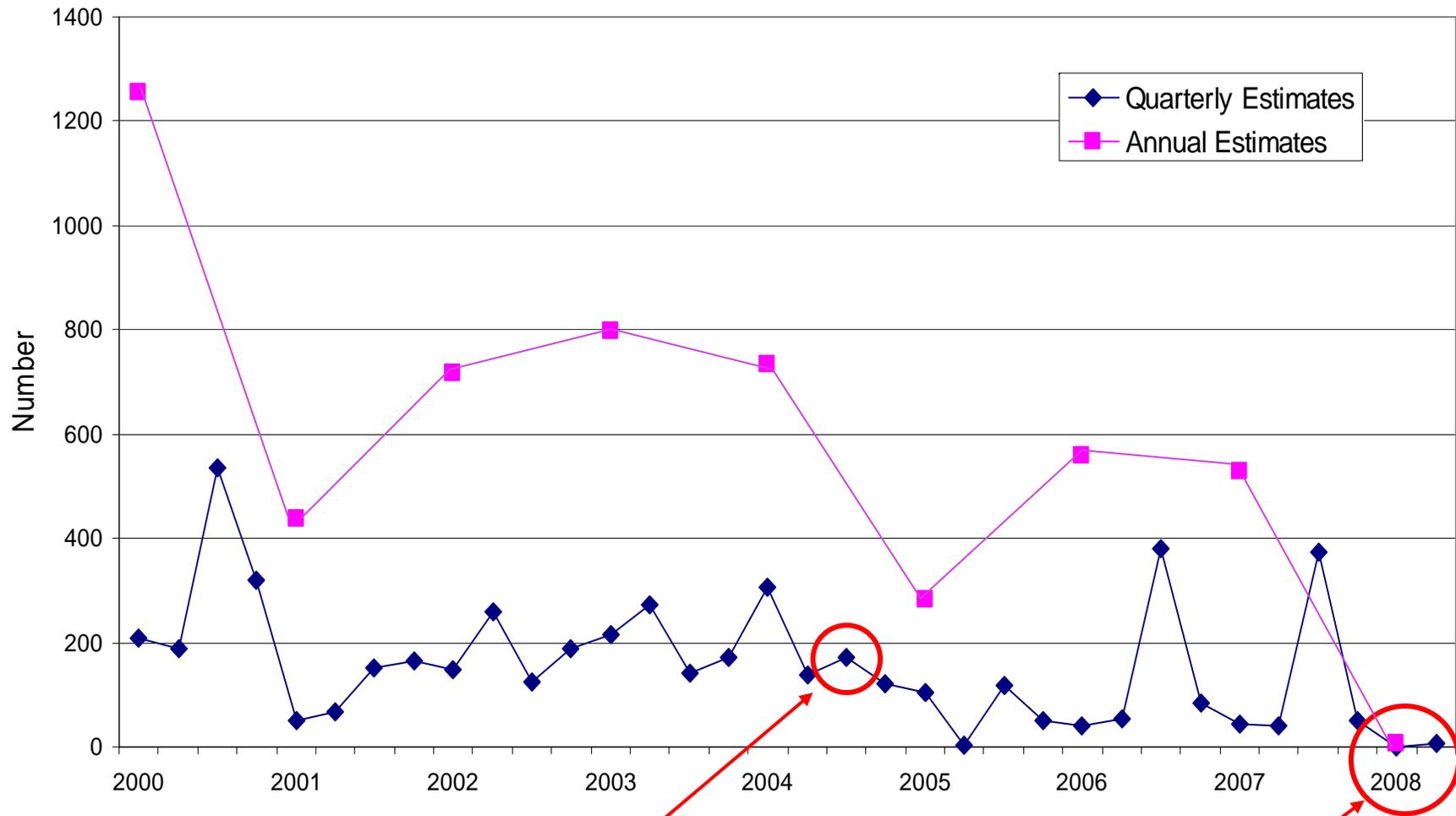




History of U.S. Swordfish Fishery (2000's)

- ICCAT 2002: SCRS concludes SWO biomass at 94% of Bmsy, stock is rebounding
- June 2004: PLL BiOp concludes that the PLL fishery not likely to jeopardize loggerheads, but still likely to jeopardize leatherbacks. Current ITS established
- July 2004: NMFS implements PLL circle hooks, handling and release tools, revised sea turtle placards and protocols, reopens NED w/ 18⁰ circle hooks
- ICCAT 2006: SCRS concludes SWO biomass at 99% of Bmsy, Total TAC should stay at 14,000 mt ww through 2008

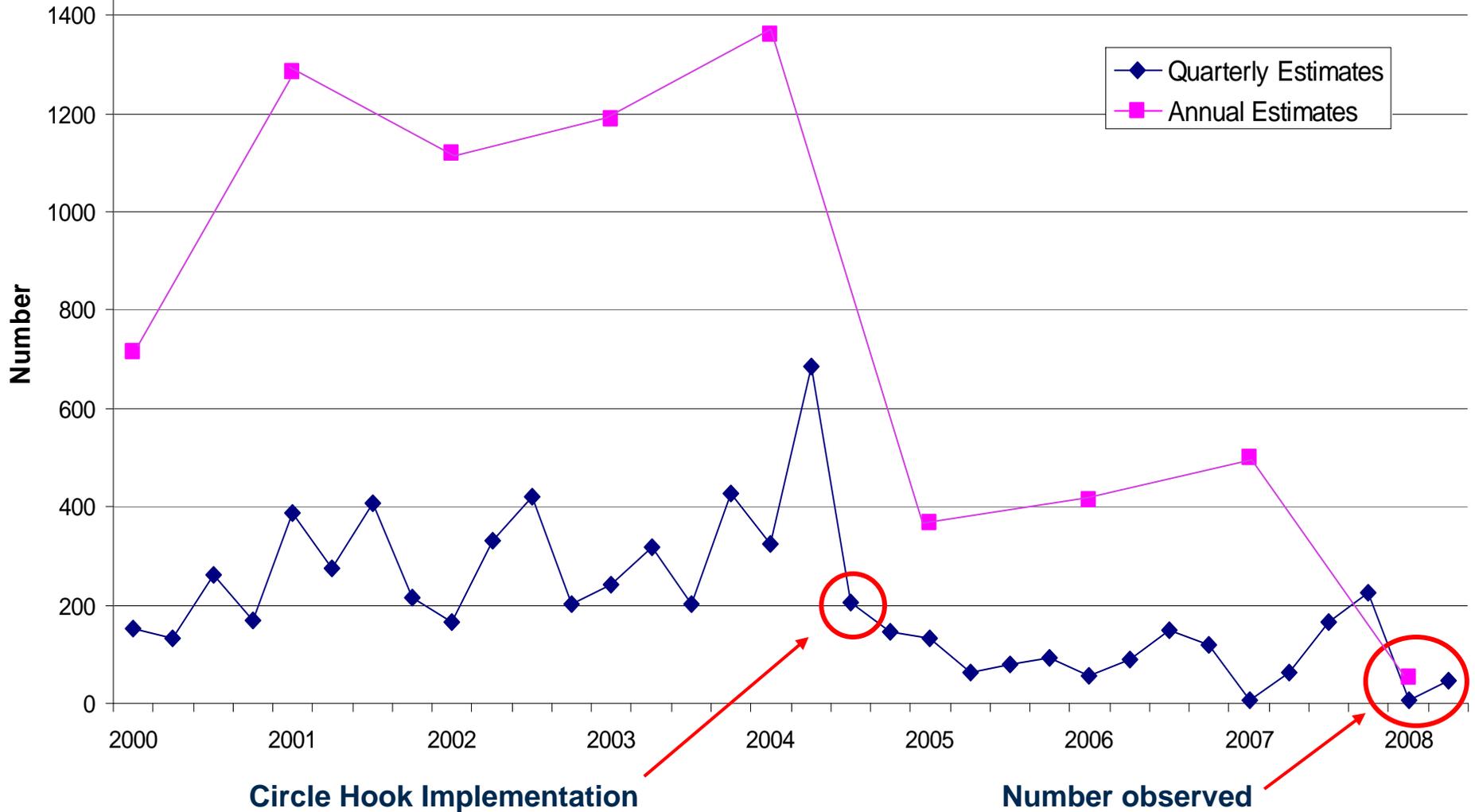
Estimated Loggerhead Interactions

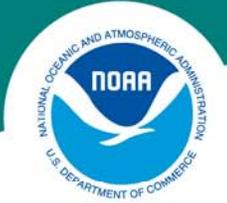


Circle Hook Implementation

Number observed

Estimated Leatherback Interactions





History of U.S. Swordfish Fishery (2006)

- Consolidated HMS FMP
 - Mandatory safe handling and release workshops for PLL and BLL vessel owners and operators
 - Shifted the fishing year to calendar year, January 1 – December 31
 - Authorized Buoy Gear in Commercial SWO fishery for Directed & HG permits only
 - Required recreational vessels with HMS permits to abide by Federal regulations regardless of where they are fishing



Recent Swordfish Research

- January 2008: NMFS announces decision to issue EFPs to conduct research in East Florida Coast and Charleston Bump PLL closed areas b/c currently available data for catch rates and bycatch interactions from within the closed areas are pre closure J-hook data
- Three PLL vessels authorized to conduct limited fishing activities with observer coverage
- Objective is to determine efficacy of closed areas under current fishing conditions



Recent Rulemaking

- June 2008: Pelagic Longline Take Reduction Plan (PLTRP) Proposed Rule
 - Establish Cape Hatteras Special Research area to identify fishing effort hot spots and bycatch
 - Mid-Atlantic Bight 20 nautical-mile upper limit on mainline length
 - Safe Handling and Release Placards displayed in both wheelhouse and working deck
 - Safe Handling and Release Workshops
 - Increase observer coverage to 12-15% throughout all Atlantic PLL fisheries that interact with marine mammals

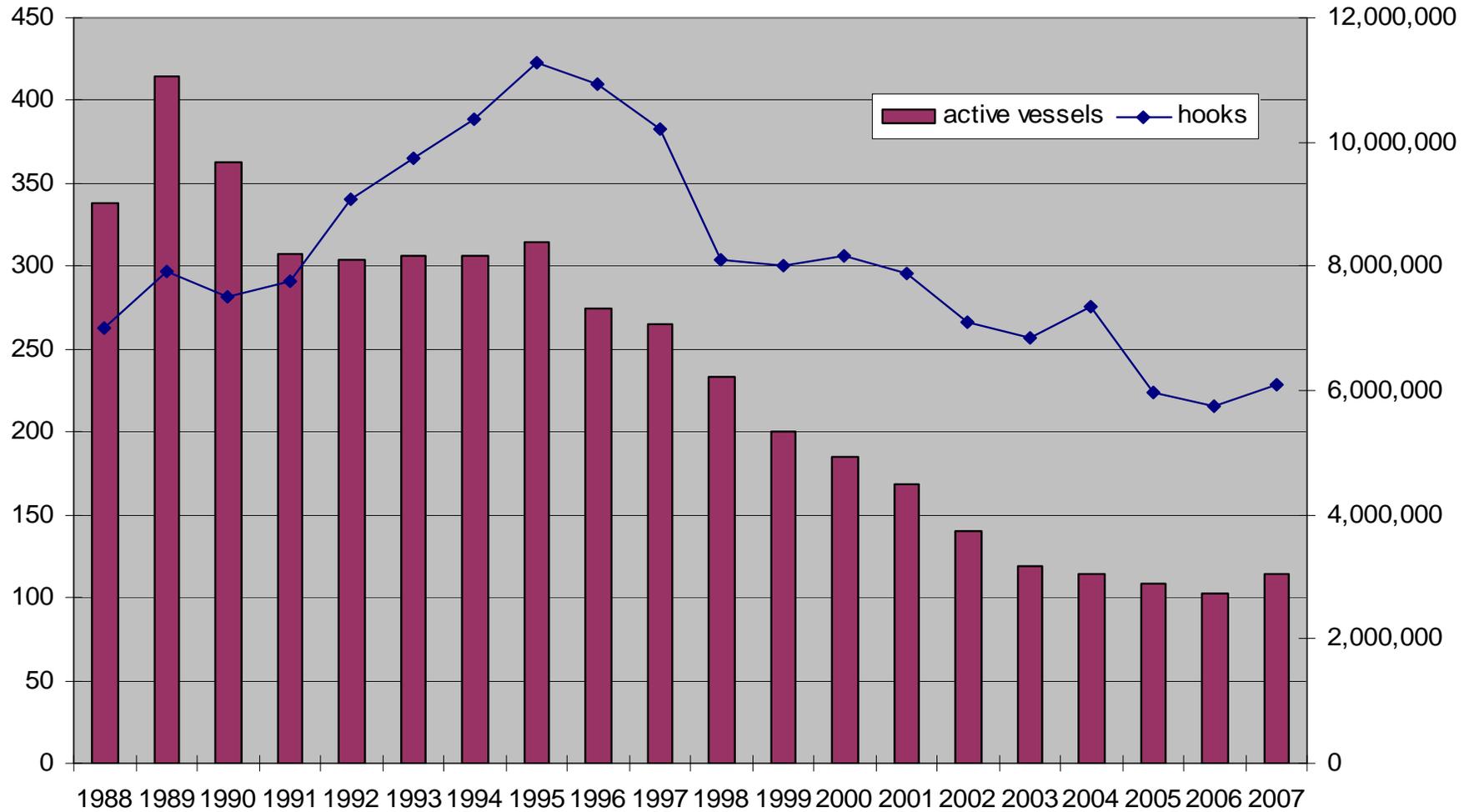
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North Atlantic SWO	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007 Prelim.	2008 To date
Baseline Quota	2,219	2,219	2,219	2,915	2,937	2,937	2,937	2,937	2,937
Quota Carried Over	0	549	1,479	1,348	2,275	3,359	4,691	1,468	1,468
Adjusted Quota	2,219	2,768	3,698	4,263	5,212	6,296	7,628	4,406	4,406
Landings	2,017	1,581	1,747	1,822	1,665	1,471	1,291	1,167	727 to date
Total Under-harvest	201	1,025	1,616	2,422	3,528	4,806	6,318	3,220	TBD

As reported by NMFS in mt dw. 2000 - 2006 landings reported for fishing year, June 1- May 31.

2007 landings for 7 month period. 2008 landings for calendar year, Jan. 1- through July 31

Number of Active Swordfish Vessels



Year

Source: 2007 ICCAT National Report

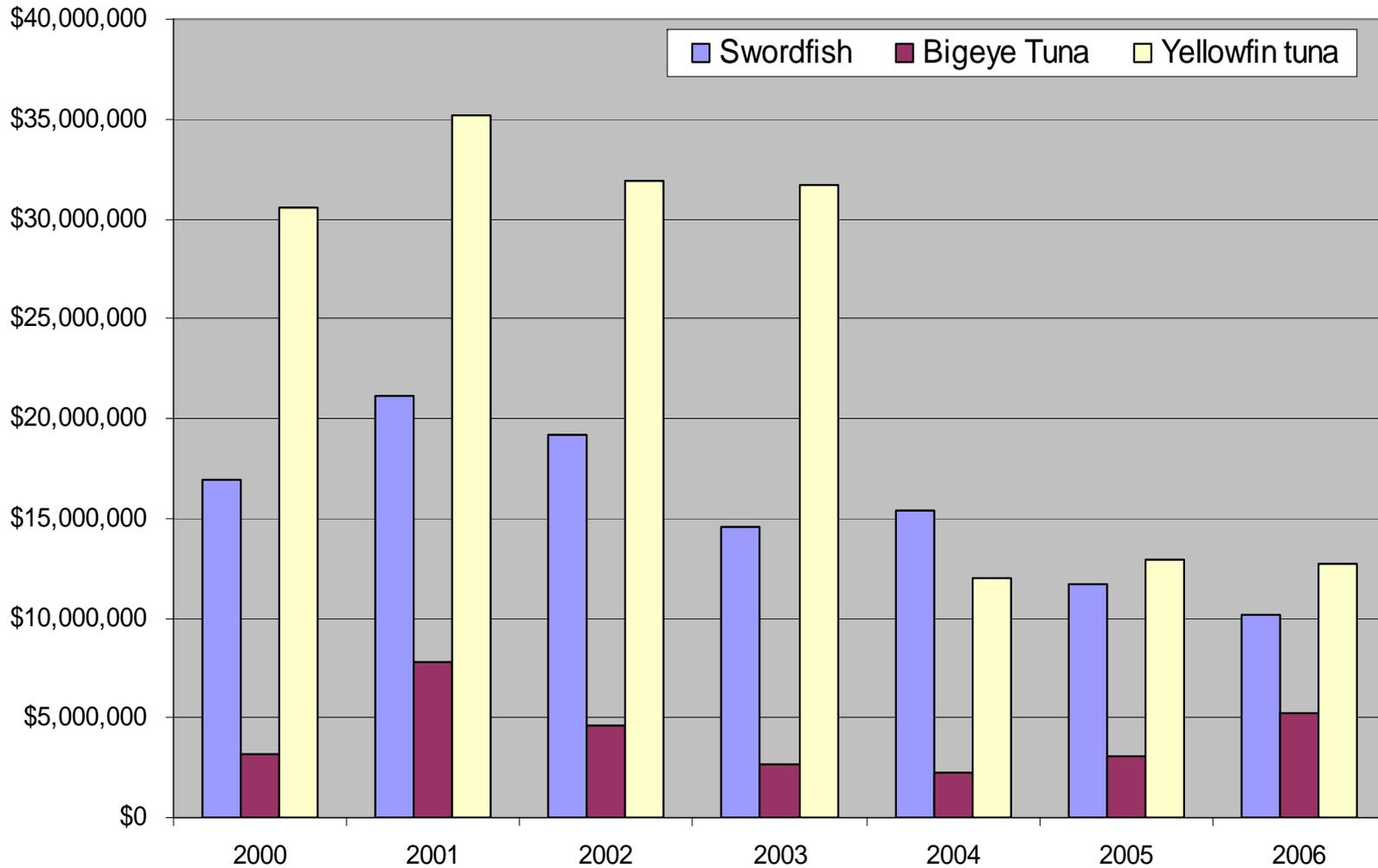


Average ex-vessel prices per lb for Atl. HMS across all areas (GOM, S.Atl., M.Atl., N.Atl.)

Species	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
SWO	\$3.50	\$3.74	\$3.19	\$3.13	\$3.56	\$3.60	\$3.58
BET	\$3.19	\$3.27	\$3.66	\$3.19	\$4.10	\$4.38	\$4.35
YFT	\$2.47	\$2.38	\$2.47	\$2.34	\$2.48	\$2.82	\$2.66

Source: 2007 HMS SAFE Report

Annual Atl. HMS Ex-vessel Revenues





Swordfish Imports

- Amount and value of swordfish products imported by the United States from 1999-2006.
- According to the data for the Atlantic most imports come from Brazil (48%), Canada (22%) and Uruguay (16%).

Year	MT	US\$ (Million)	Price per pound
1999	13,842	71.70	2.34
2000	14,314	85.57	2.71
2001	13,697	81.89	2.71
2002	15,711	88.26	2.55
2003	13,150	75.62	2.61
2004	10,726	70.95	3.00
2005	10,187	77.17	3.44
2006	10,334	75.63	3.32



Recent Swordfish Revitalization Actions (Regulatory)

- June 2007: Swordfish Revitalization Final rule
 - Amended vessel upgrading restrictions for PLL vessels
 - One-time upgrade restriction removed for all LAPs
 - Increased incidental and recreational retention limits
- July 2008: Final Rule allowed Atlantic tunas longline LAPs that had been expired for more than one year to be renewed by the most recent permit holder



Recent Swordfish Revitalization Actions (Marketing Efforts)

- NMFS participation at seafood shows (Boston, Brussels, New Orleans)
- Development of 1 page swordfish fact sheet
- Meeting with industry to discuss marketing
- Fish Watch and Fish Watch Fact Sheet
- Florida Marketing Efforts
- Industry Efforts: Brochures and Outreach
- Smithsonian Ocean Hall film clip on SWO



Ongoing Issues

- Efficacy of Bycatch Reduction Measures
 - Closed Areas
 - Live Bait
 - Circle Hooks/Bait restrictions
- Efficacy of Revitalization Efforts
 - Marketing
 - Regulatory actions



Looking Forward

- 2008 Annual ICCAT Meeting: SWO Recommendation 06-02 expires
- 2008 SWO Specifications and Vessel Chartering
- 2009 SCRS Stock Assessment
- PLTRP Final Rule
- Future Actions???

