

NOAA
FISHERIES

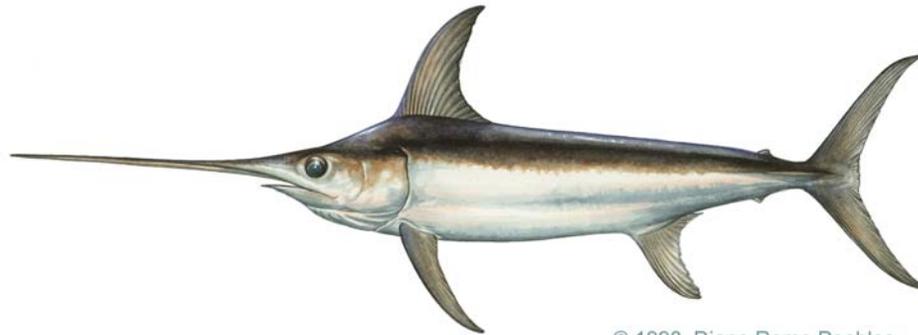
Sustainable
Fisheries

HMS Advisory Panel Wrap-Up

Fall 2016 HMS AP Meeting

September 8, 2016

Comments from Overview



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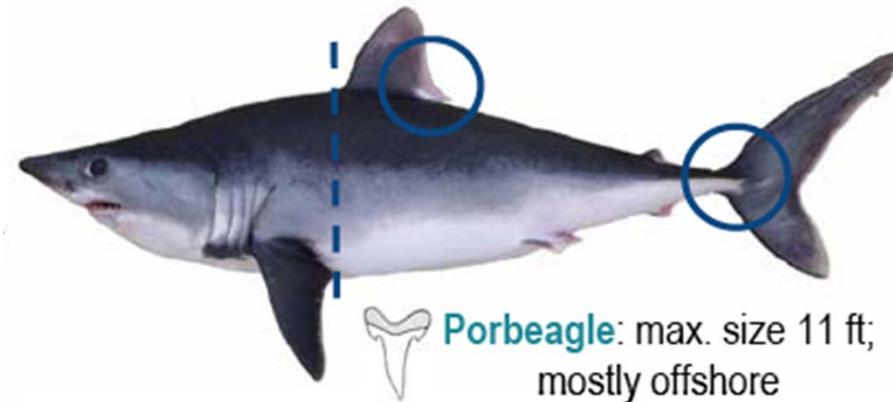
Swordfish landings, underreporting, and illegal sale:

- Recreational non-reporting of SWO - how do we fix this?
- Make a note in presentation that numbers are self-reported
- Commercial reporting is closely monitored; recreational reporting is an important issue
- Support for tagging program for landed SWO
 - NC increased daytime fishing (using deep dropping technique) & have called TBF supporting tagging

Comments from Overview

HMS News

- Make HMS News opt-in/opt-out when buying an HMS permit



Porbeagle Rule

- Need better explanation of reasons why anglers need to pick between keeping a porbeagle or tuna

General Comments from Day 1 Intro

Response to Question: Penalty for not returning a tag?

50 CFR 635.71 – Prohibitions

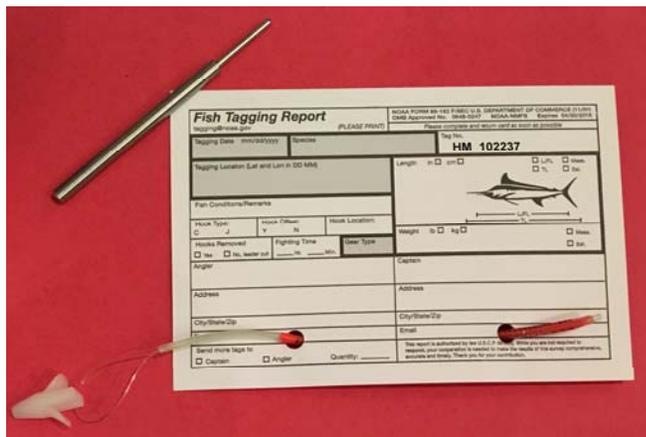
(a) *General. It is unlawful for any person or vessel subject to the jurisdiction of the United States to:*

(9) Fail to report the catching of any Atlantic HMS to which a conventional tag has been affixed under a tag and release program... (20) *Fail to report the retention of an Atlantic HMS that has an archival tag.*

GC Summary Settlement Schedule: <http://www.gc.noaa.gov/enforce-office3.html>

“Failure to report taking of Atlantic tuna tagged under a tag and release program”

- \$250 for 1st offense \$500 for 2nd offense



Dusky Shark Management



SEDAR 21 UPDATE

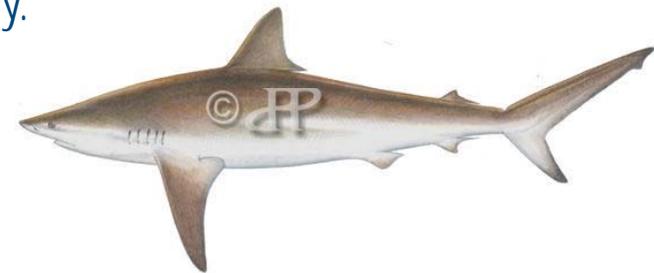
Concern about indices of relative abundance

- Factors such as climate change and distribution shifts may impact results, particularly in fixed station surveys
- Results may indicate shifts in fishing practices (as a result of prohibition, closed areas, bycatch avoidance, and other management measures) and not abundance
- Number of NE LL sets have decreased; overall number of dusky sharks in the survey have increased over time

Concern that results will lead to further reductions in the fishery.

Lots of questions about the assessment. Concerns about...

- Overall uncertainty and its impact on projections
- Overall catch recommended by the assessment
- The handling of data points that do not match the model

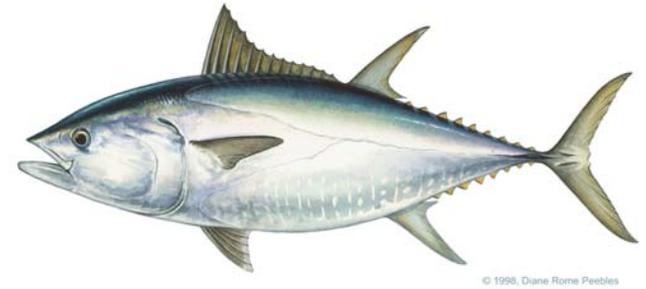


Request for new assessment (or at least a standard) to consider these concerns, updated life history, straddling stocks, data-poor methods, and new research (e.g., Dr. Sulikowski's post-release mortality cooperative research)

NOTES

- Stock assessment update: <http://sedarweb.org/sedar-21u> - addendum posted in a couple of weeks
- Draft Amendment 5b proposed rule publishes next month - HMS AP mtg in early Dec (date TBD)

Bluefin Tuna Management



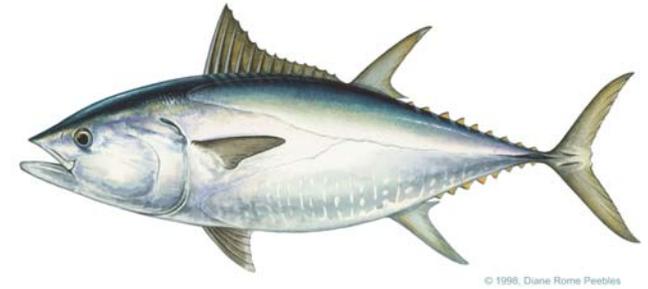
Catch Reporting

- Reporting non-compliance: When is it an enforcement issue vs. an educational one?
- Some technical issues remain (e.g., reporting by phone after office hours)
- Seek opportunities to streamline reporting efforts underway by multiple entities (states, councils), especially for for-hire vessels
- OLE officers in the field conducting outreach
- Re: PLL reporting discrepancies (VTR vs. dealer), note trips do not coincide with month start/end, so a lag is to be expected

Retention limits

- Appreciated the 3 school-size BFT limit for Charter/Headboats. May have helped convert potential discards to landings. Helpful for booking clients.

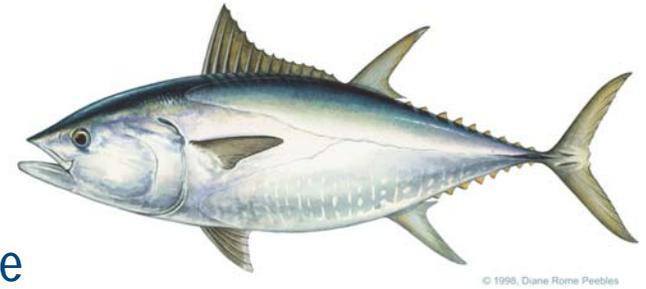
Bluefin Tuna Management



Individual Bluefin Quota (PLL)

- Anxiety diminishing re: leasing, but access is still a concern
- IBQ Inseason Transfer Proposed Rule? Could provide more quota at beginning of year
 - Value of BFT highest Jan-March, maximize Optimum Yield for the PLL fishery
 - Timing is important (pro or con, depending on location/timing of PLL activity)
 - Concern that NMFS might use the smaller # of active vessels to justify transferring a smaller amount of quota inseason
- Some question about how “fishing activity” would be defined and if providing more quota incentivizes inactive vessels to become active
- Good to provide sufficient IBQ (e.g., 721 vs. 551 lb ww) to realistically allow another fish
- Question about designation (GoM, ATL); appreciate not “breaking the pie into a million pieces”
- Count straddle-landings (Dec-Jan) against prior year quota; maximize catch for ICCAT
- Concern about the complex IBQ rules (hoops to jump through, including finding IBQ to lease and paying too much for it) when the Longline category isn’t catching its overall quota
- Overall concern about viability of the PLL fishery

Bluefin Tuna Management



Purse Seine Question - Response

How much 2016 PS quota was leased (to PLL) via IBQ system?

- 46,068 lb (~167 fish, assuming average of 267 lb/fish)

Seasons

Consider a year-round fishery for General, Harpoon, and Charter/Headboat categories

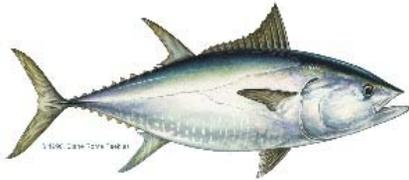
Other

- Some of these issues should be considered with 3-year review of IBQ fishery, such as permanent sale of Purse Seine quota
- May need buy-boats if fishing activity far offshore increases



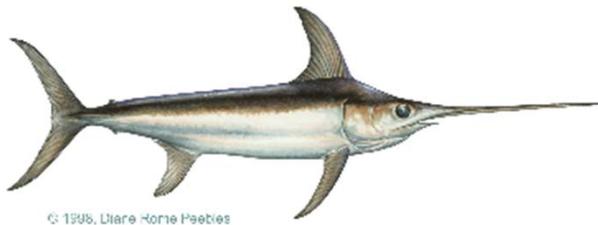
Group applauds Rom's success at reuniting lost button with owner

Swordfish Directed and Tunas Longline Vessel Upgrade Proposed Rule



General support for proposed removal of upgrading restrictions

Some interest in removal of Swordfish Handgear permit upgrade restrictions



If considering swordfish handgear permit upgrade restrictions, must consider S. Florida issues and changes in the buoy gear fishery (such as increased numbers of buoys)

White Marlin Research (Dr. Graves)

- Support for leaving white marlin in the water when releasing, to “keep them off the ESA”
- Concern that the US is not accounting for post release mortality of marlins
- Support for enforcement actions regarding pictures of people pulling fish out of water
- Support for suggesting (to anglers) creative ways to take a release photo
- Note that the sampling design may not always reflect reality (not always wet deck, wet cloth over eyes, etc.), and a quick photo likely takes less than 5 minutes
- Consider the potential implications of the number of anglers practicing poor release techniques



MRIP and HMS Recreational Implementation Plan

Avoid duplicate reporting requirements

- Too many data collections (especially in the NE) between states, APAIS, LPS, VTR, etc.
- For-hire captains don't want another logbook requirement
- Can be confusing re: required vs. mandatory reports (may result in under-reporting to HMS Management for SWO, BFT, and BLF)
- Captain's report (e.g., VTR, LPS) and client's trip summary (e.g., APAIS dockside) may conflict



Restrict persistent and nighttime phone calls from the LPS

- Can be intrusive; some block the LPS phone number

MRIP and HMS Recreational Implementation Plan

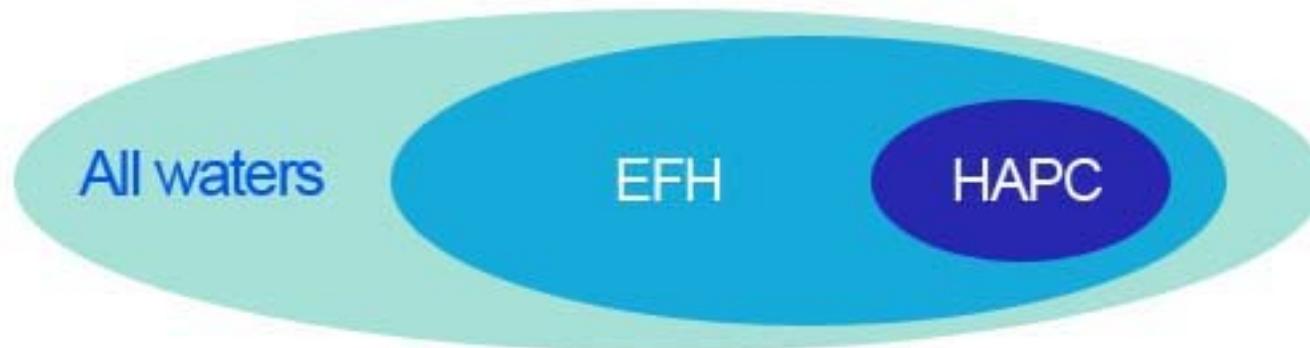
Suggested improvements:

- Support smartphone app
 - Easier and faster reporting
- Need improved compliance monitoring and enforcement
 - Give enforcement agents access to reporting database
 - Require possession of report confirmation number for agent to validate
- Consider expanding successful MD and NC catch card programs to other states
- MRIP Regional Implementation Plan in Puerto Rico should include computer and paper report options because many anglers don't have smartphones.
 - Better communicate the difference between "caught" and "landed/kept" – often confused in reports



Essential Fish Habitat Draft Amendment 10

- Questions about the criteria for updating EFH designations and determining which data are included
- Consider whether Slope Sea should be EFH/HAPC; consider ICCAT implications of designating it as a western BFT spawning area
- Concerns about designation of a HAPC for lemon sharks and implications in state waters. Questions about state lemon shark regulations.
- Confusion re: what EFH designation does in terms of the consultation process and conservation recommendations made for federal actions; How is HMS involved in EFH consultations? (See description in draft Appendix D)
- Confusion re: HAPC implications in fishery management actions.



Essential Fish Habitat Draft Amendment 10

- Consider impact of sampling distribution on larval density data as well as determining the distribution of other species in EFH designations
- Concern about EFH being a “slippery slope” toward additional regulations
- Support for a HAPC expansion for bluefin tuna; support for continued research on this subject and Slope Sea (see draft Chapter 7 – “Research Needs”)
- Recommendation to investigate nursery grounds for sand tiger sharks in Great South Bay
- Public Comment: There is a white shark nursery off Long Island; NMFS should protect young white sharks in this area
- Post-presentation comment: NMFS should specify in the presentation the importance of habitat associations (e.g., refining EFH by depth or identifying specific habitat features such as channels)

2017 Commercial Shark Season Proposed Rule

- Request to present shark landings by species in addition to management group; particularly hammerheads given the CITES requirements
- Concern regarding fishermen landings and interactions/discards in state waters, with no observer coverage, fewer requirements, and less training than federally-permitted fishermen
- Discussion about difference between state, Council, and federal regulations and need for consistency
- W GOM sub-region would prefer a retention limit of 45 LCS/trip; those fishermen are OK with short seasons

Small Coastal Shark Retention Limits

- NMFS should use an average weight of 8-20 lb dw for blacknose sharks, and not 5 lb dw
- Support for Alternative 3c (8 blacknose sharks/trip)
- Suggestion that NMFS should also consider toggling retention limit during the season just like what is done in the LCS fishery
- NMFS needs to conduct an update on the stock assessment for Atlantic blacknose sharks
- Discussion on why a few vessels are targeting blacknose sharks and the impacts of that behavior on other fishermen
- Discussion regarding SCS recreational size limits and importance of these species to recreational fishermen



Fishery Management Council Updates

Follow up with Law Enforcement re:
dedicated AP discussion

- Cast/bait nets onboard
- Recreational reporting and sale issues

General support for retaining this AP topic? Please give feedback on the AP satisfaction survey.



Caribbean Issues in HMS Fisheries

- Commercial Caribbean Small Boat Permit:
 - Consider a Caribbean-specific multi-species shark quota (don't include the ESA-listed DPS of scalloped hammerhead)
 - Consider mandatory electronic reporting
 - Increase swordfish limit
- Fund research for shark studies in the Caribbean
- Refrain from removing shark species from prohibited list due to insufficient data, except for Caribbean sharpnose shark
- Promote outreach and education to address underreporting and species identification
- Oceanic whitetip interactions happen frequently in PR; vessels available to participate in research/tagging programs

Public Comment Periods and Other Noteworthy Dates

- SCS retention limit measures – comment period ends Sep 20
- SEDAR Advisory Panel – nominations due Sep 22
- Vessel upgrade restrictions – comment period ends Sep 26
- 2017 Shark Specifications – comment period ends Sep 28
- Draft EFH Amendment 10 – comment period ends Dec 22
- Champions of Change – nominations due Sep 9 (tomorrow)
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/champions>



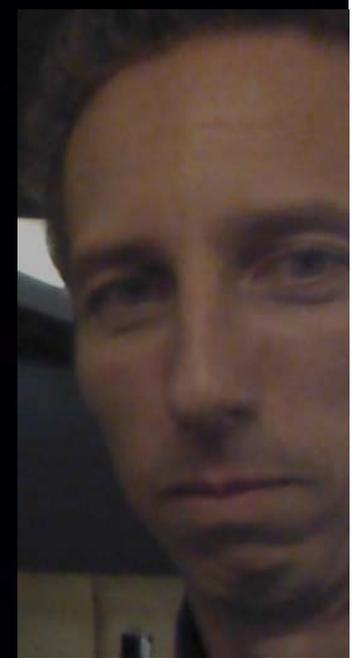
Reminders to AP Members

- Receipts due on September 16th (1 week)

Send to: Peter.Cooper@noaa.gov and mail originals



- Please return table tents and name badges
- Please complete the AP satisfaction survey



AP Branch Chief

