

Science, Service, Stewardship



HMS AP Summary

September 9 – 11, 2009

Silver Spring, MD

**NOAA
FISHERIES
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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



HMS To Do List

- Distribute presentations
- Look into shrimp observer protocols for shark ID
- Look into North Carolina data for smooth dogfish
- Follow up with ASMFC on overlap with HMS FMP
- Provide LAPP policy document to the AP
- Review AP comments on meeting structure



We received updates on...

- BFT length/weight report
- Research on circle and J hooks for billfish
- Recent enforcement actions
- MRIP



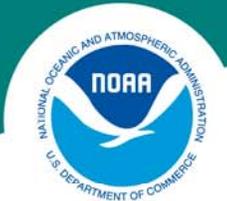
AP Comments: Amendment 3

- Questions on science and average weights for blacknose
- NMFS should wait for next stock assessment for blacknose
- Gillnet fishery closed most of year due to right whales; when fishermen can fish, the blacknose have moved to state waters
- Sharpnose sharks are abundant and affecting fishing for other species
- Need to take action on shrimp bycatch; shrimp trawl effort has declined so don't need action
- SCS quota will be taken before NC fishermen can fish for them
- NMFS should look at statute requirements and timing of A3 implementation with 2010 assessment



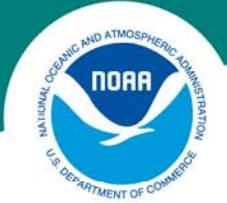
AP Comments: Amendment 3 cont.

- Concern about interaction between ASMFC and HMS FMP regarding recreational blacknose shark prohibition
- NMFS should not prohibit recreational take of blacknose; need outreach for species ID
- Support and disagreement about waiting for international action for shortfin mako
- HMS Mgmt Division should and should not take lead on smooth dogfish management
- Smooth dogfish fishermen need to dress at sea; fins should remain naturally attached
- 5% fin to carcass ratio is incorrect for smooth dogfish
- Need an stock assessment for smooth dogfish
- Smooth dogfish quota too low and too high



AP Comments: Amendment 4

- Caribbean fisheries are different from other HMS fisheries – small boats, artisanal, tourist dependent, target large YFT
- Yo-yo gear is important; need to make sure buoy gear definition for Caribbean reflects yo-yo gear
- Protect artisanal fishery, prevent industrial gears, and implement restrictions on artisanal fishery (e.g., restrict boat size)
- Concern about FADs and any related enforcement issues; support for FADs
- Concern about creating new fisheries without a plan for possible future quota situations
- Concern about and ideas for improving collection of data
- Need to interact with local government officials and engage nearby countries



AP Comments: Harpoon and General BFT Categories

- Substantial landings this year by harpoon
- Rod and reel can't catch BFT in some areas due to dogfish
- BFT are available from Canada to North Carolina in different sizes; these may or may not be same fish
- Fish are off NC early in year when commercial fishery is closed; saw more small medium fish than ever
- Premature to change regulations without knowing why quota is not caught and impact of changes
- Discussion on ICCAT model for setting quota and ending overfishing



AP Comments: BFT Minimum Size

- Reducing the size limit and taking quota associated with giants may or may not be conservation neutral
- Tails off could allow us to take more fish in a single trip; if fish is near minimum size, allow fishermen to trim the lobes
- NMFS should look into a black market fishery in MA Bay
- It should not be difficult for CHB fishermen to report both commercially and recreationally caught fish
- Reporting catch online takes too long
- Don't change regulations until BFT is recovered
- Spawning age of BFT in Mediterranean may be later than previously thought so all fish caught off US caught are immature



AP Comments: Squid Trawl

- Questions on how many active squid trawl permits, impact on giving them all SWO permits, location of fishery
- Establish a control date for obtaining the permits
- Issue them a SWO permit with a sunset and/or use it or lose it clause
- SWO incidental catch is not going to catch the quota but we need to count those fish
- Squid trawl vessels should not land sharks given the status of the stocks



AP Comments: Incidental Catch Limits

- Other countries are taking more sea turtles than the U.S.
- Do not want incidental catch of BFT in GOM; weak hook study results may show ways of reducing incidental catch in that area
- Changing catch limits would turn discards into landings without increasing incentives to fish for BFT; increasing landings of BFT may cause fishermen to fish for BFT
- Something is wrong if science is showing we're not rebuilding when we're not catching the quota
- Need to transition into bycatch friendly gears



AP Comments: HMS General Category Permit

- Issuing such a permit would increase fishermen in south FL and devastate the buoy gear and recreational fisheries that are there
- FL fishery is unique and there are already too many vessels fishing in the area
- A SWO general category permit could increase SWO landings from mid-Atlantic north
- If implemented, need to ensure there is no conflict with current shark fishery until stock status improves
- If implemented, permit holders need to go through same hoops as current commercial fishermen
- Implement a SWO general category permit, don't mix it with the Tuna general category permit



AP Comments: General ANPR

- Do not open the closed areas; Finish the research before considering opening the closed areas
- Opening closed areas may require NMFS to review all HMS EISs done since their implementation
- FL recreational fishery is an IUU fishery; there are other IUU fisheries in U.S., particularly for high dollar fisheries
- Can't increase swordfish catch without increasing effort
- Buoy gear is a clean fishery; catches decrease with circle hooks because fish can get away



AP Comments: Catch Shares, etc.

- Stakeholders need to buy into the idea
- Need to review all the details before implementation – initial allocation, how new entrants join, how to distribute a little bit of quota to a lot of stakeholders, monopolization issues, etc
- IBCs provide direct cost of bycatch to fishermen and can also lead to inaccurate reporting
- IBCs could be used to manage BFT incidental interactions with PLL in the Gulf of Mexico
- Concern about makeup of catch shares task force



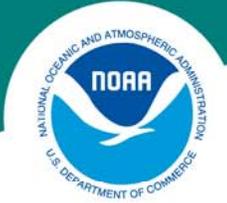
AP Comments: Shark Issues

- Consider two seasons (January and July 31/Aug. 1)
- Do not open during pupping season (April, May, June)
- Shift in landings to different non-sandbar LCS may be a concern; need species-specific stock assessments (e.g., hammerheads)
- Leaving belly flaps on would affect total weight of quota taken
- Look into catch shares for shark fishery to move away from derby fishery
- Need international cooperation on straddling stocks
- Outreach needed re: ASMFC state closure of recreational and commercial fishery April 15 - July 15
- Support for delayed opening of SCS until A3 is final
- Info requested on shark research fishery and landings; increase cooperative research



AP Comments: CITES

- Questions on trade of BFT in EU if listed on App. I or II
- Questions on look-alike species, split listings, and when changes can be made to the proposal
- Questions on whether NOAA and FWS seriously consider all proposals for listing
- Questions on interaction between CITES listing and ESA
- Questions on what happens if a country objects to a listing
- Questions on CITES listing if species does not have domestic management
- If a species is listed under App. I, does that limit quota transfers to other countries?
- Support and opposition to U.S. supporting a listing of BFT on Appendix I
- Collapse of a fishery should not be confused with extinction
- BFT are not going extinct
- Can we have a copy of the U.S. analysis on whether BFT meets App. I criteria?



AP Comments: CITES cont.

- If ICCAT takes appropriate action, that may mean a CITES listing is not pursued/needed
- Appendix 1 listing would end the U.S. BFT fishery, there is no viable domestic market; no infrastructure for frozen product
- CITES should not be used as a fishery management tool and is no substitute for long-term rebuilding plan
- Support and opposition for listing all elasmobranch species; support and opposition on listing various species
- Proposal to list shortfin mako is inappropriate and extreme
- CITES important tool for shark conservation
- Appendix II listing can promote sustainable harvest and trade
- Paperwork for trade of Appendix II listed species is burdensome; this will be difficult for perishable products
- Telling general public a species is 'extinct' or 'endangered' harms the market



Upcoming Actions

Proposed:

- 2010 BFT and SHK Specs
- ANPR Short-term action
- Amendment 4
- Follow up on Shark Issues

Final:

- Amendment 3 – Final
- 2009 SWO Specs

2010 SHK Research Fishery Notice

2010 EFP/SRP/Display Notice

HMS AP Nominations



Be on the lookout for...

- CITES - Country Proposals (due Oct. 15)
- ICCAT



Reminders

Travel receipts due

Comments due:

- Amendment 3 Proposed Rule – September 25
- Amendment 4 Predraft – October 1

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Thank you!

- We value your comments.
- Have a safe trip home.