

Evaluation of Greenstick and Swordfish Bouy Gears in the Gulf of Mexico: Pilot Program Preliminary Results

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Methods:

- Using commercial fishing vessels active in the Gulf of Mexico (Madeira Beach, FL and Dulac, LA):
 - Gear and expendables provided by program
 - Installation of GSG facilitated by Captain Fred Fox (Wanchese, NC)
- All sets observed by NSU graduate students using custom datasheets modified from POP forms (all shared with BREP project)
 - Animal logs
 - Gear/Set logs
 - Economic data

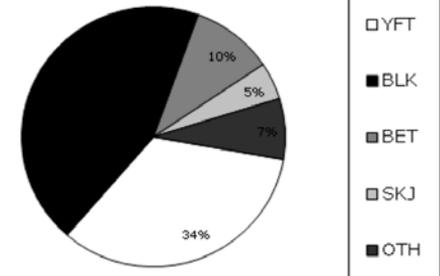
Preliminary Results:

- ◆ GSG gear has been mounted on two vessels in Madeira Beach, FL
- ◆ GSG gear currently being mounted on a PLL vessel in Dulac, LA

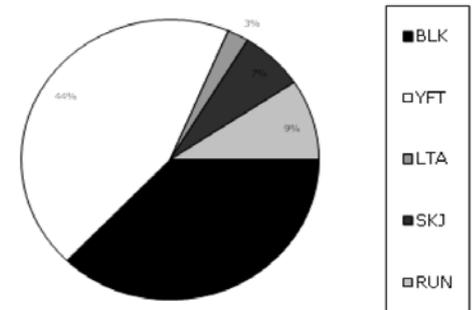


Preliminary Results:

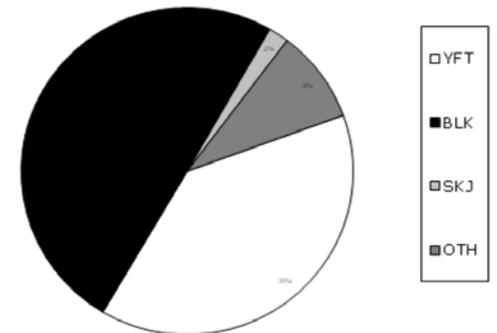
- ◆ Three GSG trips, two SBG trips (plus another GSG leaving on 19 Sept, and another SBG on 24 Sept)
- ◆ Catch compositions:
 - GSG: mostly BKT and YFT, with some SKJ and DOL. Also, LTA, WAH, and BET
 - SBG: almost exclusively SWO, with SMA, FAL, and BAR
- ◆ Economic data:
 - GSG: low grades (if any) for tunas
 - All trips still revenue negative



Catch Composition of fish brought on board F/V Sun Dancer via GSG in the Gulf of Mexico July 5-15, 2012



Catch Composition of fish brought on F/V Miss Rita via GSG in the Gulf of Mexico July 17- Aug 1, 2012



Preliminary Conclusions:

- ◆ Still encountering grading issues – to be addressed starting today through gut contents, pH and temperature monitoring at sea. We also plan on collecting PLL data, especially economics.
- ◆ Still revenue negative, but getting better (see below).
- ◆ No BFT interactions, although in period of lowest abundance in Gulf. Bycatch almost always released alive.
- ◆ Catch rates increasing for each successive trip with GSG, and more rapidly for SBG.
- ◆ Project now scheduled for a June 2013 fieldwork conclusion, so more complete results can be presented at spring AP meeting – including full economic comparisons.

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