



**NOAA
FISHERIES**

Future of the Atlantic Shark Fishery: Amendment 6 Update

Presented to the Atlantic HMS Advisory
Panel

September 2013

Outline

- Background
- Comments Received to Date
- Recent Shark Fishery Trends
- Current Thoughts
- Discussion

Background

- Future of the Shark Fishery ANPR – 9/20/10
 - Quota Structure—species complexes/quotas, regions, retention limits
 - Permit Structure—permit stacking, “use it or lose it”
 - Catch Shares—support and opposition
 - Conducted 5 scoping workshops to get feedback on ANPR

Background Cont'd

Notice of Intent to Amend the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP – 9/16/11

- NMFS announced intent to consider catch share programs
- Requested public comment on the implementation of catch shares in the Atlantic shark fisheries
- Comment period later extended to March 31, 2012
- Established Control Date of **9/16/2011** for eligibility to participate in an Atlantic shark catch share program
- Announced availability of white paper describing design elements of catch share programs in general and issues specific to the Atlantic shark fisheries
- Announced and conducted 5 catch share scoping workshops

Catch Share Scoping Workshop Public Comments

(previously presented to the HMS AP)

NMFS received mixed comments on the Notice of Intent, including:

- Increase the trip limits instead of doing a catch share program
- Management measures are needed to decrease dead discards
- Catch shares can save fuel and maximize price
- Catch shares can make fishermen more efficient because there's no trip limit
- Catch shares are more predictable for managers
- NMFS does not need an IFQ program, NMFS could establish community quotas
- NMFS needs to consider regional differences if designing a catch share program
- Sharks are a public resource and should not be privatized or individualized

Catch Share Scoping Workshop Public Comments cont'd

(previously presented to the HMS AP)

- NMFS should look into days at sea instead of catch shares
- There is inequity in the shark fishery and catch shares would make it worse
- Give Florida a January opening and 33 non-sandbar LCS/trip and there will be no need for catch shares
- NMFS doesn't have the science it needs to implement a catch share program
- Catch shares will shift effort in the shark fishery
- Include all regions in a catch share program
- Fishermen are losing infrastructure as a result of state finning bans and catch shares won't help this problem
- Catch shares will take quota and profits away from fishermen
- Catch shares are being forced upon fishermen from the top down
- NMFS should conduct a referendum or a weighted referendum

Other Options Presented in the ANPR

(previously presented to the HMS AP)

➤ Quota Structure Changes

- More species-specific quotas
- Quota Linkage
- Re-consider regions, time/area closures, and/or seasons

➤ Comments Received:

- Stock assessments can't be performed quickly enough for species-specific quotas
- Difficult to monitor numerous species quotas
- Quotas for blacktips and spinners should be combined
- Consider impacts of no quota linkage – smaller commercial quotas
- Structure the quotas and opening dates to coincide with regional shark availability

Other Options Presented in the ANPR

(previously presented to the HMS AP)

➤ Permit Structure Changes:

- Permit stacking – allow multiple permits and trip limits up to a certain amount, on 1 vessel (2 permits = 2 trip limits)

➤ Comments Received:

- Could be a reasonable solution for a directed fishery
- May cause quota to be harvested even faster
- Could make shark fishing more efficient and profitable because of higher trip limits
- May lead to fewer dead discards of sharks
- Permit stacking should only be implemented if the permits match the effort needed to catch the annual quota. If permits are stacked this way, fishermen gain freedom to put their fishing efforts to best use and fishery stability would not be further compromised

Other Options Presented in the ANPR

(previously presented to the HMS AP)

➤ Permit Structure Changes:

- Use or lose for all or some permits – e.g., don't use permit for 2 years, lose permit

➤ Comments Received:

- Latent permits may become active (harvest quota more quickly)
- Should not be implemented for incidental permits
- 7-10 years is a reasonable period of inactivity; inactive permits should be transferred to a reserve pool

Other Options Presented in the ANPR

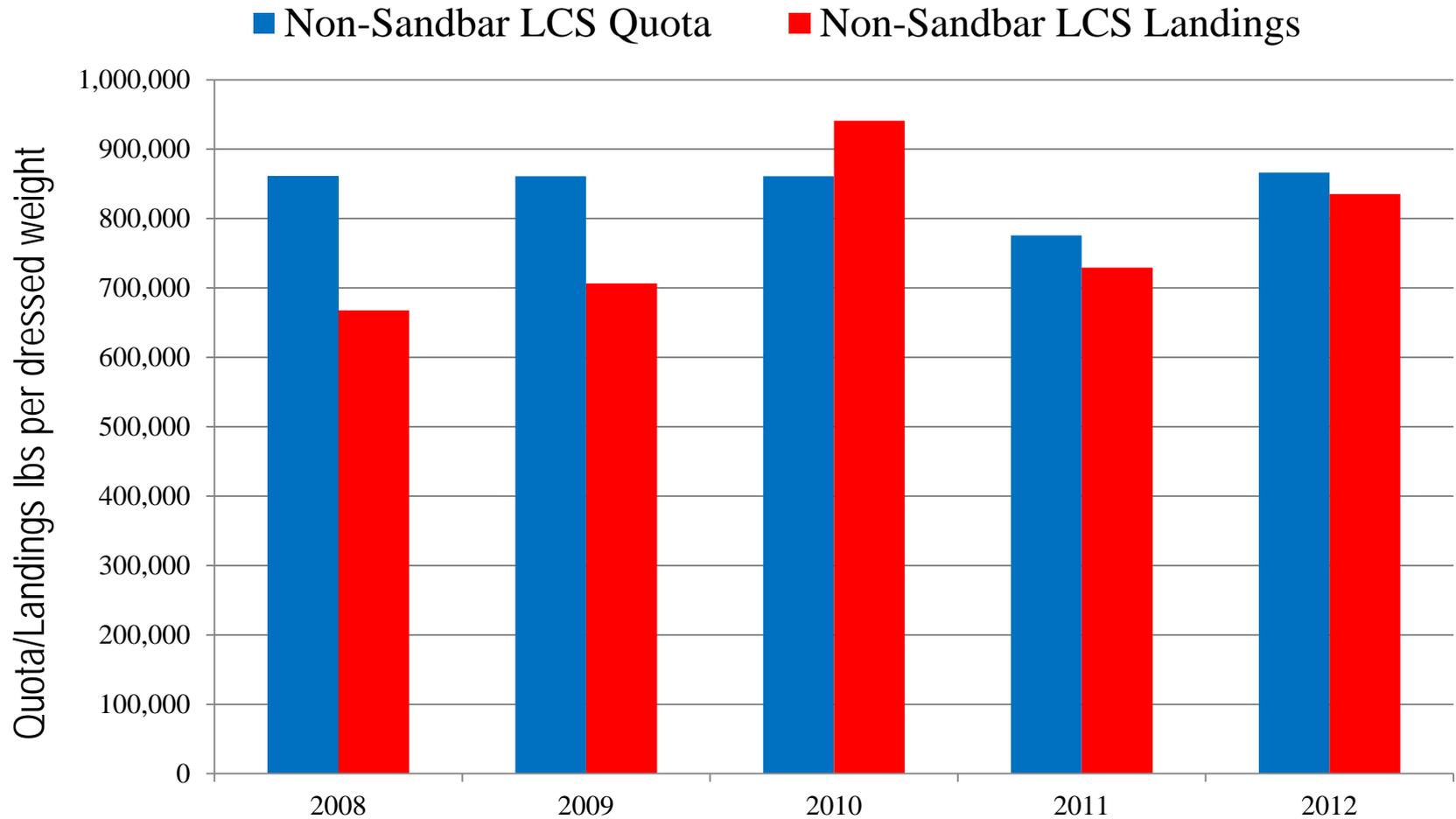
(previously presented to the HMS AP)

- Retention Limit and Authorized Species Changes
 - Re-analyze the LCS trip limit
 - Separate trip limit for Gulf of Mexico blacktip sharks
 - Consider commercial landings of sandbar outside research fishery

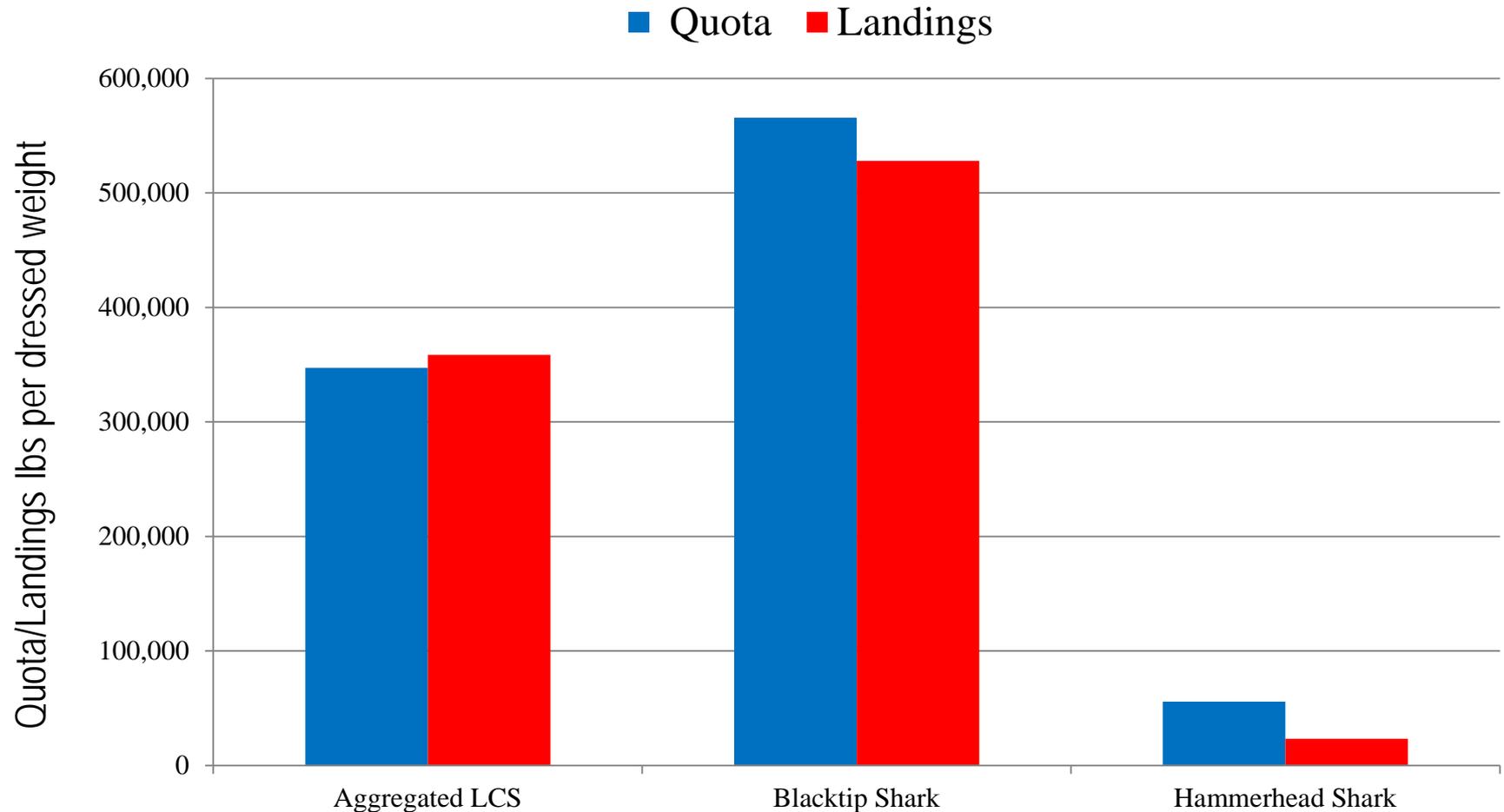
- Comments Received:
 - Consider changing LCS trip limit since it was based on the dead discards of sandbar sharks, and the stock has now improved
 - Consider different regional trip limits
 - GOM blacktip stock is healthy and can sustain a separate trip limit
 - Allow commercial fishermen to land sandbar sharks outside of the shark research fishery
 - Consider impacts to the SHK Research Fishery and future stock assessments
 - Concerns with monitoring the sandbar quota and tracking authorized landings
 - Need to allow equitable opportunity to harvest the potential shark quotas

Recent Trends in the Atlantic Shark Fishery

Gulf of Mexico Large Coastal Shark Landings

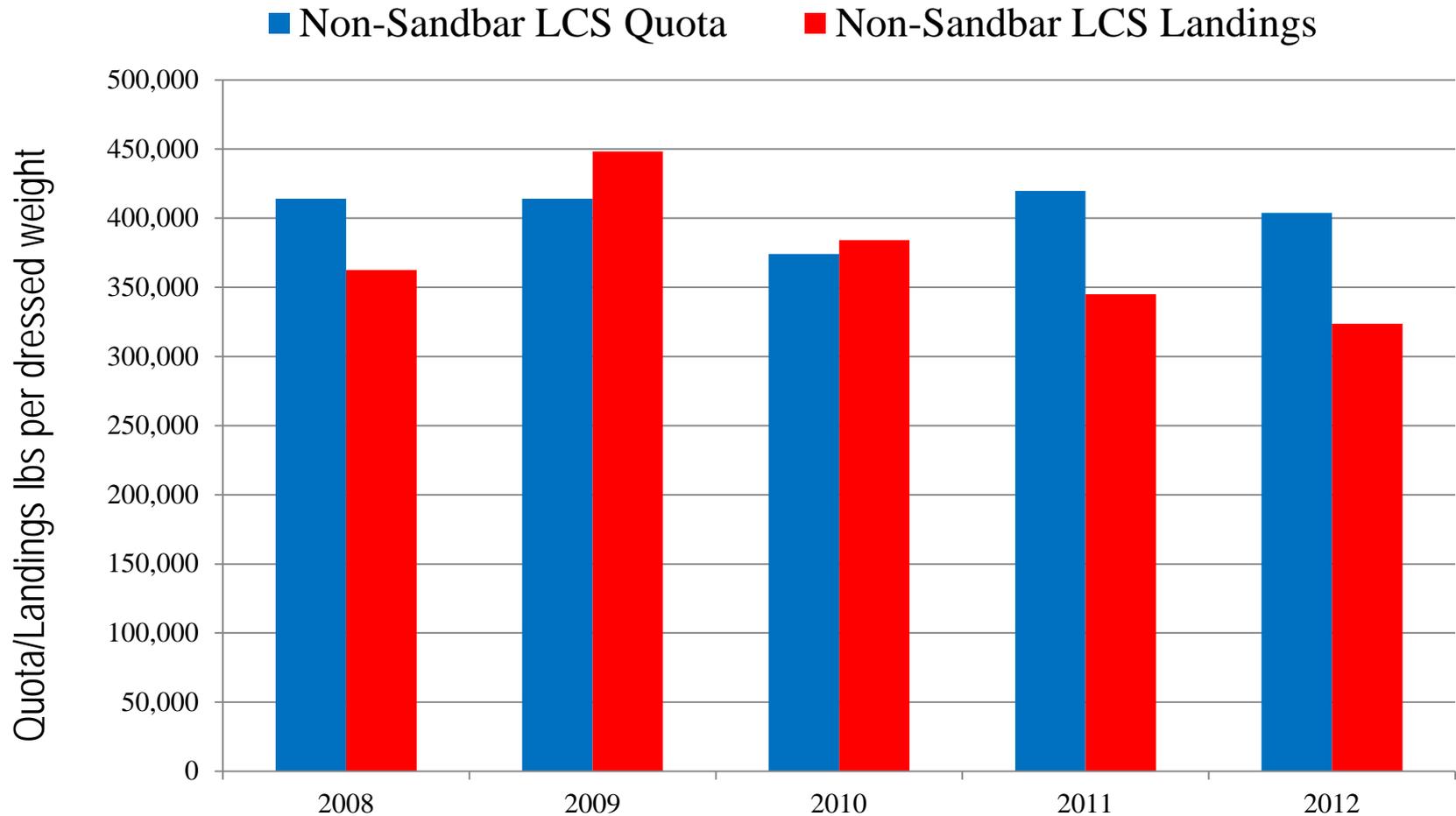


2013 Gulf of Mexico Large Coastal Shark Landings

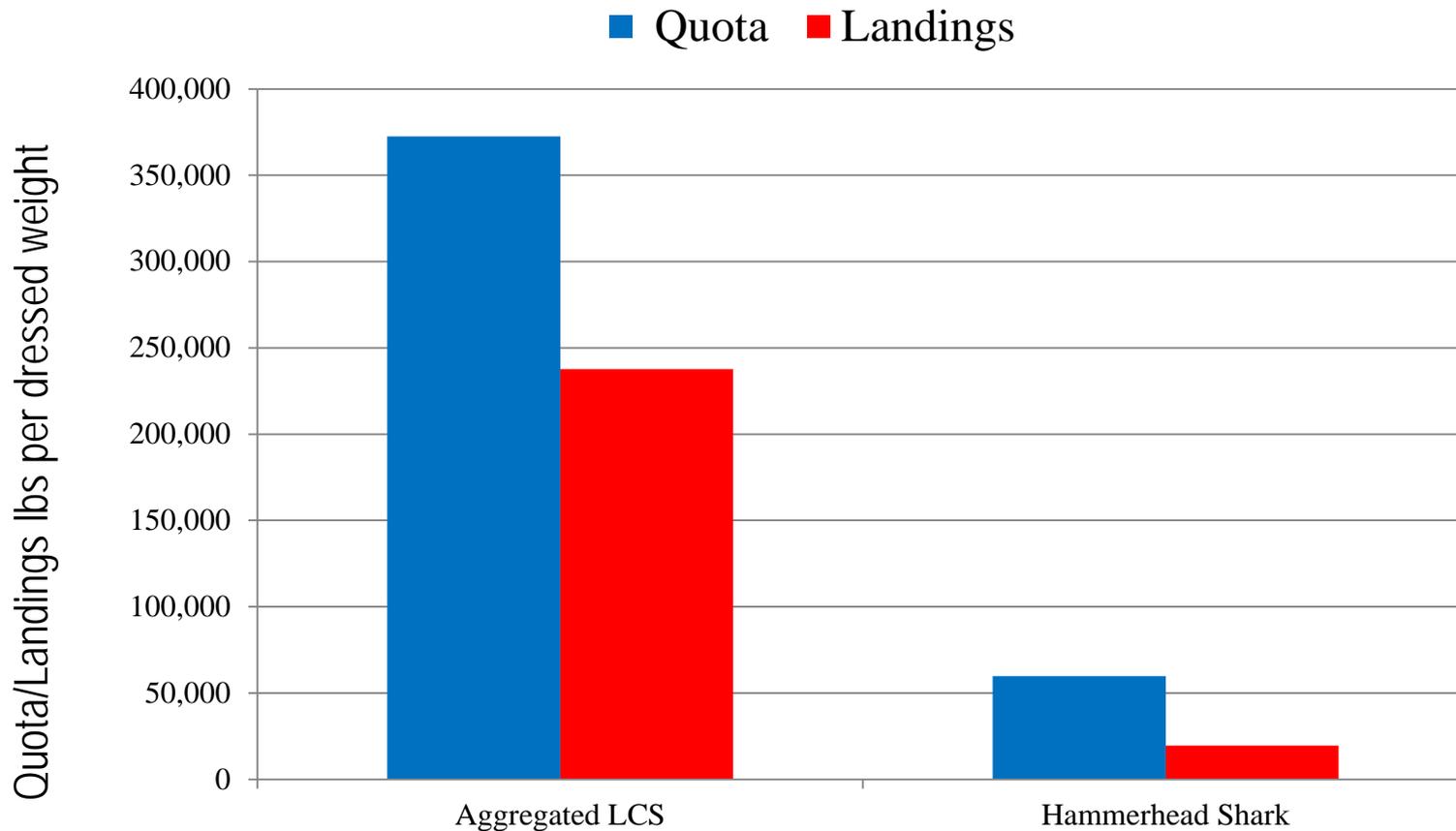


*In Amendment 5a, blacktip and hammerhead sharks were removed from the LCS complex in the Gulf of Mexico region.

Atlantic Large Coastal Shark Landings

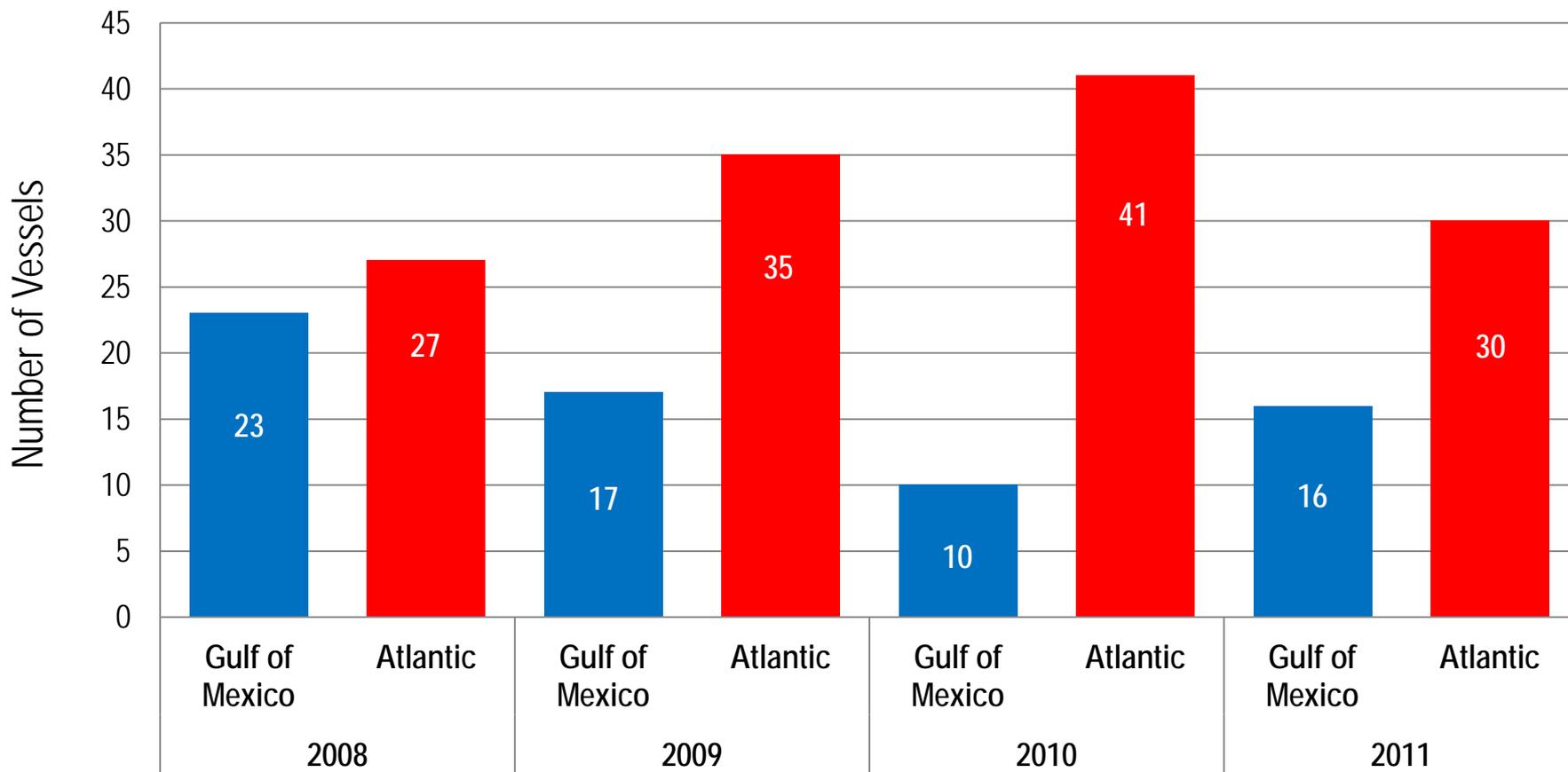


2013 Atlantic Large Coastal Shark Landings



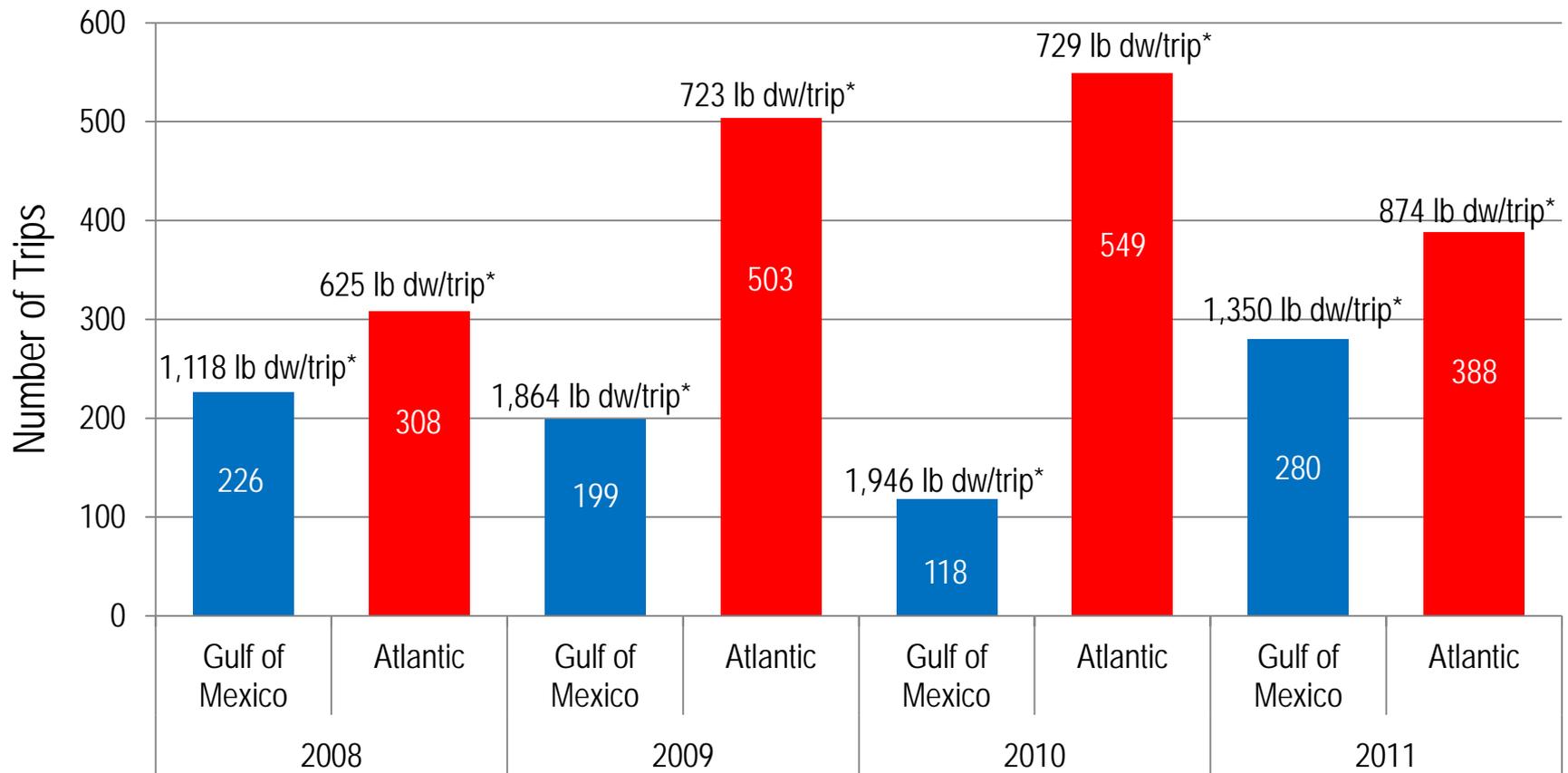
*In Amendment 5a, hammerhead sharks were removed from the LCS complex in the Atlantic region.

Active Vessels that Landed Large Coastal Sharks



*Active vessels based on data from the Coastal Fisheries Logbook

Number of Trips that landed Large Coastal Sharks



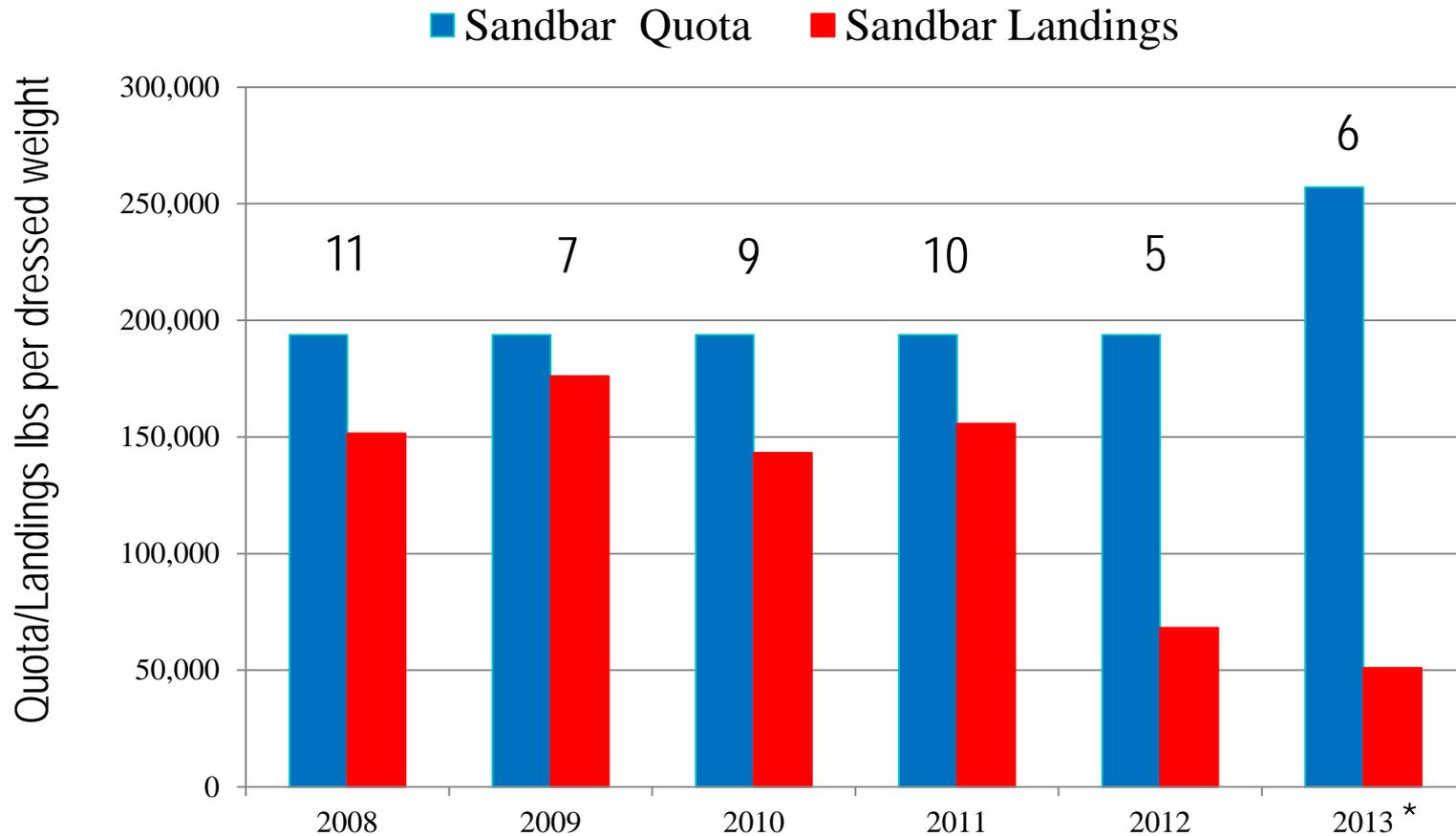
*Average LCS landed per trip based on data from the Coastal Fisheries Logbook

Atlantic Shark Research Fishery

- Amendment 2 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP (July 24, 2008) established a shark research fishery, with a small sandbar research quota and large coastal shark research quota.
- Only shark research fishery participants with an observer onboard are allowed to land sandbar sharks in addition to non-prohibited shark species.
- Benefits of Shark Research Fishery:
 - The shark research fishery has allowed for the collection of fishery dependent data for current and future stock assessments to conduct cooperative research to meet NMFS ongoing research objectives.
 - Updated the life history information used in sandbar shark (and other species) stock assessments.
 - Has collected data on habitat preferences that might help reduce fishery interactions through bycatch mitigation.
 - Is evaluating the utility of the mid-Atlantic closed area on the recovery of dusky sharks and collecting hook timer and PSAT information to determine at vessel and post release mortality of dusky sharks.

Atlantic Shark Research Fishery Landings

Numbers reflect the number of research vessels per year



*Landings to date

Moving Forward in the Atlantic Shark Fishery

- The majority of public comment on the 2011 Notice of Intent, along with recent trends and changes in the shark fishery from Amendment 5, indicate that NMFS should continue to evaluate whether a catch share program remains a good fit for the Atlantic Shark Fishery
- NMFS is evaluating what action to take next regarding management of the Atlantic shark fishery, particularly as it relates to catch share programs and other potential measures such as permit stacking
- When thinking about changes to the shark fishery also consider:
 - Gulf of Mexico/Atlantic regional split
 - Upgrading restrictions and permit combinations
 - Retention limits
 - Input of recent and future actions (e.g., Amendments 8, 7, 5b and eDealer)

Additional Questions or Comments?

Please share them with us!

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HMS Catch Share Website:
<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/sharks/catchshares.htm>