

10. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION AND OUTLOOK

NMFS strives to create economically and biologically healthy fisheries. Identifying and addressing emerging issues in a timely manner, NMFS can work towards achieving and maintaining the balance of biological and economic imperatives necessary to realize goals of stable, prosperous, and sustainable HMS fisheries.

Based on unresolved matters identified by the HMS Advisory Panel, the general public, and NMFS staff, this section serves as an important means to identify potential areas for future management practices to ensure sustainable HMS fisheries. The order of issues does not reflect any order of importance, and this list is not meant to be an exhaustive list of management issues facing Atlantic HMS fisheries. Rather, the intent is to inspire discussion on these topics, trigger identification of other important issues, and, in some cases, take regulatory action if necessary. NMFS may consider some of these issues for future rulemakings, but it is worth noting that some of these matters are complicated and may require further input from the public (e.g., scoping meetings, workshops, etc.) which could take several years to complete. This section will also serve as a starting point for discussions by the HMS Advisory Panel.

Possible Issues for Future Rules and/or FMP Amendments

Tunas

- I. Implementation of international requirements (bluefin, yellowfin, bigeye)
- II. Bluefin quota allocations
- III. Bluefin discard estimates from harpoon, purse seine, and rod and reel fisheries
- IV. Possession at-sea and landing requirements (e.g., tails on, filleting at sea)

Billfish

- V. Tournament registration and reporting - electronic v. call-in system
- VI. Improving recreational catch and effort data
- VII. Comprehensive Caribbean FMP amendment
- VIII. Scope of Certificate of Eligibility Form

Swordfish

- IX. Quota allocations (directed, incidental and recreational)
- X. Implementation of international recommendations
- XI. Swordfish fleet revitalization - next steps

Sharks

- XII. Vessel allocations (directed, incidental, research, ITQs)
- XIII. Small coastal shark measures based on new assessment
- XIV. Coordination with state management

General

- XV. Aquaculture and fish farming
- XVI. Improving outreach to fishermen/constituents

Tuna Longline/Shark/Swordfish Limited Access Program

- XVII. Permit reform (Individual Transferable Quotas (ITQs)/Limited Access Privilege Programs (LAPPs)); gear based v. species based permit
- XVIII. Rationalization of permits with harvesting capacity
- XIX. Revisiting handgear permit issuance

Bycatch Reduction

- XX. Examining the efficacy of existing pelagic longline time/area closures
- XXI. On-going identification and careful handling workshops and three year certificate renewal period
- XXII. Use of VMS
- XXIII. Highgrading
- XXIV. Bluefin tuna bycatch in the Gulf of Mexico
- XXV. Implementation of Pelagic Longline Take Reduction Plan requirements

Recordkeeping and Reporting

- XXVI. Streamlining the reporting process and/or revising/creating logbooks for all fishermen and dealers (e.g., one logbook for each fishery, electronic logbooks)
- XXVII. Implementation of the International Trade Data System
- XXVIII. Tournament reporting (e.g., electronic, call-in, logbooks)
- XXIX. Recreational surveys v. direct reporting for all HMS
- XXX. Observer coverage on all fishing vessels, including recreational
- XXXI. Paying for observer coverage on fishing vessels

Exempted Fishing/Scientific Research/Public Display Permits

- XXXII. Consistency with state regulations
- XXXIII. Monitoring and enforcement issues

Review of State Regulations Under the Atlantic Tunas Conservation Act and Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act

- XXXIV. Formal review of swordfish and billfish regulations under ATCA
- XXXV. Update tuna review under ATCA