

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Management Division announces the availability of the 2010 Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report. The SAFE Report contains a review of the current status of Atlantic HMS stocks (tunas, swordfish, billfish, and sharks), describes the year's accomplishments in managing Atlantic HMS, and provides an assessment of short-term future management of Atlantic HMS. The SAFE Report provides Atlantic HMS fishery constituents information on the latest developments in Atlantic HMS management as well as fulfilling Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) requirements.

In 2010, the HMS Management Division completed numerous management actions including Final Amendment 3 relating to small coastal sharks (SCS), pelagic sharks, and smooth dogfish (also known as smoothhound), and an interpretive rule and final action modifying the Atlantic billfish management unit. The HMS Management Division also published an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking regarding the Future of the Shark Fishery, which will examine the effectiveness of current shark management and how the shark fishery should be managed in the future. In addition, the HMS Management Division continued working on Amendment 4 relating to Caribbean issues, a bluefin tuna regulatory amendment as well as efforts to more thoroughly utilize the available BFT and swordfish quotas, and examined options to improve recreational monitoring of HMS fisheries. As described more thoroughly in Chapter 1, the HMS Management Division also implemented annual quota specifications for Atlantic tunas, swordfish, and sharks, completed several inseason management actions, moved administration of the Atlantic Tunas Longline permit to the NMFS Southeast Regional Permit Office, and participated in the International Commission for Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) negotiations to ensure U.S. interests were well represented.

Feedback and comments on this SAFE Report are encouraged and should be sent to the HMS Management Division, 1315 East West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910, phone: (301) 713-2347, fax: (301) 713-1917.