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HMS Advisory Panel Wrap-Up (Non-Comprehensive Summary of Some Comments That Were Heard)

Fall 2020 HMS AP Meeting
September 9-10, 2020

Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations

- AP – advisory panel
- CHB – charter/headboat
- FMP – fishery management plan
- GRA – gear restricted area
- HMS – highly migratory species
- IBQ – individual bluefin quota
- ICCAT – International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
- IUU – illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing
- PLL – pelagic longline
- PRiSM – PRedictive modeling and Spatial Management
- RFDs – restricted fishing days
- SAFE – Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation Report
- SHARE – SHArk fishery REview



Overview of AP Meeting

- Contrasting perspectives on the GRA/weak hook rule
 - Unnecessary action; fear it will be counterproductive to conservation efforts
 - The lack of recent fishing in these areas demonstrates the PLL fleet's self-ownership of conservation responsibilities
- Comments made about potential updates to electronic monitoring and reporting
- Concern about timing of Amendment 13, not resetting IBQ allocations soon
- Disappointment about a lack of fishermen engagement in deciding how to place observers back on vessels during the pandemic



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Amendment 12 to the 2006 HMS FMP

- Review and revision of HMS FMP objectives
 - Comments received on several objectives including 4, 5, 8, 9, 14, and 15
 - Request for new objectives addressing climate change and reporting technologies
 - Desire to increase engagement of public and small-scale fishermen in the management process
- Desire for standardization of bycatch reporting among HMS and non-HMS fisheries
- SAFE Report – Suggestions regarding *content* can be submitted anytime via email, letter, or phone call



2020 Fisheries Economic Situation Report

- Reduced imports/shorter trips increased swordfish prices, but increased imports from Canada have depressed prices
- The fishery's shift to swordfish from tuna driven by decreased demand from high-end sushi restaurants
- Concern about outdoor seating options and restaurant viability through the winter
- Charter fleets still being impacted by
 - Quarantine restrictions
 - Hotel and restaurant closures and capacity restrictions
 - Shorter trips shifting focus to inshore fishing



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Law Enforcement Update

- Discussion about genetic barcoding to identify species
 - Further discussion about when these techniques would be beneficial
 - Landing form regulations can facilitate identification
- Clarification requested about disproportionate vessel boardings occurring in Shinnecock Inlet (New York)
- Questions about foreign vessels near US waters and international efforts to investigate IUU fishing



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Bluefin Tuna Update

- Comments suggest that many new dealers are vessel owners
 - May drop off once normal conditions are reestablished
 - USDA Seafood Trade Relief Program link shared by AP member: www.farmers.gov/seafood
- Restricted-fishing days
 - Support for NMFS working with major dealers
 - Support for allowing HMS CHB vessels to fish recreationally on RFDs
 - Some opposition to RFDs, preference for dealer restrictions



SHARE: SHArk fishery REview 1/2

- Decline in commercial fishing likely because of regulations, including fin bans, and lack of a market
- Increase in shark depredation is a major issue
- Desire to revisit the stock assessments, quota, linkages, and other regulations
- Desire to see recreational shore-based fishing data by state and region
- Questions about unidentified sharks, shark endorsement, and retention of silky sharks



SHARE: SHArk fishery REview 2/2

Poll Results :

What are your greatest concerns with the <u>commercial</u> fishery?	Advisory Panel Responses
Permit Usage	3 (10%)
Landings Declines	4 (13%)
Retention Limits	3 (10%)
Overall State	17 (55%)
Other	4 (13%)

What are your greatest concerns with the <u>recreational</u> fishery?	Advisory Panel Responses
Unidentified Shark Reporting	7 (21%)
Size/Retention Limits	4 (12%)
Post-Release Mortality	6 (18%)
Regulations Outreach	10 (29%)
Other	7 (21%)

What are your greatest concerns with the <u>market</u> ?	Advisory Panel Responses
International Seafood Impacts	7 (26%)
Market Volatility	9 (33%)
Shark Demand Decreasing	9 (33%)
Other	2 (7%)



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Shark Depredation

- Comments suggest shark depredation is a widespread problem
 - Issues of fish mutilation, human safety, and habituation raised
- Suggestion that consistent management policy could benefit a market driven solution to increase demand for shark
- Interest in defining successful shark management
- Comments received about data collection
 - In general more data is needed to properly manage sharks
 - More refined analyses needed with respect to species, fishery, location, and time
 - Investigation of shark depredation mitigation measures requested
- Suggestion for additional model variables to include



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NOAA Fisheries Leadership Update

- Concern about restaurant viability and HMS market during winter months
- Concern about U.S. seafood products competing with imports
 - Use U.S. conservation efforts as a marketing tool, increase public outreach and education
 - Identify ways to maintain consistent product supplies to markets
 - Identify other mechanisms to level the playing field for U.S. fishermen
- Desire for more frequent review of management policies
- Issues raised about recruitment of fishermen into the industry
- Request to consider retention limit liberalization for 2020-2021 where applicable
- Request for a retention ban on North Atlantic shortfin mako sharks



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Spatial Management/HMS PRiSM Project

- Mixed support for using PRiSM to evaluate the effectiveness of closed areas
- Suggestions to validate model results with on-the-water studies; skepticism of model-only approach
- Some skepticism of preliminary maps because of mismatches with fishermen's knowledge
- Desire for PRiSM results to be trusted by the public and fishermen if they are used for management



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Public Comments

- Recollection of the Large Pelagics Research Center and the importance of considering the past in decision making
- Clarification that ICCAT bluefin tuna assessment results are preliminary
- The opening of the Gulf of Mexico and Northeast gear restricted areas have resulted in no bluefin interactions and are not affecting spawning bluefin in the Gulf of Mexico
- Several comments received on the topic of shark depredation
 - Charter and recreational fishermen commented on challenges
 - Sandbar, bull, dusky, and other shark species mentioned
 - Consideration of spawning aggregation effects suggested
 - Recognition that increased depredation is necessarily associated with rebuilding healthy shark populations



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Looking Ahead

- Public Comments:

- 2021 Shark Specifications Proposed Rule due October 29
- Amendment 12 (National Policies, etc.) due October 26
- Amendment 14 (Shark Allowable Biological Catch Control Rule, etc.) due December 31

- Coming soon:

- Draft Amendment 13 (Bluefin tuna)

- Next AP meeting:

- Next in-person meeting likely to be held in May
- Small AP meeting for Amendment 14, billfish management, and the HMS Electronic Technologies Plan on December 7th



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