

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
 NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION  
 (NOAA)

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NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE (NMFS)  
 ATLANTIC HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES ADVISORY PANEL

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VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING

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THURSDAY  
 SEPTEMBER 9, 2021

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The Panel met via webinar at 9:00 a.m.  
 EDT, Bennett Brooks, facilitating.

MEMBERS PRESENT

PAT AUGUSTINE  
 RICK BELLAVANCE, New England Fishery Management  
 Council  
 CHESTER BREWER, South Atlantic Fishery  
 Management Council  
 PETER CHAIBONGSAI, The Billfish Foundation  
 MARCUS DRYMON, Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant -  
 State Rep for Alabama  
 AMY DUKES, South Carolina Department of Natural  
 Resources  
 MEAGAN DUNPHY-DALY, Duke University Nicholas  
 School of the Environment  
 YAMITZA RODRIGUEZ FERRER, Puerto Rico DNER,  
 Recreational and Sport Fisheries Division  
 SONJA FORDHAM, Shark Advocates International  
 KRISTIN FOSS, Florida Fish and Wildlife  
 Conservation Commission  
 STEVE GETTO, American Bluefin Tuna Association  
 JOHN GRAVES, Virginia Institute of Marine  
 Science  
 MARCOS HANKE, Caribbean Fishery Management  
 Council

LUKE HARRIS, Pure Harvest Seafood  
DEWEY HEMILRIGHT, Mid-Atlantic Fishery  
Management Council  
GREG HINKS, New Jersey Department of  
Environmental Protection  
EVAN HIPSLEY, JR.  
RUSSELL HUDSON, Directed Sustainable Fisheries,  
Inc.  
BOB HUMPHREY, Sport-Ventures Charters and Casco  
Bay Bluefin Bonanza  
STEPHEN IWICKI  
DAVID KERSTETTER, Nova Southeastern University  
Oceanographic Center  
TRISH MURPHY, North Carolina Division of Marine  
Fisheries  
JEFF ODEN, F/V Sea Bound  
TIM PICKETT, Lindgren-Pitman, Inc.  
MICHAEL PIERDINOCK, CPF Charters "Perseverance";  
Recreational Fishing Alliance  
GEORGE PURMONT  
MARK SAMPSON, Ocean City Charterboat Captains  
Association  
MARTIN T. SCANLON, F/V Provider II  
SCOTT TAYLOR, Dayboat Seafood  
PERRY TRIAL, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department  
RICK WEBER, South Jersey Marina  
ALAN WEISS, Blue Water Fishing Tackle Co.  
KATIE WESTFALL, Environmental Defense Fund  
ANGEL WILLEY, Maryland Department of Natural  
Resources

NOAA NMFS STAFF PRESENT  
JANET COIT, Assistant Administrator for  
Fisheries  
HEATHER BAERTLEIN  
RANDY BLANKINSHIP, Division Chief, Atlantic  
Highly Migratory Species Management Division  
KARYL BREWSTER-GEISZ, HQ Fish Branch Chief,  
Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Management  
Division  
CRAIG COCKRELL, Atlantic Highly Migratory Species  
Management Division  
PETE COOPER, Branch Chief, Atlantic Highly  
Migratory Species Management Division  
DAN CREAR, Atlantic Highly Migratory Species  
Management Division  
JENNIFER CUDNEY, Atlantic Highly Migratory  
Species Management Division

TOBEY CURTIS, Atlantic Highly Migratory Species  
Management Division

GUY DUBECK, Atlantic Highly Migratory Species  
Management Division

BEN DUFFIN, Atlantic Highly Migratory Species  
Management Division

STEVE DURKEE, Atlantic Highly Migratory Species  
Management Division

CLIFF HUTT, Atlantic Highly Migratory Species  
Management Division

LAUREN LATCHFORD, Atlantic Highly Migratory  
Species Management Division

BRAD MCHALE, Northeast Branch Chief, Atlantic  
Highly Migratory Species Management Division

SARAH MCLAUGHLIN, Atlantic Highly Migratory  
Species Management Division

IAN MILLER, Atlantic Highly Migratory Species  
Management Division

DELISSE ORTIZ, Atlantic Highly Migratory  
Species Management Division

RICK PEARSON, Atlantic Highly Migratory Species  
Management Division

LARRY REDD, JR., Atlantic Highly Migratory  
Species Management Division

GEORGE SILVA, Atlantic Highly Migratory  
Species Management Division

DIANNE STEPHAN, Policy Analyst

NICK VELSEBOER, Atlantic Highly Migratory Species  
Management Division

TOM WARREN, Atlantic Highly Migratory  
Species Management Division

JACKIE WILSON, Atlantic Highly Migratory  
Species Management Division

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

9:01 a.m.

1  
2  
3 MR. BROOKS: Good morning everyone.  
4 Bennett Brooks with the Consensus Building  
5 Institute here. Welcome back for Day 2 of the  
6 fall Highly Migratory Species Advisory Panel  
7 meeting. Good to have everyone back in our  
8 virtual room.

9 I've talked to my internet gods last  
10 night and hopefully I will maintain much better  
11 connection today than I did yesterday but with  
12 speed.

13 Just to orient us to the game plan for  
14 today. This morning, in a minute, we will turn  
15 to the economic situation report. Something that  
16 the HMS Staff have been doing since COVID.  
17 There's been lots of prudent information, I think  
18 really broadly appreciated. So we'll have that  
19 this morning.

20 And after a break we will come back  
21 and we will hear from leadership. Both the new  
22 assistant administration and from Sam Rauch as  
23 well. That will be a very thick half hour so  
24 please come back from the break promptly because  
25 we will start right on time.

26 And then the rest of the day is pretty  
27 much Amendment 13. We are breaking that into  
28 three parts so that we can sort of have focused  
29 conversations on different aspects of A13.

30 Tom Warren will be leading us through  
31 that conversation. He's going to have a long  
32 day, but it will be an interesting day. And we  
33 are really looking for a very good conversation  
34 on that and lots of good feedback. That will be  
35 helpful for the HMS Staff.

36 We will have a break at 10:15. We  
37 will break for lunch from 12:00 to 1:30. We will  
38 have a break at 2:30. AP members, members of the  
39 public, if you need to make phone calls, do other  
40 work, those are the windows to aim for. So  
41 please use that as well.

42 And then for members of the public, we  
43 have designated from 3:30 to 4:00 for an  
44 opportunity for public comments. So that would  
45 be the time where if you want to weigh out any of  
46 the, any of the issues in our discussion, or  
47 frankly, any HMS related topic, that is your  
48 window.

1           So we invite you to listen to the  
2 conversation all day long and then weigh in at  
3 that point.

4           Ground rules. I don't want to hit all  
5 the ground rules other than to say, to AP  
6 Members, do like we were doing yesterday, weigh  
7 in, share time, ask questions. Those were very  
8 good conversations so thank you.

9           On the tech note, I think we're  
10 probably all fairly familiar with how this works  
11 at this point, but if you want to, the main thing  
12 to know is that you're all on mute and so to AP  
13 Members during the day or to public comment  
14 later, when you want to get in, just raise your  
15 virtual hand, which is clicking on the little  
16 smiley face at the bottom, which will bring up  
17 the dialogue box, and click raise hand. And then  
18 when you're done with your comment if you could  
19 lower your hand just by clicking on that again  
20 that would be great.

21           And for whatever reason that's not  
22 working, we have a Q&A box where you could say,  
23 hey, I want to get into the conversation. You  
24 can also use that Q&A box just post a question or  
25 a comment. Please know that those will be seen  
26 by everybody, so be aware of that.

27           And if you are participating by phone,  
28 you can raise a virtual hand by pushing \*3. And  
29 then you will lower your virtual hand by pushing  
30 \*3 again.

31           As we did yesterday, we will be  
32 recording the conversation today, so just be  
33 aware of that.

34           I think that's all I wanted to note  
35 right now. But let me just see, Randy, if there  
36 is anything you want to say at the outset here  
37 before we swift over to the economic situation  
38 report.

39           MR. BLANKINSHIP: I just want to wish  
40 everybody a happy good morning. It's good to  
41 have you all with us again for another, a full  
42 day of discussion on various topics here related  
43 to HMS. I'm looking forward to the dialogue.  
44 Thanks for being with us.

45           MR. BROOKS: Thanks. Okay, thanks.  
46 And, Pete, anything from a technical standpoint  
47 you want to fold in before we begin today?

48           MR. CHAIBONGSAI: No. I think we did

1 some mic tests. If you run into problems you can  
2 always email me or Craig, on the side, and we'll  
3 try to work that out.

4 MR. BROOKS: Great. And AP Members,  
5 if there are any questions that you have about  
6 the agenda today, or anything, this would be the  
7 moment to raise your hand. So I will pause for  
8 ten seconds just to see if anyone has any  
9 questions.

10 And if not, and I'm not seeing any,  
11 then, George Silva and Cliff Hutt, I'm going to  
12 hand it up to you to dive into economics.

13 MR. SILVA: Let me share my screen.  
14 And I assume that the slides are up, is that  
15 correct?

16 MR. BROOKS: We're seeing it. Yes,  
17 looks good.

18 MR. SILVA: Great. Thank you. Well  
19 thanks everyone for having me back. I can't  
20 believe this is already the fourth presentation  
21 of the economic situation report. Last in the  
22 spring.

23 I talked to folks about some of the  
24 green shoots that we were observing that were  
25 occurring in the economy. Unfortunately, some of  
26 those sprouts that we were taking a look at  
27 haven't fully yet emerged.

28 The emergence of the Delta variant  
29 continues to impact the economy. And there is  
30 quite a diversity of new issues that have come  
31 up.

32 We've worked in some of your  
33 recommendations from the previous meetings. I  
34 want to thank you for letting us know about your  
35 interest in bluefin tuna price variations.

36 More of a regional focus on some of  
37 the restaurant sales. And some more details  
38 about imports and exports.

39 So we've incorporated that into this  
40 presentation to help address many of those good  
41 comments that we received at the last spring AP  
42 meeting.

43 So let me start by walking you through  
44 what I'm going to talk about. I'm going to first  
45 start off, once again, with some macroeconomic  
46 indicators to give you the most kind of real-time  
47 look at what's going on in the fishery sector.  
48 In particular interest to HMS.

1 I'm going to dive into the HMS  
2 landings revenue by month that we've collected  
3 and analyzed. And then examine the individual  
4 price trends for some of our species.

5 Followed by a look at commercial  
6 vessel activity. That gives us a really very  
7 fine real-time look at what's going on, on the  
8 water, followed by international trade.

9 And Cliff Hutt will join us for a  
10 discussion of the for-hire sector tournaments.

11 Let's start by, my kind of canary in  
12 the coal mine, as I like to refer to the regional  
13 restaurant sales as provided by the open table  
14 network.

15 We've taken a look at this data since  
16 the beginning of the pandemic. It's been pretty  
17 useful to give us a, kind of a near real-time  
18 look at what's going on in the restaurant sector.

19 That's mainly because 68 percent of  
20 all consumer expenditures for fisheries products  
21 were made at food service establishments. That  
22 was provided to us by fisheries of the U.S. in  
23 2017.

24 And I think that's still, for the most  
25 part, holds true. But there has been some  
26 changes since the pandemic in consumption.

27 As you can see here we've, you know,  
28 once again there was a dramatic reduction in  
29 seated diners in March of 2020, as shutdowns  
30 occurred across the country as a result of the  
31 COVID-19 pandemic.

32 But then there was a recovery last  
33 summer to some degree. Though the winter things  
34 kind of took a turn for the worst. As you can  
35 see, we dropped down to almost, still an 80  
36 percent reduction around the, just before the  
37 holidays.

38 And then that's slowly improved. And  
39 we saw some really good numbers starting in early  
40 April. People were excited to get back outside.

41 A lot of outdoor seating, some, many  
42 states reopened their restaurant establishments  
43 for in-person dining with the rollout of the  
44 vaccines that really took off in March. There  
45 was a pretty strong return to restaurants.

46 However, that did kind of take a dip.  
47 A couple, the data gets a little more choppy  
48 since then, as you can see. There is some up and

1 down movements in April, May.

2 There's a big spike for Father's Day.  
3 Apparently everyone wanted to go out for Father's  
4 Day weekend, which is kind of interesting.

5 Memorial Day was a little bit of a  
6 mixed bag. That takes us through the summer.  
7 And we, kind of, there was kind of improvements  
8 all the way, I would say, up to almost July 4th.  
9 And then after July 4th there was a little bit of  
10 a slow down towards the tail end of July.

11 And then I wanted to give you kind of  
12 a real-time update. On Labor Day U.S. seated  
13 restaurant sales were up 15 percent. And the  
14 Sunday, this past Sunday, they were up 30  
15 percent.

16 However, just on Tuesday of this week  
17 they were down 30 percent. So there's a lot of  
18 choppiness, a lot of change in, I think, consumer  
19 behavior.

20 The difference between maybe dining  
21 out when people went to work at the office versus  
22 now maybe some more concentration of dining out  
23 on weekends and holidays versus during the week  
24 day.

25 But I took a look at the seven day  
26 average to kind of smooth out some of this  
27 weekly, this kind of daily ups and down, as you  
28 can see in the data. But that pattern has become  
29 choppy.

30 Over the past seven days there's been  
31 a positive one percent improvement in seated  
32 table diners over the 2019 equivalent week. So  
33 that's pretty good. I mean, that's not bad.  
34 That's kind of on par.

35 But the previous week before Labor Day  
36 it was still off by nine percent, over 2019  
37 numbers. So we're, there is a concerted push for  
38 recovery.

39 It's hard to tell though with the  
40 holiday week exactly what's going on, but my kind  
41 of impression now is that special occasions, like  
42 holidays and nice weather weekends, we do get  
43 some big surge in people trying to go out, but  
44 it's not steady throughout the week. That  
45 recovery.

46 So let me jump into regional  
47 restaurant sales. This is a new chart that I've  
48 put together.

1 In the last meeting we got some  
2 interest in more of an east coast focus. Kind of  
3 the HMS area.

4 So I took some select states that had  
5 sufficient data on the open table network. And  
6 this data I grabbed from Florida, Texas,  
7 Massachusetts, New Jersey and North Carolina.  
8 And I think that gives a fairly decent picture of  
9 what's going on in the east coast and the Gulf of  
10 Mexico.

11 And as you can see, there really was,  
12 everyone kind of took the same closure pattern in  
13 March. I mean, all the lines are very tightly on  
14 top of each other just before, or just leading up  
15 to that March 18th date. Really starting in  
16 like, I think it was March 14th and kind of  
17 leading into the March 18th.

18 Recovery and reopenings first took off  
19 in Texas and Florida, by that green line and that  
20 turquoise line on the map. On the chart I mean.

21 And then that was followed by in kind  
22 of like mid-May, around May 18th, North Carolina  
23 started reopening, I think, in restaurant  
24 visitation. And then kind of the low, the  
25 slowest ones to reopen was Massachusetts and then  
26 New Jersey.

27 It's interesting, the one interesting  
28 thing on that is that New Jersey was the last to  
29 start up in June 2020, but they had one of the  
30 largest rebounds leading up to Labor Day of 2020  
31 over, look at kind of September, that purple line  
32 is right at the top. So there's a large rebound  
33 in New Jersey.

34 Massachusetts and North Carolina have  
35 had the slowest recovery so far of these five  
36 east coast states. So those are that orange line  
37 at the bottom there, as you can see leading into  
38 August. And light blue line in North Carolina.  
39 That's probably pretty much it.

40 The one thing they kind of note about  
41 this open table data is there have been a  
42 substantial number of permanent closures in  
43 restaurants, and that affects some of the data  
44 since kind of, they can't really recover to a  
45 restaurant that no longer exists.

46 And then there is also a bit more  
47 competition. There is a couple of competitors on  
48 the market that provide the same services as open

1 table and that have really taken off during the  
2 pandemic. So I just want to put those caveats  
3 out there that we've been considering.

4 But so far it's still kind of, in  
5 terms of availability of data it gives us still  
6 one of the best real-time looks of what's going  
7 on in the restaurant sector.

8 A little bit slower source of data is  
9 the U.S. Census Bureau. They collect advance  
10 retail sales for different sectors.

11 In particular, I was interested in  
12 looking at the U.S. restaurant and bar sales.  
13 This is not just seated diners, but this also  
14 includes takeout and alcohol sales of bars.

15 As you can see here, the pandemic had  
16 a dramatic effect on restaurant and bar sales,  
17 with a 53 percent reduction at its lowest point  
18 in April of 2020. Thankfully things have looked  
19 a bit better, as I started talking about in the  
20 last AP meeting that there were some positive  
21 elements to keep an eye out for.

22 And as we can see in March of 2021 a  
23 change from 2019 monthly sales was at zero. So  
24 we're right back to 2019 levels in March of 2021.

25 And we've seen an improvement since  
26 then with almost a ten percent increase by the  
27 time we get to July of 2021. But the one thing  
28 to kind of note there is that that has an  
29 improvement in the sector.

30 Really the biggest improvement was in  
31 April with that five percent jump from zero to  
32 five percent. After that, and then there is a  
33 pretty good recovery also from April to May.

34 But after Memorial Day, really kind of  
35 saw slowdown of recovery over the summer months.  
36 With just a one percent increase monthly from May  
37 through June to July.

38 That maybe partially attributed to  
39 some of the hesitancy associated with the Delta  
40 variant. And also, with just kind of the  
41 economic turmoil in the economy and it's impacted  
42 our expenditures.

43 So switching gears from the restaurant  
44 sector. The other big kind of driver of  
45 fisheries expenditures, especially our  
46 recreational sector, is travel.

47 TSA provides some great real-time  
48 numbers on the number of travelers through the

1 nation's airports that go through TSA  
2 checkpoints.

3 And as you can see here, the 2019 is  
4 kind of our baseline, it's in orange. And it's  
5 pretty, you know, it has a weekly up and down  
6 movement that spikes around various important  
7 holidays.

8 The green line shows us what happened  
9 in 2020, with that dramatic decline in March of  
10 2020. And a real slow recovery from April  
11 through really July of 2020.

12 2021 has shown steady gains. Well,  
13 there was a dip after the New Year, but since the  
14 beginning of the new year through the early  
15 summer there was steady improvement on that blue  
16 line.

17 However, after you get past Memorial  
18 Day there is once again kind of this flattening  
19 of the improvement. And we're still well below  
20 the 2019 total traveler numbers. So that's  
21 something to keep an eye on in terms of our  
22 tourism sector.

23 Now we jump into kind of some of the  
24 key costs associated with the fishery and fuel  
25 costs. For a while fuel costs were kind of  
26 boring in this whole story.

27 2019 was our baseline, it's that black  
28 line on there. And this is weekly, number two,  
29 diesel retail prices that I got from the  
30 Department of Energy, on the graph there.

31 The one thing to note is that while  
32 the pandemic was going, the demand for fuel  
33 decreased. And that lead to a decrease in fuel  
34 prices throughout 2020. That green line there is  
35 well below the black line baseline for 2019.

36 Things started changing in 2021, the  
37 orange line. In January and February we're still  
38 that kind of decrease in demand for, diesel was  
39 still kind of, or for fuel in general, was still  
40 kind of there.

41 However, by the time we got to March  
42 and April there was an increase in prices. But  
43 the increase in prices was also associated with  
44 the increase of prices across the economy.

45 Consumer price index had pretty large  
46 gains during that time period. So it was some  
47 inflationary pressures on the economy.

48 And so then by the time we got to, I

1 would say mid-April, early April, we were  
2 basically at 2019 prices. And since the early  
3 summer, and kind of that, basically after June,  
4 fuel prices have kind of surpassed 2019 prices.

5 Recently, at the beginning of August,  
6 diesel was retailing at about \$3.36 a gallon. I  
7 took a look more recently towards the end of  
8 August and it was still at, it had just climbed  
9 to \$3.37. A penny more. So much hasn't changed  
10 since I put this slide together.

11 But fuel isn't the only issue.  
12 Actually, I'll probably pause here before I jump  
13 into employment.

14 A few other things have occurred as  
15 well, and I haven't found a great way to  
16 characterize it, but as you know, the supply  
17 chains have been disrupted in various ways.  
18 Personally I had a car repair this summer at the  
19 body shop and it took almost the entire summer to  
20 source parts and get that job taken care of.  
21 It's kind of amazing.

22 I'm hearing the same things occurring  
23 in the trucking sector. We're hearing that  
24 critical part of replacement is having an impact  
25 on our long-haul trucking.

26 I'm hearing a few anecdotes in our  
27 fishing fleet that boats have been kind of shored  
28 up to deal with repairs that have taken longer  
29 than normal. Parts that normally would have come  
30 in, in 24 to 48 hours are taking a week or two,  
31 maybe several weeks to arrive.

32 So those are all kind of concerning  
33 aspects that the pandemic and kind of the  
34 shifting economy has really had an impact. And  
35 one of the things contributing to that, in  
36 addition to like sourcing of parts, there is also  
37 some strange things going on in the labor market.

38 One of the big, dramatic things, is we  
39 saw uninsured unemployment claims hit some of the  
40 all-time, really all-time highs at 23.1 million  
41 on May 9th, 2020. Luckily claims have decreased  
42 to 28 million as of August 7th, 2021.

43 Unemployment has improved  
44 dramatically. It was at, at his highest rate in  
45 April at 14.8 percent. And it is now declined to  
46 5.4 percent.

47 One thing to note of right now, as  
48 many unemployment benefit programs are ending,

1 and this might have secondary consumption impacts  
2 on the economy that might affect how, the amount  
3 of cash some households that are still unemployed  
4 have available to spend on goods.

5 In addition, the unemployment numbers  
6 are really inconsistent from one sector to  
7 another. We've seen some sectors that are  
8 virtually unimpacted while other sectors, such as  
9 hospitality, had a major impact. Major shifts in  
10 unemployment.

11 And those are all having ripple  
12 effects on the economy. And I think that's  
13 contributing to some of the supply chain issues  
14 that we were witnessing.

15 So now kind of shifting gears from  
16 that macroeconomic overview and taking a look at  
17 how that feeds into our Atlantic HMS commercial  
18 landings. This chart you've seen. This is  
19 comparing 2019 to 2020.

20 Overall there was a 12 percent  
21 decrease on average of commercial landings from  
22 2019 to 2020. I won't belabor this slide too  
23 long, but I wanted to get you updated on what's  
24 going on in 2021.

25 So I took a slice of that previous  
26 chart and added in the 2021 numbers from January  
27 through July that we have currently available.  
28 As you can see here, there was still a pretty  
29 large decrease in landings by value in January.  
30 With a 29 percent reduction.

31 And that's still way off our baseline  
32 of 2019. And really 2020. Because that was pre-  
33 pandemic.

34 February it was down 16 percent.  
35 March, in comparison to the baseline and in  
36 comparison to even to the start of the pandemic,  
37 we saw a nice recovery this year, really. A 56  
38 percent increase.

39 The one thing to note there, while the  
40 56 percent increase over the 2019 March numbers,  
41 it's just slightly above the February landings  
42 value. So in that aspect it is fairly  
43 consistent.

44 Really, January, February and March  
45 saw fairly consistent monthly HMS ex-vessel  
46 landings month-over-month. But compared to  
47 previous years, it's been kind of down and then  
48 back up.

1 April, that recovery continued. And  
2 actually, there was some real gains in April in  
3 the fishery overall. And there was a dramatic  
4 improvement, even compared to 2019, with that 71  
5 percent increase.

6 So there was some very positive things  
7 occurring in the fishery in March and April.  
8 Unfortunately that's staled out in May.

9 In May we saw a 13 percent decline in  
10 HMS landings as compared to 2019. And it was  
11 down from April as well. It wasn't just a year-  
12 to-year comparison issue it was also a month-to-  
13 month decline.

14 In June, while landings revenue was  
15 down seven percent, it was still above May  
16 numbers, so that was good. In July we saw a  
17 pretty nice jump, I mean a really nice, a really  
18 dramatic jump, in landings.

19 But that's consistent with what we see  
20 in the HMS fishery. And it's very close to what  
21 the July 2019 numbers were.

22 So shifting gears. Let's kind of  
23 drill into some of the components that might be  
24 driving this improvement and landings value.

25 Prices for bluefin tuna have held  
26 steady in 2021. Ranging from \$5.53 to almost  
27 \$7.00 per pound in July.

28 Prices climbed above 2019 prices in,  
29 the preliminary numbers are showing for July  
30 here. That's the first time, really, that we're  
31 surpassing it.

32 Well, there was also a period in  
33 February and March too. But it's really kind of  
34 the first deviation. But we'll have to see how  
35 those numbers shake up when we get revisions to  
36 figures.

37 But here last time we had a question  
38 regarding the distribution of prices. So I  
39 decided to drill in and give you some more  
40 details on that.

41 And this next graph is going to be a  
42 little bit complicated. I'll run through it a  
43 couple of times just to give you an opportunity  
44 to look at all of the details and to give you an  
45 overview.

46 Here I will start by showing you this  
47 bluefin tuna ex-vessel price distribution. So  
48 what's going on in this chart here is ex-vessel

1 price is on the horizontal, x-axis at the bottom.  
2 And as you can see it's, in January it was  
3 averaging, in 2021, around \$6.43. That's kind of  
4 where that, the center of the mass is for that  
5 blue shaded area.

6 The orange shaded area shows you the  
7 kind of distribution of the ex-vessel price in  
8 2019. And we've used this scale density.

9 Which basically means we just looked  
10 at kind of the distribution, the probability  
11 distribution of pricing for that month and scaled  
12 at the one to make them a little easier so all  
13 the charts were kind of the same size.

14 So let me walk you through that. As  
15 you can see here, in 2019, there was kind of a,  
16 almost a bimodal distribution of price. Some of  
17 it kind of around \$4.50 versus about, I don't  
18 know, maybe it looks like about \$7.50 peaking in  
19 2019 where 2021 it's really centered around the  
20 mass around that six, a little over \$6.00 mark.

21 But let me start this animation for  
22 you. And this animation goes over time. And so  
23 the next month is February. And you can see that  
24 the pricing is shifted to the right for 2021. So  
25 blue ray is a little bit shifted over.

26 April, however, saw kind of more of a  
27 peak and a mass. And then May we see kind of a  
28 much more diffused pricing in 2021 versus 2019,  
29 which 2019 is very centered around that. It  
30 looks around \$4.50, most bluefin tuna we're going  
31 for.

32 And here's June, which shows a bimodal  
33 distribution 2021. And July we see that kind of  
34 shift to the right again where bluefin is  
35 definitely exceeding.

36 So let me just let it run one time  
37 just to have you take a look at all the price  
38 distribution over the different months.

39 One thing in the PDF we've produced  
40 for this slide presentation, each month is a  
41 separate slide. So if you want to kind of drill  
42 down drill and take a look at how each month  
43 plays out from January through July I would  
44 recommend downloading that PDF from our website.  
45 The advisory panel meeting.

46 So here we go again. Shifting in  
47 February. Basically the same distribution by  
48 shifted to the right.

1 March, a little bit different where it  
2 was, 2019 was bimodal. April, pretty dramatic  
3 difference.

4 May, lots more distribution in 2021.  
5 There's June, kind of that before pricing. There  
6 is July with that big shift to the right.

7 So that's probably, kind of takes us  
8 through bluefin tuna pricing. Hopefully that  
9 answers some of the questions that we had at that  
10 last meeting regarding that distribution.

11 So bigeye tuna prices. Bigeye started  
12 to exceed 2019, 2020 prices in March of 2021.  
13 That remains slightly higher through July. Most  
14 recent price being around \$6.44 a pound.

15 Yellowfin prices started off lower in  
16 January and the previous years. But has exceeded  
17 2019 and 2021. The 2020 prices since March. As  
18 right now it's, July was \$4.47 (technical  
19 difficulties) --

20 MR. BROOKS: Hey, George, you're  
21 cutting out a little bit, can you just make sure  
22 you're staying close to your mic?

23 MR. SILVA: Yes, thank you, Bennett.  
24 I probably was leaning back in my chair a little  
25 bit. Thanks.

26 MR. BROOKS: Okay. No worries.

27 MR. SILVA: Let's see, where am I  
28 here. Swordfish. Swordfish prices have exceeded  
29 2019 and 2020 prices in 2021. Except with the  
30 exception of May.

31 I guess there was a pretty strong  
32 pricing for swordfish last May, so it was a  
33 little bit higher last year than this year. But  
34 it's been pretty steady. It's kind of following  
35 a lot of the other consumer products in terms of  
36 improved pricing. And most recently at \$5.16 per  
37 pound.

38 Blacktip, there was a great story in  
39 2020 with it having a nice recovery in price for  
40 the meat of the shark. However, in 2021, since  
41 basically May, prices have dropped below 2020  
42 levels and are, have dropped down to now just  
43 under \$1.00 per pound in July.

44 So let's jump into our other high  
45 frequency data source that has been very helpful  
46 for looking at the pandemic's impacts, which is  
47 our VMS data. This slide here is a bar graph of  
48 the number of the VMS pre-landing reports.

1                   And that tells us basically the number  
2 of trips for all landing HMS vessels equipped  
3 with VMS. As a reminder, VMS is required by  
4 vessels equipped with pelagic longline gear on  
5 board, bottom longline vessels fishing off South  
6 Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia from  
7 January through July, gillnet vessels issued  
8 directed shark limited access permits near the  
9 southeast U.S. monitoring area from December  
10 through March 31st and for vessels.

11                   So here we see the number of trips  
12 curiously have pretty dramatically declined in  
13 January and February of 2021. There was some  
14 pretty big impacts there.

15                   Not sure if that were impacts  
16 associated with the crew or whatnot. Those  
17 impacts actually exceed the previous numbers for  
18 revenue and so, even though trips were down some  
19 of those offset with better landings with, or a  
20 higher volume of landings from the trips that  
21 were taken.

22                   March, eight percent recovery in the  
23 number of trips taken. April, while April there  
24 were a bit more trips than March, it was still  
25 down as compared to 2019.

26                   Same thing for May. May there were a  
27 few more trips than there were in April. But it  
28 was still off by 25 percent as compared to 2019.

29                   June, the story is almost the exact  
30 same pattern as in May. Except a few more trips.  
31 July, unfortunately, we did see a decline in the  
32 number of trips overall, both from June to July.  
33 And as compared to 2019. Which was off by 18  
34 percent.

35                   Now we also, from the pelagic longline  
36 vessels, we get the number of set reports taken  
37 by each vessel. So this gives us a measure of  
38 effort of the longline fleet, in particular.

39                   Somewhat similar patterns. Effort was  
40 down 29 percent as compared to 2019 in January.  
41 February effort was down 36 percent. March,  
42 there was still a nice recovery of a increase of  
43 three percent in effort.

44                   And that increase continued in April.  
45 It really dramatically improved from 2020. But  
46 it was, and it was above March 2021 numbers as  
47 well.

48                   May was just a tiny bit more effort

1 than in April, but it was dramatically off from  
2 what we normally see in May as compared to like,  
3 in comparison to 2019 it was down 43 percent.

4 In June that kind of story continues.  
5 It was, June was up a bit from May but still down  
6 as compared to 2019. Down 18 percent.

7 In July though the effort was off a  
8 bit overall, both from June and, from June in  
9 2021. And is in comparison to both 2019 and 2021  
10 numbers. 2019 and 2020 numbers. It was down 35  
11 percent.

12 So, there was a lot of interests in  
13 the last meeting about HMS trade data. And I  
14 thought most of the interest would be focused on  
15 imports of HMS species products. It was an  
16 overall decrease in 2020 as compared to 2019 in  
17 imports.

18 Some of you mentioned in previous  
19 meetings, with passenger air travel down, there  
20 was also a major impact on air travel, or  
21 freight, air freight, associate with the travel  
22 restrictions that had an impact on imports. And  
23 a few other contributing factors. And just  
24 demand was probably off overall internationally  
25 because of the economic distribution.

26 As you can see here, bluefin was down  
27 dramatically from basically 2,500 metric tons  
28 down to 1,700 metric tons in 2020. Bigeye was  
29 also down equally from about, just under 5,000  
30 metric tons to a bit under, or down to about  
31 1,900 metric tons in 2020.

32 Yellowfin, percentage wise, wasn't  
33 down quite as much imports from 19,700 down to  
34 like 14,600 in 2020. And then as you can see,  
35 albacore, skipjack was small amounts of imports.

36 Swordfish probably the most interests.  
37 We had about 10,456 metric tons imported in 2019  
38 and 8,163 metric tons in 2020.

39 One thing to keep in mind is that  
40 these imports are from all oceans. So they're  
41 not just fish from the Atlantic, they're from the  
42 Pacific and they're from all countries. I just  
43 wanted to caveat that.

44 We get this data from the U.S. Census.  
45 Their customs and boarder protection numbers that  
46 come in.

47 I did kind of anticipate a question  
48 that you might have. So what's going on in 2021.

1 I had to do some hand calculations because we're  
2 still only about halfway through the year, so I  
3 took a look at the first six months of 2021 data.

4 It's not up here on the slide but I  
5 did do some quick math earlier this week to kind  
6 of have that, those questions answered. So  
7 taking a look at swordfish.

8 Swordfish in the first six months of  
9 2021 was off 20 percent as compared to 2019, in  
10 terms of the amount of metric tons of imports.  
11 That's kind of in comparison to the first half of  
12 2020. The first half of 2020 was down 38  
13 percent.

14 So, I mean, there is a bit more  
15 imports coming in now in comparison to 2020, but  
16 overall, still, it's still down 20 percent for  
17 this first half of the year.

18 Bluefin, this story is a little  
19 different. Bluefin tuna is, imports are up 27  
20 percent over the first six months of 2021. Based  
21 on 2019 to 2021, the first half of the year.

22 And that's different than it was in  
23 2020 for the first half of the year. In 2020  
24 those imports were down 34 percent as compared to  
25 2019. So that was kind of a change over there.

26 Albacore is up, imports are up ten  
27 percent in the first half of this year.  
28 Yellowfin imports are still six percent lower in  
29 2021 versus 2019 for the first six months.

30 And that's a bit, that's quite a bit  
31 different than it was in the first half of 2020.  
32 The first half of 2020 it was down 32 percent.

33 Then some increase in yellowfin  
34 imports from 2020 to 2021. But it's still not  
35 fully up to the, what the levels were in 2019.

36 And bigeye, bigeye had a 55 percent  
37 reduction in imports in the first six months of  
38 2021 as compared to 2019.

39 So that kind of takes us through all  
40 the kind of nitty gritty commercial economic  
41 numbers here. I can move on to the next slide.

42 And this will be the spot where I  
43 transition to Cliff Hutt. And he will walk us  
44 through our recreational fisheries information.

45 MR. HUTT: Thank you, George. I am  
46 Cliff Hutt, I'm with the HMS division.

47 More recreational data experts, and  
48 today I'm going to walk you through some data we

1 have based on recreational fishing effort where  
2 I'll be comparing some baseline data from 2015  
3 through 2019 to what we saw last year in 2020 and  
4 what we're seeing so far this year in 2021.

5 Since we really only have data for the  
6 first half of 2021 at this point, we're just  
7 going to be looking at data from the first half  
8 of the previous years as well.

9 We'll start off with some of the MRIP  
10 data in the southeast. Here we have MRIP trip  
11 effort data for the south Atlantic for the for-  
12 hire fleet. As you, most of you will be aware,  
13 MRIP data is presented in two months. So we have  
14 January/February, March/April and May/June data.

15 The first bar in each of those groups,  
16 that kind of blueish green is that average of  
17 2015 through 2019. The green is 2020, the purple  
18 is 2021. And the percent change is a comparison  
19 to that baseline from '15 through '19.

20 As you can see from this graph, we saw  
21 a dip in for-hire effort in 2020 following the  
22 start of the pandemic. And that really rebounded  
23 pretty well by wave three as people were kind of  
24 figuring out that outdoor activities were, say  
25 for alternative, during the pandemic.

26 And for waves one and three we've  
27 basically seen data, the effort and the for-hire  
28 fleet in the south Atlantic kind of returning  
29 slightly back to normal. But we saw this huge  
30 spike in March and April of 2021.

31 However, this number is kind of on par  
32 to what we normally see in wave three. I think  
33 maybe reflective of just kind of an early arrival  
34 of some of the HMS species that are targeted by  
35 this fleet.

36 Because these numbers, to be clear,  
37 these are trips that either were targeting or  
38 caught HMS. So, I think the big spike we saw  
39 March/April this year was just a result of the  
40 fish kind of showing up a bit early, which we've  
41 been seeing all up and down the coast the last  
42 couple of years.

43 Next slide, George. And here for the  
44 south Atlantic we have the private boat effort  
45 data. Basically what we see here in 2020, we saw  
46 initial decline in effort in March, when the  
47 pandemic got started. With it largely returning  
48 to normal in May/June.

1                   And what we're seeing now for 2021 is  
2 the pattern, the effort pattern, for the private  
3 boat fleet in the south Atlantic basically  
4 returning to normal as reflected on the 2015 to  
5 2019 baseline.

6                   Slight increases in waves one and two,  
7 but they're kind of within the range in  
8 variability that we expect for the periods of the  
9 year.

10                  Next slide, George. Now we go to the  
11 Gulf of Mexico, which for MRIP data is basically  
12 from Mississippi through the Florida Keys.

13                  Here, again, what we saw last year, we  
14 had a good spike last January and February in  
15 for-hire effort in the Gulf of Mexico compared to  
16 the baseline. And then when the pandemic started  
17 effort, you know, for-hire effort in the Gulf  
18 just completely kind of crashed.

19                  A lot of that effort in the Gulf HMS  
20 suffered is kind of driven out of the Florida  
21 Keys. And the Keys really shutdown hard in those  
22 early months in the pandemic. So you just saw  
23 kind of a puddle cessation of for-hire effort  
24 down there. And what we're seeing now this year  
25 is that for-hire effort largely returning back to  
26 normal.

27                  Next slide, George. The numbers are  
28 really kind of weird this year are the private  
29 boat effort in the Gulf of Mexico.

30                  They were really down in January and  
31 February. A huge spike up in March/April. And  
32 then kind of coming back down in May/June.

33                  Hard to say what all of this is being  
34 driven by. I do know March/April is largely  
35 driven by an odd yellowfin tuna spike out of  
36 Mississippi of all places. We had an estimate of  
37 roughly, just almost 17,000 yellowfin tuna caught  
38 in wave two out in Mississippi this year.

39                  It seems to be an emerging fishery.  
40 We first started seeing some fish caught out of  
41 there in 2019. Came up a little last year in  
42 2020, and just a huge spike this year.

43                  And not entirely sure what's going on  
44 there, but if anybody on the panel has any  
45 insight on that love to hear it.

46                  But a lot of this I think is just  
47 reflective of the fact that the private boat  
48 effort and catch data out of the Gulf of Mexico

1 is some of the most variable recreational effort  
2 we have for the HMS fleet given, which has  
3 largely been the case since Louisiana pulled out  
4 of MRIP to create its own survey on krill.

5 Next slide, George. Now we go to the  
6 LPS data. At this time all we have is data for  
7 the month of June. General note, the LPS ran  
8 through October and covers the New England and  
9 Atlantic states.

10 Looking at charter boat effort in the  
11 month of June, now, again, we have that baseline  
12 data of the 2015 to '19 average. 2020 data and  
13 2021 data.

14 During the pandemic, in most states,  
15 we actually saw, by the month of June, we saw a  
16 slight increase in most states. In the for-hire  
17 effort with big increases in Maryland and  
18 Delaware where the effort nearly tripled last  
19 year.

20 In the case of Maryland and Delaware,  
21 the effort is still up compared to the baseline,  
22 but it's kind of come back down to earth. And  
23 again, the other states we're seeing it kind of  
24 returning closer to the baseline. Some places  
25 down a little, some places up a little but kind  
26 of within the range of the variability.

27 Next slide, George. And then for the  
28 private boat effort, kind of largely seeing the  
29 same thing. In most states the effort kind of  
30 returning back to closer than normal.

31 Seeing, again, in private both effort,  
32 another big spike in Maryland and Delaware. Even  
33 higher than last year, although the spike last  
34 year in the private boat effort was not near as  
35 great as it was in for-hire effort.

36 I think a lot of this is, for Maryland  
37 and Delaware, just being driven by an early  
38 bluefin tuna bite. Tuna bite kind of in the area  
39 where we're seeing them showing up earlier every  
40 year as we have in the past.

41 Next slide, George. And here we have  
42 the tournaments. For the year 2021 we are still  
43 down, compared to 2019 and 2020 we had 47 fewer  
44 registered tournaments through the month of  
45 September.

46 And this year that number is still  
47 down, but it's only 26 fewer tournaments. We've  
48 seen a lot of them come back, but not all of them

1 yet. And this is probably reflective of  
2 continued issues with the Delta variant, but we  
3 are seeing some recovery in terms of turn at  
4 registrations. Throughout most of the region.

5 And with that, that's kind of the end  
6 of the presentation here. This is a list of  
7 various covered resources from NMFS and the U.S.  
8 Government. And George and I are happy to answer  
9 any questions you might have.

10 MR. BROOKS: Great. George and Cliff,  
11 thank you both so much. Always, this is always a  
12 fascination presentation. And I know it's really  
13 valuable for everyone, so thank you on behalf of  
14 the whole AP.

15 We are at ten of. We have until,  
16 we've got about 25 minutes for some Q&A. We will  
17 have a hard stop at 10:15 because I do want to  
18 give us our break before the leadership update,  
19 which will start at 10:30.

20 So, AP Members, please raise your  
21 hands so we can see who would like to enter this  
22 conversation with questions or comments. And  
23 just so we can, you know, and I really ask people  
24 to be as focused on your comment. And George and  
25 Cliff, as focused in your responses as possible  
26 so we just get a lot of people into the next.

27 So I see Marty Scanlon, your hand is  
28 up. Let's bring you into the mix.

29 MR. SCANLON: Thank you for the  
30 presentation. One of the major factors with the  
31 decrease in trips, and effort, is the lack of  
32 crew. That's been a major, major issue  
33 throughout the year, throughout the beginning of  
34 the pandemic has been just impossible to deal  
35 with. If you go by numbers, you would think I  
36 retired this year.

37 The other thing here is, one question  
38 I have for you, is there any data on restaurants  
39 that are permanently closed and how many  
40 restaurants reopened to that time frame would be  
41 interesting to see. So to see what the potential  
42 to rebound is, you know, that might be of help.

43 And the other thing is, with the less  
44 trips and the less sets per trip being made, that  
45 is one of the results of the higher prices, less  
46 product on the market.

47 And on top of just having the lack of  
48 crew, when we do windup with crew they're

1 inexperienced and we're not able to fish the same  
2 amount of gear that we would normally fish. Nor  
3 are we capable of fishing in the amount of  
4 weather we normally fish. Throw all of those  
5 factors in there.

6 As far as your numbers in May are  
7 concerned, one of the main docks that we packed  
8 out in Beaufort, North Carolina almost closed to  
9 commercial packing this past winter. So that  
10 really limited the access to the fleet too to  
11 troll the bump area when it reopened up in May.  
12 So those are all factors that you can look at  
13 there in the future here.

14 MR. SILVA: Thanks, Marty. Yes,  
15 appreciate the feedback on your experience with  
16 crew issues.

17 I think in terms of reopening up the  
18 restaurants, I'll take a look for a good source  
19 for that. I don't have one handy at the moment  
20 in terms of businesses closing and opening.  
21 Probably more of a industry association type of  
22 data point that I could track down. But I'll  
23 take a look at that.

24 MR. SCANLON: That would be helpful to  
25 drop by is too, to see how many of them actually  
26 permanently, are considered permanently closed.  
27 And how many, what percentage of new restaurants  
28 have opened in the meantime to replace that.  
29 That would be a really important number there for  
30 them to look at.

31 MR. BROOKS: Thanks. Thanks, Marty.  
32 Scott Taylor.

33 MR. TAYLOR: Just a couple of other  
34 things that I want to add around the alliance of  
35 Mark and Doug. I don't want to echo, just kind  
36 of majorly problematic through Wisconsin for us.  
37 And you can forget experience there.

38 There was a couple of things that  
39 would have been nice to have seen in the economic  
40 data. Like a comparison between the domestic  
41 production x value or even in just pounds versus  
42 the import to see how that overall trend is going  
43 to look.

44 And the other thing is that it would  
45 have been nice to have seen how many inactive  
46 vessels. What the trend is like with that.

47 Because what's happening here, and  
48 what should be really concerning to everybody, is

1 the overall general trend of decline in both  
2 effort and in sets. And that's attributable to  
3 just attrition. And no new recruiting coming  
4 back into the industry.

5 We've had some people pass away this  
6 year. I just don't know if anybody, offhand,  
7 that's new that's coming into the industry.

8 And my fear is, at least from our  
9 perspectives, that you're on the test because of  
10 a crash. I know for a fact that there is no  
11 boats, no U.S. boats, so they're going to be out  
12 on Havana Banks this year. Or none that I'm  
13 aware of in any kind of numbers.

14 We haven't seen obviously swordfish  
15 product yet in terms of the U.S. fleet. But  
16 these numbers need to be a wake up from the, if  
17 we don't get standard level of support for the  
18 revitalization, at some point the trends will  
19 just fall off the cliff.

20 So, again, if we did this economic  
21 data moving forward it would be nice to see  
22 domestic production against that relative,  
23 whether or not it's being filled by the imports.

24 Clearly with the lower amount of  
25 enforce, we do see some increase in pricing. But  
26 as Marty stated, the number in sense, the number  
27 of effort happens to be distributed across the  
28 individual boats.

29 It's just no longer a sustainable  
30 model for us. Especially when you got the  
31 McDonald's paying \$15.50 an hour for labor. So,  
32 really, really concerning for us. Thank you.

33 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Scott. George or  
34 Cliff, any comments there before I go to the next  
35 speaker here?

36 MR. SILVA: I think the only comment  
37 I'd have is, we probably can work in the number  
38 of active vessels over time for the next  
39 presentation.

40 And we'll take a look at that import  
41 versus domestic production number. It's a little  
42 trickier because we'd probably have to factor in  
43 the west coast and pacific production numbers  
44 into that from the domestic side. But we'll take  
45 a look at our means for doing that.

46 MS. BRENNER: Thanks. Let's go to  
47 Dewey, than Jeff Oden and Alan Weiss. Dewey.

48 MR. HEMLIRIGHT: Can you hear me?

1 MR. BROOKS: Your mic should be open,  
2 Dewey. Yes, we got you.

3 MR. HEMLRIGHT: Okay. Yes, a couple  
4 of things for this would be very helpful to get a  
5 100 foot level instead of a 30,000 foot level,  
6 would be to look at the amount of hooks, that the  
7 decrease in amount of hooks that have been set by  
8 pelagic longline. And that would give you a  
9 better idea to focus on versus the VMS and the  
10 different ones that got to use VMS.

11 Second of all, how about looking at,  
12 with gassed tuna. Which is a process where they  
13 gas the tuna with the treatment and we have to  
14 compete against it with our fresh things. Some  
15 way to figure that. I mean, millions of pounds  
16 are imported not the U.S. for that matter.

17 And another thing to look at with the  
18 imports is, look at the customs, where it has to  
19 clear customs at, along the east coast or Miami  
20 to see where that seafood is coming into. And  
21 from the different customs offices up and down,  
22 particularly to the east coast you can get some  
23 assumptions.

24 But we really need a standardization  
25 of the active vessels and not just one swordfish  
26 in a six month time period. Including active  
27 vessel.

28 Because what Scott said is, he is 100  
29 percent on, we are getting, the industry is  
30 getting pushed right to the edge of a cliff. No  
31 pun intended there, Cliff.

32 But we're getting right to the edge.  
33 And you all have the data available at your hands  
34 already to show that 100 foot level versus this  
35 30,000 over foot view.

36 And so that would be very helpful.  
37 Particularly in any case of revitalization of the  
38 pelagic longline, which seems to be a mantra that  
39 I've heard for ten or 15 years now. And so,  
40 anything closer of a spectacle to getting down  
41 there of reality would be very helpful. Thank  
42 you.

43 MR. BROOKS: Thanks. Alan Weiss and  
44 then Jeff Oden. Alan, your line is open.

45 MR. WEISS: You have a slide that  
46 showed ex-vessel landings and aggregate. And I  
47 guess along the lines of what Dewey said, it's  
48 interesting information but there is limits to

1 really what you can draw from it.

2 You have separate slides showing  
3 numbers of trips and sets over time. You have  
4 other slides showing ex-vessel prices. The  
5 initial one I mentioned was the one that shows  
6 the aggregate ex-vessel value.

7 It would be good to be able to, and  
8 I'm not sure, I don't have a ready suggestion for  
9 you, but some way to synthesis this stuff so that  
10 you have a clearer idea of what the trends are  
11 for an individual boat, other things held  
12 constant.

13 Because when you're looking at these  
14 various aggregations separately, it's hard to  
15 tell if the landings are down because the effort  
16 is down or the landing, or the value is down  
17 because the landings are down or because the  
18 prices are down. It's hard to bring it all  
19 together and know exactly what the impacts are at  
20 a constant level of participation of the boats  
21 that are involved in the fishery on an ongoing  
22 basis over time.

23 Additionally, and this is a separate  
24 matter, and this is something you haven't  
25 covered, and I don't know if you have data on it  
26 or not, but I'm in the longline gear supply  
27 business and I can tell you, you look at the fuel  
28 cost input, which is important, that's really  
29 probably the largest extent, but this year all  
30 the sudden the cost of a number of items in the  
31 area of fishing gear have just gone through the  
32 roof.

33 And it's mostly items that are, have  
34 plastic components, or are made of plastic  
35 entirely. Floats, buoys, tools that have plastic  
36 handles. And of course, monofilament fishing  
37 line.

38 So, a lot of prices, a lot of input  
39 costs have gone up. Which they've gone up enough  
40 to have significant impacts, I think, on the  
41 profitability.

42 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Alan. It's all  
43 interesting you said here.

44 Let's go to Jeff, and then let's bring  
45 in Rick Weber. So, Jeff Oden. Jeff, your line  
46 hasn't been open yet. There you go.

47 MR. ODEN: Okay, thanks. Anyway, I  
48 see the trends and ironically I find my home port

1 being one of the exceptions.

2 I'm seeing six new captains in my  
3 area. And a couple of boats have sold, but a  
4 couple of have been, they have been replaced and  
5 a couple more bought.

6 And anyway, I see optimism. And then  
7 again, I really ask myself, when I look and see  
8 the trends in other areas, how much is NMFS to  
9 blame for that. I mean, with what people see  
10 coming with A13, it really has taken the wind out  
11 of a lot of people's sails.

12 And I mean, if they have no place to  
13 go for closure, which I know that's the  
14 discussion ahead, I mean, you truly have to ask  
15 yourself, how much are you all responsible for  
16 where this industry is heading. And I'll save  
17 the rest for later.

18 But I do see optimism in my area. And  
19 I'm proud to say that I see it here. I sure hope  
20 you all allow it to continue. And, anyway, we're  
21 a valuable entity within the HMS. The most  
22 valuable I might comment.

23 And anyway, I'll save the rest for  
24 later. Thank you.

25 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Jeff. Rick  
26 Weber, why don't you jump in.

27 MR. WEBER: George, on big picture  
28 things, I'm not sure I agree that TSA, though I  
29 understand it's good and quick and easy data to  
30 grab, I'm not sure it's a great proxy for  
31 recreational effort.

32 There are some sources. Soundings  
33 Trade Only, the magazine, but they normally  
34 publish an index of boats sales. And they'll  
35 frequently break it up by category. And that  
36 might something you look at for health of the  
37 recreational boating market.

38 I believe their publishing data that  
39 comes from either Yacht World or boats.com. Is  
40 what they're publishing. But that's at least a  
41 source for you.

42 Or perhaps if the likes of Expedia or  
43 Airbnb will tell you about shore side rentals.  
44 If they break it down. The people, the number of  
45 people who are moving towards waterfront  
46 hospitality might also be a better proxy for you  
47 than the number of people that are flying. Just  
48 as an idea.

1 Other than that, I always really  
2 appreciate this presentation. And I know I was  
3 supposed to bring in the rec voice, but the  
4 decrease in longline/VMS vessel trips needs to be  
5 disconcerting to leadership.

6 That there is something there and we  
7 do not want to replace it nationally with more  
8 imports. We know that that is worse for the  
9 oceans at-large is to replace U.S. caught fish  
10 with imported fish.

11 So, just a word of support to those  
12 folks. Thank you.

13 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Rick. Tim  
14 Pickett. You're open, Tim.

15 MR. PICKETT: Pandemic. In terms of,  
16 we're talking about imports and exports and  
17 things like that.

18 And the importance of having a  
19 domestic fishery, I was approached by several  
20 different, smaller countries. Island nations in  
21 the Caribbean towards the end of this pandemic  
22 that really, I mean, got caught with their pants  
23 down.

24 Their nations, they important  
25 everything, they're used to importing everything.  
26 And they had no way to feed their people when  
27 everything was locked down. There was no  
28 commercial, viable commercial fishery in these  
29 countries.

30 And I think it kind of, you know, this  
31 might be a wake up call, might be a call to  
32 action that we really need to support these  
33 domestic fisheries so they don't go away like  
34 Scott is saying and everything.

35 It's important on a national level,  
36 just for food security in case something like  
37 this ever happens again, we can beat ourselves.  
38 You know, no planes coming in, no imports.

39 We have the ability in the area and  
40 the people and the knowledge on how to do this.  
41 I just thought it was very interesting that it  
42 was two different island nations that approached  
43 me and said, hey, we're going to get some  
44 government money in here and everything to  
45 promote our domestic commercial fishery because  
46 we can't feed our people if it ever gets locked  
47 down again. So I just figured I'd throw that  
48 perspective out.

1 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Tim. Marty, your  
2 hand is up, I don't know if that's leftover or  
3 whether you want to get back in the queue?

4 MR. SCANLON: I want to jump in here  
5 if can, Bennett, that Jeff said and that Dewey  
6 said, if I can, is that okay?

7 MR. BROOKS: Yes. Go ahead, Marty.

8 MR. SCANLON: Well, when you talk  
9 about coastal fisheries and you look at what Jeff  
10 has just stated to us that that's the one region  
11 in the country that has had an increase in  
12 captains and a recruitment in captains and an  
13 increase in vessels, it doesn't get more coastal  
14 than that particular area.

15 Even though the inlet is bad to  
16 navigate, it's as coastal as it gets. You can  
17 leave the dock in the morning and we can return  
18 to the dock at the end of each day when you get  
19 down hauling at the end of a short trip. You can  
20 work in-between the weather.

21 And it's a point that Scott Taylor has  
22 made. It is one of the reasons why it's  
23 important for us to gain access, regain access to  
24 the bump area, and to that northern Florida area  
25 if we're going to keep this industry going.

26 That's the way this fishery is being  
27 led. That's the economic viability of the  
28 industry is for these small coastal vessels to be  
29 able to operate in and out of these ports more  
30 safely and more able to recruit crews that are  
31 qualified to work on these vessels. So that's a  
32 prime example of why we need those, need access  
33 to those other areas.

34 The other thing I wanted to point out  
35 is, that Dewey brought up on gassed tuna fish and  
36 gassed fish, this country is one of the few  
37 countries in the world that allows gassed fish to  
38 be sold. China has banned it. The European  
39 Union has banned it.

40 And why this country is subjecting its  
41 population to the dangers of gas tuna fish is  
42 beyond this. And we've worked on this topic,  
43 Blue Water has, over the last several years.

44 And we really never got any, we've  
45 never gotten any results out of it there but it's  
46 a really important issue, I think, that we need  
47 to address in moving forward. This gassed tuna  
48 issue.

1                   Because what it does is it masks the  
2 quality of the fish. You can actually turn bad  
3 fish and make it look just fine by gassing the  
4 appearance of it there. It's amazing what that  
5 will do. And it's almost like a magic act.

6                   So, I just wanted to add that in  
7 there. Thank you.

8                   MR. BROOKS: Great, thanks, Marty.  
9 And I'll note that in the Q&A Wallace Jenkins has  
10 weighed in saying, I agree with what Rick Weber  
11 just said in reference to imports versus  
12 domestically harvested. These imports are not  
13 sustainable harvested, not to mention thereby  
14 catch. So thanks for replying with that Wallace.

15                   I don't think I see anyone else in the  
16 queue right now. I'll just note, a number of  
17 kind of specific suggests and things like Cliff  
18 and George, when you come back to the next  
19 meeting, things to be thinking about.

20                   Taking a closer look at that  
21 restaurants and sort of what's permanently  
22 closed, new ones coming on, see what's happening  
23 there.

24                   Looking at hooks, the pelagic  
25 longlines, fishery. Rick Weber suggested a  
26 couple of different ways that you might get  
27 another look at what's going on in the rec world  
28 from both sounds, by type, shore side rentals.  
29 That that might be a better proxy for the  
30 recreational fishery than air travel.

31                   And as well as short of looking at  
32 this import versus domestic production. Seeing  
33 if we can get a finer look at that.

34                   And then more broadly, a number of  
35 people weighing in on big picture trends in the  
36 pelagic longline fishery. Just being a lot of  
37 concerns there and a lot of trouble. Ways to  
38 address that.

39                   And then lastly, to the extent that  
40 you all can do more synthesis, that grabs some of  
41 these different figures and puts them together  
42 and sort of helps to make even a little more  
43 sense over them. I mean, the presentations are  
44 great, but whatever you can do to even further  
45 distill it and make those trends pop will be  
46 appreciated.

47                   I don't know, George or Cliff, is  
48 there anything you want to say before we go to

1 break here. But turn it back to you.

2 MR. SILVA: I just want to thank  
3 everyone for the comments. I think we got some  
4 good feedback. I appreciate it.

5 MR. BROOKS: All right. Then we  
6 should get to a break. Randy, anything you want  
7 to say before we go to a break?

8 MR. BLANKINSHIP: I think we're good  
9 for going to break. Look forward to coming back  
10 with leadership.

11 MR. BROOKS: Okay, great. And again,  
12 we will start at 10:30 sharp. Because we have  
13 just a half of leadership and we want to get  
14 every second of that. So, see you in 15 minutes.

15 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter  
16 went off the record at 10:14 a.m. and resumed at  
17 10:30 a.m.)

18 MR. BROOKS: Okay, Randy, I'm going to  
19 hand it off to you. Before I do that, I will  
20 just remind AP members that we will have a hard  
21 stop for leadership at 11 o'clock. So when after  
22 we hear some remarks and open it up for  
23 questions, I will ask AP members to be really  
24 focused in their conversation so we have a chance  
25 to hear from as many folks as possible, you know,  
26 have a good conversation.

27 Randy, to you.

28 MR. BLANKINSHIP: Yes, thank you,  
29 Bennett. I think we've got -- I'm not sure that  
30 we have Janet yet. So I know we've got Sam.

31 MR. BROOKS: Right.

32 MR. BLANKINSHIP: And I think we're  
33 working behind the scenes here to make sure that  
34 we get Janet here shortly.

35 MR. BROOKS: Okay.

36 MR. BLANKINSHIP: So we may need to  
37 pause just for a moment.

38 MR. BROOKS: Okay. I'm sure her  
39 calendar is jam packed. She's just jumping from  
40 meeting to meeting.

41 MR. BLANKINSHIP: Yes, I've talked  
42 with her. She's certainly intending to give some  
43 initial remarks, so we should wait.

44 MR. BROOKS: Okay.

45 MR. BLANKINSHIP: She just asked me  
46 for the panelist password, so --

47 MR. BROOKS: Okay, good. HR and  
48 Clifford, you haven't seen in the Q&A, Rick

1 Webber just posted a link for you there. Okay, I  
2 think she is joining right now. I see her name  
3 there.

4 MS. COIT: Good morning. Can you hear  
5 me? I'm sorry, I had a little trouble signing  
6 on.

7 MR. BROOKS: We can. No worries, and  
8 welcome. I'm going to hand it off to Randy to do  
9 the intro.

10 Randy, go ahead.

11 MR. BLANKINSHIP: All right, great.  
12 Janet, thank you for joining us and Sam as well.  
13 I'll do a little introduction here.

14 I know you're coming in from probably  
15 many other meetings and activities, so hopefully,  
16 I'll talk a minute and let you get your breath  
17 with joining us.

18 But so for everyone else on the  
19 Advisory Panel, I want to introduce Janet Coit,  
20 who is the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries.  
21 Janet was named as the new Assistant  
22 Administrator in June of 2021 this year.

23 And prior to coming to us, she  
24 directed the Rhode Island Department of  
25 Environmental Management for more than ten years.  
26 And prior to her stint as the Director of Rhode  
27 Island Department of Environmental Management,  
28 she was the State Director for the Nature  
29 Conservancy in Rhode Island for ten years. Prior  
30 to that, she was Counsel and Environmental  
31 Coordinator for the late Senator John Chafee and  
32 subsequently then Senator Lincoln Chafee. And  
33 she also served as Counsel to the U.S. Senator  
34 Committee on Environmental and Public Works.

35 She graduated from Dartmouth College  
36 and holds a law degree from Stanford Law School.

37 And then I'll also introduce Sam Rauch  
38 who is more of a known quantity to you all and  
39 has spoken to this group several times. Sam  
40 Rauch is the Deputy Assistant Administrator for  
41 Regulatory Programs. And he oversees NOAA  
42 Fisheries regulatory actions and programs and  
43 coordination of the Agency's aquaculture  
44 activities and the National Environmental Policy  
45 Act programs.

46 So with that, I'll turn it over to  
47 you, Janet.

48 MS. COIT: Thank you, Randy. Good

1 morning, everyone, and thank you for that  
2 introduction, Randy.

3 And I want to start by acknowledging  
4 the great work of Sam Rauch, during this time  
5 that this administration was transitioning before  
6 I got here. And now, since I've been here  
7 because the experience and commitment and the  
8 caring of the people who are leading NOAA  
9 Fisheries is so evident to me and that's true of  
10 this group as well.

11 I was able to scan everyone who is on  
12 here. I do know some people as I come into this  
13 role. Certainly, I'm eager to work with you and  
14 look forward to your advice and your support.

15 This morning, let me just confirm that  
16 -- Randy, can you hear me fine? Okay.

17 This morning I was asked to give a few  
18 remarks and I am happy to do that and tell you a  
19 little bit more about me and the priorities of  
20 this administration. I also hope we have some  
21 time for discussion or Q and A. And I have Sam  
22 and Kelly and Randy here to help me get up to  
23 speed.

24 So I won't go over everything that  
25 Randy just said about my background except to say  
26 that for the last ten years as the head of Rhode  
27 Island State Department of Environmental  
28 Management, I certainly worked a lot on fisheries  
29 and habitat issues, marine issues from the Ocean  
30 State.

31 And by the way, Randy, it's Chafee.  
32 I was privileged to work for John Chafee in the  
33 Senator for many, many years and he is a hero of  
34 mine and was really a giant in the conservation  
35 world and that's actually what led me to Rhode  
36 Island. And then, strange how life is, I ended  
37 up working for his son as governor and I worked  
38 for three governors in my last role which is  
39 quite unusual for a cabinet member at the state  
40 level, including Secretary Raimondo. So I worked  
41 for her for six and a half years on the entire  
42 time that she was Governor of Rhode Island. And  
43 my relationship with her and her interest in  
44 marine life and the work of NOAA in her role as  
45 Commerce Secretary is one of the things that  
46 makes it very, very exciting for me to be in this  
47 role at this time.

48 In my last role, I saw a state

1 perspective on many of the issues that you are  
2 working on. I was on the New England Council as  
3 head of the state agency represented by some fine  
4 people who were leaders in marine fisheries in  
5 Rhode Island. So I'm very aware of the Magnuson-  
6 Stevens Council process and in bringing a respect  
7 for role of advisors like you, state agencies,  
8 stakeholders, academic experts to this position.

9 The only other thing I'd like to say  
10 about my background is when I did work on the  
11 Hill, which is another set of relationships and  
12 experience that I bring to this role, the primary  
13 focus of my work for many years was the  
14 Endangered Species Act and worked to reauthorize  
15 that law, to strengthen that law, and part of my  
16 passion in this role is the work that we're doing  
17 on protected species, marine mammals. And part  
18 of my motivation is the particular challenges we  
19 have at this time.

20 So I must say I've learned a lot from  
21 Randy and Kelly over the last few weeks about the  
22 work of HMS Advisory Panel. You're a unique  
23 animal and not a panel that I've worked with  
24 before, so I will be counting on folks to bring  
25 me up to speed as I learn and grow in this job.

26 It's clear that the Advisory Panel is  
27 a very important and valued partner to NOAA  
28 Fisheries and set the process and the  
29 participatory role that you play across the  
30 geographic range of these highly-migratory  
31 species is important and really adds expertise  
32 and value to our decision-making process.

33 So the engagement, one of the things  
34 I really want to focus on is just really solid  
35 engagement and communication with stakeholders,  
36 fishing community, environmental community. I'm  
37 very aware of the economic importance of the work  
38 that we do and one of the earlier executive  
39 orders under the Biden administration was about  
40 equity. And so we want to serve all people. We  
41 want to be very mindful of past injustices, under  
42 served and under represented communities, and I  
43 think the work that you're all doing and that  
44 we're doing together lends itself to taking  
45 another look at those issues, access in equity.

46 Definitely have a great appreciation  
47 for the difficulty of your work and the  
48 perspectives that you provide as we move forward

1 with this sustainable fisheries imperative.

2 A couple more thoughts about the  
3 administration's priority. Dr. Spinrad, the head  
4 of NOAA, had each of us who were political  
5 appointees do training on scientific integrity  
6 and the scientific basis for the work that we do  
7 at NOAA Fisheries and across NOAA, and thus the  
8 cutting edge and authoritative science of NOAA  
9 are really needed and important. And we know  
10 that the changes that are happening due to  
11 climate change are having a dramatic effect on  
12 our oceans.

13 Cisco Werner, the Chief Scientist at  
14 NOAA Fisheries, keeps saying these aren't the  
15 same oceans that we learned about when we all  
16 went to school, meaning they've changed so  
17 dramatically and we're learning so much about  
18 those changes. And certainly climate change is  
19 another priority of the Biden-Harris  
20 administration and is having a dramatic effect on  
21 our oceans and our fisheries management.

22 Yesterday, we spent an afternoon,  
23 those of in the NOAA Fisheries leadership  
24 listening to presentations from every region in  
25 regard to climate change and what our science and  
26 our observations are showing us and it was really  
27 moving and impactful to hear from the North  
28 Bering Sea to the Western Pacific to the  
29 Caribbean the rate and pace of change. And while  
30 we see changes that are predictable in terms of  
31 sea level rise or warming waters, there's also  
32 the dramatic events and dramatic habitat events  
33 that we couldn't have predicted and that are  
34 impacting in the economic and the sustenance  
35 fisheries in a way that we need to better  
36 predict, if we can, but better manage for when it  
37 comes to buffers or conservation or conservative  
38 values.

39 So climate resilience, fisheries, our  
40 climate and fisheries initiative, our areas of  
41 particular focus for me and for this  
42 administration as mentioned the environmental  
43 justice issues are top of mine and I'm  
44 representing the Commerce Department on a White  
45 House panel on environmental justice issues.  
46 This is something I am passionate about working  
47 with all of you and across the administration on.

48 The other facet of climate change I

1 wanted to mention is renewable energy development  
2 because the scaling up of offshore winds is  
3 something that is another priority of this  
4 administration in regards to the decarbonization  
5 of our energy sector and a commitment that's  
6 being made and we're part of that team, but we  
7 have a unique role in terms of being stewards of  
8 the marine resources with concern about migratory  
9 species, concern about habitat, and concern about  
10 the unknowns in regard to what will be the impact  
11 of this energy development along the Atlantic  
12 Coast. And the Atlantic is the -- kind of ground  
13 zero so to speak of offshore wind development.  
14 There's 17 active leases along the Atlantic Coast  
15 right now. Our Greater Atlantic Region and our  
16 Northeast Science Center have been spending so  
17 much time on offshore wind issues diverting time  
18 from other important issues as we look at impacts  
19 on great whales and sea turtles and on the  
20 fisheries.

21 We have a big meeting with BOEM  
22 tomorrow to talk about these issues and there  
23 really isn't a road map for how you do  
24 compensatory mitigation and so that will be a  
25 really large focus of mine and Secretary  
26 Raimondo's and of our team.

27 Seafood sector, you know, the work  
28 that we need to do on conservation and the work  
29 that we need to do that maintains sustainable  
30 fisheries sometimes intersect in a strange way.  
31 But the job -- the coastal communities helping  
32 them to be sustainable. Can we predict right now  
33 the right level of effort? That is another area  
34 that I think is very, very specific to the work  
35 that you're doing and important. It's a  
36 fascinating time. It's a consequential time to  
37 be involved in the work that we're all doing.

38 So it's interesting, just one kind of  
39 digression. When I was working at Rhode Island  
40 DEM and the pandemic hit. It was super stressful  
41 for everyone and locked up, lots and lots of  
42 isolation. But people turned to the water.

43 So we noticed in Rhode Island the  
44 increase in recreational fishing, increase in  
45 boat buying, and that's an important economic  
46 sector. But it was also just interesting, a lot  
47 of people rediscovered the outdoors, rediscovered  
48 marine environments. And I think we'll see

1 building pressure on our oceans in a variety of  
2 ways.

3 My husband often says as he goes out  
4 kayaking here that it's Rhode Island's only  
5 wilderness, but it really doesn't feel like a  
6 wilderness when you look at all the planned and  
7 interesting uses. And if I can emphasize with  
8 being a migratory species, you know, the work  
9 that you all have to do to protect those habitats  
10 is awesome.

11 So I don't want to get into specifics  
12 that are sort of beyond my knowledge in terms of  
13 some of this. I've been briefed on the work that  
14 you're doing today on the continuing challenges.  
15 I heard from a lot of people about the shark  
16 fisheries and a lot of competing points of views.  
17 So the work that you're doing will really help us  
18 prioritize the right actions to address some of  
19 those concerns, concerns with shark degradation.  
20 And I mentioned the multiple user groups. I  
21 think the management challenges in front of you  
22 are similar to, but maybe even more complex than  
23 some of those that we face in other regions. So  
24 this Advisory Panel again is a unique entity and  
25 the work that we're doing is so important. So I  
26 just want to thank you for the time.

27 I know you were all very busy and that  
28 you have experience, you have expertise that you  
29 bring to this. And again, I think the challenges  
30 that we face today make this work super  
31 interesting, but also perhaps more challenging  
32 than it's ever been before.

33 As we talked to the folks yesterday  
34 from Alaska, they talked about sort of decades  
35 and decades where status quo management was  
36 working well and then all of a sudden things were  
37 changing so dramatically.

38 So thank you for the opportunity to  
39 talk to you today and for serving as our chief  
40 partners in our management. Again, I think the  
41 work we're doing is critical to conservation and  
42 biodiversity in the world and very, very  
43 important to the U.S. economy. And I look  
44 forward to getting to know you and I can see you  
45 in person and to hearing some of your thoughts  
46 today.

47 So I'll stop there and hand it back to  
48 you, Randy.

1 MR. BLANKINSHIP: Thanks, Janet. And  
2 I think actually I'll hand it over to -- well,  
3 unless Sam has something to say, but I think  
4 we'll hand it to Bennett to handle the queue.

5 MR. BROOKS: Yes. Thanks. Sam, you  
6 want to jump in here? Any words here or just  
7 open it up?

8 MR. RAUCH: No, just open it up.

9 MR. BROOKS: Okay, great. Let's do  
10 that.

11 Janet, thanks so much for those  
12 comments. Really, really thoughtful and I'm sure  
13 they'll trigger some questions here.

14 What I would like to do is make sure  
15 that you have a chance to hear from all the  
16 different sectors that are on the panel and so  
17 I'll bounce around a little bit here.

18 Let's start off with Rick Bellavance.  
19 If folks could just introduce themselves, name,  
20 and give Janet a sense of affiliation would be  
21 helpful.

22 MS. COIT: Well, actually, Rick  
23 Bellavance is one of the people I know, so good  
24 morning, Rick.

25 (Simultaneous speaking.)

26 I'm good. I worked closely with Rick  
27 over many, many years on many, many issues, but  
28 Rick, I had no idea until this role how many  
29 other people you've worked with.

30 MR. BELLAVANCE: Thanks for that. I  
31 appreciate it, both Sam and to you, Janet.  
32 Thanks for your time this morning talking to us  
33 and introducing yourself. You do a very good  
34 job, I'm sure.

35 I brought up a point yesterday during  
36 the bluefin tuna discussion that I thought tied  
37 in a little bit to some of the things that you  
38 mentioned during your comments, that I thought  
39 would be helpful to just repeat a little bit.

40 This year in the southern New England  
41 and in Rhode Island, in particular, we had a  
42 strong bluefin tuna fishery that we hadn't seen  
43 as strong like it was this year in quite a while.  
44 And I personally used to do a lot of that through  
45 to presence of sand lance which is a forage fish  
46 for a lot of different things like the marine  
47 mammals that you were talking about, the HMS  
48 species that we're here to talk about today.

1                   And it also happens to be that a lot  
2 of that fishing activity took place in the wind  
3 energy areas off of Rhode Island in Coxes Ledge  
4 and so I started learning a lot more about sand  
5 lance this year. And I learned that their  
6 habitat is really particular. They need a  
7 particular grain of sand to live in because if  
8 it's too small of a grain, they'll suffocate. If  
9 it's too big, they won't be able to burrow into  
10 the sand which they like to do both on a day-to-  
11 day basis and as a hibernation type of behavior  
12 over the wintertime.

13                   So I'm just reaching out to you and  
14 your Agency folks, all the folks in the Science  
15 Center to do what they can to better understand  
16 the importance of sand lance to the southern New  
17 England area for the HMS species and as well as  
18 marine mammals.

19                   I don't know that we really talked  
20 about them a lot during the discussions I've had  
21 with offshore wind planning, but I don't want  
22 them to get overlooked so I thought I'd take a  
23 minute to bring that up.

24                   Thanks, and it's good to see you.

25                   MS. COIT: Thanks, Rick. I'd just  
26 like to offer in reaction specifically that sand  
27 lance. Maybe some other people want to speak to  
28 that, but it was disappointing to see Coxes Ledge  
29 be part of a lease area because we had identified  
30 it and you were part of that process in Rhode  
31 Island as being extremely important habitat. And  
32 NOAA Fisheries had identified that area as  
33 essential fish habitat.

34                   So one of the things we're working on  
35 right now with Interior Department looking at  
36 lessons learned is whether we can, without new  
37 authorities, because we're dealing with existing  
38 law, whether we can have a better communication  
39 that avoids some of these conflicts or that  
40 allows essential fish habitats identified by NOAA  
41 Fisheries which is advisory to have a better  
42 chance of being kept out of some of the wind  
43 lease areas where they won't be turbines on top  
44 of some of these areas.

45                   So I think Coxes Ledge is to me a sore  
46 point and probably to you as well.

47                   MR. BROOKS: Thanks. Let's go to Katie  
48 Westfall and then we'll go to Scott Taylor.

1 Katie.

2 (Simultaneous speaking.)

3 MS. WESTFALL: Can you hear me?

4 MR. BROOKS: Yes, we can.

5 MS. WESTFALL: Great. I'm Katie  
6 Westfall. I'm the Director of Resilient  
7 Fisheries and Communities at the Environmental  
8 Defense Fund.

9 Janet, it's so great to have you at  
10 the helm at NMFS, you bring some really wonderful  
11 experience to the Agency at a crucial time.

12 Just a couple of quick comments. I  
13 wanted to commend NOAA on the launch of the  
14 Climate and Fisheries Initiative. It's  
15 incredibly exciting to see this across NOAA  
16 effort that seems really unprecedented and really  
17 brings the type of build of modeling and decision  
18 support tools that's a critical part of the  
19 equation for increasing resilience to changing  
20 ocean conditions.

21 And as I'm sure other AP members said  
22 I also recently participated in a kickoff opener  
23 for the East Coast Climate Change Scenario  
24 Planning Initiative which is also critically  
25 exciting and great to see the three Atlantic  
26 Councils, folks at Headquarters and the Atlantic  
27 States Marine Fisheries Commission working  
28 together on governance management issues related  
29 to climate change and shifting stock.

30 And I just want to thank you for these  
31 efforts and encourage the Agency to make sure  
32 that HMS fisheries aren't left out of all this  
33 great work given that they are managed  
34 differently and not through the regional council  
35 systems. And just a reminder to not forget HMS  
36 since we're doing all this great work on climate.  
37 So thank you so much.

38 MS. COIT: Thank you, Katie. We're  
39 also really -- and appreciate your EDF role, in  
40 general, and also in the scenario planning  
41 because figuring out how we can manage  
42 differently, given the shifting stock through the  
43 changes in habitat is front and center for us  
44 right now. And I appreciate what you said about  
45 the highly migratory species as well. We won't  
46 leave them out.

47 MR. BROOKS: Okay, thanks. Scott  
48 Taylor, let's go to you.

1 MR. TAYLOR: Really appreciate the  
2 time you've given us. Also Sam, again, as usual.  
3 My name is Sam Taylor. I'm a Board Member of  
4 Blue Water Fisherman's Association. I'm also an  
5 honorary manager of longline fleet out of South  
6 Florida.

7 A couple of points that I wanted to  
8 make quickly to you all. The U.S. surface fleet  
9 is the most sustainably managed, regulated fleet  
10 in any way place in the world. And over the last  
11 several years, we've seen a steady level of  
12 attrition within the industry and our ability to  
13 be able to catch our swordfish quota. It's being  
14 fair with far less sustainably managed fish from  
15 other countries that fill that void for us.

16 A big part of that has been the  
17 continuing loss of flexibility and --

18 (Audio interference.)

19 MR. TAYLOR: --- and I wanted to take  
20 the opportunity to talk real briefly about the  
21 monument. The monument was basically for bottom  
22 structure, but you know, that area. The loss of  
23 that additional surface area would be devastating  
24 again for the fleet, particularly this time of  
25 the year and really would not achieve any  
26 additional conservation management because these  
27 fish as we know are pelagic in nature. They've  
28 been moved. They've followed the bait and food,  
29 and at no time deserve your anywhere approach the  
30 bottom structure. We're slowly dying the depth  
31 of a fast frontier here for lack of a better  
32 description and I really wish that you would take  
33 some time to look into particular issues of the  
34 way the gear is actually fished in those areas  
35 how little impact that it has.

36 And the last point that I want to make  
37 is the biggest crisis that we have presently is  
38 that of staffing. That is tied to a bunch of  
39 different things in terms of the ability to be  
40 able to fish because we've taken our fleet  
41 primarily from our teams on the coastal fleet to  
42 an onshore longline fleet, but that the economics  
43 in the industry haven't kept up with it.

44 In Hawaii in particular, and on the  
45 West Coast of the United States the staffing for  
46 the longline boats is almost 100 percent labor  
47 from foreign countries, whether or not it's  
48 Filipino or Indonesian, those people are not

1 given proper visas. When they come into the  
2 ports, they were essentially remanded to the  
3 vessels.

4 If we can't find a way to recruit  
5 proper people into this industry, you'll see a  
6 continuing level of attrition. And we really  
7 need the Agency's help. Hopefully, there will be  
8 an opportunity to come up to Randy and the staff  
9 later on.

10 We're currently working on H3 visa  
11 program and a training program to work with some  
12 other nations to be able to bring the type of  
13 help that will fill the void if we can't get it  
14 domestically here. It's been a very, very tough  
15 challenge for us to bring young people into  
16 recruit, primarily because of the fact that these  
17 boats are being pushed offshore, 20, 25 days a  
18 year and there's a -- I've got five grandkids and  
19 a couple of kids. It's difficult to manage  
20 family in that environment.

21 And so there are workers that do want  
22 to do that kind of work, where American labor may  
23 not want to, but there ought to be ability to  
24 legally hire them. And it's a big problem. It's  
25 the single biggest issue that I think that  
26 everybody would agree across the board. There is  
27 recruitment and the ability to properly staff  
28 these vessels.

29 So again, I appreciate your time. And  
30 whatever you can do in those regards would be a  
31 big help.

32 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Scott.

33 MS. COIT: Scott, could I ask -- thank  
34 you on all the issues you raised. Could you send  
35 -- this issue has come up when the Secretary was  
36 in Seattle in terms of staffing and workforce  
37 development. But also a similar issue, the  
38 tourism industry was something she was working on  
39 in terms of getting workers from other nations.

40 Could you send specific, something  
41 specific to me and --- maybe through Randy or Tom  
42 because I would like to raise it up to -- it's  
43 something that a different arm that the Commerce  
44 Department is working on.

45 MR. TAYLOR: Yes. so I'd like to  
46 clarify that with Blue Water Fisherman's  
47 Association because it's an issue across the  
48 board. We've been working with an immigration

1 attorney down here to do some of the preliminary  
2 work. There's a way that obviously, you know,  
3 Randy's staff or me behind this in order to deal  
4 with some of the key bureaucratic issues for lack  
5 of better description would be a huge help. So I  
6 will send over with Larry a very specific  
7 request.

8 MS. COIT: Thank you.

9 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you very much.

10 MR. BROOKS: Thanks. I painfully have  
11 to tell us that I think we're out of time. I can  
12 tell that Bennett and Sam you are both booked at  
13 the top of the hour and I respect that.

14 There are a whole bunch of people who  
15 have more questions about this area, but I think  
16 we're going to have to save that for another day.  
17 So thank you, both, for making the time to be  
18 here. We'll look forward to having you back at  
19 future HMS meetings.

20 MS. COIT: Thank you, Bennett, and I  
21 will look to Randy for a report out and if  
22 there's other folks that had burning issues they  
23 wanted to raise maybe through Randy or Kelly you  
24 can bring those to me and Sam.

25 MR. BLANKINSHIP: Thanks, Sam.

26 MR. RAUCH: Thanks.

27 MR. BROOKS: Great. Thank you both.  
28 All right, we should jump back in, and I know  
29 there was a bunch of folks that had their hands  
30 up.

31 And I think we knew before we started  
32 it that we would probably not have enough time to  
33 have all the conversation we want there. But  
34 it's good to at least get a little time with  
35 Janet.

36 So, with that, what we want to do is  
37 shift now and really the rest of the day is going  
38 to be focused on Amendment 13. And I'm going to  
39 hand things off to Randy and Tom Warren here in a  
40 minute.

41 But I just, by way of kind of setting  
42 up the conversation, we always had a lot of  
43 conversation on 13 back -- well, we've had lots  
44 of conversation over years. Well, a big  
45 conversation back in May.

46 It was a little truncated at the time.  
47 There was obviously a lot of interest, a lot of  
48 issues to be talking about, and there's been a

1 lot of discussion since then. There's been  
2 scoping sessions. This is obviously an issue  
3 that is front and center for a whole bunch of  
4 you, a lot of important issues being considered  
5 here.

6 The Agency has brought the timeline  
7 out in here. This has created the opportunity  
8 for more feedback and more internal consideration  
9 on this.

10 And today, we really want to use this  
11 meeting time -- and I've set aside a good chunk  
12 of this meeting time -- to really have a deeper  
13 conversation on this and really push the  
14 conversation forward.

15 And I can't emphasize that enough,  
16 right? I don't think it will serve this panel or  
17 the Agency well to kind of have a do-over of the  
18 conversation we had in May.

19 The issues that were raised, the  
20 concerns that were raised, were heard loud and  
21 clear. And I think the goal for today, and the  
22 challenge I would put to all of you, is to really  
23 try to bring as many fresh ideas, fresh  
24 perspectives that you can, reflect on the  
25 comments that have come up in scoping, help the  
26 Agency think about new ideas, new approaches,  
27 additional information, anything that will help  
28 them really make sure that it's new with as  
29 strong and a thoughtful, and as effective as  
30 possible.

31 I think that's really my charge to  
32 everybody, and I really invite you to take that  
33 seriously, as we jump into this conversation.

34 Structurally, what we're going to do  
35 is break into three parts as following, and so  
36 we're going to break into three different parts,  
37 the first we'll jump into in a minute.

38 We'll focus on the individual bluefin  
39 quota program and we'll spend about an hour on  
40 that.

41 After lunch, we'll take up the second  
42 part, in which we'll focus on bluefin quota  
43 alternatives and purse seine category  
44 alternatives, and after break we'll come back for  
45 Part 3, which we'll focus on a bunch of other  
46 alternatives that are in there.

47 So, we'll ask you as well to kind of  
48 stay with us as we focus on these different

1 parts, so we can add that focus to conversation,  
2 if possible.

3 So, I think that's all I want to say.  
4 Justin's going to clean this up. Randy, I'll hand  
5 it off to you in case you want to say anything,  
6 and then over to Tom.

7 MR. BLANKINSHIP: No, I don't really  
8 have anything to add to that. I think we'll just  
9 go ahead and turn it over to Tom so he can take  
10 this away.

11 MR. WARREN: Okay.

12 MR. BROOKS: So, Tom, it is yours. Go  
13 ahead.

14 MR. WARREN: Okay, thank you, Bennett.  
15 Thank you, Randy. Let me share my screen and let  
16 me know, please, when you see it.

17 MR. BROOKS: Seeing your screen, but  
18 not yet in presentation mode.

19 MR. WARREN: Okay.

20 MR. BROOKS: You're good. Yeah,  
21 perfect.

22 MR. WARREN: So, my name is Tom  
23 Warren. I'm with HMS, based in Gloucester, and  
24 I'll be providing you with a brief review of  
25 Amendment 13 alternatives, with an opportunity  
26 for discussion and comments. And trying to get  
27 this to advance. There we go. Okay.

28 So, as Bennett mentioned, I'll be  
29 chunking this discussion into three parts,  
30 Part 1, Part 2, and Part 3. But first, I'll be  
31 giving a brief status overview. So, this table  
32 contains the relevant milestones.

33 Starting in May of this year, we  
34 published a proposed rule in the draft  
35 Environmental Impact Statement, followed by the  
36 HMS panel discussion on May 25th.

37 And then, subsequently, there was a  
38 series of public hearings and public hearing  
39 webinars, in-counsel briefings, and then the  
40 original end to the common period we scheduled  
41 for July 20th.

42 Based on a couple of public requests,  
43 we revised the end of the public comment period  
44 to September 20th, and the request was based on  
45 an interest in having more time to digest and  
46 come to understand the many alternatives in the  
47 draft Environmental Impact Statement. So, here  
48 again is the IBQ program alternatives.

1           It's helpful to start with a brief  
2 review of some information to lay the groundwork.  
3 The three-review, which was the formal Magnuson-  
4 required review of the catch-share program, this  
5 document we released in 2019.

6           But one of the recommendations was  
7 that an alternative method of distributing IBQ  
8 shares should be considered. And that document  
9 showed data that indicated a large percentage of  
10 the IBQ that had been allocated, in fact, went to  
11 inactive vessels.

12           And longline representatives saw the  
13 AP, recommended a different, more dynamic, method  
14 of determining shares.

15           Because the current method that was  
16 implemented in 2015 through Amendment 7, is  
17 basically a static allocation, a static  
18 determination of shareholdings, where over time  
19 the amount of shares and the shareholders do not  
20 change.

21           A couple of key definitions. An IBQ  
22 share is the percentage of the longline category  
23 quota associated with an affirmative vessel,  
24 that's based on some kind of formula considering  
25 relevant vessel history.

26           In contrast, an allocation is the  
27 amount of bluefin quota, in pounds, that's  
28 associated with that vessel, based on the share  
29 percentage, but also applied to the annual  
30 longline category.

31           By simple math, if a vessel has X  
32 percent of the quota, you multiply that share  
33 percent by the annual longline quota.

34           So, in other words, the share under  
35 the current system does not change, but the  
36 allocation would change if the quota changes.

37           So, the alternatives that address the  
38 method of share determination are depicted here.  
39 So, all of these were analyzed in the draft  
40 Environmental Impact Statement.

41           And the different alternatives are  
42 denoted by the arrow, so you have the arrow  
43 denoting the different alternatives.

44           The alternatives that were in fact  
45 proposed, and we call them proposed measures,  
46 those are indicated by the red fonts, in both  
47 these measures and the rest of the presentation.

48           So, the first suite of measures

1 analyzed, with respect to the IBQ shares, were  
2 four dynamic determination of IBQ shares.  
3 Basically, these four alternatives would  
4 eliminate the existing designations of  
5 shareholders, and distribute IBQ shares only to  
6 currently active vessels, those engaged in  
7 fishing.

8 And the different iterations of this  
9 dynamic determination were using a metric of  
10 hooks, or using a metric of sets, or the proposed  
11 measure, using a metric of specific species  
12 landings, or based on equal allocation.

13 But what these have in mind is, the  
14 intent is to provide some measure of fishing  
15 effort, or some measure of a determinant that  
16 would -- it's an indicator of how much bluefin a  
17 vessel might need.

18 And then, lastly, a rerun of the  
19 Amendment 7 formula, which instead of using a  
20 suite of years originally -- years which was 2006  
21 to 2012 -- this would use a revised suite of  
22 years 2016 to 2018.

23 But it's a cousin of the current  
24 system, in that it would rerun Amendment 7, but  
25 then be a static share.

26 So, getting into the proposed measure  
27 of dynamic allocation based on designated species  
28 landings, this would be shares based on specific  
29 species landing choosing eDealer data, and those  
30 specific species would be defined as Swordfish,  
31 Bigeye, Albacore, Yellowfin and Skipjack tunas.

32 Define shareholders annually, based on  
33 the three most recent years available data, and  
34 again, reactive vessels, those using longline  
35 gear, at least once during the three year period.

36 Another caveat is that vessels must  
37 currently have a valid tuna to the allocated  
38 quota.

39 And also, another caveat is for deep  
40 water horizon, oceanic fish restoration project  
41 participants, that project that's been occurring  
42 in the Gulf of Mexico.

43 Approximate amount of effort would be  
44 assigned to represent a longline effort that the  
45 participant vessels would have had if they had  
46 not been participating in the project.

47 This is showing you the impacts of the  
48 no-action, or the status-quo alternative.

1 Basically, a snapshot of what the current system  
2 is, so that when we get into what the proposed  
3 and other alternative measures are, then you'll  
4 have a baseline that's prepared.

5 So, under the current system there are  
6 three tiers defined, three separate shareholder  
7 percentages. So, the high tier is currently  
8 entitled to 1.2 percent share of the total quota,  
9 medium is .6 percent, and the low tier is  
10 37 percent.

11 And so, this translates into these  
12 various pounds of IBQ allocation, based on the  
13 current quota, so you can see the highest level  
14 is 4317, and the lowest, 1330. And also in the  
15 right-hand column, the number of shareholders  
16 equaling 136.

17 So, again, since 2015, the defined  
18 shareholders has not changed, being 136 total.  
19 Yet, the number of active vessels has been less  
20 than that, and therefore, vessels that have been  
21 inactive have basically been a quota sink.

22 In contrast, the dynamic allocation  
23 alternatives are depicted here. One that's not  
24 depicted here is equal shares. This is a dynamic  
25 allocation that would be also based on active  
26 vessels, but the quota would be divided evenly.

27 So, going from left to right, under  
28 this system there would be four quartiles, four,  
29 three, two, one. And this shows you a comparison  
30 of the amount of shared percentage in allocations  
31 between hooks, sets, and a proposed method  
32 landings.

33 So, going from left to right, you'll  
34 see that the actual percentages under these three  
35 alternatives are fairly similar, 2.05, 1.85 and  
36 2.09.

37 But what you'll notice is, in contrast  
38 to the current system, where the highest amount  
39 is 1.2 percent, these alternatives would have  
40 meaningfully higher percentage amounts.

41 Also, what's notable is that the  
42 lowest percentage, .17, .17, .12, is notably  
43 lower than the current lowest percentage of .37.

44 So, kind of the take-home message with  
45 these methods of allocation is, the range of  
46 percentage allocations are greater, the amounts  
47 are higher than the status-quo action, and the  
48 lowest amounts are lower.

1           You'll see in the right-hand section,  
2 the number of shareholders defined in each of  
3 these tiers. What's notable and particular, is  
4 the bottom row, the total number of shareholders,  
5 97, 97 and 99, notably lower than the currently  
6 number of shareholders under the no-action  
7 alternative, of 136.

8           So, basically, the pelagic longline  
9 pie would be divided by less participants, and  
10 yield a larger slice of the pie for many of the  
11 participants.

12           Not all, but many, would get a larger  
13 piece of the pie. Some would get a smaller piece  
14 of the pie.

15           The number of shareholders differs  
16 between hooks and sets and landings, because  
17 there are different databases used. Hooks and  
18 sets are based on VMS data, and landings is based  
19 on the eDealer data.

20           So, another way to compare is the  
21 number of vessels that either gain or lose quota  
22 amounts compared to the status-quo.

23           Very similar results, hooks and sets,  
24 each would see 66 active vessels gaining, versus  
25 what they have now, versus 31 vessels losing  
26 share and allocation, compared to what they have  
27 now.

28           Landings, 57 vessels would gain and 42  
29 would lose. Now, on its face, it looks like,  
30 okay, well, the proposed landings has less number  
31 of vessels that gain and more that lose.

32           Well, this isn't the whole picture  
33 though. In addition, the amount of quota that  
34 these vessels gain and lose is a relevant metric.  
35 And although I don't show it, basically, when you  
36 look at the amount of quota that the gainers  
37 gain, and the amount of quota that the losers  
38 lose, this, based on landings, would be more  
39 beneficial than hooks and sets.

40           But again, these differences in these  
41 three different allocations are relatively minor,  
42 in terms of the scale of differences.

43           One thing not noted here is that the  
44 vessels that would lose IBQ, so to speak, the  
45 universe here is only active vessels. So, those  
46 vessels that have share under the current  
47 program, those 136, well, it would be 36, 37  
48 vessels that also lose quota because they're not

1 currently active.

2 So, switching gears a little bit out  
3 of the metrics and taking a step back, another  
4 integral part of the IBQ program are the regional  
5 designations of IBQ.

6 So, in addition to the amount of IBQ,  
7 each IBQ share has an associated designation,  
8 called a regional designation, and you recall  
9 that these regional designations, Gulf of Mexico  
10 or Atlantic, were intended to prevent increases  
11 in effort into the Gulf of Mexico.

12 And so, under the no-action current  
13 system, each vessel has an amount of Gulf of  
14 Mexico, and each vessel has an amount of  
15 Atlantic-designated IBQ.

16 Gulf of Mexico IBQ can be used to  
17 account for bluefin caught in either the Gulf of  
18 Mexico or the Atlantic. But Atlantic-designated  
19 IBQ can only be used to account for bluefin  
20 caught in the Atlantic. So, basically, the  
21 Atlantic IBQ is more restrictive in its use.

22 There's the no-action alternative, and  
23 there's an alternative that would eliminate such  
24 designations, but nevertheless cap what we catch  
25 from the Gulf of Mexico.

26 Under the current system, there's  
27 35 percent of the total individual bluefin quota  
28 is designated as Gulf of Mexico quota. So, this  
29 cap on the amount of Gulf IBQ serves as a cap on  
30 the amount of bluefin that can be caught from the  
31 Gulf of Mexico, either landings or dead discards.

32 So, again, the second alternative  
33 would either eliminate that, but would retain  
34 that cap.

35 But what we're proposing, however, is  
36 something different. It's a modification of the  
37 designation system, to account for the fact that  
38 it would be implemented in the context of the  
39 dynamic allocation system. And this would cap  
40 catch from the Gulf of Mexico.

41 So, more on this proposed modification  
42 of the regional designations.

43 Again, it would be in conjunction with  
44 the dynamic allocation, and there'd be regional  
45 designations determined on an annual basis. So,  
46 again, not static.

47 But there'd be no change in the  
48 accounting rules. The Gulf of Mexico IBQ could

1 be used to account for bluefin in either  
2 location, Gulf or Atlantic, but the Atlantic IBQ  
3 could only be used to account for bluefin in the  
4 Atlantic.

5 So, for example, if a vessel landed  
6 90 percent of their designated species in the  
7 Gulf and ten percent in the Atlantic -- and this  
8 would, again, be over a three-year look-back --  
9 their IBQ share designations would be 90 percent  
10 Gulf and ten percent Atlantic.

11 However, this cap would be maintained  
12 at 35 percent, but a new aspect of this system  
13 would be that the cap would be able to be reduced  
14 from the 35 percent based on various criteria.

15 And these would be the same criteria  
16 used currently to make in-season adjustments to  
17 the General category and other in-season  
18 fisheries. So, again, a flexible system.

19 And the intent of this is to allow a  
20 little bit more flexibility in the system, so  
21 that, for example, if a vessel that had in the  
22 past fished predominantly in the Atlantic but  
23 wanted to increase effort a little bit in the  
24 Gulf, they could do so.

25 But they would need to fish there  
26 first, in order to basically earn their  
27 allocation, based on Gulf of Mexico landings.

28 So, for example, if a vessel did not  
29 have any Gulf of Mexico landings, and therefore  
30 no Gulf of Mexico shares, it would need to lease  
31 Gulf of Mexico IBQ for a year, and then in the  
32 following year its shares and allocation would  
33 reflect a little bit of Gulf of Mexico activity,  
34 assuming they landed designated species, and  
35 their shares would be reflected. So, it's a  
36 little bit of flexibility in the system.

37 So, leaving that aside and going to  
38 another aspect of the IBQ system, is the proposed  
39 measure that there'd be no changes with respect  
40 to the use of Northeast distant area data.

41 So, the Northeast distant area, as you  
42 may recall, is an area off the Grand Banks where  
43 basically the far-most eastern portion of the  
44 Longline Fishery, where there's just a few  
45 participants typically, it has a separate ICCAT  
46 allocation, 25 metric tons, and some separate  
47 rules.

48 And those separate rules also include

1 a separate rules for its participation in the IBQ  
2 program, whereby vessels that fish in the  
3 Northeast distant area, or the NED, do not have  
4 to use IBQ to account for their bluefin catch  
5 until that 25 metric tons set-aside has been  
6 achieved.

7 And currently, vessels fishing in this  
8 area aren't treated any differently, in terms of  
9 the allocation formula and metrics, for  
10 determining how much shares they would get.

11 So, we would maintain this system.  
12 Basically, the allocation formulas are blind with  
13 respect to where a vessel fishes.

14 Whether it's fishing in the Northeast  
15 Distant area, Gulf of Mexico, Rhode Island, North  
16 Carolina, South Florida, it's blind to location,  
17 with the exception of the Gulf versus the  
18 Atlantic. So, that's the proposed measure.

19 Another alternative analyzed is not  
20 including the Northeast Distant area fishing  
21 activity in the calculation of IBQ allocations.

22 Switching gears once again, we're  
23 proposing no change with respect to the sale of  
24 IBQ shares. Currently, shares are not allowed to  
25 be sold. Shares are not severable from a  
26 longline permit.

27 In Amendment 7, when the IBQ was  
28 implemented, the thought was that accumulation of  
29 shares via sale, there's not a need for  
30 accumulation of shares, and it would complicate  
31 the IBQ program, as well as complicate the IBQ  
32 leasing market. And we're proposing no change to  
33 this.

34 However, we did analyze sale of IBQ  
35 shares as an alternative in the draft  
36 Environmental Impact Statement.

37 One suite of alternatives looks at  
38 capping the amount of shares an entity may hold,  
39 or capping the amount of IBQ allocation that the  
40 sea may lease or use.

41 In the Magnuson-Stevens Act, there is  
42 a provision that says in a catch-share program,  
43 thou shalt not allow excessive accumulation of  
44 shares.

45 So, to address that Magnuson  
46 requirement, we analyzed several alternatives  
47 that would cap the amount an entity can hold or  
48 acquire, the amount of shares.

1                   Now, I did just state that shares  
2 cannot be sold. Well, they cannot, but the way  
3 an entity or an individual acquires shares is  
4 indirectly through the purchase of a longline  
5 permit, because indeed folks can purchase the  
6 limited access longline permit.

7                   So, it's an indirect method of  
8 accumulating shares, which can and does occur.  
9 So, the analyzed alternatives are no-action,  
10 capping at seven percent.

11                   But what we're proposing is a cap at  
12 25 percent, which would permit a single entity  
13 from pulling a disproportionate amount of shares.

14                   This would allow some accumulation of  
15 shares to provide a business or an organization  
16 some flexibility if their business plan was  
17 optimized by acquiring some more shares, but it  
18 does limit the amount of accumulation that a  
19 business could do. But we did also analyze  
20 50 percent.

21                   Similarly, we analyzed a couple of  
22 alternatives for restricting leases, but we're  
23 not proposing any restriction on leasing, so this  
24 is the no-action alternative for the proposed  
25 measure, which does not propose an amount that  
26 could be leased, a maximum amount.

27                   And the reason that we're proposing  
28 this is that because leases are temporary for the  
29 duration of the year, business can't really  
30 acquire a large amount over time, because  
31 basically the amount that they lease would  
32 disappear. So, it doesn't really make economic  
33 sense.

34                   And really, the only incentive to  
35 acquire an amount that would be a large amount is  
36 to account for a bluefin tuna catch, which is the  
37 reason for the IBQ in the first place.

38                   We are proposing a modification to the  
39 dealer reporting requirements for IBQ.  
40 Specifically, eliminate the requirement for the  
41 dealer to report dead discards.

42                   This was a redundant measure  
43 implemented in 2015, redundant because the vessel  
44 is required to report dead discards through their  
45 VMS. We have determined and documented that  
46 indeed vessel operators do a great job reporting  
47 dead discards through VMS, and so we're  
48 eliminating this redundant requirement for the

1 dealer to report dead discards.

2 In fact, the dealers did not report  
3 dead discards very well, and it's more efficient  
4 and effective for the vessel to.

5 Secondly, we've proposed eliminating  
6 requirements that would continue the dealer's  
7 requirement to enter a vessel PIN.

8 Basically, as a security measure,  
9 currently the vessel PIN is needed by the dealer  
10 to enter data into the database. So, basically,  
11 the vessel operator has to coordinate with the  
12 dealer.

13 It was intended to operate on a trip-  
14 level basis, but as a practical matter, the  
15 dealer just gets the PIN from the vessel, that it  
16 routinely lands, accepts catch from, and puts  
17 that in. So, this would basically simplify the  
18 system.

19 However, as an oversight measure to  
20 provide security, the vessel owner would be sent  
21 an email and notification when the dealer  
22 basically inputs catch into the system and debits  
23 the vessel and its account, so there's oversight  
24 retained.

25 The electronic monitoring program, we  
26 have several aspects that we're proposing  
27 modifications to. The first is the hard drive  
28 requirement.

29 Rather than the current requirement  
30 that the vessel operator mail in the hard drives  
31 after every trip, instead the hard drive would  
32 need to be mailed in only after every two trips,  
33 and this would reduce the cost and burden  
34 associated.

35 The hard drives have not been full of  
36 data. So, basically, hard drives can hold  
37 multiple trips. So, this is the proposed  
38 simplification.

39 We're clarifying the regulations that  
40 LINKS has the authority to install hardware such  
41 as a boom, so that the video camera can obtain an  
42 optimal view.

43 And specifically, we're looking to  
44 improve the view of the water where the fish are  
45 hauled, outboard of the side of the vessel.

46 And this is based on research done in  
47 Hawaii, that shows that increasing the camera  
48 angle by measure of a telescopic boom or a boom

1 that levers down, can increase the amount of, and  
2 quality of, data on the fish that are either all  
3 through the water, or more specifically, fish  
4 that are discarded.

5 Thirdly, we're proposing authorizing  
6 NOAA fisheries to install a measuring grid on the  
7 deck in view of the camera, either a painted  
8 grade, or a mat that would serve as a  
9 standardized size reference, to facilitate both  
10 determination of fish size and species, and this  
11 would facilitate a determination of size and  
12 species, and especially in the context of  
13 artificial intelligence and computer automation,  
14 that would reduce costs of the electronic  
15 monitoring program.

16 Lastly, with respect to the IBQ  
17 program, Magnuson-Stevens Act requires a system  
18 for NOAA fisheries to recover its costs of  
19 administering the IBQ program. And this, again,  
20 is a requirement from Limited Access Programs  
21 under Magnuson.

22 Vessels would be required to pay a fee  
23 based on the amount of bluefin that they landed.  
24 So, it would be specific to their --

25 (Audio interference.)

26 The key aspect of this program to  
27 remember though, is NMFS would make an annual  
28 decision whether or not to charge a fee. And the  
29 reason for this is the total fees by Magnuson-  
30 Stevens are limited to a maximum of three percent  
31 of the ex-vessel value of the bluefin landed by  
32 the longline fleet.

33 So, because the bluefin is not a  
34 target species, and the IBQ program provides  
35 strong incentives to void bluefin catch, the  
36 amount of bluefin catch to begin with is not very  
37 much.

38 And because total fees would be  
39 limited to three percent of ex-vessel value, then  
40 the total fees are very much reduced further.  
41 So, you're looking at a small pie and reduced to  
42 three percent of that pie.

43 So, NMFS basically would not assess a  
44 fee if the total amount of fees to be recovered  
45 is similar to NMFS's cost of actually  
46 implementing this program on an annual basis.

47 Their costs associated with  
48 implementing this program, determining the amount

1 landed, determining the average price,  
2 communicating with the fleet, an administrative  
3 system to recoup these fees, follow-up adminis-

4  
5 trative system to follow up on the folks that are  
6 slow in payment, and associated communication and  
7 associated Federal Register documents, etc.

8 So, the picture I'm trying to paint is  
9 that it may not make economic sense to recover  
10 costs, but we will be implementing a system to do  
11 so, and would make this determination not --

12 (Simultaneous speaking.)

13 MR. WARREN: Sure.

14 MR. BROOKS: Tom, I wanted to mention  
15 this for just one second.

16 (Audio interference.)

17 I also wanted to state to the AP  
18 members, I'm imagining we're probably going to  
19 want to go until an extra ten or fifteen minutes  
20 into lunch, that we have time for conversations.

21 MR. WARREN: Okay. And I am wrapping  
22 this up, believe it or not.

23 So, last thing with respect to the  
24 Longline Fishery, we're clarifying the  
25 regulations for those few vessels that use a  
26 green-stick gear and have a longline permit,  
27 allowing retention of 173-inch legal-sized  
28 bluefin.

29 But the vessel would be required to  
30 account for bluefin using the IBQ allocation  
31 report, green-stick-caught bluefin through VMS,  
32 and abide by the other IBQ program requirement,  
33 with the exception of electronic monitoring would  
34 not be required on green-stick gear sets, and it  
35 would not matter if longline gear is onboard.

36 There's an alternative analyzed that  
37 would restrict the use of green-stick gear to  
38 when longline gear is not available.

39 So now, this finally ends my  
40 description of the measures. And rest assured,  
41 this portion of the three-part session of my  
42 summary of Amendment 13 is the longest.

43 So, the most challenging description  
44 and most challenging listening session to Tom's  
45 voice drone on has come to a close.

46 So, the summary of comments, the folks  
47 that support the use of designated species  
48 landings, folks that do not support the use of

1 designated species landing metrics, and some  
2 reasons are that the metrics should include Mahi  
3 landings, which they do not.

4 Use of landings would incentivize  
5 retention of smaller fish, not a standardized  
6 metric. These sets, instead of landings as the  
7 metric, limit to one a day.

8 Do not support use of quartiles,  
9 support custom shares, distribute minimum amount,  
10 implement a method to facilitate new entrants, a  
11 support for the preferred alternatives with  
12 respect to the regional designations, support for  
13 equal allocations.

14 And then, electronic monitoring  
15 support for the hard drive requirement, proposed  
16 flexibility, the comment saying we just need more  
17 flexible with how we transfer data, such as allow  
18 these satellite transfer.

19 No support for the installation of  
20 booms, no support for the measuring grid, and  
21 some support for these requirements.

22 So, to start our discussion, one thing  
23 I'd like to note is I will be talking about the  
24 purse seine proposed measures this afternoon.  
25 Basically, reallocation of the purse seine.

26 And I realize that the quota  
27 alternatives that I just discussed leading to the  
28 allocation or amount of quota and shares that a  
29 vessel would receive, is linked to some of the  
30 other quota alternatives that I'll discuss this  
31 afternoon, specifically those relating to whether  
32 the purse seine quota is reallocated to the  
33 Longline category or not.

34 So, I'd urge you to kind of constrain  
35 your comments to the information I just  
36 discussed, and not get into whether the purse  
37 seine piece of the pie goes to everybody or not.

38 So, with that said, regarding the  
39 comments that don't support the proposed  
40 measures, can you prioritize your concerns or  
41 suggested modifications to what we've proposed to  
42 the IBQ measures, what data or analysis provide  
43 further insights, or is there a new comment or  
44 nuance you'd like to propose.

45 And so, with that I'll open up the  
46 floor. We will be taking notes on a Google-  
47 sheet, which, as we write them down we'll share  
48 with you, so you can see some of the comments.

1                   And so, I'll be trying to address  
2 questions as they come in, but we will also be  
3 taking notes. Thank you.

4                   MR. BROOKS: Great. Thanks so much,  
5 Tom. I know there was a ton there to walk  
6 through, and thank you. You did a really nice  
7 job with it.

8                   Again, let's just all assume we're  
9 going to go until quarter after, if we need that.  
10 We'll just tuck into a little bit of that  
11 lunchtime. Since people don't have to queue into  
12 the sandwich shop, that should be fine.

13                   All right, so let's get into it. And  
14 again, I really ask people to focus on the  
15 questions that Tom had that are sort of, you  
16 know, can you help prioritize concerns or  
17 modifications?

18                   Is there data analysis that would give  
19 the Agency more insight, more understanding? And  
20 any kind of new comment with nuances that you'd  
21 like to Agency to be thinking about?

22                   Marty, your hand was up before. Then  
23 we'll go to Tim, and then to Shana. So, Marty?

24                   MR. SCANLON: Yes, I hope you can hear  
25 well. To be honest with you --

26                   MR. BROOKS: We got you, Marty.

27                   MR. SCANLON: I have an awful lot to  
28 say here and a very little time to say it. I'm  
29 really disappointed in the amount of time that  
30 was taken with this presentation. We've already  
31 heard this at the last AP meeting. I've listened  
32 to this throughout three webinars that I  
33 attended.

34                   We were also supposed to review this  
35 before we got on the meeting today, so we could  
36 spend as much time in discussion as possible.

37                   If you can, Tom, I'd like you to go  
38 back to the first page so I could start  
39 addressing everything that you presented to us  
40 one thing at a time. I think that's the best way  
41 to do this as we move forward here. Can you do  
42 that? Is that possible?

43                   MR. BROOKS: I think he's moving it  
44 back. And Marty, I know there's a lot to comment  
45 on. I will just ask you to be as succinct as you  
46 can so there's lots of time for others too. But  
47 go ahead.

48                   MR. SCANLON: Well, basically, this

1 basically pertains to the pelagic longline  
2 industry, just about every one of these issues  
3 here.

4 MR. BROOKS: I know. I know. Front  
5 and center.

6 MR. SCANLON: As far as -- let me just  
7 get to it here. We'd prefer that the allocation  
8 be reset based on sets that we made. We have a  
9 prepared comment to present it at the end of the  
10 comment period.

11 But our reasoning is so that we  
12 can -- to us, it's the fairest way to do it. I  
13 mean, we don't any means of the tears that way.  
14 The vessels that are the most active wind up  
15 making the most sense.

16 As you see in your graphs there, the  
17 hooks and sets have the most impact on the ones  
18 that'll get the most and the ones that'll lose  
19 the least. So, I mean, to me that's cut-and-  
20 dried, it should be sets.

21 I mean, if you go to a tier system,  
22 you miss by one pound, and all of a sudden you're  
23 basically really handicapped by as little as one  
24 pound can really handicap how you have to conduct  
25 your business throughout the rest of the time  
26 there.

27 So, us, we want it done, the pelagic  
28 longline industry, Blue Water, we want it to be  
29 reallocated by sets. So, we can move to the next  
30 page there.

31 MR. BROOKS: You mean the next page,  
32 Marty? Or the next -- you mean --

33 MR. SCANLON: The next topic. Let's  
34 go to the next topic there.

35 MR. BROOKS: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, next  
36 page. Yep, the alternative.

37 MR. SCANLON: We're not going to get  
38 into as much detail as I'd like to, so I'm going  
39 to try to cover all these little things as  
40 quickly as I can here.

41 MR. BROOKS: Yep, that's great.

42 (Simultaneous speaking.)

43 MR. SCANLON: Now, one of the things  
44 that we talked about is eligibility for quota.  
45 We believe that a vessel, if he's to be deemed  
46 eligible for quota, he should have made at least  
47 a minimum amount of sets to qualify for enough  
48 quota to leave the dock.

1           If you don't make enough sets to get  
2 enough quota to leave the dock -- and that's one  
3 of the arguments that you made, to have tiers --  
4 is that under your tiers system, the vessels may  
5 not have enough quota, through any formulation  
6 that you made, to acquire enough quota to leave  
7 the stock, and now you have to average them up  
8 and average the guys at the top of the tiers  
9 down. So, that's one of the reasons why we don't  
10 like the tiers system and we don't want to go by  
11 the wayside.

12           Also, with the weights there, you're  
13 talking about the top vessels landing as much as  
14 600-something thousands of pounds of fish,  
15 compared to the vessels at the bottom of those  
16 tiers, at 220,000 lbs.

17           That's a significant difference in  
18 what you have averaged them out to, where a set's  
19 a set. The vessels that are catching the most  
20 fish generally are making the most, if they're  
21 catching the most fish. So, we can move on from  
22 that topic right there. What's the next topic  
23 here?

24           MR. BROOKS: Next is the regional  
25 designations.

26           MR. SCANLON: The regional desig-  
27 nation. There's a 35 percent cap in the Gulf of  
28 Mexico. As we've seen, and as I brought to the  
29 attention of the Agency of --- since the  
30 beginning of 2015 of A7 here, because of the deep  
31 water horizon project -- which was only supposed  
32 to last for a year or two, which is still going  
33 on and we're still being told that it's going to  
34 end next year -- well, there's 11 vessels having  
35 23 vessels tied up into that.

36           And with the way this is going, when  
37 you reset this allocation, they may be very  
38 limited, Gulf of Mexico quota given. And to me  
39 and to Blue Water, this is a systematic way of  
40 sunsetting the Gulf of Mexico to pelagic  
41 longlining.  
42

43           With a 35 percent cap on the quota  
44 there, of the bluefins allowed to be caught  
45 there, there's no reason for the designation.  
46 Allow Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico both, it should  
47 not matter.

48           Get rid of the designation, put the

1 35 percent cap, which is in there already, and  
2 you got the weak hooks for protection and all of  
3 that. So, that's where we stand on that. Next  
4 topic.

5 MR. BROOKS: Next up is sale of IBQ.

6 MR. SCANLON: Sale of IBQ. We're  
7 against the permanent sale of IBQ. Next topic.

8 MR. BROOKS: IBQ cap.

9 MR. SCANLON: I don't think there  
10 should be a cap on the IBQ. At any given time,  
11 any vessel could have a disastrous year or  
12 disastrous set, and may be required to acquire as  
13 much quota as it could possibly acquire to  
14 continue to fish. Next topic.

15 MR. BROOKS: Other aspects. There's  
16 a bunch of them here.

17 MR. SCANLON: We're in favor of  
18 modifying the dealer and all that reporting type  
19 of stuff there, to the best means possible. I  
20 mean, I believe with our discussions and with our  
21 discussions with the Agency, that's going to be  
22 an ongoing project, to try to continue to  
23 streamline that and to make that better.

24 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Is that the end?

25 MR. SCANLON: Electronic monitoring.  
26 We agree with the two trips. We agree with  
27 changing that. We are against increasing the  
28 insulation of anything outside the footprint of  
29 the vessel, for safety and sea rate reasons.

30 The same thing goes with the grid on  
31 the deck, the painted lines, and all of that  
32 stuff there. Any kind of mats to be secured on  
33 the deck is an impossibility in rough weather,  
34 and if you were to put the painted lines on the  
35 deck, you'd be having to come back and do that on  
36 a regular basis.

37 Basically, the decks are resurfaced on  
38 a regular basis to assure footing, according to  
39 the requirements by our underwriters for our  
40 insurance. Next topic.

41 MR. BROOKS: Cost recovery program.

42 MR. SCANLON: We're against the cost  
43 recovery project. I mean, we don't catch enough  
44 bluefins to warrant them, under Magnuson, they  
45 would not be able to collect enough money to pay  
46 for that. So, I think that's just -- it's there,  
47 but I think it's a waste of time to even look at  
48 it. I'll top it. We can't afford to have any

1 more expenses put on us here.

2 MR. BROOKS: Mm-hmm. Retention of  
3 bluefin caught with green-stick gear.

4 MR. SCANLON: We're in favor of that.

5 MR. BROOKS: Okay. I think that's it.  
6 So, Marty, it sounds like -- because I know this  
7 is an interest sort of for the Agency to be  
8 hearing the prioritizing of concerns.

9 It sounds like the shifting to sets,  
10 the avoiding tears, that that is sort of big,  
11 bright lights --

12 MR. SCANLON: Right.

13 MR. BROOKS: -- for you. Is that  
14 right?

15 MR. SCANLON: Right. Because then you  
16 don't have to worry about designated species. We  
17 will have an extensive comment explaining all of  
18 that in detail, of our reasoning for that.

19 I use a different fishing message  
20 dealing -- we've gone over this in some of our  
21 comments in the prior AP, where targeted fish --  
22 different vessels target different fish for  
23 different reasons.

24 I mean, everything -- there's a  
25 million factors involved in that there.  
26 Basically, the thing is, is that the sets are the  
27 most easily verifiable.

28 On top of that, the important element  
29 of that, is this. The way you have it done under  
30 the ways, we're talking about doing this for  
31 2016, 2017 and 2018.

32 If you go by sets, those are  
33 verifiable in real time. We declare every day at  
34 the end of each day with the 12 hours, of whether  
35 or not we have a bluefin on our gear, and whether  
36 we made that set or not.

37 So, we could actually regulate the  
38 industry and give the allocations in real time,  
39 with sets to be done in real time, we fish in  
40 real time, we're accountable in real time.

41 So, that's why the sets make the most  
42 sense. Nothing's perfect, but that's got the  
43 most things going for it.

44 MR. BROOKS: Thanks. Thanks, Marty.  
45 That was really succinct. Thank you. Thank you  
46 for that. Tim Pickett.

47 MR. PICKETT: Thanks, Tom and Marty  
48 there. We covered a lot of the things I was

1 going to mention.

2 One thing I would say as a suggestion,  
3 this is something to look into, Marty touched on  
4 it with the Gulf of Mexico and the way there's  
5 going to be a cap on the quota there, or there  
6 has been, and there's no -- you have the ability  
7 to fish the Atlantic with Gulf of Mexico quota,  
8 even though I don't think many people do -- but  
9 you cannot fish the Gulf of Mexico with Atlantic  
10 quota.

11 There's enough data right now to  
12 understand, and it's kind of -- everybody knows  
13 this anyways -- but this time of year after  
14 July 1st, your ability to encounter a bluefin  
15 tuna in the Gulf of Mexico is pretty much non-  
16 existent.

17 So, in terms of them shifting to an  
18 effort-base or a landings-base annual  
19 determination of quota, I'd like to see, I mean,  
20 a step in the right direction.

21 I know it's not offered here, but a  
22 step in the right direction would be to offer  
23 vessels that have Atlantic quota, to fish under  
24 that Atlantic quota in the Gulf of Mexico, after  
25 July 1st, individually the late-summer, early-  
26 fall, where their ability to encounter bluefin is  
27 incredibly diminished.

28 You could put a cap, you could put a  
29 trigger in case something odd happened, but I  
30 think that would be a good mechanism for people  
31 to garner a set experience in landings in the  
32 Gulf of Mexico, to make themselves eligible for  
33 Gulf of Mexico quota, without having to lease it.

34 This is existing people that already  
35 have Atlantic quota. It would increase the  
36 flexibility of the fishery a little bit. I think  
37 it might be something that would go on the table  
38 later, or I don't know if it could be added to  
39 this, but it would be a small concession in the  
40 right direction, to kind of add to what Marty was  
41 saying, in terms of the Gulf becoming a shut-off  
42 entity, in terms of no ability to gain quota,  
43 very difficult to lose quota, everything of that  
44 nature.

45 So, I just wanted to throw that out  
46 there. That's it.

47 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Tim. Shana?  
48 Shana, I think your line's open.

1 MS. MILLER: -- the prize for the  
2 shortest presentation yesterday. I think Tom, my  
3 condolences that you always seem to end up with  
4 the longest presentations, but you did a really  
5 good job walking through it. And just a few  
6 comments, one on the regional designations.

7 I think that they are still important.  
8 The Gulf of Mexico is still the one place where  
9 we can target protections on the much smaller  
10 Western population, and especially when we're  
11 hearing that there's so many Eastern bluefin in  
12 the Western Atlantic along the East Coast right  
13 now.

14 That is not the case in the Gulf of  
15 Mexico, so it's still important to have a  
16 distinction there.

17 I think Tim's idea to allow Atlantic  
18 IBQ to be fishing the Gulf of Mexico after  
19 July 1st or July 15th, whatever. I think that  
20 makes sense, but getting rid of the regional  
21 designation at all doesn't.

22 And in fact, I would say that that  
23 35 percent cap should be reduced to 25 percent,  
24 especially, as Tim points out, there's only a  
25 limited geographic time that longliners would be  
26 interacting with bluefin in the Gulf anyway.

27 So, yeah. So, to change that cap from  
28 35 to 25 percent, just a general support for what  
29 you're proposing to do to improve the electronic  
30 monitoring. Specifically, support for E3B and  
31 E4B, and then like Marty, supporting expanding  
32 use of green-sticks and allowing them to retain  
33 fish. So, what is that, I5C. Thanks.

34 MR. BROOKS: Great. Thanks, Shana.  
35 Jeff Oden, I know you have to jump off in a  
36 minute, so I'm going to let you jump the queue  
37 here. Let's bring Jeff in.

38 MR. ODEN: Thanks, Bennett. I just  
39 have a couple of things to add that reinforce  
40 what Marty had already mentioned.

41 Of course, the green-stick gear needs  
42 to go without saying. Definitely is my -- a  
43 great portion of my landings and many others,  
44 inside the Atlantic, are Mahi in early spring.  
45 And why should that be excluded, when we're  
46 forced to fish under HMS rules?

47 Thirdly and lastly for me, and like I  
48 said, I've got to go get stitches, but as for EM

1 monitoring, we've got two cameras, a VMS, we've  
2 got observers up to 17 percent of our fishery,  
3 and now you want another camera on us, when  
4 nobody else in this whole purview has any  
5 scrutiny whatsoever?

6 You can't even get them to dive on  
7 film or to dive on logbook, or declare a tuna.

8 MR. WARREN: Excuse me. Just to  
9 clarify, the proposal isn't a third camera  
10 necessarily. It's how the second camera is  
11 positioned.

12 MR. ODEN: Well, my understanding --  
13 okay, whatever. Anyway, okay, but before you go  
14 sticking a stethoscope up our butt, I think maybe  
15 you want to start looking at other avenues in  
16 this fishery.

17 We're not the only entity here with an  
18 issue. The only problem is, we're the only one  
19 that gets any attention. And I think as an  
20 Agency, you all should start actually realizing  
21 what is going on throughout, not just on our  
22 boats.

23 I mean, we've got enough scrutiny now.  
24 And anyway, with that, I've got to go. Thank  
25 you. Bye.

26 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Thanks, Jeff.  
27 Scott Taylor, come right in. Then, we'll go to  
28 Rick Weber, and then Alan Weiss. Scott?

29 MR. TAYLOR: -- echo a couple of  
30 things. I mean, Jeff went and took my thunder  
31 about this issue with the EM, that -- well, I've  
32 always been a supporter of the use of the EM,  
33 that it becomes getting the fear-wide, that not  
34 only are we singled out, but this is really  
35 becoming to the point of being invasive and  
36 dangerous, in terms of camera location. We're  
37 going to put a boom out over the side of the  
38 vessel.

39 We've demonstrated a level of  
40 accountability that is far beyond anybody else  
41 that's in the industry, and that you guys,  
42 through this increase in level of sort of  
43 invasive suggestion about the things -- I  
44 really -- getting to the point that it really is  
45 a violation of what I believe maybe our civil  
46 rights, because it's not being uniformly applied  
47 to everybody else in the fishery.

48 We're not the only ones that are

1 involved with bluefins. And so we unilaterally  
2 basically are of the position that enough is  
3 enough until we've brought the other participants  
4 in the fishery to some level of parity.

5 But I do want to note also with the  
6 way that the vessels are calculated, that the  
7 elimination of 37 vessels that are currently not  
8 active, and 36 vessels that would receive a lower  
9 portion of allocation, that that essentially is  
10 73 boats that would no longer be eligible for  
11 any -- or would be extremely unlikely to be  
12 eligible for any sort of transfer, for lack of a  
13 better description.

14 And I know we're going to talk about  
15 this later on this afternoon, so I'll leave it  
16 open to that. But I do want to sort of put a bug  
17 in everybody's ear about something that was  
18 mentioned earlier, about the North Carolina  
19 fishery and the deep set fishery that was there,  
20 that a lot of those birds really just don't have  
21 very much firm allocation, and are without the  
22 ability to have it where best for the transfer  
23 system that's going to be in place, that you're  
24 again going to limit -- what's a -- a  
25 budgeting fishery, in terms of this.

26 So, we need to be really careful, in  
27 terms of what's going on for -- we're certainly  
28 not saying that when things aren't broken, don't  
29 fix them.

30 We've been able to basically stay  
31 within the general parameters, while we certainly  
32 support a different metric to -- I support the  
33 main bullet position of the third allocation.

34 We need to make sure that we have the  
35 ability, when there's a problem, to have quoted  
36 this -- it's going to be evenly transferred. And  
37 I'll wrap it up with that.

38 MR. BROOKS: Thanks. Thanks, Scott.  
39 Rick Weber.

40 MR. WEBER: I want to affiliate myself  
41 with Shana supporting Tim, as far as if we're  
42 going to protect the pure West until they've  
43 spawned, and maybe there's a window of  
44 opportunity there.

45 And also with Marty. My understanding  
46 is that industry came in hard with a plan related  
47 to sets.

48 And although I've heard this

1 presentation now twice, I've never heard a  
2 counter-argument to why sets is bad.

3 I find the argument that it's going to  
4 cause people to land fish that they wouldn't have  
5 landed otherwise, to be a compelling argument.

6 You're going to put people on a pound  
7 hunt. Regardless of market, they will be fishing  
8 for the tonnage, in order to get the quota. And  
9 I don't see how that is in the best interests of  
10 US fisheries.

11 But I think it is a clear and  
12 predictable outcome. And so, Tom, I invite you  
13 to tell me what's wrong with sets. And if you  
14 don't wish to, I'll respect that. Thank you.

15 MR. BROOKS: Thanks. Tom, I was going  
16 to invite you in just to maybe provide a bit more  
17 of the underlying rationale, so it would be  
18 helpful for folks to understand.

19 MR. WARREN: Sure. The initial  
20 rationale, with respect to -- well, let me take a  
21 step back.

22 First of all, the metric landings  
23 versus sets, versus hooks, versus equal, there's  
24 not a bright line and huge compelling reason,  
25 frankly in my mind, to go with any of them, and  
26 there are nuances mostly between them.

27 Now, that said, folks have raised some  
28 very good points.

29 The reason for going with landings was  
30 that we felt it was a metric that reflected  
31 effort, and that vessels essentially fish for  
32 dollars/landings, although I understand the  
33 difference between the two.

34 And also, some of the analyses we did  
35 with correlation. Landings seemed to correlate  
36 more with bluefin catch, and with some of the IBQ  
37 metrics that represent our need for IBQ, such as  
38 the amount of quota and the amount of leasing.

39 So, those kind of statistical aspects  
40 helped tip the scales. That said, these  
41 statistics, these correlation analyses, they were  
42 only moderately correlated, so they weren't  
43 strongly correlated, in any case. That's,  
44 briefly, some of the reasons.

45 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Tom. That's  
46 helpful. Alan Weiss, and then over to Katie.

47 MR. WEISS: First of all, in regards  
48 to the IBQ allocation issues, I don't understand

1 why -- and when you're talking about this  
2 talking, you're talking about a subject area that  
3 isn't a matter of conservation. It's a matter of  
4 just the functioning of the IBQ system, how it  
5 works. And so I don't understand why you  
6 wouldn't follow the advice or the request or the  
7 pleas of the industry as to what they believe  
8 will work best for them as I think they know best  
9 what would work for them better than people who  
10 are not in the fishery know what would work best  
11 for them. And this matter of how to determine  
12 who's eligible and for how much quota, it's not a  
13 conservation issue because the whole sum total of  
14 the quota isn't going to change no matter how you  
15 parcel it out.

16 The -- as far as the tiers are  
17 concerned, that, to me, stood out as a particular  
18 sore spot because as Marty pointed out, you have  
19 to draw those lines and every -- there's going to  
20 be people falling just on one side or other of an  
21 -- of a division line between tiers. If you're  
22 the one that just fell just short, maybe if you  
23 had landed one more fish, you would have twice as  
24 much or almost twice as much bluefin allocation.  
25 That just doesn't make sense. I don't see how  
26 that could comport with National Standard 4 in  
27 being fair and equitable.

28 I think you have to parcel out the IBQ  
29 proportionate to whatever the metric is that  
30 you're using to measure effort. And of course,  
31 landings are not a measure of effort. They're a  
32 result of effort, and they're not directly  
33 correlated. You do now have people who are  
34 mindful of marketability of their catch and are  
35 specifically choosing to forego catching a larger  
36 volume of lower value fish so that they can land  
37 higher value fish.

38 The other item I wanted to touch on is  
39 the Gulf of Mexico where there's really no  
40 justification for trying to further reduce or  
41 tamp down the amount of longline effort in the  
42 Gulf of Mexico. For one thing, the ICCAT mandate  
43 in regard to spawning areas is just to have no  
44 directed fishing for bluefins there.

45 Second of all -- and this, of course,  
46 is not directed bluefin effort -- second of all,  
47 the impact on conservation is based on fishing  
48 mortality. Overfished status or overfishing are

1 based on levels of population or fishing  
2 mortality. That's impacted by the number of fish  
3 removed from the population. It doesn't matter  
4 whether you caught it in the Gulf of Mexico or  
5 North Carolina or the Grand Banks, a removal from  
6 the population is a removal, and where you catch  
7 it doesn't affect how it impacts the population.

8 I could get into the -- I'll try not  
9 to take too much more time, so I won't get into  
10 the reasons for -- the conservation reasons for  
11 limiting fishing in spawning areas, but those  
12 reasons or justifications for doing that as a  
13 general policy matter don't apply to the longline  
14 fishery and bluefin tuna in the Gulf of Mexico.  
15 So there really is --

16 MALE PARTICIPANT: Makes sense.

17 MR. WEISS: -- no reason continue to  
18 try to constrain and pull back and -- you know,  
19 everyone is going to be constrained by their IBQ  
20 and everyone, in aggregate, is going to be  
21 constrained by the total quota available. Thank  
22 you.

23  
24 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Alan.

25 MR. WARREN: Thanks. If I could jump  
26 in with a quick remark.

27 MR. BROOKS: Yes, please, Tom.

28 MR. WARREN: With respect to kind of  
29 the process and listening to industry, and just  
30 for the record, when we were considering what  
31 measures to propose, we did hear from the  
32 industry in support of sets. We also heard from  
33 the industry in support of landings and also in  
34 support of hooks. So again, in terms of how we  
35 came to what we proposed, there's a variety of  
36 data and a variety of voices that were in the  
37 mix, so just, you know, food for thought.

38 And of course, the proposed rule  
39 comment period provides an opportunity for us to  
40 further consider what we proposed and, if  
41 warranted, make changes. And we are continuing  
42 to listen to all voices and look at all the  
43 relevant data.

44 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Tom. Katie, why  
45 don't you jump in, and then Marty, I think your  
46 hand is back up. And then we'll get everyone to  
47 lunch. Katie?

48 MS. WESTFALL: Thank you, Bennett.

1 And I'm going to be providing a longer comment  
2 letter so I'll keep my comments pretty focused  
3 here. I did want to echo Rick Weber's comments  
4 on basing allocation on landings. I am concerned  
5 about it could incentivize the retention of  
6 smaller fish and really kind of trying to  
7 maximize poundage.

8 I'm also concerned about Mahi not  
9 being included in that designation. As we heard  
10 from Jeff, you know, Mahi can be a pretty  
11 substantial part of certain fishermen's catch and  
12 could potentially put those fishermen at a  
13 disadvantage. So I think the steps may need more  
14 -- you know, associating allocation on steps may  
15 make more sense.

16 And I'm curious. You know, Marty and  
17 Alan make good points on the tier system and I'm  
18 wondering what the merits are of a tiered system  
19 versus Blue Water and, you know, some of the  
20 fishermen's suggestions on calculating bluefin  
21 quota just based off of sets using a simpler  
22 method over some time period versus, you know,  
23 trying to create tiers.

24 MR. WARREN: Thank you. We had  
25 proposed tiers or several reasons. One, in a  
26 way, you could think of them as being more simple  
27 whereby there's four distinct amounts of shares  
28 and associated allocations versus everyone having  
29 their own. But more importantly, it cuts out  
30 either tail of the distribution, so very high  
31 percentages would be limited. Arguably, one  
32 would not a very high allocation of bluefin  
33 because arguably, it would reduce incentives to  
34 avoid bluefin.

35 And then similarly, it reduces or  
36 eliminates the very low allocations which is  
37 problematic in the context if there's a minimum  
38 allocation amount to fish and a lot of vessels or  
39 a portion of vessels have not -- don't have the  
40 minimum amount, that's an issue. So you cut out  
41 the tails of the distribution basically.

42 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Tom. That's  
43 helpful to understand. Marty, I'll give you a  
44 one quick last bite here. Scott, I see your hand  
45 has gone up. If you can each keep it to about 50  
46 seconds, that be great.

47 MR. SCANLON: One thing I wanted to  
48 touch base on here is where Tom talks about the

1 correlation between landings and need for  
2 bluefins. Well, that's probably true if you go  
3 out there and you just ignore the intent of  
4 Amendment 7 in the first place. The intent of  
5 Amendment 7 in the first place was to reduce our  
6 interactions with bluefin tuna. And the vessels  
7 that modified their behavior at the cost of  
8 landing less fish, of course landed less bluefin.  
9 So that was the purpose of Amendment 7 and the  
10 people that participated successfully by you  
11 doing the landings here, by you saying that to  
12 us, it's almost insulting to tell us that the  
13 landings have a direct -- of course they do. If  
14 you go out there in total disregard for what  
15 you're targeting and of course you're going to  
16 catch anything and everything. That's the point  
17 of not doing it by landings and doing it by sets.

18 The other thing that I want to point  
19 out to you is that of course there's different  
20 voices within the PLL industry, but I want to  
21 remind you is that Blue Water Fisherman's  
22 Association is the majority voice of the  
23 industry. You look around this panel and see how  
24 many board members here of Blue Water sit on this  
25 panel, and you can -- you know, take it from  
26 there. All these other voices that you're  
27 hearing from, they don't participate in any of  
28 these panels. You're talking about independent  
29 industry participants that have their own self-  
30 interest at stake. We take and take the time to  
31 go out and solicit advice throughout the entire  
32 industry and come up -- we try to come up with a  
33 unified voice which will work for all  
34 participants equally and fairly, and that's Blue  
35 Water's purpose, and that's what we bring to the  
36 table.

37 So to tell us that because --

38 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Marty.

39 MR. SCANLON: -- you heard it from  
40 somebody else, I mean that's -- you know, don't  
41 undermine the effort that Blue Water puts into  
42 this process, if you would.

43 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Marty. And I  
44 think, Tom, was just trying to characterize that  
45 there are a range of use so -- but that's duly  
46 noted. Scott, give you the last word here. And  
47 again, if you can keep to a minute, that be  
48 great.

1 MR. TAYLOR: Yes. I just want to kind  
2 of echo what Marty was saying, that we all have  
3 our own opinions about different things. We're  
4 trying to do a consensus for what's best for the  
5 industry but, you know, every single one of the  
6 other user groups gets to maximize its uses on  
7 whatever the application is. And, you know,  
8 we've always been a big advocate. I think it's  
9 kind of, you know, insulting by saying well,  
10 you're going to give, you know, from any  
11 particular boat or individual, you know, more  
12 clearly that they're going to go out and, you  
13 know, essentially, exploit that for the use, we  
14 are very, very, very much aware of what the  
15 parameters are for, you know, the setting and  
16 also for the -- this reauthorization. And at the  
17 end of the day, our only concern is that it  
18 doesn't become a limited factor in the ability  
19 for us to catch while balancing that with  
20 whatever economic value that we can get out it.  
21 You can't keep taking away things that are --  
22 that provide economic value as to the fleet  
23 collectively. If everybody else gets an  
24 allocation, why is it that you want to  
25 disincentivize the use as long as we stay within  
26 the allocation that is provided to us. I don't  
27 understand that and I'll leave it at that and  
28 we'll pick up these other issues this afternoon.

29 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Scott. And I'll  
30 just note from the Q and A saying it's time to  
31 hear what's best for the industry participants,  
32 especially if the request doesn't affect the  
33 resource, it just helps the fishers to perform  
34 the activity. Also, it's time to support those  
35 that provide the biggest chunk of scientific  
36 data.

37 I know that the HMS has been taking  
38 notes and I don't know if you want to put that up  
39 there. I'll just flag from my own sort of  
40 listening to this conversation. While there --  
41 while we heard some varied views on should -- you  
42 know, should the agency get rid of the Gulf of  
43 Mexico designation or not, some varied views on  
44 electronic monitoring and some of the changes  
45 that are under consideration there, we did hear  
46 some pretty sort of consistent views on sets over  
47 landings, some pretty strong consistent views  
48 around tiers and the concerns about having these

1 sort of, you know, you're in, you're out kind of  
2 breaks, and some rationales for why you might  
3 want go to sets from folks. And in terms of  
4 alternative B, we also heard a number of people  
5 weighing in, I think everyone weighed in on this,  
6 thought it made sense to, you know, consider  
7 letting fish in the Gulf of Mexico after July 1  
8 or July 15th, whenever that date is and then also  
9 the point for green-stick changes, so some really  
10 helpful feedback there. Thanks, everybody.

11 And I don't know if Tom or anyone else  
12 wants to weigh in before we break for lunch?

13 MR. BLANKINSHIP: I just want to kind  
14 of circle back and thank Tom for, you know, some  
15 of his comments there to reflect the comments  
16 that we received over the long period of time  
17 that this has been out including going back and  
18 scoping. He accurately reflected the need of the  
19 agency to be able to hear from all members of the  
20 public that in no way undermines any particular  
21 user group or industry group at all. But it is a  
22 requirement that we do take public comment and we  
23 take all of those comments seriously, and that is  
24 an important part of the rulemaking process. And  
25 so I want to specifically just acknowledge that,  
26 that it's our role, and that we will continue to  
27 do that. Thank you, Tom, for explaining that.

28 MR. BROOKS: Thanks. And I don't know  
29 if there's a question in the ---

30 (Audio interference.)

31 MR. BROOKS: Can you hear me now?  
32 Randy, do you hear me?

33 MR. BLANKINSHIP: Yes, I can hear you.

34 MR. BROOKS: Sorry, my phone just  
35 crapped out on me for a second. Anyway, there's  
36 a question in the Q and A from Peter wondering  
37 whether the notes that were just put up would be  
38 made available to everyone. Can you speak to  
39 that for just a quick second before we go to  
40 lunch?

41 MR. BLANKINSHIP: Yes. I think what  
42 we'll be doing and the plan here -- I think  
43 because we were just shooting some messages  
44 offline here about that -- is that as we come  
45 back from lunch, we will make those available for  
46 viewing on the screen and continue to make that  
47 available but particularly notes that were taken  
48 thus far, I think when we come back from lunch,

1 make them available on the screen, yes.

2 MR. BROOKS: Great, thanks. I want to  
3 get everyone to the break. Alan, burning  
4 question or can it wait or be handled in the Q  
5 and A?

6 MR. WEISS: Like to quickly if I could  
7 throw in something else that -- to follow-up what  
8 I was saying before. I'll try to be as quick as  
9 I can. In regard to the Gulf of Mexico, there  
10 were a couple of speakers from the advisory panel  
11 that mentioned that the Gulf of Mexico is an area  
12 where it's purely western fish and so things that  
13 we would do there would particularly benefit  
14 western -- the western stock of bluefins. It's  
15 true that certainly that the fish in the Gulf of  
16 Mexico are, I suppose, entirely western, but the  
17 way I would look at it is that the quota that we  
18 have, the entire bluefin quota that we have is a  
19 western stock quota. To the extent that we're  
20 filling a sizeable chunk of that quota with  
21 eastern fish, you know, in a general overall  
22 sense, that itself is a huge conservation benefit  
23 to the western stock. Thank you.

24 MR. BROOKS: Great. Thanks, Alan.  
25 Thanks, everybody, for the good conversation.  
26 Tom, thank you for the really thoughtful  
27 presentation and some of the clarifying comments  
28 I think really helped animate the conversations.  
29 Thanks. We'll be back at 1:30, so an hour and 10  
30 minutes. Thanks, all, and we'll see you in a  
31 little bit.

32 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter  
33 went off the record at 12:21 p.m. and resumed at  
34 1:31 p.m.)

35 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Well, we are at  
36 1:30, so I think we should jump back in. Welcome  
37 back to the HMS AP Meeting. Just to remind  
38 ourselves what we will be up to this afternoon,  
39 we started the conversation on Amendment 13 and  
40 the first of three parts before lunch. We will  
41 now dive into the second part, which will focus  
42 on the bluefin quota alternatives and the Purse  
43 Seine category alternatives. And then after a  
44 break, we'll come back to the third part, which  
45 will then be a little bit of a collection of  
46 other alternatives as well related to Amendment  
47 13.

48 To any members of the public who are

1 here and haven't been on earlier, the  
2 conversation is among the advisory panel members  
3 but at 3:30, we will have an opportunity for  
4 public comment. We've got a half an hour set  
5 aside for that so encourage you to weigh in at  
6 that point if there are comments that you would  
7 like the panel and the HMS staff to hear. So  
8 that's the game plan, and we'll wrap up by 4:00.

9 So I will hand it back to Tom and as  
10 he did before, he'll tee up the conversation with  
11 an overview of the Amendment 13 alternatives, and  
12 then we'll open it up for conversation. So Tom,  
13 over to you.

14 MR. WARREN: Great. Thank you,  
15 Bennett. I will jump right in and share my  
16 screen. Let me scroll down. Okay.

17 MR. BROOKS: And we are seeing it not  
18 yet in present view, but I think you know that  
19 already.

20 MR. WARREN: Yes. Okay. How's that?

21 MR. BROOKS: Perfect.

22 MR. WARREN: Great. Now for some  
23 reason, it went to the first slide. This next  
24 part, in contrast to this morning's focus on the  
25 IBQ program, I'm going to zoom out and consider  
26 the broader context and scope of the whole  
27 fishery and the quota alternatives that pertain  
28 to all of the bluefin fishery and the different  
29 quota categories.

30 The first proposed measure would  
31 affect a relatively minor step in the annual  
32 quota allocation methods and specifically with  
33 regard to the 68-metric tons allocation to the  
34 Longline category. Annually, based since 2015,  
35 it's been 68 metric tons provided to the Longline  
36 category but instead of subtracting a fixed  
37 amount of each category, it adds up to 68 metric  
38 tons and would be allocated to the Longline  
39 category. We're proposing a simplified method  
40 that changes it from a two-step to a one-  
41 step process, so it would be basically a  
42 modification to the amount of percentage in each  
43 quota category, a relatively minor percentage.  
44 And I'll show you more details on that a little  
45 later.

46 This slide and the next slide pertain  
47 to the future of the Purse Seine category and how  
48 that relates to the overall bluefin quota

1 allocation. The Purse Seine category has been  
2 relatively inactive for 15 years and has had no  
3 activity since 2015. So there's a couple  
4 practical implications of this. The first is if  
5 there is no activity under current rules, the  
6 Purse Seine category gets only 25 percent of its  
7 allocation, and the Purse Seine allocation is  
8 18.6 percent of the total. So the Purse Seine  
9 category only gets 25 percent of that 75 percent  
10 of the Purse Seine category allocation does  
11 annually get reallocated to the reserve category  
12 and thereupon, it's available for distribution  
13 based on criteria to the rest of the fishery. So  
14 that 75 percent has not unused yet it's a source  
15 of uncertainty in that every year, NMFS has to  
16 make decisions how to dole out that quota as well  
17 as the fishing participants, there's uncertainty  
18 about how much and when NMFS might provide to  
19 each quota category from the Reserve.

20 The second implication is the 25  
21 percent that remains with the Purse Seine  
22 category, the Purse Seine category, of course, is  
23 free to fish that or to lease it if they have not  
24 been fishing, and they lease approximately half  
25 of that 25 percent or up to half to the Longline  
26 category. So for the Longline category, it's a  
27 meaningful amount of quota that comes from the  
28 Purse Seine category in the form of leasing.

29 So with respect to the future of the  
30 Purse Seine category given its level of  
31 inactivity, these alternatives provide broad  
32 alternative frameworks for the future. The first  
33 -- and the proposed measure would be to  
34 immediately, upon implementation of Amendment 13,  
35 discontinue the Purse Seine category and  
36 reallocate upon implementation.

37 The other two alternatives would  
38 discontinue and reallocate the quota at a future  
39 sunset date two years after the implementation,  
40 so basically a delay in reallocation of the Purse  
41 Seine category. These two alternatives differ in  
42 what happens between now and the future sunset  
43 date. In the first, the Purse Seine category,  
44 keeping its 25 percent may lease quota or fish;  
45 and the second alternative, the Purse Seine may  
46 not fish but may lease. So again, when the Purse  
47 Seine category would go away basically and what  
48 happens in the meantime.

1                   So this next slide shows, okay,  
2 regardless of whether the Purse Seine category is  
3 reallocated immediately or with a delay, these  
4 alternatives propose and describe how the  
5 reallocation would occur. So two alternatives  
6 that we're not proposing but were analyzed were  
7 reallocate proportionately to all categories  
8 including the Longline category. And this  
9 proportionately meaning based on the current  
10 percentages that each quota category has, they  
11 would get that relative percentage of the Purse  
12 Seine category.

13                   And then under this, there's two sub-  
14 alternatives. One would provide the Longline  
15 category regardless of location to all  
16 geographical areas, and the other would provide  
17 Longline category only for use in the Atlantic  
18 out of concern for the Gulf of Mexico locations.

19                   What we're proposing, in contrast, is  
20 to reallocate proportionately among only the  
21 directed categories, the General, Harpoon,  
22 Angling, and Reserve but not to the Longline or  
23 Trap category because they are incidental  
24 categories.

25                   So this slide shows the current  
26 allocation amounts in percentages in contrast to  
27 the opposed. So under the last of the current  
28 percentages, you'll see from each quota category  
29 -- in comparing those percentages to the  
30 proposed. On the right, you'll see the orange  
31 Purse Seine category of 18.6 percent of the  
32 bluefin quota would no longer exist. Also of  
33 note in the proposed pie are the fact that all of  
34 the quota categories would receive greater  
35 amounts -- greater percentage amounts of the  
36 bluefin quota.

37                   Now the Longline category percentage  
38 increased from 8.1 to 13.1, again, isn't because  
39 that Purse Seine quote would be reallocated to  
40 it, but that is because of the simplified method  
41 of reallocating the 68 metric tons. In other  
42 words, instead of getting a fixed tonnage around  
43 68 metric tons, their percentage would be boosted  
44 slightly.

45                   So this shows the proposed bluefin  
46 percentages in tabular form similar to the pie  
47 chart. So you'll notice on the left, the quota  
48 category, working to the right, the current

1 percentages. The column A is the revised  
2 percentages resulting from that simplified 68  
3 metric ton method so basically, a slight decrease  
4 in percentage rather than providing a fixed  
5 tonnage amount. But then more importantly, the  
6 right-hand column is the net revised proposed  
7 percentages. So for example, the General  
8 category would go from the current value -- it's  
9 47.1 percent -- up to 55.8 percent; Purse Seine  
10 would go to zero; Harpoon category from 3.9 to  
11 4.6; angling from 19.7 to 23.3; Longline from 8.1  
12 to 13.1.

13 So the underlying question and issue  
14 regarding these reallocation options and  
15 specifically the reallocation of the Purse Seine  
16 quote to either the full fishery or to the  
17 directed fishery, the underlying issue with  
18 respect to specifically the Longline category  
19 with Longline fishery is how much quota does the  
20 Longline category need. So this next few slides  
21 and discussion is meant to try to shed light on  
22 some of the variables and some of the issues in  
23 play to inform our discussion.

24 So the reasons an active vessel needs  
25 IBQ -- and I key on the active vessel, inactive  
26 vessel arguably does not need IBQ because the  
27 goal of the IBQ program is to provide quota to  
28 account for bluefin by catch. So an inactive  
29 vessel not fishing does not need bluefin. The  
30 first reason, of course, is to satisfy the  
31 minimal amount required. On the first trip of  
32 each calendar quarter, a vessel is required to  
33 have a minimum amount of quota in the Gulf of  
34 Mexico and a separate minimum amount in the  
35 Atlantic. The principal reason, of course, a  
36 vessel needs IBQ is to account for moving catch,  
37 landings, or discards.

38 And then thirdly, though, vessels have  
39 expressed that they need and want bluefin quota  
40 as insurance against future catches of bluefin.  
41 It's highly uncertain how much, if at all, a  
42 vessel will catch but they may need some IBQ if  
43 they catch bluefin in the future.

44 So here's some first type of data to  
45 inform the discussion, leasing data from 2015 to  
46 2020, going from left to right, the amount of  
47 Purse Seine quota that was leased by longline  
48 vessels, the total amount of quota leased, larger

1 amount, and then the percent of total lease quota  
2 that was from Purse Seine participants. So  
3 you'll see from 2015 to 2020, the relative  
4 percentages. So in 2015, a relatively small  
5 percentage of the overall quota leased was from  
6 Purse Seine participants but in recent years,  
7 2019 and 2020, 48 percent and 46 percent of the  
8 total lease quota was from Purse Seine  
9 participants.

10 Now looking at this in a different  
11 way, the bottom blue bars reflect the information  
12 I just showed in those percentages of overall  
13 leased amount from the Purse Seine. But this bar  
14 chart divides these longline leases into two  
15 categories; those from vessels that have been  
16 fishing, the active vessels in orange in contrast  
17 to those vessels that have not been fishing,  
18 inactive vessels in gray. And this is a new  
19 analysis that was not in the environmental impact  
20 statement.

21 So here the general trend from 2016 to  
22 2020 is an increasing reliance on Purse Seine  
23 quota for leasing and an increasing reliance on  
24 inactive vessels that are not fishing. And this  
25 metric is valid because, you recall from this  
26 morning's discussion, the inactive vessels that  
27 have not been fishing would not be allocated  
28 quota. So this gets at the question or  
29 uncertainty of the bluefin market in the future  
30 is what will the leasing dynamics be; will  
31 vessels with quota want to hang onto all their  
32 quota or most of their quota as insurance against  
33 future catches, or will they lease it because in  
34 the past, there's an indication that the reliance  
35 on inactive vessels has been meaningful and  
36 contributed to the market in a meaningful way.  
37 So basically, the underlying question is, again,  
38 sources of these quota for active longline  
39 vessels and how those sources and dynamics would  
40 change under the proposed measure and what the  
41 leasing market would be like.

42 So another metric that's important, of  
43 course, is, okay, the amount of bluefin catch and  
44 the percent of quoted use. The landings are on  
45 the left followed by the discards, total catch,  
46 the adjusted quota, and the total percent of  
47 Longline quota. So the total percent of Longline  
48 quota used to account for bluefin catch has

1 ranged from 34 percent to a high of 51 percent.

2 So trying to pull some of these  
3 metrics together, in answering the question,  
4 okay, what is the total amount of quota needed  
5 and how do these different pieces fit together,  
6 the catch has been, on average, from 2016 to 2020  
7 45 percent of the quota. However, a portion of  
8 the catch is used to -- is accounted for by lease  
9 quota, and a portion of the catch is accounted  
10 for by the annual allocation. So the catch in  
11 leasing is not additive. It would be double-  
12 counting these quota because some of the lease  
13 quota is actually used for catch, and some is  
14 used for insurance.

15 So to try tease out these two  
16 different amounts in a method that makes sense,  
17 quota debt is a proxy for how much quota -- how  
18 much lease quota is actually used to account for  
19 catch versus is used as insurance, because quota  
20 debt represents after a vessel uses its quota, it  
21 goes into debt to account for catch. In all  
22 cases, a vessel has paid back its quota debt. So  
23 the only way to pay back quota debt is by leasing  
24 quota.

25 So if you're following, quota debt is  
26 a proxy for lease quota that is used to account  
27 for catch. So if we take the total of these  
28 quota and subtract this proxy, we're left with  
29 the adjusted leasing which is a proxy to  
30 represent insurance against future catches. So  
31 basically, this verbal mess I'm serving you is  
32 basically an effort to not double-count leasing  
33 and catch. So if you add leasing and catch had  
34 the minimum amount of 8 percent, what you're  
35 getting is a picture that the category has been  
36 using approximately 73 percent of its quota for  
37 these various uses.

38 So again, just some various data to  
39 help inform the discussion of how much IBQ the  
40 Longline category needs and how that relates to  
41 the considerations of whether the Purse Seine  
42 quota is reallocated to the Longline category.

43 So in terms of comments we received on  
44 related issues, we've received comments that  
45 support or do not support discontinuing the Purse  
46 Seine category and reallocation citing the Purse  
47 Seine category historical participation and  
48 option to fish as well as the reliance of the

1 Longline category on Purse Seine quota. There's  
2 been support for reallocating to directed  
3 categories only, and then there's been support  
4 for reallocating to all categories including  
5 Longline citing the need for longline vessels to  
6 provide the Purse Seine category for basing,  
7 concerns about the fairness of reallocating quota  
8 to the General category and not the Longline  
9 category given the differences in the fishery  
10 including the reporting requirements of the  
11 Longline category and the monitoring  
12 requirements.

13 And then a comment that there should  
14 be annual accountability in the IBQ program if  
15 the Longline category does not receive Purse  
16 Seine category quota. And you recall currently  
17 vessels have to balance the books on their IBQ  
18 accounts at the end of each quota or in order to  
19 fish during the next quota. So kind of like a  
20 credit card that comes due every quarter, you  
21 don't have to -- you can go into debt on a daily  
22 basis, but at the end of the quarter, you have to  
23 pay the bill rather than waiting to pay the IBQ  
24 bill, so to speak, at the end of the year.

25 So similar questions as this morning  
26 regarding the comments that do not support the  
27 measures. How do you prioritize such concerns or  
28 suggestions? What data or analyses might inform  
29 these considerations, or is there a new comment  
30 you'd like to provide?

31  
32 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Thanks, Tom, very  
33 much and we want to, again, open this up and have  
34 a conversation and hear different perspectives on  
35 this. I've got at least a couple of people in  
36 queue. I've got Marty and Scott and Dewey. And  
37 again, if you can -- as much as you can, speak to  
38 the questions that Tom has put out there for  
39 feedback, that would be great.

40 MR. SCANLON: Okay. Well, maybe we  
41 can do it the same we did it before there, Tom,  
42 if we can go back to the first slide and we'll -  
43 - I'll add my comments as we go through your  
44 presentation?

45 MR. BROOKS: Yes. That worked well,  
46 Marty. That be great.

47 MR. SCANLON: Okay. They modified my  
48 --- that, to me, is, you know, we're being paid

1 with our own money right there. I mean that's  
2 really no -- that makes no difference whatsoever  
3 how you describe it or what you do with the  
4 allocation, it's really the same thing. That's  
5 what we've had, you know, so I mean to me, you  
6 know, to make it almost seem like we're getting  
7 an increase in our allocation by the category  
8 that's, you know -- again, that's almost  
9 insulting right there. I mean it is what it is.  
10 I mean we began to 68 metric ton, do it by  
11 whatever you want to, but it's really no gain to  
12 the pelagic longline industry from what it was.  
13 So we can leave that at that, all right.

14 No action Purse Seine category  
15 allocation. We're against discontinuing the  
16 Purse Seine category all together. I mean the 25  
17 percent that has remained in the Purse Seine  
18 category is a very important component to the  
19 pelagic longline industry from the inception of  
20 A7 back in 2015. And one of the troubling things  
21 that I have -- and I mentioned this in my -- but  
22 you know, systematically subsetting the Gulf of  
23 Mexico, you look at this as an example right  
24 here. I mean we gave the Purse Seine -- HMS gave  
25 the Purse Seine category an option to either  
26 lease the quota or to catch the quota themselves.  
27 It was economically more feasible for them to  
28 lease the quota to us than to go through all the  
29 trouble of hiring observers, gearing up their  
30 boat, paying the crew and everything else to go  
31 catch it themselves, so they decided to lease the  
32 quota. Also, what I believe in the inception of  
33 A7 back in 2015, vessels that were considered to  
34 be leasing their quota were considered to be  
35 active, and they were able to get additional  
36 disbursements as a result of that. So to now tell  
37 these guys after they've been cooperative, and  
38 they've been a major component in A7 since its  
39 inception and keeping this thing, the program  
40 even moving forward -- without it, it would have  
41 been a complete disaster -- to now tell those  
42 guys that, you know, oh, you didn't actually fish  
43 the quota so now you're no longer active and  
44 we're taking all the quota from you, I don't  
45 think that's right. I mean they -- you know,  
46 they participated in the process. They've been  
47 active throughout A7 and give them -- leave them  
48 their, you know, their 25 percent and it's, like

1 I said, it's an important component to the  
2 pelagic longline industry.

3 In A13, some of the things that should  
4 have been done through the A7 through your  
5 review, we actually have a process there where  
6 we're trying to fix one portion of the problem,  
7 which is all the quotas sitting in the inactive  
8 vessels' hands and all the actives sitting in the  
9 no vessels' hands, and we're trying to revitalize  
10 this fishery, and what we got to remember is that  
11 the fishery has been contracting at 10 percent a  
12 year since 2015. So we're trying to fix one  
13 portion of it there, and we're going to break the  
14 other portion of it that's working, which is the  
15 leasing from the Purse Seines. So how is that  
16 going to be an addition? That's just going -- at  
17 best, it may neutralize it.

18 If you do get rid of the Purse Seine  
19 category all together and you don't give us that  
20 quota, -- it's a must that it becomes a year-end  
21 accountability because nobody's sitting on quota  
22 that's active. As you can see in those charts  
23 that Tom just gave, very little active vessels  
24 are leasing their quota. And when they are  
25 leasing their quota, it's usually at the end of  
26 the year or end of the surge of bluefin  
27 throughout the year that they're leasing their  
28 quota. They're not giving that quota up when  
29 there's the potential that they can be in the  
30 same position of the leasee -- or the leaser, you  
31 know, so that's not going to happen.

32 So I mean -- so you're going to be --  
33 if you get rid of other Purse Seine category,  
34 you're going to be forced to go to year-end  
35 accountability, and that's just all there is to  
36 it. There's no other way so -- but we're against  
37 getting rid of that. I think that the Purse  
38 Seine is they've earned their -- they've earned  
39 their right to hold onto that quota by  
40 participating fully in A7. They've been staying  
41 with the pelagic longliners. They haven't  
42 hoarded that quota. They haven't overcharged us  
43 for that quota. They've been very cooperative  
44 and they've been -- and because of that, it's  
45 what made this whole process move forward from  
46 2015 to the present day. So let's not break  
47 something that's actually working.

48 Next slide. As far as the

1 reallocation, you know, we're talking about the  
2 reallocation here, right? Is that the next --

3 MR. BROOKS: Yes.

4 (Simultaneous speaking.)

5 MR. SCANLON: -- percentages?

6 MR. BROOKS: Yes.

7 MR. SCANLON: Listen, I believe that  
8 we should be getting not only that but we should  
9 be getting the 13.1 percent of whatever -- if  
10 whatever, there's 75 percent of that stuff, we  
11 should get 13.1 percent of that. What we need to  
12 remember is this. When A7 was started back in  
13 2015, the reason why the Purse Seiners were only  
14 allowed to lease their quota to the pelagic  
15 longline industry was because it was declared  
16 commercial quota and could only be leased to  
17 commercial vessels. Now what you're trying to  
18 say is well, it's a directed fishery and now it's  
19 only going to go to directed fishery.

20 However, during the A7 process from  
21 the inception in 2015, through the back door, we  
22 would take a quota from the Purse Seines, put it  
23 into the Reserve, and we were leasing that quota  
24 to the recreational category, which I have no  
25 problem with if that's what -- you know, if that  
26 would work for those guys, that's fine. But now  
27 don't talk through both sides of your mouth by  
28 telling us well, it could only be given to  
29 directed fishermen because it's directed quota  
30 when back then, it was commercial quota should  
31 only be going to the commercial guys, and you  
32 were finding a way to give it to the recreational  
33 guys. So that's -- you know, we're not that  
34 stupid to be -- don't play us like that.

35 So we believe that, you know, the rest  
36 of the 75 percent should be divided up. You  
37 know, we should get our 13.1 percent or perhaps  
38 it should just be given equal to all of the  
39 categories equally.

40 I mean one of the problems that I have  
41 is, you know, the category that has been least  
42 accountable for their interactions, least  
43 responsible in their reporting and their  
44 compliance with A7 is the General category, and  
45 they get the greatest reward out of this. How do  
46 we continue to reward a category that is, on  
47 average, been 57 percent noncompliant with the  
48 regulations, and we're going to give them the

1 biggest reward in reallocating this quota? I  
2 mean if nothing else, they should get no more  
3 allocation than anybody else. So I mean perhaps  
4 we should just take it and divide it up amongst  
5 all the categories equally. Maybe that's the  
6 best way to do that. I don't know but at the  
7 very least, we should be getting that 13.1  
8 percent of that quota as well. Next slide.

9 We talk about the activity, the 276-  
10 pound and the 551 pounds account for insurance  
11 for future catches. Well, like I said, we're --  
12 you know, like I said prior to this, I believe  
13 that we need to get rid of these -- it's time to  
14 get rid of the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico  
15 designations. I mean we've just seen what you're  
16 attempting to do with the Purse Seine category  
17 here by systematically sunseting the category.

18 What's to say down the road here now  
19 that, you know -- that Deep Water Horizon project  
20 has been on my -- that's been on my mind since  
21 its beginning. That was supposed to be a one-  
22 year program way back in 2015, and it's still  
23 going on today. And next -- last I heard, it's  
24 going to go on for another two more years. So  
25 that could go on forever, and who's to say that  
26 down the road there that all of a sudden, this is  
27 well, you know, you've been in the Deep Water  
28 Horizon project and you really haven't longlined  
29 anymore, so you're no longer a longline, so we're  
30 not giving you that category anymore, you're no  
31 longer an active pelagic longliner so we're just  
32 going to decide that that's going to be the end  
33 of this for you, too? And if you do that --  
34 right now I believe there's only 11 or 12 active  
35 vessels with quota sitting in the Gulf of Mexico  
36 that can be leased to boats in the Atlantic for  
37 use in the Atlantic.

38 Now if those boats start leasing that,  
39 they're going to be very hesitant to lease  
40 anymore quota because they may not get quota.  
41 And systematically, when you reduce their quota  
42 to the point where there's no more quota being  
43 reallocated each year, you're essentially going  
44 to sunset the, you know, the access to the Gulf  
45 of Mexico to the pelagic longline industry, and  
46 we're right on the cusp of that happening.

47 And on top of this, I might remind you  
48 that I've said this from the beginning, that the

1 purpose -- one of the purposes, I believe, to re-  
2 designate that Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico was to  
3 protect Deep Water Horizon from having to  
4 compensate the rest of the Atlantic -- rest of  
5 the pelagic longline industry who are  
6 dramatically affected by what happened in the  
7 Gulf of Mexico, because those are highly  
8 migratory species. And it has had a long-term  
9 effect and it's part of the reason why we have  
10 ASEP, is because of what happened over there.

11 So I mean to me, it's time to get rid  
12 of the re-designation of that. It should be just  
13 Atlantic. Don't worry about -- there's a 35  
14 percent cap over there. That's the end of it.  
15 You know, I don't see -- and I don't see a surge  
16 ---

17 (Simultaneous speaking.)

18 MR. BROOKS: Hey, Marty?

19 MR. SCANLON: -- there.

20 MR. BROOKS: Marty, I want you just to  
21 try to wrap up a little bit just so I can --

22 MR. SCANLON: All right.

23 MR. BROOKS: -- there are a bunch of  
24 people (simultaneously speaking) --

25 MR. SCANLON: We can go to the next  
26 slide.

27 MR. BLANKINSHIP: Yeah, and I just  
28 want to address one more thing already brought up  
29 a couple times related to the Deepwater Horizon  
30 Oceanic Fish Restoration Project, which we've had  
31 presentations before the AP about in the past.

32 And from its inception, it was  
33 intended to be -- the length of this project was  
34 based upon a target of about 60 vessel years,  
35 which meant one vessel participation for one year  
36 makes a vessel year, so with any combination of  
37 vessels and years to get to that level of length  
38 of a project in order to accomplish the  
39 restoration goals that it was designed for.

40 And so it began in 2017. It is not  
41 infinite in length. It will be coming to an end,  
42 and we are getting closer to that end.

43 MR. SCANLON: Do you have an idea when  
44 that'll happen, Randy, by chance? What's the  
45 projection on that ending?

46 MR. BLANKINSHIP: I think that -- the  
47 actual ending will depend upon the final amounts  
48 of participation, but at least at this point, I

1 think it's thought that it will go at least one  
2 more year.

3 MR. BROOKS: Thanks. All right.  
4 Let's go to Scott Taylor. And, again, if folks  
5 can be --

6 MR. TAYLOR: I don't want to be too  
7 redundant over what Marty said, but the numbers  
8 are somewhat misleading. And I think that  
9 there's a major point in there that Tom may not  
10 have taken into consideration, which is that  
11 essentially, every single one of the active  
12 vessels has got to maintain 300 pounds and  
13 change.

14 And that 300 pounds and change is  
15 really more like four to five hundred pounds  
16 because that's really what the average size fish  
17 has been. And it's not in --- it's indirectly.  
18 While the reserves is only a mandatory number of  
19 pounds that are being addressed in the whole  
20 weight number, when we ran the fish, we have to  
21 do a conversion back over to dressed.

22 So, if you take the total number of  
23 active boats and figure probably need to do some  
24 scooping up -- okay? At 500 pounds of holding,  
25 it really has to be sort of in reserve. Unless  
26 everybody is perfect to the last day of the last  
27 year for the last trip, essentially you're going  
28 to have -- I don't know. If there's, you know,  
29 90 active boats, that's 50,000 pounds. That's 25  
30 metric tons that essentially have to be  
31 calculated into the -- on top of the number that  
32 is being held for the catch number.

33 So they're much closer to the cap that  
34 you guys really are looking at because of the  
35 fact that that has to be maintained. And I don't  
36 know of anybody that's perfect at the end of the  
37 year and essentially has zero in their account.  
38 I mean, we really have to go into the year over  
39 year and surrender part of it as a general rule.

40 So it's inherently problematic when we  
41 sit here and -- what's interesting is that also,  
42 probably because you don't have all the numbers  
43 yet, or 2021 numbers -- 2020 was a down year for  
44 a lot of reasons in particular. And we've had  
45 more than one comments about how prolific these  
46 fish have been this year.

47 So my concern is that they're trying  
48 to force our (audio interference), okay? Which

1 is that there's probably a few things that are  
2 going to go on that are going to impact this  
3 fishery. The NMFS seems to be encouraged with  
4 the deep-set fisheries, particularly off of North  
5 Carolina. And there have been a lot of bluefin  
6 landings there already in North Carolina. And  
7 now the way that that fishery has been able to  
8 survive the bluefin this year is I know for a  
9 fact that there's a particular company that has  
10 worked with the purse seine quota to essentially  
11 acquire a quota for those fishermen that were  
12 bringing in deep-set fish. It's a byproduct of  
13 that particular fishery.

14 And I think the numbers, you know,  
15 will minimize turtles and other things. There's  
16 still a component of bluefin going along with the  
17 fishery, which is fine. There's no issue,  
18 really, with that.

19 But we can only see you're not taking  
20 into account the fact that the work that you guys  
21 are doing and that we're doing collectively at  
22 ICCAT is bearing fruit. And the larger these  
23 populations are of the fish, the more resilient  
24 and then the numbers come back, the more likely  
25 that we are to have interactions again.

26 So it's essentially that if you're  
27 taking away the vast majority of the available  
28 quotas might -- again, I think this is the final  
29 point, that -- if you go back to the slide where  
30 it shows the 20 percent of the -- to the active  
31 -- so the active 20 percent, if you're going to  
32 eliminate -- and those numbers hold true and  
33 don't continue to climb, then my guess is that in  
34 2021, they're going to be higher than 2019.

35 If you're essentially eliminating 80  
36 percent of the quota that was leased because as  
37 (audio interference), any of the boats that are  
38 now in that 66 vessel category that are going to  
39 get the higher level of allocation cannot afford  
40 to give away that quota until they absolutely  
41 know that that quota is not available because  
42 none of the other categories are going to be  
43 available to lease.

44 You've taken all the profit out of  
45 this. You're going to have boats sitting in  
46 dock, this time for sure, because there's no  
47 place to turn other than to the boats that you're  
48 allocating them the lion's share of the 22. And

1 they are not going to want to lease.

2 There's a lot of, let's just say,  
3 industry competitiveness at that level, the  
4 bigger boats, you know. I don't really need to  
5 name names for you. You guys know who they are,  
6 the bigger producers out there. If they end up  
7 with the lion's share of the quota, they can't  
8 afford to have their ability to fish interrupted.

9 It's going to be the smaller guys that  
10 are out there that are going to be scrambling and  
11 not have any place to turn to be able to get the  
12 quota. This is the most important thing that's  
13 on our agenda right now. Anybody who understands  
14 that we want to be as efficient as we possibly  
15 can with the use of this thing -- we've had a  
16 system that was working up to this point.

17 While it may have some inefficiencies  
18 that are in it, they're not as much being  
19 betrayed because of that reserve. That 380  
20 pounds across the active vessels is a big number  
21 collectively, and it's not being included with  
22 any of that because by your own design, it has to  
23 be surrendered at the end of the year.

24 You can't expect the big boats are  
25 going to go into the end of the year with zero  
26 quota if they're actually fishing. So I would  
27 really implore you to think very carefully about  
28 what it is that you're doing here because we  
29 can't afford any more hiccups. We cannot. Okay?

30 This is just another new thing that  
31 has the potential to turn into a (audio  
32 interference) to limit the ability for this fleet  
33 to maneuver and to be productive. Thank you.

34 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Scott.

35 I'm going to -- just to bring in  
36 another sector here, Rick Weber, I'm going to  
37 bring you in, and then we'll go back to some  
38 other commercial folks.

39 MR. WEBER: Once again, I'm not sure  
40 I'm speaking for another sector. Everyone wants  
41 more bluefin. There's no doubt about it. But A7  
42 did indeed use the purse seine as a relief valve  
43 when we went into IBQ.

44 And I think we have to tie this  
45 section in with the last -- I want to say act --  
46 first presentation, because when we look at the  
47 tier system and when we look at the poundage  
48 system, and now we're getting rid of the free

1 market insurance policy, everyone is, again,  
2 going to land as many pounds as possible because  
3 they need to get to tier 2 or tier 1.

4 And no one's going to know who else  
5 has how much poundage, and it's going to be a  
6 derby to be tier 2 and above to have enough  
7 poundage to make sure that you have the IBQ.  
8 This just feels like free market responses that  
9 are, again, predictable.

10 By the same token, I've been here long  
11 enough. I know why we got here. When we  
12 contemplated putting longlines onto the fixed  
13 percentage when there was a cut, the longlines  
14 didn't want to hear about a cut because it was  
15 all accidental catch, and there was no way for  
16 them to reduce the number of accidents.

17 So I acknowledge the history and how  
18 we got here. Are we, Tom, using the full quota?  
19 I'm sorry. With all of the numbers and  
20 percentages and leases, at the end of the year,  
21 is the longline using all of the tonnage that is  
22 being proposed?

23 MR. WARREN: And that's where it gets  
24 tricky. Using -- it depends what you mean by  
25 used. To account for bluefin catch, no. The  
26 range is between 34 and 51 percent. But the  
27 quota is also, as strongly stated, used for  
28 insurance against other catches.

29 So that adds into the percentage  
30 numbers --

31 (Simultaneous speaking.)

32 MR. WEBER: That's what I thought I  
33 was understanding. I wasn't sure. That is what  
34 I thought I was understanding. And that leads  
35 me, then, to support end-of-year accounting  
36 rather than quarterly accounting because, once  
37 again, I am very sympathetic to the argument that  
38 no one's going to give up their quota midseason.  
39 At the end of the season, they would.

40 And, by the way, if the industry went  
41 over, it may be a game of musical chairs that the  
42 people who went badly over can't fix their  
43 problem, which is an interesting thing. I mean,  
44 the industry would resolve its own bad actors  
45 problem by not fixing their quota.

46 I don't know. I don't know this well  
47 enough. I have a fairness issue with the  
48 dramatic changes from A7 to A13. I feel like

1 that purse seine quota was held out there as the  
2 relief valve, and in the middle of a big switch,  
3 we're also taking away the relief valve.

4 I admit you have lots to look at, and  
5 I'm not sure I have firm answers. But I'm  
6 sympathetic to their problems.

7 MR. BROOKS: Yeah. So, Rick, if I can  
8 sum up, sort of -- which I think you just did --  
9 is you may not know what the fix is, but the  
10 preferred approach feels like it has a fairness  
11 issue and a sort of effectiveness and  
12 implementation --

13 (Simultaneous speaking.)

14 MR. WEBER: Exactly. Thank you,  
15 Bennett.

16 MR. BROOKS: Yeah. Thanks.  
17 Dewey, let's go to you. You're open,  
18 Dewey. Yep. We gotcha.

19 MR. HEMLRIGHT: Yeah, I would just  
20 like to echo support. A part of being able to  
21 use the purse seine category is a relief valve if  
22 necessary. And, also, it is kind of troubling  
23 that -- looking at rewarding a user group that  
24 doesn't report or has very low compliance with  
25 reporting. And so that could be a care to make  
26 them report more or something.

27 But the pelagic longline industry  
28 needs relief valves, and we need the purse seine  
29 quota, parts of it, to build and continue mixing  
30 this up as our fisheries or our participants are  
31 evolving in different things to the folks that  
32 are left. Thank you.

33 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Dewey.

34 George Purmont, why don't you jump in?

35 MR. PURMONT: Can you hear me okay?

36 MR. BROOKS: Yeah, we gotcha.

37 MR. PURMONT: Thank you. I -- really,  
38 where to begin except the beginning? I spent a  
39 long, long time dealing with purse seining, which  
40 I was a participant in in 1967. And it was sort  
41 of assumed that it would be phased out given a  
42 number of kick-the-can-down-the-road sunsets.

43 I don't see rewarding purse seiners --  
44 and I'm a seiner -- for nonparticipation. I  
45 don't see that. I never thought it was the  
46 intent of National Marine Fisheries to give them  
47 a 401(k) plan and a lease format specifying that  
48 specifically only the longliners could be the

1 recipients.

2 I guess I've got a couple of  
3 questions. And one is can highly migratory  
4 species take the purse seine quota and actually  
5 lease it to the longlines?

6 (Simultaneous speaking.)

7 MR. BROOKS: -- quota goes to the --  
8 is held by the program and is leased out.

9 MR. PURMONT: Right. In other words,  
10 take the same quota. Tell the seiners, hey, you  
11 know, you might be living the life down in  
12 Florida, but what's happening on the ground here  
13 is that this quota -- you're not earning it.

14 Whatever your reward is that allows  
15 you to continue, whether you contribute it to  
16 science, whether you contribute it to an industry  
17 as far as seining and establishing quotas and  
18 stuff like that -- can highly migratory species  
19 actually acquire the purse seine quota and lease  
20 it independently to the longliners up to a  
21 certain point, and then the rest of it gets put  
22 into the general reserve at their discretion so  
23 that it actually leased quota at an agreed-upon  
24 price from the government? Thank you.

25 MR. BROOKS: So the issue, George, is  
26 you want to make it available, but it doesn't  
27 feel right to you that the purse seine is sort of  
28 benefitting from this at this point?

29 MR. PURMONT: Exactly.

30 MR. BROOKS: Randy or Tom, do either  
31 one of you want to weigh in on that question?

32 MR. WARREN: I'll let Randy weigh in.  
33 (Simultaneous speaking.)

34 MR. BROOKS: How gracious of you, Tom.

35 MR. BLANKINSHIP: There's probably  
36 more than one HMSer that might want to weigh in  
37 on this particular thing, and I'll take a shot,  
38 at least for now. And that is to say that -- so  
39 what you're talking about there, George, I think  
40 would take a completely separate initiative of  
41 rulemaking or to set up the provisions or to do  
42 something like that.

43 I think there would be a lot of  
44 consideration about legal obligations and a lot  
45 of administrative cost that would be associated  
46 with that. It's not something that I think that  
47 we have been inclined to go down the road on.

48 Brad came on. I can see that. I'm

1 glad he did because he certainly has been a big  
2 part of the early discussions, what went to  
3 Amendment 13, and I'm sure that this actually has  
4 been considered before.

5 But, Brad, do you want to say  
6 anything?

7 MR. McHALE: Sure. And thank you,  
8 everyone, for their feedback and insight as far  
9 as how these programs need to evolve to meet the  
10 needs of the respective fisheries.

11 During the Amendment 7 process, this  
12 topic of having, for lack of better way to  
13 explain it, a safety net was discussed at some  
14 length. And the record will show that I know Tom  
15 and both myself have spoken to a number of  
16 different options.

17 One was that with the lack of actual  
18 fishing on -- part of the purse seine is we  
19 didn't want to sunset them at that time but to  
20 allow the door to remain open. We now know that  
21 all the historical participants are no longer  
22 active or have indicated at times to be active,  
23 hence why in Amendment 13 it's proposed to sunset  
24 that fishery because we're not necessarily  
25 proponents of having armchair fishermen having  
26 control over other fishermen for economic gain.

27 That isn't just in HMS fisheries.  
28 That's kind of across the board, the agency as a  
29 whole. But saying that, it is not lost on the  
30 dynamic when IBQ was stood up that we had two  
31 categories that had individual vessel quotas to  
32 allow for some level of leasing to mitigate any  
33 growing pains that we all felt by introducing a  
34 new management regime to mitigate the bycatch of  
35 bluefin tuna in the pelagic longline fishery.

36 As we've continued to move down the  
37 process of lessons learned and trying to adapt, I  
38 guess, George, the short answer is yes, that  
39 could be an option that the agency holds some  
40 sort of quota in reserve that has the sole  
41 purpose of covering longline bycatch. But I  
42 think Randy just hit it on the head.

43 That would transcend the scope of what  
44 has been put forward in Amendment 13 and would  
45 incur significant need for dialogue on how that  
46 then, in turn, would be managed to mitigate  
47 various levels of subjectivity to make sure that  
48 there was equity, that all of a sudden somebody

1 like Brad McHale didn't go out and disregard some  
2 of the goals of Amendment 7 to curtail effort  
3 that may result in bluefin bycatch and say, screw  
4 it; the Fisheries Service will bail me out.

5 And, therefore, it erodes that game  
6 that we've all kind of experienced both  
7 domestically and internationally over the years.  
8 So there's challenges there. But just as strong  
9 as an option is to look at other parts of the  
10 agency and fisheries, fisheries management, and  
11 how the industry has also stood up their own  
12 safety nets where quota or permits have been  
13 essentially consolidated into what's kind of  
14 referred to as banks.

15 And so it's no longer an  
16 agency/industry relationship to provide that  
17 safety net, but it's industry to industry. I  
18 think something that's behind the intent of this  
19 proposal here is -- one is that you don't  
20 necessarily have one defunct category that then  
21 has economic gain over another that is actively  
22 fishing, but also then to further explore how do  
23 you then mitigate third parties, whether it be  
24 agency or other categories in the management of  
25 the pelagic longline fishery to allow more self-  
26 sustainability on how that category's quota is  
27 managed as a whole?

28 So that's kind of a very long-winded  
29 response to George. We kind of tackle some of  
30 the history, some of the options that have been  
31 discussed, and again, some of the dialogue as we  
32 try to figure out this way forward to make sure  
33 that the category as a whole has its needs met.  
34 But we also don't necessarily erode the gains  
35 that were achieved in Amendment 7.

36 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Brad.

37 We are starting to get a little bit  
38 tight on time here, and I've still got several  
39 people who want to jump in here. So let me try  
40 to get to a few more people. I think we'll push  
41 a little bit beyond our 2:30 planned break, but  
42 we're going to start to run up against a clock.

43 Steve, Steve Getto, why don't you jump  
44 in? And then we'll get to Jeff Oden.

45 MR. GETTO: It's a tough pill for any  
46 commercial fisherman to swallow to see that any  
47 quota that they've been using being given to a  
48 recreational sector that hasn't made the

1 sacrifices to see this fishery recover.

2 You've got to remember that a large  
3 component of the recreational fishery, the  
4 charter/headboats, benefit from this quota  
5 remaining commercial. So I really feel that the  
6 commercial fishery should have access to this  
7 quota, and it should not go to the recreational  
8 sector.

9 And, if anything, give yourselves some  
10 flexibility and continue to keep it in the  
11 reserve. So --

12 (Simultaneous speaking.)

13 MR. BROOKS: Keep it with commercial.

14 MR. GETTO: Keep it with commercial.

15 MR. BROOKS: And maybe hold it close  
16 for a little -- to give the agencies a little  
17 room. Okay.

18 MR. GETTO: Exactly.

19 MR. BROOKS: Thanks.

20 Jeff?

21 (Pause.)

22 MR. BROOKS: Have we opened up Jeff?

23 MR. CHAIBONGSAI: Yeah. Jeff, you  
24 should be open, or you should have a request to  
25 open.

26 MR. ODEN: Can you hear me now?

27 MR. BROOKS: Yeah, we got you now.

28 MR. ODEN: It seems like where we're  
29 headed -- to me, once it's allocated, it's likely  
30 forever. You know? There's probably not going  
31 to be any going back without bloodshed. I don't  
32 mean that literally by any means. I'm just being  
33 truthful.

34 I mean, nobody's going to want to give  
35 up quota they ended up with. And nobody needs it  
36 worse than our industry. There's been a lot of  
37 talk over the last few days about the resurgence  
38 of bluefin up and down the coast. Well, that's  
39 good for all the anglers and the General cat  
40 guys. It's not necessarily good for us if we  
41 have a future. And to where I see this going,  
42 it's just scary without this 25 percent minimum  
43 relief valve.

44 Secondly, one other thing I'd like to  
45 comment on is, with the tier system, how is a  
46 young individual -- when we speak of  
47 revitalization of this fishery, how is a young  
48 individual going to work his way into this with

1 five or six hundred pounds without continually  
2 having his hand in his pocket?

3 I mean, it's bad enough for those that  
4 are in here. I see I've been demoted. Anyway,  
5 so it's going to be tough in my corner, but I  
6 can't even see how somebody would contemplate  
7 coming into this fishery. And I've made mention  
8 of that before. You talk about lack of  
9 participation anymore and the fishery declining.  
10 Well, you're responsible for that.

11 Secondly, or thirdly, end-of-year  
12 accountability, that is a must. It is an  
13 absolute must because not a one of us that I know  
14 of are going to come off quota until, at the very  
15 earliest, November. In years past, I used to  
16 catch bluefin in November. The last six or  
17 seven, it hasn't seemed like we've seen them  
18 until maybe early January.

19 But it's not to say that won't change,  
20 just like it did this year when, once on the  
21 point -- in my 21 or 23 years, I've never once  
22 seen bluefin on the point in the tide on the West  
23 Wall in July. This year, I did. So everybody's  
24 seeing the resurgence. And if anybody needs that  
25 quota, it's our industry, and especially if we  
26 have a future. The future is in your hands. I  
27 thank you.

28 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Jeff.

29 All right. I got three people who  
30 haven't had a chance to jump in yet and about six  
31 minutes. If I do that math, I come out with two  
32 minutes each.

33 Alan Weiss?

34 MR. WEISS: Thanks, Bennett.

35 I think the problem here is that the  
36 question has been framed the wrong way. The  
37 issue that we're trying to attack is how do we  
38 facilitate the functioning of the IBQ leasing  
39 market? And we had a discussion of one part of  
40 that this morning, and now we're having a  
41 discussion of another part of it.

42 But what we really need to know is how  
43 those two major parts interact with one another.  
44 And what I've come to as I'm listening to this  
45 discussion is that, basically, in Amendment 13,  
46 you've tried to undertake changing two huge  
47 pillars of that IBQ leasing system at the same  
48 time. I don't think that makes sense.

1                   There's a lot of support for making  
2 the changes that we discussed this morning, to  
3 shift quota away from inactive vessels in the  
4 initial allocation and allocate it to active  
5 vessels. It doesn't make sense to make that big  
6 change and, at the same time, make this big  
7 change to the availability of the purse seine  
8 quota when it's really hard to tell -- it looks  
9 like it would completely collapse the market for  
10 leasing IBQ.

11                   But we really need a better handle on  
12 how these two moves will interact with one  
13 another. And my recommendation at this point  
14 would be to completely put any changes in the  
15 purse seine leasing system that's been running  
16 for the last several years -- put that off until  
17 there can be a future analysis of a whole bunch  
18 of other possibilities, some of which were  
19 discussed just a few minutes ago, and really do  
20 this thoughtfully and carefully so that we don't  
21 make a huge mistake that ends up screwing up the  
22 whole works.

23                   MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Alan.

24                   MR. WEISS: Thank you.

25                   MR. BROOKS: Thanks.

26                   Tim, take it. Again, a minute or two  
27 would be great.

28                   MR. PICKETT: Yeah, I'm not going to  
29 reiterate what everyone else has already said  
30 that I'm very much on board with. But I would  
31 say at the very least -- and I'm saying at the  
32 very least -- this reallocation of the purse  
33 seine quota needs to be discretionary, and it  
34 needs to be annually discretionary.

35                   Jeff touched on the point earlier  
36 saying, once you allocate that quota to somebody,  
37 it never comes back. And I think -- well, it  
38 would be hard fought, he said, to come back. And  
39 I think, personally, it'll never come back.

40                   And with all the changes and stuff, I  
41 think at the very least, that needs to be a  
42 discretionary accounting. You know, kind of keep  
43 that parachute there for a while. If this is in  
44 fact going to happen, it needs to be a  
45 discretionary reserve sort of thing, at least for  
46 the interim, if that is in fact going to happen,  
47 which I hope it doesn't.

48                   But that's my --

1 (Simultaneous speaking.)  
2 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Tim.  
3 MR. PICKETT: Yep.  
4 MR. BROOKS: Thanks.  
5 David Schalit? David, you're open.  
6 MR. SCHALIT: It's 2:33 right now.  
7 I'm prepared to wait until after we come back  
8 from the break.  
9 MR. BROOKS: Well, when we come back  
10 from the break, we're picking up a different  
11 topic. So --  
12 MR. SCHALIT: Well, so we can actually  
13 cover -- this is a complex issue here. So --  
14 MR. BROOKS: Oh, I know.  
15 MR. SCHALIT: -- I think it deserves  
16 the time.  
17 MR. BROOKS: I understand. I'm just  
18 -- I know there's other issues. I know we're  
19 going to have public comment. I think what we  
20 might do is see whether we have much public  
21 comment, and if not, come back to it after that.  
22 But we need to -- we need to hit the 3:30 mark  
23 for public comment to be respectful of that. So  
24 that's where we --  
25 MR. SCHALIT: All right. I'll tell  
26 you what. I'll do my best, you know, and --  
27 okay. First of all, I was in an SCRS meeting  
28 most of the morning, and so I came in late here.  
29 And I'm wondering, how is all of this discussion  
30 going to change the schedule for Amendment 13? I  
31 missed that.  
32 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Let me let Randy  
33 or Tom just quickly answer that question.  
34 MR. WARREN: Extension of the public  
35 comment period essentially modified our target  
36 date of implementation, delaying it by a year.  
37 MR. BROOKS: Go ahead, David.  
38 MR. SCHALIT: Okay. My second  
39 question is -- by the way, thank you for your  
40 presentation. The two-year interval that you  
41 mentioned in those various options -- and I  
42 forget which page number it was -- what purpose  
43 does that two-year interval serve? Am I being  
44 clear with you?  
45 MR. WARREN: Yes. I mean, arguably,  
46 it's a slow way to make changes and see what  
47 happens.  
48 MR. SCHALIT: Ah, okay. Okay. That's

1 good. Okay. My next question is, there was a  
2 problem that was mentioned some time ago in  
3 connection with some vessels -- some pelagic  
4 longline vessels that were inactive or maybe only  
5 relatively inactive that we're holding onto their  
6 IBQs and not leasing them. Has this been  
7 addressed? Or has a solution been discussed in  
8 this connection?

9 MR. WARREN: That solution would be in  
10 the dynamic allocation. If a vessel is not  
11 fishing, it would get very little IBQ. So the  
12 IBQ allocation is sensitive to the amount of  
13 fishing. So somebody didn't have much quota to  
14 lease if they weren't fishing.

15 MR. SCHALIT: Noted. What if they  
16 did, like, two or three sets in a year's time;  
17 would that -- you know, would that not exacerbate  
18 the issue?

19 MR. WARREN: They would have a very  
20 low level of quota.

21 MR. SCHALIT: Okay. Okay. Okay.  
22 Last question. Institutionalized underage -- has  
23 any thought been given to how we could reduce  
24 this? This is a Rich Ruais term, which relates  
25 to the fact that every single year, going back  
26 since time immemorial, the U.S. is not able to  
27 capture -- catch its full quota.

28 And we hear about this all the time at  
29 ICCAT where they say, "Well, the U.S. can't  
30 possibly have a lot of abundance. They can't  
31 catch their quota." But in actual fact, it's a  
32 regulatory issue. And I'm wondering if in the  
33 process of discussing all of this that issue came  
34 up.

35 MR. BROOKS: Thanks. Tom? Randy?

36 MR. WARREN: That has not been one of  
37 the alternatives developed, but one of the  
38 objectives does address our ATCA and Magnuson  
39 mandates for optimal yield. So that's kind of  
40 always in the background.

41 MR. BLANKINSHIP: Let me add to that,  
42 that, you know, within the overall U.S. quarter  
43 we go through an exercise of looking at the  
44 umbrage, and then the allowable carry forward of  
45 a portion of that umbrage that we then have  
46 available, an adjusted quota in the following  
47 year, which facilitates continued use or  
48 maximizing that use. But we do manage the

1 overall quota to get as close to, but not exceed,  
2 that level on an annual basis.

3 Brad, can you add anything to that?

4 MR. BROOKS: Brad, if you can --

5 MR. McHALE: If I could, and I know  
6 we're short on time here, but just reflecting  
7 back to kind of what I had stated earlier that as  
8 an underlying theme of how Amendment 7 in the IBQ  
9 program was set up, and how we were addressing  
10 inactive vessels, so those are vessels that  
11 didn't actually have permits associated with  
12 them, that we didn't award allocations, even if  
13 they qualified for a share, again, to meet that  
14 kind of overarching goal that we didn't have  
15 armchair captains that were leveraging those that  
16 were actually getting lines wet in the fishery.

17 So that applied really to kind of a  
18 Purse Seine proposal, but also how the IBQ  
19 program was originally implemented.

20 David, to your point, when you have  
21 vessels that have IFQs, individual fishing  
22 quotas, it becomes very problematic of when the  
23 agency or other needs of the United States can  
24 then retrieve that quota.

25 So that leads to some of that  
26 institutionalized underharvest where you have  
27 this mixed use fishery where there are open  
28 access fisheries as well as these limited access  
29 that have direct allocations. And, hence, some  
30 of the struggle that we're trying to continue to  
31 navigate.

32 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Brad.

33 All right. I do need to get us a  
34 break. Mike Pierdinock, you appear not -- you  
35 have not been able to jump in here. I'll give  
36 you 30 seconds here. Okay?

37 MR. PIERDINOCK: (Audio interference)  
38 brief. The recreational and for-hire community  
39 has been targeting bluefin tuna going back to the  
40 early 1900s. With guys and gals in suits and  
41 ties in big charter boats going out and landing  
42 bluefin back in the early 1900s, you were able to  
43 land them recreationally. And back then they  
44 were able to sell them.

45 The reason why today we continue to  
46 have our historical access to that quota, either  
47 recreationally or to sell it commercially for the  
48 for-hire -- as a for-hire vessel. I would hope

1 that -- or I see that that continues to be (audio  
2 interference) of the quota to all of the  
3 different gear types. It needs to be fair and  
4 reasonable, and it's reasonable that other gear  
5 types would be -- have access to the same.

6 And with that, we recreationally or  
7 for-hire need the same -- have that same access  
8 and have equitable inclusion in that quota.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. BROOKS: Thanks. All right. So  
11 I know we need to get to break. I will just say,  
12 you know, first of all, thanks for all of the  
13 comments. This is obviously not an easy issue to  
14 solve. I will just say that there were I think a  
15 pretty strong set of concerns raised here around  
16 loss of a safety valve, around equity, around the  
17 history, you know, around the likelihood that  
18 large producers will hold on to that quota and  
19 not make it available for leasing until the end  
20 of the year if there were such a switch.

21 There also were a number of possible  
22 solutions thrown on the table. One is if you did  
23 a shift, you'd have to have end-of-the-year  
24 accounting for this to work. Ideas about, you  
25 know, maybe just keep it as is, and, you know,  
26 that the Purse Seine category continues to have  
27 that allocation available -- to make available  
28 for leasing.

29 That the agency might be able to play  
30 some role as a safety valve there, though we  
31 heard concerns about that as well. That if you  
32 did distribute it, that you would want to do it  
33 at least in a discretionary way each year, so  
34 that it didn't become sort of an allocation that  
35 would be hard to retrieve back.

36 And then coming around, you know,  
37 maybe you want to rethink doing two big changes  
38 in -- at the same time, and, you know, give one  
39 some time to play out.

40 So other points, too, but I think  
41 those are the main themes I heard. Again, Tom or  
42 Randy, if there's anything you want to fold in  
43 here before we go to break.

44 MR. BLANKINSHIP: No, thank you.

45 MR. BROOKS: All right. Thanks,  
46 everybody. What I think I want to do is just  
47 give us a very short break. Let's come back at  
48 10 of, which will just put us about five minutes

1 behind, but there really are still a number of  
2 alternatives to be discussing.

3 Then we'll go to public comment at  
4 3:30. And if that winds up being a short set of  
5 comments, we can come back and reopen any of the  
6 topics that we have talked about.

7 Does that work, Randy?

8 MR. BLANKINSHIP: All right.

9 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Great. Let's go  
10 to break, then, and we'll start back up with Part  
11 3 at 10 of. So just about seven minutes from  
12 now. Thanks, everybody.

13 MR. BROOKS: Okay. It is 10 of, so I  
14 think we should get back into it. We want to  
15 turn to the last of the three parts. Again,  
16 there are several other alternatives that are  
17 part of Amendment 13 and want to give Tom a  
18 chance to, as he has done before, kind of walk  
19 through the alternatives, and then open it up for  
20 discussion.

21 So, Tom, back to you and seeing your  
22 screen, and you are now presenting. Good.

23 MR. WARREN: Okay. Can you hear me?

24 MR. BROOKS: Yep. You're all good.

25 MR. WARREN: Okay. So this last  
26 section deals with other alternatives and  
27 specifically focusing on behavior fisheries. So  
28 with respect to the General category, and  
29 specifically modifications to the subquota  
30 periods for allocations, is the main scope of the  
31 analyses in the DEIS.

32 We are not proposing any changes with  
33 respect to either the subquota time periods  
34 listed in the first column nor the associated  
35 percentage allocations of that subquota period.  
36 So January through March we would still get  
37 5.3 percent; September, 26.5 percent, as an  
38 example.

39 Some of the other alternatives  
40 analyzed in the DEIS but not conferred dealt with  
41 changes in the time periods, such as 12 equal  
42 months, or extending the January through March  
43 subquota period until the end of April, or  
44 several alternatives dealt with changes to the  
45 subquota percentages.

46 So without changing the time periods,  
47 changing the allocation percentages associated,  
48 for example, increasing the January through March

1 subquota or increasing the amounts for the  
2 September and for the October through November  
3 subquota period with corresponding decreases in  
4 the June through August amount to basically fund  
5 those increases.

6 And if reallocation of Purse Seine  
7 quota occurred to the General category, a caveat  
8 that couldn't be put in the September and October  
9 through November time periods and not during  
10 earlier portions of the year. So, again, these  
11 are General category alternatives analyzed but  
12 not conferred.

13 So I'm going to show some relevant  
14 data to the consideration of these alternatives.  
15 This shows you for 2018 General category trip  
16 locations. We don't get trip locations on a  
17 continual basis, but we do as a result of special  
18 studies such as the General category cost  
19 earnings database. And this shows you the pretty  
20 typical patterns of trip locations concentrating  
21 off New England and off North Carolina.

22 So the next few slides I'll show you  
23 are relevant information in the DEIS to help  
24 compare metrics across quota periods. As you are  
25 aware, management of the General category fishery  
26 through the use of potential limits, time  
27 periods, quotas, and subquotas, enclosures, is a  
28 complex business. Because of the nature of the  
29 fishery, it is highly variable from year to year,  
30 and the location of the fish are variable during  
31 the year, of course migrating up and down the  
32 east coast.

33 And so the question of how you  
34 standardize numbers and really grapple with what  
35 is going on in the fishery is of utmost  
36 importance. So in the next few slides, we use  
37 metrics to try to, again, standardize what is  
38 going on in the fishery and compare metrics. And  
39 one can't rely on a single metric alone, but it's  
40 kind of through a combination of evaluation of  
41 metrics that you can get a handle on this  
42 fishery.

43 This first table is number of unique  
44 vessels landing at least one bluefin. And, again,  
45 these are commercial landings by General  
46 category, vessels, or Charter/Headboat category  
47 vessels that have declared their intent to land  
48 commercial bluefin.

1           So this compares the quota category --  
2       excuse me, the subquota periods, the number of  
3       vessels landing at least one bluefin. So you can  
4       see greater numbers of vessels land bluefin  
5       during the mid-portion of year in contrast to the  
6       earlier months of January, March, and the later  
7       months of December.

8           The number of days the fishery was  
9       open 2016 through 2019, so the first column shows  
10      the subquota period, and the number of days in  
11      that subquota period, and then in the columns for  
12      2016 through 2019, the number of days the fishery  
13      was open.

14           So taking 2019 as an example, the  
15      January through March subquota period was opened  
16      59 days out of 93 days, which is, you know,  
17      55 percent maybe. The June through August was  
18      open 69 days out of 92 days; September, 13 out of  
19      31; October/November, 13 out of 35; and, in 2019,  
20      31 days out of 31.

21           So, again, another metric that is  
22      trying to standardize the information to allow  
23      comparing across subquota periods, and that are  
24      in some ways indicators of fishing opportunity.

25           Commercial bluefin in metric tons  
26      landed per day open -- again, the subquota period  
27      in the left-hand column. So the amount of  
28      bluefin landed per day open, kind of a rate of  
29      landings that takes into account two of the  
30      variables, amount landed and number of days open,  
31      again, try to represent fishing opportunity.

32           So you can see the number of bluefin  
33      per day open in 2019 is quite a bit higher in  
34      September and October and November than during  
35      the other months of the year, June through  
36      August, is higher than in January through March,  
37      the lowest being 0.7.

38           The commercial bluefin landed per  
39      unique vessel that landed is another take on some  
40      of the underlying data. So, again, amount of  
41      bluefin landed per vessel that landed, of those  
42      successful vessels, how much did they land? And  
43      this gives a picture that the vessels landing at  
44      least one bluefin landed more than the other  
45      subquota periods.

46           So without delving and discussing  
47      those metrics, I am going to switch gears to the  
48      angler category trophy fishery. You will recall

1 that the Angling category trophy fishery is an  
2 incidental fishery allocated a relatively small  
3 amount of trophy fishery to the Angling category;  
4 that is, greater than 73-inch fish that are  
5 normally the commercial size category.

6 But given that the Angling category  
7 that targets a smaller sized class, between 27  
8 and 73 inch, does incidentally catch these larger  
9 fish, this fishery is basically carved out to  
10 reduce bycatch and allow some catch of this  
11 trophy size fish.

12 It is a relatively small amount of  
13 quota divided currently among three different  
14 geographic areas -- the Gulf, north, and the  
15 south. This proposed measure would try to create  
16 a little bit more opportunity vessels in the  
17 northern aspect, the northern location of this  
18 northern area, because typically the northern  
19 Angling category trophy quota is harvested before  
20 the fish even get to northern New England.

21 So this would subdivide the current  
22 northern area into two zones, north and south,  
23 off Chatham, Massachusetts, with the net result  
24 of four trophy category zones and each with an  
25 associated equal amount of quota, again, to  
26 provide a little bit of opportunity for those  
27 vessels in the north.

28 To fund this quota, it would increase  
29 a portion of the Angling category that is  
30 allocated for the trophy fishery and have an  
31 equivalent reduction for the large school/small  
32 medium. So, again, not an increase to the  
33 overall amount allocated to the Angling category,  
34 but taking from a portion of the Angling  
35 category, which is already divided up by size  
36 classes, changes how those size classes are  
37 subdivided.

38 So here is the proposed area in blue.  
39 The current northern area is the light and dark  
40 blue. This would divide it up into two areas,  
41 the Gulf of Maine in dark blue, southern New  
42 England in light blue.

43 Other modifications to the handgear  
44 fisheries address harpoon fishery. We are not  
45 proposing any change to the authorized gears.  
46 The draft environmental impact statement does  
47 analyze the use of harpoon gear on  
48 Charter/Headboat permitted vessels not currently

1 allowed, and we are not proposing this change.

2 And it also analyzes the removal of  
3 harpoon gear as an authorized gear for the  
4 General category vessels. Currently, General  
5 category vessels are allowed to use harpoon gear,  
6 and under the proposed measures this would not  
7 change.

8 We are proposing a modification to the  
9 Harpoon category daily retention limit.  
10 Currently, there is a limit on the small --  
11 excuse me, the large medium fish and there is no  
12 limit on the giant bluefin.

13 The whole fishery, the Harpoon  
14 category, is under of course a quota. So in  
15 order to provide a little bit more opportunity,  
16 either extend the time period of the quota or the  
17 number of vessels fishing, this would constrain  
18 the total amount of fish available to harpoon  
19 category vessels at 10 fish per day or trip. So  
20 the combined large medium fish and giant bluefin  
21 would be constrained to 10 total.

22 The Harpoon category season we are not  
23 proposing any changes. We would maintain the  
24 current start and closure date. The current  
25 start date, instead of changing, would remain the  
26 same. Excuse me. This other alternative listed  
27 below in blue analyzed would set an earlier date  
28 of May 1 instead of June 1, but we'd still close  
29 on November 15th. But, again, we are not  
30 proposing a change to the length of the harpoon  
31 season.

32 And last but not least, changes in  
33 permit categories are allowed under the current  
34 rules. A vessel, if they make a mistake in their  
35 application for a permit, such as a vessel  
36 wanting to enroll in the angling category, but  
37 makes a mistake and instead enrolls in the  
38 General category and gets the wrong permit type,  
39 they are able to make this change provided they  
40 request it within 45 days.

41 We are proposing that this restriction  
42 is relaxed, so that for vessels issued an open  
43 access permit would be allowed to change permit  
44 categories at any time due to errors, provided  
45 the vessel has not landed any bluefin.

46 A summary of the comments received are  
47 for the General category support for the  
48 no-action alternative as we proposed, support for

1 creating a separate August subquota, support for  
2 providing the increase from a Purse Seine  
3 reallocation only to the September through  
4 December subquota periods.

5 With respect to the angling category,  
6 support and lack of support for the proposed  
7 trophy areas. Requests to allocate more quota in  
8 fact to the trophy category overall and to the  
9 trophy subquota, and concern about how the  
10 increase to the trophy subquota is being dealt  
11 with, concern about this slight decrease in the  
12 large -- small medium subquota that would occur  
13 in conjunction, support for these trophy category  
14 areas, but also some new ideas, support for  
15 moving the southern line further south to Ocean  
16 City, Maryland, or another idea, to divide the  
17 trophy in this trophy south also into two areas.

18 So, again, similar comments to the  
19 Advisory Panel as we posed this morning.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. BROOKS: Great. Thanks very much,  
22 Tom.

23 We've got about 25 minutes to chew on  
24 this. Let's see what comments AP have or  
25 questions. Peter Chaibongsai and then David  
26 Schalit. And, Peter, star three if you're on the  
27 phone.

28 MR. CHAIBONGSAI: Can you guys hear  
29 me?

30 MR. BROOKS: We've got you.

31 MR. CHAIBONGSAI: Okay. Thank you.  
32 This is a question on General category  
33 information. Alan and I were kind of going back  
34 and forth on this, so we're just hoping for some  
35 clarification.

36 If you're fishing in tournaments, are  
37 we allowed -- is the angling community allowed to  
38 land any and all types of billfish and tuna in  
39 those tournaments? And will those be counted  
40 towards the General category?

41 MR. WARREN: I'm going to defer to  
42 Brad or somebody who is a little more adept at  
43 answering those kind of billfish questions than  
44 maybe.

45 MR. CHAIBONGSAI: Thank you.

46 MR. BLANKINSHIP: Yeah. So just a  
47 clarification, I think that actually would be a  
48 -- in the ballpark of a regulatory question

1 because I don't think it's really covered in  
2 Amendment 13.

3 MR. CHAIBONGSAI: I'm sorry, guys.  
4 There's just something that Alan and I were just  
5 trying to find, and we wanted to make sure that  
6 we understood this aspect well. I'm sorry about  
7 that.

8 MR. BLANKINSHIP: Yeah. Sure. It's  
9 not a problem. But I'll answer as quick as I  
10 can. So --

11 MR. CHAIBONGSAI: Sure.

12 MR. BLANKINSHIP: -- the permit  
13 category of vessels when they are fishing in a  
14 registration of tournament -- fish in that  
15 tournament under the angling category rules for  
16 other species besides tuna. They would still be  
17 in the General category for tuna. But for the  
18 others they fish under the angling rules which  
19 would apply for billfish and sharks and  
20 swordfish. And so all of those angling  
21 requirements would apply.

22 MR. CHAIBONGSAI: Thanks, Randy.

23 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Sorry, one last  
24 thing. Thank you, Randy. And I think -- I  
25 didn't have a chance to speak up on it last time  
26 because we were running out of time, and I knew  
27 I'd have a little bit of time now. So just  
28 really quickly, on the -- basically this goes to  
29 the last part of the presentation.

30 But since we are talking about angling  
31 a little bit, I wanted to bring it up now, too,  
32 is when we are talking about some of the  
33 allocation of -- or reallocation of the IBQs to --  
34 -- obviously, we would love -- and I think Mike  
35 brought it up, too, the history of the angling  
36 community participating in this sport.

37 We would obviously love to have it --  
38 to have it in all regions, and I think you  
39 mentioned specifically here just essentially  
40 within the New England area. We would love to --  
41 and our constituents would love to have it  
42 throughout all regions, so not just the north --  
43 the northeast.

44 And I think, Tom, you brought it up to  
45 where sometimes before you brought this -- within  
46 Amendment 13, excuse me, because a lot of the  
47 fish were being caught before they got to New  
48 England, vice versa could be said for the Gulf of

1 Mexico, too. So that's one area that we would  
2 look at potentially increasing with that  
3 reallocation.

4 So thank you.

5 MR. BROOKS: Thanks. David Schalit,  
6 you are briefing --

7 MR. BLANKINSHIP: Before we go there,  
8 I want to kind of address this. I think, Peter,  
9 you may be conflating a couple of things here.

10 MR. CHAIBONGSAI: Okay.

11 MR. BLANKINSHIP: And just to kind of  
12 -- and, Tom, you can help me out, but related to  
13 redistribution of Purse Seine and the  
14 alternatives in Amendment 13 related to that, if  
15 it was redistributed to all categories, there are  
16 sub-alternatives under that alternative that make  
17 a distinction for the Longline category and  
18 whether, then, the Longline category, when they  
19 receive that, if it would then be distributed  
20 without geographic distinction, meaning anywhere  
21 -- Atlantic or Gulf -- or the other  
22 sub-alternative is there would be a distinction  
23 between the Atlantic and the Gulf. But that's  
24 for the longline.

25 MR. CHAIBONGSAI: Okay. My  
26 understanding from what I read -- and I  
27 apologize. So, Tom, if you can clarify that, I  
28 apologize. This is on the last series of slides.  
29 I thought that meant if it was redistributed  
30 through all categories. It could be  
31 redistributed for all categories within the three  
32 different regions in the Atlantic.

33 So if that's not the case, if you  
34 could just clarify that. If it's just for  
35 longline, if that's what you're saying, Randy,  
36 that's not what I got from the presentation. So  
37 I apologize.

38 MR. BLANKINSHIP: Okay. So in the  
39 trophy category -- I'm going to let Tom speak to  
40 this, but --

41 MR. CHAIBONGSAI: Okay.

42 MR. BLANKINSHIP: -- he can clarify on  
43 this.

44 MR. WARREN: Overall, with respect to  
45 the reallocation from the Purse Seine category, I  
46 agree with Randy's characterization that the only  
47 caveat in the amendment was between the two ways  
48 to reallocate to the Longline category.

1 Pivoting to the angling category,  
2 trophy fishery, that really is not related to the  
3 Purse Seine reallocation alternatives. And it's  
4 just pose in on the method of allocating to the  
5 trophy fishery within the angling category.

6 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Tom.

7 MR. WARREN: So it's very conscribed.  
8 It's a narrow focus.

9 MR. CHAIBONGSAI: Okay.

10 MR. BROOKS: Brad, your camera came  
11 on. Did you want to weigh in, too?

12 MR. MCHALE: If I was hearing him  
13 right, the Gulf of Mexico has standalone trophy  
14 fishery already allocated, 1.8 metric tons, as  
15 does the Atlantic, as well as does the north.  
16 And so the latter proposal there, Peter, was just  
17 whether or not there could be another carveout  
18 area, given that limited quota utilization and  
19 potential limited opportunities for those  
20 recreationally fishing in New England.

21 So to get to your point, those trophy  
22 opportunities are currently in place Atlantic and  
23 Gulf of Mexico-wide.

24 MR. CHAIBONGSAI: So then does this  
25 mean, with Amendment 13 potentially moving  
26 forward in whatever manner it is, then there is  
27 no aspect to where the angling community would be  
28 getting a bump in their quota?

29 MR. MCHALE: So tying those different  
30 threads that Randy and Tom had just explained, to  
31 me if the Purse Seine reallocation were finalized  
32 and quota was redistributed to the category level  
33 -- angling, general --

34 MR. CHAIBONGSAI: Right.

35 MR. MCHALE: -- harpoon, potential  
36 longliner -- then the existing angling category  
37 distribution within the category would apply.  
38 There is really no alteration there. And so  
39 there would be potential slight upticks on the  
40 school fishery, on the large school fishery, on  
41 the giant fishery, but a trickle-down effect  
42 would be pretty inconsequential as it related to  
43 trophy. And there is ICCAT recommendations on  
44 tolerances on school fish.

45 MR. BROOKS: Thanks.

46 MR. CHAIBONGSAI: Okay. Thank you.  
47 I might need some -- I might need to talk to one  
48 of you following this, but I -- I believe I

1 understand it now, so I appreciate that. I think  
2 that's something I might need further  
3 clarification on that with one of you guys.

4 MR. BROOKS: And definitely encourage  
5 you to do that, Peter. I think that would be  
6 probably helpful.

7 MR. CHAIBONGSAI: Thank you.

8 MR. BROOKS: Yep. David Schalit?  
9 Your line is open, David.

10 MR. SCHALIT: (Audio interference) a  
11 concern, let's call it that.

12 MR. BROOKS: All right. Hey, David?  
13 David?

14 MR. SCHALIT: Yes.

15 MR. BROOKS: David, we missed the  
16 beginning of what you were saying. Start again.

17 MR. SCHALIT: Sorry. One of the  
18 complaints that I hear from time to time is the  
19 -- is this issue of where is this trophy quota  
20 coming from? And, of course, if it's coming from  
21 the recreational sector, then that should be the  
22 end of the discussion.

23 But I'm mindful that the way this is  
24 being handled now is by weight. In other words,  
25 the total amount of quota available in this  
26 trophy category is coming out of the recreational  
27 quota by weight.

28 And there is another -- there is  
29 another way of looking at this, and that is the  
30 biological side of it. In other words, I have  
31 spoken to some of the scientists about this, and  
32 they say that there is a way to establish a  
33 relationship biologically between the juvenile  
34 and the giant in terms of what is value to the  
35 overall biomass.

36 And I'm wondering if anything has --  
37 if you guys have considered looking at this -- at  
38 it from this perspective as an alternative to  
39 just doing it by weight. Thanks.

40 MR. WARREN: The federal impact  
41 statement does not consider it from that point of  
42 view.

43 MR. SCHALIT: Okay.

44 MR. BROOKS: Angel?

45 MS. WILLEY: Hi. Thanks for the  
46 presentation. I just wanted to take another  
47 opportunity to indicate that we can't support the  
48 alternatives to the angling category trophy

1 fishery because they are not equitable to the  
2 vessels fishing from Ocean City, Maryland.

3 We do support, you know, a boundary  
4 change that allows Maryland vessels that fair  
5 opportunity.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Thanks, Angel.

8 I'm not seeing any other hands at this  
9 point. Okay. Now I'm seeing two hands. Let's  
10 go to Shana and then to Mike Pierdinock. Shana?

11 MR. CHAIBONGSAI: Shana, maybe -- you  
12 should have a request to unmute.

13 MR. BROOKS: Shana, are you seeing  
14 that request or --

15 MS. MILLER: Can you hear me now?

16 MR. BROOKS: Now we've got you. Yes.

17 MS. MILLER: Okay. Thank you. Sorry  
18 about that. I'm on my phone now.

19 Yeah. Just with regard to the  
20 proposed change to the trophy category areas, you  
21 know, I think it makes sense to divide the  
22 northern area and make those changes in the east  
23 coast. But just to reiterate what we had said  
24 during Amendment 7 that because of ICCAT's  
25 targeted -- targeting prohibition in the Gulf of  
26 Mexico, there should not be a trophy category at  
27 all in the Gulf of Mexico because there shouldn't  
28 be any targeting recreationally or commercially  
29 there.

30 And, you know, the fact that there is  
31 a dedicated quota for bluefin, you know, it's  
32 hard to incidentally catch an 800-pound spawner  
33 when you're fishing for other species.

34 So just to have no incentive for  
35 targeting there when these boundaries are  
36 reworked, it would be good to eliminate that  
37 specific area, and that would also free up some  
38 trophy category for the other areas.

39 Thank you.

40 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Shana.

41 Mike?

42 MR. PIERDINOCK: (Audio interference)  
43 the proposal for that northern zone. Many of us  
44 up here in the north support. You have to look  
45 at the history. That zone, as it presently  
46 exists, gets closed down very early in the  
47 season, and the recreational community then has  
48 no opportunity for a trophy size fish.

1                   So to be fair and equitable, among all  
2 of the different north and southern zones and  
3 Gulf zones, that northern zone that is being  
4 proposed would hopefully make it fair and  
5 equitable for the recreational anglers in the  
6 different zones.

7                   Thank you.

8                   MR. BROOKS: Thanks. Angel, just to  
9 -- I want to just follow up on your comment. Do  
10 the -- does the public comment of moving the  
11 trophy south line from Great Egg Inlet, New  
12 Jersey, to Ocean City, Maryland, address your  
13 concern?

14                  MS. WILLEY: Yes.

15                  MR. BROOKS: Okay. Thank you.

16                  All right. If there are not any other  
17 comments -- and, again, I think I'm not seeing  
18 any other -- I'm going to suggest we go to public  
19 comment, and then we can, after that, open it up  
20 to any other comments that people didn't get to  
21 weigh in on particularly on our topic number 2.

22                  Randy, does that work?

23                  MR. BLANKINSHIP: Yeah.

24                  MR. BROOKS: Okay. So then let's go  
25 to public comment. And just a reminder to any  
26 member of the public who wasn't here yesterday,  
27 this is an opportunity for you to share your  
28 perspectives with the panel and with HMS staff.  
29 We manage this as an opportunity for you to --  
30 for you to speak and everyone to listen.

31                  It's not intended to be a back and  
32 forth or a Q&A period. We would ask everyone to  
33 limit their remarks to three minutes or so. And  
34 if you want to get into the conversation, there  
35 are a couple of different ways to let us know  
36 that.

37                  One would be to click on the little  
38 slanty face icon at the bottom of the screen.  
39 And when you open that up, you'll see there is a  
40 raise hand. If you could just click on that,  
41 we'll see that you want to get into the queue.  
42 You could also throw the -- throw your aim into  
43 the Q&A, if that's -- if that works better for  
44 you, so we know that. And then to raise your  
45 hand in the -- if you're just on the phone, you  
46 would do star three.

47                  So three different ways to let us  
48 know. And when I do recognize you, if you could

1 start with your name, affiliation, and whatever  
2 the topic is that you're going to be talking to.

3 So with that, let me see if there are  
4 any members of the public who would like to weigh  
5 in at this point.

6 Charlie Bergman, let me go to you.  
7 And, again, if you could start with name,  
8 affiliation, and topic that you're talking to,  
9 please. And you should be able to talk now.

10 MR. BERGMAN: Okay. I think I'm --

11 MR. BROOKS: Charlie? We can hear  
12 you, Charlie. Can you hear us?

13 MR. BERGMAN: Yeah, I hear you fine.  
14 Charlie Berman, retired National Marine Fisheries  
15 Service, retired pelagic longliner, a whole mess  
16 of stuff I guess.

17 I just -- I had some questions, and I  
18 have to phrase it into a comment I guess. At  
19 some point, I'd like to find out where these  
20 overages on the IBQ have been coming from,  
21 because if it's -- if the overages are all coming  
22 out of the Atlantic, or the majority are coming  
23 out of the Atlantic, then I -- then I have a  
24 tough time supporting the idea of making the IDQ  
25 all the same where the Atlantic fishes the Gulf  
26 without Gulf IBQ.

27 And so that's -- that's my comment.

28 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Thanks.

29 Any other members of the public who  
30 care to comment?

31 Okay. I am not seeing any other  
32 comments. Craig, Pete, are you seeing anybody  
33 that I'm not? Okay.

34 MS. ORTIZ: I haven't seen any  
35 comments, so --

36 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Thanks, Delisse.

37 So let's see if there is other -- any  
38 other comments that AP members wanted to double  
39 back on? And I think when we get to 3:30, I want  
40 to just doublecheck again for public comment,  
41 because it's possible folks -- a person or two  
42 might be joining just at that time.

43 AP members, I know there were maybe a  
44 few other comments that folks had. Marty, I see  
45 your hand up. Please jump in.

46 MR. SCANLON: Just a couple of things  
47 to follow up on in a previous segment there. As  
48 it pertains to NOVESID vessels, that was a

1 question that somebody had asked, what happens  
2 with that quota there?

3 One of the things that Blue Water  
4 Fisherman's Association proposes is that instead  
5 of holding that quota for a year like is proposed  
6 in the proposed rule here, it would be to suspend  
7 the NOVESID vessel's quota until the vessel  
8 became active again.

9 And then whatever the activity level  
10 of that vessel was prior to becoming inactive, or  
11 falling into that status, that would be what  
12 would be available to the vessel. That would be  
13 one thing that we wanted -- I wanted to add.

14 The other thing is that -- Scott had  
15 touched base on this here -- the IBQ system  
16 itself, because we have to have minimum quota to  
17 leave the dock, there is always going to be quota  
18 leftover in the pelagic Longline category, just  
19 because of that fact. Unless everybody goes out  
20 there and catches a bluefin on their last trip  
21 each year, there is going to be quota leftover.  
22 So how do we address that?

23 And the other thing is is that, you  
24 know, one of the things I think either Brad or  
25 Tom had mentioned is that, you know, one of the  
26 reasons to reallocate the Purse Seine, the  
27 75 percent left in the Purse Seine category at  
28 this time, is so that they don't basically have  
29 to manage it, you know.

30 I mean, it's quite a bit of work for  
31 them to manage that throughout the year, but to  
32 me, you know, with all the questions that have  
33 been raised in all of these different categories,  
34 and all of the different needs of all of these  
35 different categories, you know, I don't know why  
36 we were in such a rush to reallocate that  
37 permanently at all, the 75 percent that would be  
38 leftover.

39 You know, I mean, you know, each --  
40 each individual category has individual needs  
41 each particular year, depending on the  
42 circumstances, and, you know, I think NMFS has  
43 done, you know, a relatively good job. I don't  
44 want to get them to have a big head or nothing  
45 there, but they've done a fairly good job of, you  
46 know, trying to deal with that, you know.

47 So, you know, one category may need  
48 something this year, and they may -- somebody

1 else may need it the next year. So, you know, I  
2 think Alan put a point there, you know, we're  
3 trying to fix everything all at once here, and,  
4 you know, trying to fix one thing at a time may  
5 be the answer here. You know, keep -- remain  
6 with the flexibility that NMFS has right now to  
7 reallocate that additional 75 percent leftover in  
8 the Purse Seine as they have been doing. And it  
9 seems to be working fairly well.

10 You know, there has been some -- you  
11 know, it's disturbing to me, as I look at these  
12 categories, to see anybody shutdown for any  
13 portion of the year. And to make that's more of  
14 a situation of mismanagement -- not that I want  
15 to blame NMFS for that -- but, you know, it's  
16 more of a mismanagement than a quota allocation  
17 issue. You know what I mean?

18 As you can see, you know, as we do  
19 this, didn't seem to be getting better, you know?  
20 So the times the boats are tied to the dock and  
21 not able to fish I think become less and less  
22 each year. So, you know, I think that might be --  
23 -- might be the solution is, you know, not try to  
24 fix it all at once, you know, to roll that over,  
25 that 75 percent. Let NMFS manage it, you know?

26 MR. BROOKS: Thanks. Thanks. And I'm  
27 glad you're taking care not to be  
28 overcomplimentary, Marty.

29 All right. Let's --

30 MR. BLANKINSHIP: I don't think  
31 there's much worry about us getting a big head.  
32 I don't think there is --

33 (Laughter.)

34 -- either a bluefin tuna or shark  
35 management, so --

36 MR. SCANLON: Oh, come on, Randy. I  
37 haven't been that hard on you; have I?

38 MR. BROOKS: We're going to let --  
39 we're going to let that one go unanswered, Marty.  
40 Let's go to Fly, and then over to Katie. Fly,  
41 are you getting a message saying to click on it?  
42 Here we are. Fly, you should --

43 MR. NAVARRO: Good afternoon. Can you  
44 hear me now?

45 MR. BROOKS: We got you.

46 MR. NAVARRO: Thank you very much. I  
47 just sat there, talked to myself for about 30  
48 seconds.

1 My question is, I'd like a little bit  
2 of a clarification -- and I apologize because I  
3 didn't -- I'm not sure who exactly brought it up.  
4 I think it was Shana that brought up about  
5 possibly getting rid of the incidental bluefin  
6 quota for the Gulf of Mexico.

7 Again, these fish that these anglers  
8 are coming across are incidental. They are  
9 fishing for blue marlin while they are catching  
10 the bluefin tuna. And I believe our quota is  
11 right around 1.8 or two metric tons, so we're not  
12 talking about a lot of fish here.

13 But I would like some clarification on  
14 whether that was being recommended to get rid of  
15 that quota or not.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Shana, do you want  
18 to jump back in on that? I thought it was around  
19 the trophy piece that you were talking about, but  
20 do you want to jump in?

21 MS. MILLER: Yes. I was suggesting  
22 that the -- that the dedicated Gulf of Mexico  
23 trophy category be eliminated altogether. It is  
24 my understanding -- and, Brad or Tom, you can  
25 correct me if I'm wrong -- but prior to  
26 Amendment 7, any trophies that were, you know,  
27 truly incidentally caught in the Gulf of Mexico  
28 by an angler were counted against the southern.  
29 Is that correct?

30 MR. MCHALE: That is correct. And  
31 then, as part of the Amendment 7, we set out the  
32 incidental trophy allowance that Fly is referring  
33 to, and Amendment 13 does not propose to  
34 eliminate that category or that geographic  
35 category.

36 MS. MILLER: Yes. That was -- that  
37 was my proposal is an adjustment to what you guys  
38 have put as your preferred alternative. So --

39 MR. NAVARRO: So, Shana, you're  
40 recommending that we get rid of that quota  
41 altogether.

42 MS. MILLER: Yes, that's me as one AP  
43 member's recommendation. But it's -- I don't  
44 know. This is a little -- we're not supposed to  
45 be talking to the public commenters I thought,  
46 but --

47 MR. NAVARRO: I am not -- I am not --  
48 just so you know, I am not a public commenter. I

1 am an AP member.

2 MR. BROOKS: So this is -- this is  
3 fine. This is just the AP talking to the AP.

4 MR. NAVARRO: Yeah. I just wanted --  
5 I just wanted to get some clarification on this  
6 recommendation that you just proposed.

7 MS. MILLER: Yes.

8 MR. NAVARRO: Okay.

9 MS. MILLER: So is that clear now?

10 MR. NAVARRO: It's clear. Not happy  
11 with it, but it's clear.

12 MS. MILLER: Okay. Thanks. I'm happy  
13 to --

14 MR. BROOKS: Go ahead, Shana. Okay.  
15 Well, I --

16 MR. NAVARRO: No, no, no. That's it.  
17 That's all. She clarified exactly what I wanted  
18 to know.

19 MR. BROOKS: Okay. Great.

20 Katie?

21 MS. WESTFALL: As the discussions  
22 continued around the safety valve, and sort of  
23 the reserve related to the IBQ, I think Brad  
24 alluded to some examples where industry has  
25 created sort of a risk pool. And there are  
26 examples on the west coast in the groundfish  
27 fishery as to how industries sort of work  
28 together to create this kind of, you know, pool  
29 of quota in case there is some type of disaster  
30 set. And I'm happy to connect industry, you  
31 know, with some colleagues who worked really  
32 closely with fishermen to create that kind of a  
33 system.

34 And I think that has benefits in the  
35 sense that you don't have the agency involved and  
36 some additional kind of administration and  
37 bureaucracy involved, and kind of industry can  
38 sort of run that.

39 And I think separately I want to  
40 encourage the agency to think about kind of a  
41 set-aside for new entrants or folks that want to  
42 reenter the fishery, and I know Blue Water has  
43 done some thinking as to how this might be able  
44 to work.

45 But I think it's sort of a best  
46 practice in terms of making sure that folks can  
47 still enter the fishery and there aren't -- there  
48 isn't a huge barrier to participate in the

1 fishery. As we all know and I think was  
2 mentioned earlier, there, you know, is an overall  
3 conservation benefit of maintaining a viable U.S.  
4 fleet and holding on to that North Atlantic  
5 swordfish quota.

6 So I just wanted to make those  
7 additional points and happy to talk to folks  
8 offline who might be interested in some of those  
9 ideas.

10 MR. BROOKS: Thanks, Katie.

11 Okay. I don't see any other hands up  
12 at this point. Let me just check again to see if  
13 there are any members of the public who might  
14 have joined in the last five minutes, seven  
15 minutes, who have any public comment they wish to  
16 make.

17 Okay. If not, then I think we can  
18 probably move to wrapping up here. We can wrap  
19 up a little bit early, and, again, give you all a  
20 little bit more time in your day. I will hand it  
21 off to you, Randy, in one minute.

22 I would just remind folks that  
23 tomorrow we will start at 9:00 a.m. We will be  
24 opening up the lines early, as we have done  
25 yesterday and today, so please, as you have been  
26 doing, keep joining early, so we can just make  
27 sure we're connected with everybody.

28 We'll have two topics for tomorrow.  
29 We'll talk about spatial management update  
30 initially. And then, after the break, we'll come  
31 back and talk about Advisory Panel term limits,  
32 and then we'll have public comment and we will  
33 wrap up by 11:30. So that's the game plan for  
34 tomorrow.

35 Randy, over to you.

36 MR. BLANKINSHIP: Thanks Bennett. And  
37 thank you all, again, for another good day of  
38 discussion, very active engagement, very  
39 thoughtful contributions. And really appreciate  
40 all of that, especially, you know, the very  
41 useful discussion around Amendment 13 that  
42 occurred in depth.

43 And I think that we, as an agency,  
44 have benefitted from dedicating this much time  
45 certainly to walking through your comments. And,  
46 of course, we're still in the comment period.  
47 We're looking forward to additional comments as  
48 they come in in the next few days. And look

1 forward to continuing our discussion tomorrow for  
2 half a day.

3 And before we go, I do want to share  
4 an announcement with you all about an in-season  
5 action that we are rolling out. It will file in  
6 the Federal Register this afternoon, and you  
7 should see an email from our HMS News ListServ  
8 coming out later on about it, related to the  
9 General category. We are transferring 113.8  
10 metric tons of bluefin quota from the reserve to  
11 the General category. That is intended to  
12 account for the accrued overharvest of 53.8 tons  
13 from previous time periods through this year, and  
14 provide further opportunities for the General  
15 category.

16 The September season is progressing,  
17 and landings have been high. And, of course,  
18 restricted fishing days are in place, and we are  
19 using that tool.

20 But similar to last year, this action  
21 will be a very similar thing, which is cover  
22 comes overage that has occurred thus far this  
23 year and then provide a little bit more quota for  
24 additional opportunities. So be on the lookout  
25 for the email related to that.

26 That's it for me. Thank you very  
27 much.

28 MR. BROOKS: Okay. I think we're  
29 wrapped up, then, for today. Thanks, everybody.  
30 We'll see you bright and early tomorrow morning.  
31 Thanks, all, for a really good conversation.

32 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter  
33 went off the record at 3:36 p.m.)  
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C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that the foregoing transcript

In the matter of: Atlantic Highly Migratory  
Species Advisory Panel

Before: U.S. NOAA

Date: 09-09-21

Place: teleconference

was duly recorded and accurately transcribed under  
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*Neal R Gross*

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Court Reporter

**NEAL R. GROSS**

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