HMS Recreational Roundtable

HMS Advisory Panel Fall Meeting
September 7, 2022
Purpose of Roundtable

GOAL: Discuss your thoughts/ideas/concerns about recreational HMS Fisheries

• Each region is holding or has held roundtable discussions on recreational fisheries
• Open discussion
• What is on your mind regarding recreational HMS fisheries?
• We have a few ideas in the following slides
• We will solicit your thoughts/ideas at the end of the presentation
HMS MRIP Regional Implementation Plan

- MRIP = Marine Recreational Information Program
- Original plan was released in 2017
- Identifies data needs and sets agency priorities for improving HMS recreational data collections for the next five years
- Gathered feedback during Spring 2022 AP meeting, and will discuss with ICCAT Advisory Committee on Sept 16
- Will circulate draft for agency partner review in the fall
HMS MRIP Regional Implementation Plan

- Existing priorities to continue and expand
  - Completion of Large Pelagics Survey (LPS) re-design and new survey implementation by 2024
  - Expand Atlantic HMS recreational fishery data collection surveys
    - Assess addition of more offshore sampling to MRIP to improve percent standard errors (PSE)
    - Consider starting LPS sampling earlier to capture fishing effort in additional months
  - Inclusion of Atlantic HMS charter/headboats in federal for-hire logbooks
  - Identify ways to reduce reporting burden
  - Improve and expand data collection on recreational shark fisheries
  - Improve HMS recreational data collections in the Caribbean
HMS MRIP Regional Implementation Plan

- Identify new recreational data priorities
  - Establish data collections to quantify shark and other depredation events
  - Maximize reporting compliance with HMS catch reporting requirements
  - Incorporate electronic data capture (i.e., via tablets) into Large Pelagics Intercept Survey (LPIS)
Offshore Wind Impacts to HMS Recreational Fisheries

- Need for better spatial data on recreational fishing activity
  - LPS and recently implemented Gulf of Mexico for-hire vessel monitoring systems (VMS) currently only sources of data for on-the-water fishing locations
- HMS is coordinating with GARFO, SERO, and SEFSC to assess impacts to our fisheries
  - Limited data and resources
- External researchers conducting tagging studies on numerous species
HMS Tournament Issues - Sharks

- HMS has received a number of inquiries about shark tournaments this summer
- Controversy and backlash around recent shark tournaments in Florida
  - Misunderstandings regarding tournament regulations and NOAA’s role
  - Misinformation about shark regulations and what tournaments could do or not
  - Continued requests for more shark tournaments, both those that allow landings and catch-and-release only events
- NOAA Fisheries is working to improve our online communications products related to tournaments to better inform the public
- Need to clarify that shark endorsements do not authorize General category vessels to target or retain sharks outside of tournaments
HMS Tournament Issues - Bluefin Tuna

• NOAA Fisheries has received comment expressing concern about tournaments targeting bluefin tuna under General category regulations

• Concerns raised about events resulting in derby-style fishing late in a subquota period or in questionable market conditions (i.e., resulting in no-sale events)

• Suggestion that tournaments should be required to indicate size-class of bluefin tuna to be targeted; some suggestion for prohibiting tournaments on commercial fisheries
Vessel Registration Delays & Impact on Permitting

- New vessels cannot acquire HMS permits without U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) documentation or state vessel registration
- USCG District 1 (ME-NJ) has been proactive on this issue and stresses the requirement for USCG Merchant Marine Examinations
  - USCG is sending out 2,500 letters to NOAA permitted vessels without current USCG exams, and sent out a Marine Safety Information Bulletin to commercially permitted fishermen
Proposed Rule to Amend Right Whale Vessel Speed Regulations

- NOAA Fisheries has concluded that lethal vessel strikes are impeding recovery of endangered right whales.
- Vessels under 65’ accounted for 5 of 12 lethal strikes since speed restrictions were put in place in 2008 on vessels 65’ and over.
- Proposed rule would extend speed restriction (10 knots or 11.5 mph) to vessels between 35-65’ and broaden seasonal restriction zones.
- Comment period open until September 30.
Share your thoughts!

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