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Summary of Comments on Amendment 14 Scoping: Shark Quota Management

Highly Migratory Species Management Division

September AP Meeting 2019

Summary of Need and Objectives

Consistent with National Standard 1, Amendment 14 aims to explore options for:

- Modifying or establishing reference points.
- Increasing management flexibility for Atlantic shark fisheries.

The scoping document presented the following objectives:

1. Consider revising acceptable biological catch (ABC) control rule to ensure harvest does not exceed overfishing limit (OFL).
2. Evaluate the process of establishing annual catch limit (ACL) for non-prohibited shark species.
3. Evaluate process for determining what are the acceptable levels for rebuilding success.
4. Consider a process for managing under or over harvests of sharks in the HMS management unit.
5. Consider increasing flexibility to adapt to changes in harvest of sharks by sector.

The Scoping document also presented 18 options for 5 issues.



Comments Received

- ABC Control Rule - Support for:
 - Creating a tiered ABC control rule.
 - Establishing a peer review process that will account for uncertainty.
- ABC Phase-in:
 - Support for and opposition to a 3 year phase-in ABC approach.
 - Concern about slowing the response to negative stock information.
- ACL Development - Support for:
 - Establishing species-specific ACLs with no linkages.
 - Grouping species into new management units.
 - Establishing an ACL framework that accounts for management uncertainty and actively manages ACLs while limiting directed fishing and bycatch of shark species.
 - Strengthening reporting and data collection mechanisms in all sectors.



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Comments Received Cont.

- Carry Over – Support for:
 - Implementing carry-over.
 - Limiting the amount of carry-over (weather, market).
 - Establishing accountability measures that reduce the ACL if the ABC exceeded.
 - Considering of all sources of mortality.
- Multiyear Overfishing:
 - Opposition to using a multiyear overfishing approach as it may mask changes in stock status without an assessment.
 - Support for using a multiyear overfishing approach because it may be more reflective of the stock life history due to the long life cycle of shark species.
 - Support for multiyear overfishing approach to evaluate OFL/ABC and landings, particularly for the recreational sector.



Comments Received Cont.

- General comments
 - Support for:
 - Greater transparency in the assessment and management process.
 - Using additional data, conducting more frequent assessments, and using more life history data in the process.
 - Reevaluating the allocation process and analysis concerning management groups and geographic area.
 - Creating an SSC or developing a similar review process.
 - Opposition to any changes to management affecting rebuilding plans or timeframes.
 - General concern with the number of entities (NOAA Fisheries, ICCAT, CITES) involved in shark management and confusion as to who is the primary lead for shark management.



Tentative Next Steps

- Proposed rule: Spring 2020
- Final Amendment 14: Winter 2020 or 2021

To read all the submitted comments, please go to
<http://www.regulations.gov>
Keyword - “NOAA-NMFS-2019-0040”

Additional Questions or Comments?

Ian Miller, ian.miller@noaa.gov

Guy DuBeck, guy.dubeck@noaa.gov

Karyl Brewster-Geisz, karyl.brewster-geisz@noaa.gov
301-427-8540



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