Requests for Regulatory Changes

Presented to the HMS Advisory Panel

May 2017
Background

- HMS Management Division staff have received a variety of requests on a wide range of topics over the last several months/years.
- This presentation tries to capture this input from:
  - HMS AP members (during & outside meetings)
  - Regional Fishery Management Councils
  - Commercial and recreational fishermen & groups
  - Interested members of the public
- It is a summary for discussion purposes and not a comprehensive list.
Requests for Regulatory Changes: Pelagic Longline

Overarching:
• Revise or remove regulations impacting ability to catch swordfish quota
• Increase equity in requirements for all commercial categories

Individual Bluefin Quota (IBQ)-specific:
• Revise IBQ accountability (e.g., end of year/quarterly/other vs. trip-level) to increase flexibility
• Allow carryover of IBQ balance at the end of the year to increase flexibility
• Revisit/remove GRA performance criteria
• Provide flexibility for disaster sets
• Reallocate quota shares/revise IBQ share tier allocations
Requests for Regulatory Change: PLL cont

Non-IBQ:

• Revise/remove time/area closures to increase access to fishing grounds, especially access to Charleston Bump
• Remove June Northeast Closure as redundant with IBQ requirements
• Revise/remove weak hook requirements in the Gulf of Mexico
• Reduce observer requirements
• Revisit the Draft A7 alternative to allow access to closed areas when an observer is onboard
• Allow EM hard drives to be sent in periodically (vs each trip)
• Support access to Windward Passage
• Support rebranding of fishery
• Revisit/remove demersal vs pelagic indicator spp for closed area monitoring
• Reduce number of different places dealers have to report bluefin landings (IBQ vs SAFIS)
Requests for Regulatory Changes: Bluefin

Harpoon category:

- Modify large medium (73-<81") BFT daily retention limit inseason so that it is equivalent to General category limit) *(current range 2-4; would require a change so that range maximum is 5, like for General category)*

- Change start date to May 1 *(from June 1)*; do not manage via season open/close dates

- Others?
Requests for Regulatory Changes: Bluefin

General category:
- Modify subquota allocations; allow fishing of “January” subquota until met (vs. March 31); do not manage by seasons/subquotas
- To reduce post-release mortality:
  - Prohibit use of treble hook lures or implement lure size limit
  - Establish minimum line sizes
  - Establish minimum size reel and rod combinations
  - Require single barbless hooks
  - Establish a maximum number of releases
  - Establish maximum fight times
  - Others?
Requests for Regulatory Changes: Charter/Headboat

- Create two Charter/Headboat (CHB) permits - one that allows for sale of HMS and one that does not allow for sale of HMS - to address USCG commercial fishing vessel safety exam requirements

- Authorize use of harpoon gear on CHB-permitted vessels to increase utilization of CHB vessels (currently authorized only for General and Harpoon category-permitted vessels; NMFS proposed but did not finalize a similar request in 2008)

- Others?
Requests for Regulatory Changes: Purse Seine

- Reallocate quota of non-fishing participants to other categories *(currently can lease to PS and PLL)*

- Allow permanent sale of quota by Purse Seine participants *(vs. limited to leasing)*

- Reconsider viability of this gear type for bluefin tuna

- Others?
Requests for Regulatory Changes: Shark

- Allow recreational landing of sharks on Atlantic tunas General category-permitted vessels (currently must have an HMS Angling or CHB category permit)
- Change commercial fishery closure trigger to 90%
- Allow large shark carcasses to be cut in half, particularly in the commercial fishery, to allow for sharks to fit into hold fully
- Remove species (e.g., bignose, night) from prohibited species list
- Allow sandbar shark quota to be fully used; Provide sandbar shark retention limit to entire fleet
- Allow shark retention under the Caribbean Small Boat Permit, especially Caribbean reef and sharpnose sharks
- Others?
Requests for Regulatory Changes: Swordfish

- Remove upgrading restrictions for Swordfish Handgear Limited Access permits

- Increase retention limit for Swordfish General Commercial Permit in the Florida Swordfish Management Area

- Increase swordfish retention under the Caribbean Small Boat Permit

- Others?
Requests for Regulatory Changes: Billfish

- Require circle hooks when fishing for billfish with natural
  natural/artificial baits all the times (not just in tournaments)

- Remove the circle hook/bait requirement for billfish
  tournaments

- Others?
Requests for Regulatory Change: General

• Allow use of bait nets

• Allow filleting at sea of bigeye and albacore tunas

• Revisit policy of requiring researchers to be on board as condition of Exempted Fishing Permits

• Others?
Questions? Comments?