

**Southwest Region Bycatch Implementation Plan Action Items (FY09 and FY10) and Accomplishments (FY08)**

Action Item	Status/Specific Accomplishments 2008	Plan Action Items 2009	Plan Action Items 2010	How Progress Will Be Measured and/or Monitored	Milestone (Outcome)	Milestone Completion Date
<b>Standardization and enhancement of bycatch reporting methodologies, including data collection and monitoring</b>						
The Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP) should be amended to explicitly establish a standardized reporting methodology.	Observer program ended due to lack of funds.	Resume observer program if funds are available.	Resume observer program if funds are available.	Review by Pacific Fishery Management Council and NMFS.	Establish standardized methodology in the FMP capable of reporting precise and accurate bycatch estimates.	Future
A pilot at-sea-observer program in California to supplement and confirm the bycatch assessments derived from dock-side sampling conducted by the State of California should be a component of a standardized reporting methodology.	Observer program ended due to lack of funds.	Resume observer program if funds are available.	Resume observer program if funds are available.	Evaluate bycatch data collected.	Enhance bycatch estimates.	Future
NMFS should continue its efforts, through its support of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) and international agreements, to ensure that bycatch by U.S. and other Nations flag vessels is accurately reported.	A. Consolidated Resolution on Bycatch - Extension ended January 2008 for full retention of juvenile tunas. B. Resolution on the Conservation of Sharks Caught in Association with Fisheries in the Eastern Pacific Ocean. C. Resolution on Incidental Mortality of Seabirds. D. Resolution to Mitigate the Impact of Tuna Fishing Vessels on Sea Turtles. B, C and D - Reviewed at the 2008 annual meeting of the IATTC. Alleged violations were compiled by the IATTC Secretariat and submitted to the IATTC Permanent Working Group on Compliance and referred to nations for action(s). C. A revised Resolution regarding the Incidental Mortality of Seabirds was introduced at the 2008 annual meeting of the IATTC by the United States and Spain. It was not adopted.	A. Extension ended January 2008 for full retention of juvenile tunas. No action. B., C., and D. Review at the next IATTC Annual Meeting in 2009 and the IATTC Permanent Working Group on Compliance. Also, for D. a special technical meeting on seabirds will be held May 2009.	A. Extension ended January 2008 for full retention of juvenile tunas. No action. B., C., and D. Review at the IATTC Annual Meeting in 2010 and the IATTC Permanent Working Group on Compliance.	A. Review of Annual Report. B. Review of Annual Report. C. Review of Annual Report. D. Review of Annual Report. A, B, C, and D are also reviewed at the IATTC Permanent Working Group on Compliance. Alleged violations are compiled by the IATTC Secretariat and submitted to the IATTC Permanent Working Group on Compliance and referred to nations for action(s).	A. The resolution continues to require full retention of non-target species of fish, and provides for a review of compliance on the full retention measure (by flag state or entity). B. Resolution on the Conservation of Sharks (C-05-03). C. Resolution on Incidental Mortality of Seabirds (C-05-01). D. Resolution to Mitigate the Impact of Tuna Fishing Vessels on Sea Turtles (C-07-03).	September, 2009

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Drift gillnet (DGN) observer coverage should be maintained at 20%.	Drift gillnet coverage fell to ~16% due to lack of funds.	Maintain drift gillnet observer coverage at 20%.	Maintain drift gillnet observer coverage at 20%.	Maintain 20% observer coverage.	Produce accurate bycatch estimates.	September, 2009
The Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC) should prepare reports which include estimates of the total bycatch of finfish in the DGN fishery, as well as estimates of precision associated with measures of sea turtle and finfish bycatch.	Completed California/Oregon (CA/OR) drift gillnet section of National Bycatch Report.	Publish first version of National Bycatch Report.		CA/OR drift gillnet fishery bycatch estimates included in National Bycatch Report.	Reporting of finfish and protected species bycatch estimates for CA/OR drift gillnet fishery.	September, 2009
<b>Research needs</b>						
Continue research on the effects of purse seine encirclement on dolphin populations in the Eastern Tropical Pacific (ETP).	STAR (Stenella Abundance Research) cruises postponed until 2009.	Conduct STAR cruises.	Conduct STAR cruises.	Results of the research studies will be analyzed and reported.	Complete four-month ETP monitoring cruise.	September, 2009
Conduct quantification and trend studies of finfish bycatch in the DGN fishery. Characterize size composition of fish bycatch species in DGN fishery.	Completed CA/OR drift gillnet section of National Bycatch Report.	Publish National Bycatch Report.		Quarterly and Annual Reports to SWFSC and Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) management and advisory teams.	Increased accuracy of bycatch reporting in the DGN fishery.	September, 2009
Characterize habitat and spatial and temporal dynamics of different life stages of various bycatch species, so avoidance techniques or possible area closures could be developed.	Continued observing drift gillnet, set gillnet, pelagic longline, and coastal purse seine fisheries. Collecting measurements from all Highly Migratory Species (HMS) FMP managed species observed caught.	Continue observing drift gillnet and longline fisheries.	Continue observing drift gillnet and longline fisheries. Expand to other fisheries if funded.	Quarterly and Annual Reports to SWFSC and PFMC management and advisory teams.	Reduced bycatch and bycatch mortality.	Ongoing

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Conduct a feasibility study on implementing Performance Standards. This system would reward fishers for decreasing their bycatch and/or bycatch mortality.	Longline Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) was not approved this year.	Conduct longline EFP if approved.		Quarterly and Annual Reports to SWFSC and PFMC management and advisory teams.	Shift fishing effort to more selective gear types.	Ongoing
In addition to conducting studies of the socio-economic effects of effort reduction programs, the effects on bycatch should also be considered.	Longline EFP was not approved this year.	Conduct longline EFP if approved.		Quarterly and Annual Reports to SWFSC and PFMC management and advisory teams.	Incorporate effects of effort reduction programs on bycatch into analysis of management actions for the DGN fishery.	Ongoing
Determine the effects of removals by U.S. fishing vessels of adult and sub-adult leatherback and loggerhead turtles on the reproductive capacity of the respective populations in the Pacific Ocean.	Section 7 consultation completed on EFP for shallow set longline fishing (one vessel) in the U.S. EEZ -- no jeopardy determination for leatherbacks.	Section 7 consultation on Amendment 2 to the HMS FMP, which may authorize shallow set longline fishing outside of the EEZ.		Section 7 consultations and informal consultations.	Pacific Ocean fisheries do not jeopardize the continued existence of loggerhead and leatherback sea turtles.	September, 2009
Explore options for providing NMFS Enforcement with the means for unobtrusive monitoring of pinger compliance at sea (e.g., hydrophones).	Revising regulations to allow for dockside inspection of pingers.	Publish final rule authorizing dockside pinger inspection.		At-sea and dockside inspection of DGN vessels for pinger compliance.	Increased enforcement of pinger regulations.	September, 2009

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Characterize the migratory pathways of leatherback and loggerhead turtles in the Pacific Ocean, especially during El Niño years.	Completed LUTH (Leatherback Use of Temperate Habitat) cruise, documenting leatherback sea turtle distribution and abundance off of California. SWFSC also conducted satellite tagging studies of leatherbacks to determine their migratory pathways. Conducted SLUTH (Swordfish and Leatherback use of Temperate Habitat) workshop involving fishers, researchers and managers to understand the overlap of swordfish fisheries and leatherback turtles and develop ways to reduce leatherback bycatch and bycatch mortality.	Continue LUTH cruises and leatherback tagging studies.	Continue LUTH cruises and leatherback tagging studies.	By completion of the survey annually.	Reduced bycatch and bycatch mortality of leatherback and loggerhead sea turtles in Pacific Ocean fisheries.	Ongoing
Determine the effects of removals by U.S. fishing operations on Pacific populations of blue and shortfin mako shark.	Conducted a fishery-independent longline survey for juvenile shortfin mako and blue sharks in the Southern California Bight.	Conduct a fishery-independent longline survey for juvenile shortfin mako and blue sharks in the Southern California Bight, if shiptime is available.	Conduct a fishery-independent longline survey for juvenile shortfin mako and blue sharks in the Southern California Bight, if shiptime is available.	By completion of the survey annually.	Database updated and cruise report produced detailing the survey results including a time series of the nominal catch-per-unit-effort for shortfin mako and blue sharks.	September, 2009
Review the efficiency of DGN sampling rate (observer coverage) for estimating DGN finfish and other non-turtle and marine mammal bycatch to determine whether enough samples being collected given the variability.	Drift gillnet coverage fell to ~16% due to lack of funds.	Maintain at least 20% observer coverage in DGN fishery, increase coverage if funding allows.	Maintain at least 20% observer coverage in DGN fishery, increase coverage if funding allows.	Increased observer coverage if recommended.	Accurate bycatch estimates of rare and sensitive species.	September, 2009
<b>Education and outreach efforts</b>						

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<p>Educate the public about the new stand-alone URL (<a href="http://www.DolphinSafe.Gov">www.DolphinSafe.Gov</a>) for the Tuna Tracking &amp; Verification Program (TTVP). The site includes agency policy and documentary requirements for the industry.</p>	<p>March 2008 - At the Fred Hall Boat Show, discussed the TTVP and website with members of the public. June 2008 - NOAA World article discussed recent collaboration with National Weather Service on the TTVP's spot check audit. Website updated with results. August 2008 - Article on the TTVP and website published in the National Customs Brokers &amp; Forwarders Association of America's (NCBFAA) monthly newsletter. September 2008 - Webinar on the TTVP and website offered as part of the NCBFAA's Educational Institute's Certified Customs Specialist Certification Program.</p>	<p>The TTVP plans to continue to broaden outreach by contacting importer and customs broker associations and providing them with pertinent TTVP information. Also, opportunity to promote TTVP details via the news media, related industry seminars, NMFS Training Classes, and public education events will be taken advantage of.</p>	<p>Promote TTVP details via the news media, related industry seminars, NMFS Training Classes, and public education events.</p>	<p>Noting how many association listserves or newsletters contain TTVP information as well as counting how many media outlets, trade seminars, or public education events were provided with TTVP information.</p>	<p>TTVP website press release and education outreach to the general public and trade industry.</p>	<p>September, 2009</p>
<p>Continue skipper workshops for participants in the large vessel ETP purse seine fishery.</p>	<p>Two workshops were offered but cancelled due to lack of interest.</p>	<p>Workshops will be conducted as needed. Continue with format that also fulfills the requirements for the U.S. ETP operator's permit and for captains to be included on the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP) qualified captain's list.</p>	<p>Workshops will be conducted as needed. Continue with format that also fulfills the requirements for the U.S. ETP operator's permit and for captains to be included on the AIDCP qualified captain's list.</p>	<p>Workshops completed.</p>	<p>Conduct three workshops (April, August, and December).</p>	<p>September, 2009</p>
<p>Develop and conduct skipper workshops as needed for West Coast HMS fisheries (e.g., surface hook-and-line fishery and small purse seine fishery).</p>	<p>A series of four outreach meetings were held in 2008 at major HMS recreational fishing harbors and marinas in southern California, including one each in Newport Beach and Oceanside and two in San Diego. Planned meetings in the Pacific Northwest ports were cancelled due to budget constraints.</p>	<p>Conduct HMS port meetings in all three West Coast States pending sufficient funding allocation in budget.</p>	<p>Conduct HMS port meetings in all three West Coast States pending sufficient funding allocation in budget.</p>	<p>Workshops completed.</p>	<p>West Coast HMS fishers are kept informed of current fishery regulations and potential future management measures.</p>	<p>September, 2009</p>

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<p>Increase efforts to educate the public about effective catch-and-release methodologies and gear innovations to increase post-release survivorship in HMS, including tunas, sharks, and billfish. With lead from SWFSC, assist with initiation of an angler-based shark tagging program encompassing, among other things, a strong outreach and education element to inform the public of the life history, population status, and conservation measures for HMS sharks (e.g., common thresher, short-fin mako, and blue sharks).</p>	<p>The research team from Pflieger Institute of Environmental Research and NMFS successfully deployed 12 pop-up satellite archival tags (PSATs) on rod and reel captured thresher sharks during the 2008 field season. The information gathered proved useful in on-going PFMC deliberations pertaining to thresher shark conservation and management efforts. A manuscript is being developed with submission to a peer-reviewed journal slated for FY 2009.</p>	<p>The research team has submitted a proposal for continued PSAT tagging of sport caught thresher shark to the Bycatch Reduction Engineering Program. The proposal includes a first season of gear testing research to investigate the feasibility of switching from J-hook to circle-hook for this fishery. Additional port meetings will be held to continue with outreach and education elements underway such as best catch-and-release practices for increasing survivorship.</p>		<p>Results from the study will be published in a peer reviewed journal(s) and will be disseminated via popular media outlets (e.g., Pacific Sportfishing Magazine and Western Outdoor News). Results and conservation measures, including best practices for successful catch-and-release angling, will be posted on the Southwest Region website.</p>	<p>A documented increase in the post-release survivorship of sport-caught thresher sharks. If warranted, development of additional conservation measures, including regulatory measures, to manage HMS in a sustainable manner.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>