



# MARINE MAMMALS AND COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

Minimizing Bycatch through Collaboration

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/interactions/trt>



## MARINE MAMMAL TAKE REDUCTION PLANNING

### Why Take Reduction Planning?

- The U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy declared bycatch as the largest threat currently facing marine mammals in the United States.
- The Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) mandates NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to develop and implement Take Reduction Plans for preventing the depletion and assisting in the recovery of certain marine mammal stocks that are seriously injured or killed in commercial fisheries.

### The Planning Process

- NMFS convenes Take Reduction Teams, composed of stakeholders, that make recommendations for reducing serious injury and deaths (bycatch) to acceptable levels.
- The Teams design each Plan to reduce bycatch within a specific timeframe through a combination of voluntary and regulatory measures implemented by NMFS.

### Goals, Assessments, and Reevaluation

Under the MMPA, each Plan must be developed so that:

- Bycatch rates are below the stock's Potential Biological Removal Level within 6 months, and
- Bycatch is reduced to insignificant levels approaching a zero serious injury and mortality rate within 5 years.

## TAKE REDUCTION TEAMS

### PACIFIC OCEAN

#### Pacific Offshore Cetacean (<http://go.usa.gov/kVF>)

- Marine Mammals: West coast beaked, short-finned pilot, pygmy sperm, sperm, and humpback whales, and northern right whale dolphins
- Fisheries: California drift gillnet
- Key Measures: Minimum set depths, pinger requirements, and educational workshops
- ✓ **Status:** Bycatch for beaked and pygmy sperm whales has been reduced to insignificant levels

#### False Killer Whale (<http://go.usa.gov/kVM>)

- Marine Mammals: Hawaii pelagic, Hawaii insular, and Palmyra Atoll false killer whales
- Fisheries: Hawaii deep-set and shallow-set longline targeting tuna and swordfish
- Key Measures: Proposed use of weak circle hooks, time/area closures, and handling and release procedures
- ✓ **Status:** NMFS is developing the final Plan based on comments on the draft 2011 Plan and will begin monitoring once it is implemented



## NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

### OFFICE OF PROTECTED RESOURCES

The Office of Protected Resources works to conserve, protect, and recover species through research, management, and education.

*Teams continued on reverse*



## TAKE REDUCTION TEAMS

### ATLANTIC OCEAN

#### Atlantic Large Whale (<http://go.usa.gov/ldN>)

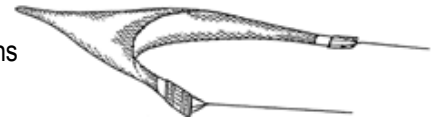
- Marine Mammals: North Atlantic right, humpback, and fin whales
- Fisheries: U.S. East coast trap/pot and gillnet
- Key Measures: Gear modifications, marking requirements, and time/area closures
- ✓ **Status:** Amendments to the 2008 Plan are under development



Trap or pot

#### Atlantic Trawl Gear (<http://go.usa.gov/kVA>)

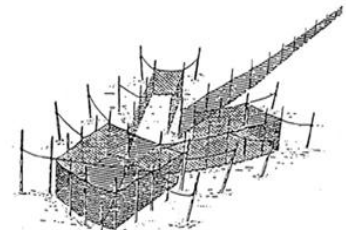
- Marine Mammals: White-sided dolphins, common dolphins, short-finned pilot whales, and long-finned pilot whales
- Fisheries: Northeast and Mid-Atlantic mid-water and bottom trawls
- Key Measures: Voluntarily minimizing tow times and increasing radio communications
- ✓ **Status:** The Team has developed a strategy for monitoring bycatch and conducting priority research and outreach activities



Trawl

#### Bottlenose Dolphin (<http://go.usa.gov/kVs>)

- Marine Mammals: Atlantic coastal bottlenose dolphins
- Fisheries: North Carolina – inshore gillnet, long haul seine, roe mullet stop net; Southeast Atlantic – gillnet; Mid-Atlantic – haul/beach seine, coastal gillnet, blue crab trap/pot; Virginia pound net
- Key Measures: seasonal gillnet restrictions, gear proximity requirements, and gear length restrictions
- ✓ **Status:** The 2006 Plan was amended in 2009, with further changes under development



Pound net

#### Harbor Porpoise (<http://go.usa.gov/kV6>)

- Marine Mammals: Gulf of Maine/Bay of Fundy harbor porpoises
- Fisheries: Northeast sink gillnet and Mid-Atlantic gillnet
- Key Measures: Pinger use, time/area closures, and gear modification requirements
- ✓ **Status:** The short-term goal was initially achieved and additional conservation measures were implemented in 2010



Gillnet

#### Pelagic Longline (<http://go.usa.gov/kVt>)

- Marine Mammals: Short- and long-finned pilot whales and Risso's dolphins
- Fisheries: Atlantic pelagic longline
- Key Measures: Handling and release procedures, mainline length restrictions, and a special research area
- ✓ **Status:** NMFS is monitoring and assessing the 2009 Plan



Longline



**Contact the Office of Protected Resources for more information**

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/>