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LONGMAN'S BEAKED WHALE (*Indopacetus pacificus*): Hawaii Stock

STOCK DEFINITION AND GEOGRAPHIC RANGE

Longman's beaked whale is considered one of the least known cetacean species (Jefferson et al. 1993; Rice 1998; Dalebout et al. 2003). Until recently, it was known only from two skulls found in Australia and Somalia (Longman 1926; Azzaroli 1968). Recent genetic studies (Dalebout et al. 2003) have revealed that sightings of 'tropical bottlenose whales' (*Hyperoodon* sp.; Pitman et al. 1999) in the Indo-Pacific region were in fact Longman's beaked whales, providing the first description of the external appearance of this species. Although originally described as *Mesoplodon pacificus* (Longman 1926), it has been proposed that this species is sufficiently unique to be placed within its own genus, *Indopacetus* (Moore 1968; Dalebout et al. 2003). The distribution of Longman's beaked whale, as determined from stranded specimens and sighting records of 'tropical bottlenose whales', includes tropical waters from the eastern Pacific westward through the Indian Ocean to the eastern coast of Africa. A single stranding of Longman's beaked whale has been reported in Hawaii, in 2010 near Hana, Maui (West et al. 2012), and there was a single sighting off Kona over 13 years of nearshore surveys off the leeward waters of the main Hawaiian Islands (Baird et al. 2013). Summer/fall shipboard surveys of the waters within the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the Hawaiian Islands, resulted in one sighting in 2002 and three in 2010 (Barlow 2006, Bradford et al. 2013; Figure 1).

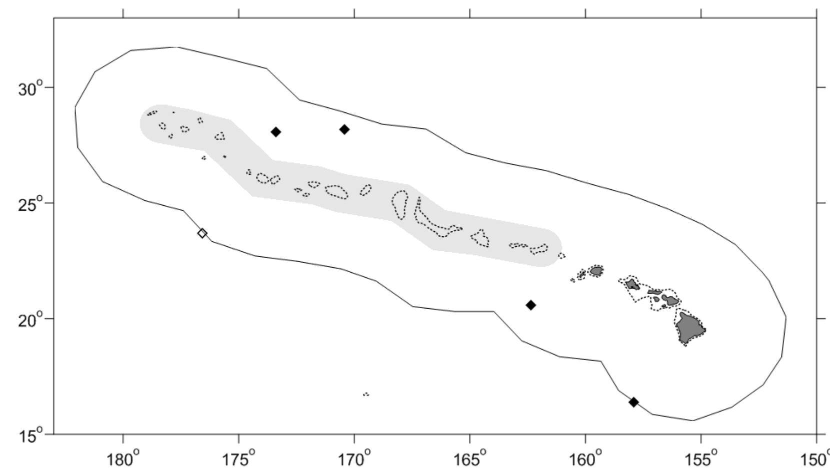

Figure 1. Sighting locations of Longman's beaked whale during the 2002 (open diamond) and 2010 (black diamonds) shipboard cetacean surveys of U.S. waters surrounding the Hawaiian Islands (Barlow 2006, Bradford et al. 2013; see Appendix 2 for details on timing and location of survey effort). Outer line indicates approximate boundary of survey area and U.S. EEZ. Gray shading indicates area of Papahanaumokuakea Marine National Monument. Dotted line represents the 1000m isobath.

For the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) stock assessment reports, there is one Pacific stock of Longman's beaked whales, found within waters of the Hawaiian Islands EEZ. This stock includes animals found both within the Hawaiian Islands EEZ and in adjacent high seas waters; however, because data on abundance, distribution, and human-caused impacts are largely lacking for high seas waters, the status of this stock is evaluated based on data from U.S. EEZ waters of the Hawaiian Islands (NMFS 2005).

POPULATION SIZE

A 2002 shipboard line-transect survey of the entire Hawaiian Islands EEZ resulted in an abundance estimate of 1,007 (CV=1.25) Longman's beaked whales (Barlow 2006). The recent 2010 shipboard line-transect survey of the Hawaiian Islands EEZ resulted in an abundance estimate of 4,571 (CV = 0.65) Longman's beaked whales (Bradford et al 2013). This is currently the best available abundance estimate for this stock.

Minimum Population Estimate

The minimum population size is calculated as the lower 20th percentile of the log-normal distribution (Barlow et al 1995) around the 2010 abundance estimate, or 2,773 Longman's beaked whales within the Hawaiian Islands EEZ.

Current Population Trend

The increase in the abundance estimate for the 2010 survey versus the 2002 survey is attributed primarily to use of beaufort sea states 0-5 in 2010 versus 0-2 in the 2002 when estimating the trackline detection probability, resulting in significantly less extrapolation to unsurveyed areas in 2010 (Bradford et al. 2013). This change in analysis methodology precludes evaluation of population trend at this time.

CURRENT AND MAXIMUM NET PRODUCTIVITY RATES

No data are available on current or maximum net productivity rate for Longman's beaked whales.

POTENTIAL BIOLOGICAL REMOVAL

The potential biological removal (PBR) level for this stock is calculated as the minimum population size within the U.S. EEZ of the Hawaiian Islands (2,773) times one half the default maximum net growth rate for cetaceans (½ of 4%) times a recovery factor of 0.50 (for a stock of unknown status with no known fishery mortality or serious injury within the Hawaiian Islands EEZ; Wade and Angliss 1997), resulting in a PBR of 28 Longman's beaked whales per year.

HUMAN CAUSED MORTALITY AND SERIOUS INJURY

New Serious Injury Guidelines

NMFS updated its serious injury designation and reporting process, which uses guidance from previous serious injury workshops, expert opinion, and analysis of historic injury cases to develop new criteria for distinguishing serious from non-serious injury (Angliss and DeMaster 1998, Andersen et al. 2008, NOAA 2012). NMFS defines serious injury as an "*injury that is more likely than not to result in mortality*". Injury determinations for stock assessments revised in 2013 or later incorporate the new serious injury guidelines, based on the most recent 5-year period for which data are available.

Fishery Information

Information on fishery-related mortality and serious injury of cetaceans in Hawaiian waters is limited, but the gear types used in Hawaiian fisheries are responsible for marine mammal mortality and serious injury in other fisheries throughout U.S. waters. No interactions between nearshore fisheries and Longman's beaked whales have been reported in Hawaiian waters. No estimates of human-caused mortality or serious injury are currently available for nearshore hook and line fisheries because these fisheries are not observed or monitored for protected species bycatch. There are currently two distinct longline fisheries based in Hawaii: a deep-set longline (DSLL) fishery that targets primarily tunas, and a shallow-set longline fishery (SSLL) that targets swordfish. Both fisheries operate within U.S. waters and on the high seas. Between 2007 and 2011, no Longman's beaked whales were observed hooked or entangled in the SSLL fishery (100% observer coverage) or the DSLL fishery (20-22% observer coverage) (McCracken 2013, Bradford & Forney 2013). However, eight unidentified cetaceans, which may have included Longman's beaked whales, were taken in the DSLL fishery, and two unidentified cetaceans, one unidentified Mesoplodon, and one unidentified beaked whale, which may have included Longman's beaked whales, were taken in the SSLL fishery.

Other Mortality

Anthropogenic sound sources, such as military sonar and seismic testing have been implicated in the mass strandings of beaked whales, including atypical events involving multiple beaked whale species (Simmonds and Lopez-Jurado 1991, Frantiz 1998, Anon. 2001, Jepson et al. 2003, Cox et al. 2006). While D'Amico et al. (2009) note that most mass strandings of beaked whales are unassociated with documented sonar activities, lethal or sub-lethal effects of such activities would rarely be documented, due to the remote nature of such activities and the low probability that an injured or dead beaked whale would strand. Filadelpho et al. (2009) reported statistically significant correlations between military sonar use and mass strandings of beaked whales in the Mediterranean and Caribbean Seas, but not in Japanese and Southern California waters, and hypothesized that regions with steep bathymetry adjacent to coastlines are more conducive to stranding events in the presence of sonar use. In Hawaiian waters, Faerber & Baird (2010) suggest that the probability of stranding is lower than in some other regions due to nearshore currents carrying animals away from beaches, and that stranded animals are less likely to be detected due to low human population density near many of Hawaii's beaches. Actual and simulated sonar are known to interrupt the foraging dives and echolocation activities of tagged beaked whales (Tyack et al. 2011, DeRuiter et al. 2013). Cuvier's beaked whales tagged and tracked during simulated mid-frequency sonar exposure showed avoidance reactions, including prolonged diving, cessation of echolocation click production associated with foraging, and directional travel away from the simulated sonar source (DeRuiter et al. 2013). Blainville's beaked whale presence was monitored on hydrophone arrays before, during, and after sonar activities on a Caribbean military range, with evidence of avoidance behavior: whales were detected throughout the range prior to sonar exposure, not detected in the center of the range coincident with highest sonar use, and gradually returned to the range center after the cessation of sonar activity (Tyack et al. 2011). Fernández et al. (2013) report that there have been no mass strandings of beaked whales in the Canary Islands following a 2004 ban on sonar activities in that region. The absence of beaked whale bycatch in California drift gillnets following the introduction of acoustic pingers into the fishery implies additional sensitivity of beaked whales to anthropogenic sound (Carretta et al. 2008, Carretta and Barlow 2011). No estimates of potential mortality or serious injury are available for U.S. waters.

STATUS OF STOCK

The Hawaii stock of Longman's beaked whales is not considered strategic under the 1994 amendments to the MMPA. The status of Longman's beaked whales in Hawaiian waters relative to OSP is unknown, and there are insufficient data to evaluate trends in abundance. Longmans' beaked whales are not listed as "threatened" or "endangered" under the Endangered Species Act (1973), nor designated as "depleted" under the MMPA. Given the absence of recent recorded fishery-related mortality or serious injuries, the total fishery mortality and serious injury can be considered to be insignificant and approaching zero. The impacts of anthropogenic sound on beaked whales remain a concern (Barlow and Gisiner 2006, Cox et al. 2006, Hildebrand et al. 2005, Weilgart 2007). The first confirmed case of *morbillivirus* in a Hawaiian cetacean was found in a subadult Longman's beaked whale stranded on Maui in 2010 (West et al. 2012). The presence of *morbillivirus* in 10 species of cetacean in Hawaiian waters, including all 3 known species of beaked whales (Jacob 2012), raises concerns about the history and prevalence of this disease in Hawaii and the potential population impacts on Hawaii cetaceans.

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