



## NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE: Southwest Region



The Southwest Region is responsible for the conservation and management of marine species found off the coast of California in the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone. These waters include the U.S. portion of the California Coastal Current Large Marine Ecosystem, known as one of the most productive coastal upwelling areas of the world. This nutrient-rich environment supports a diversity of marine life as well as a variety of healthy commercial and recreational fisheries.

## The National Bycatch Report: Southwest Region

Reducing fisheries bycatch is a top priority for NOAA Fisheries and is required under guiding legislation and international laws. Monitoring and reducing fisheries bycatch promotes healthy marine ecosystems and the best use of the nation's living marine resources. NOAA Fisheries new report, the National Bycatch Report, provides bycatch estimates by fishery and species for each of the six NOAA Fisheries Regions. The Pacific Fishery Management Council, in conjunction with NOAA Fisheries, is responsible for managing fisheries in the Southwest Region.

### Southwest Region Fast Facts

- 25 commercial fisheries (federal, state, tribal, and international) are included in this report for the Southwest Region.
- 4 fishery management plans regulate the harvest of federally managed species in the Southwest Region.
- Landings from all California commercial fisheries included in the report were valued at approximately \$116 million in 2005.
- Observer programs have historically monitored up to 10 of the 25 fisheries.
- Protected species (marine mammals, seabirds, and sea turtles) bycatch estimates were available for 3 fisheries and 9 species/groups in 2005.
- Fish bycatch estimates were not available for the Southwest Region when this report was developed (estimates will be included in the next edition of the National Bycatch Report).

### Southwest Region Bycatch Reduction Success Stories

- Use of acoustic pingers in the California/Oregon drift gillnet fishery has reduced cetacean (whales, dolphin, and porpoises) bycatch by approximately 50% since pinger use began in 1996. There have been no observed beaked whales taken since the use of pingers was mandated through implementation of the Pacific Offshore Cetacean Take Reduction Plan in 1997
- Time and area closures are used in regional gillnet fisheries to protect leatherback and loggerhead sea turtles.
- Designation of a cowcod conservation area in California has successfully reduced bycatch and allowing rebuilding of cowcod, an overfished rockfish.



View the complete National Bycatch Report at: [www.nmfs.noaa.gov/bycatch.htm](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/bycatch.htm)