

DOLPHIN WAHOO COMMITTEE
JEKYLL ISLAND, GA
March 3, 2009

The committee reviewed measures currently in the Dolphin Wahoo FMP. Dolphin has not been managed with an ABC/TAC/quota management program. Regulations include a commercial “soft” cap of 1.5 million pounds or 13% of total landings, whichever is greater, recreational bag limit of 10 dolphin per person per day in or from the EEZ not to exceed 60 dolphin per boat per day whichever is less, headboats (with a valid certificate of inspections) are allowed a bag limit of 10 dolphin per paying passenger, a prohibition on sale of recreationally caught dolphin except that for-hire vessels that possess the necessary state and Federal commercial permits may sell dolphin, and a minimum size limit for dolphin of 20 inches fork length off Florida and Georgia and no minimum size limit north of Georgia. Therefore, an amendment will need to be prepared to set ACL and AM (and other actions) for dolphin.

Wahoo have not been managed with an ABC/TAC/quota management program. Regulations include a commercial trip limit (landed head and tail intact) of 500 pounds with no transfer at sea allowed, a recreational bag limit of 2 wahoo per person per day in the Atlantic EEZ, allowable gear, and a prohibition on sale of recreationally caught wahoo in or from the Atlantic EEZ. Therefore, an amendment will need to be prepared to set ACL and AM (and other actions) for wahoo. The committee talked in some detail about the minimum size limit and the prohibition on bag limit sales of dolphin in the for-hire sector. Council staff then presented an overview of the scoping comments.

The committee reviewed the species in the fishery management unit which consist of dolphin and wahoo and these two species will need to have ACLs and AMs specified. In terms of timing, guidance has been provided by NMFS and NOAA GC that the amendment containing these values should be implemented during fishing year 2011, which is the calendar year for dolphin and wahoo, to meet the deadline specified in the Reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Act.

The committee approved the following motions:

MOTION #1: RECOMMEND COUNCIL PURSUE INCLUDING DOLPHIN AND WAHOO IN THE COMPREHENSIVE ACL AMENDMENT TO ADDRESS NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR ACLS AND AMS AND EVALUATE PROHIBITING BAG LIMIT SALES OF DOLPHIN FROM FOR-HIRE VESSELS AND ESTABLISHING MINIMUM SIZE LIMITS FOR DOLPHIN OFF NC & SC
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

MOTION #2: EVALUATE THE PROHIBITION ON BAG LIMIT SALES OF DOLPHIN FROM FOR-HIRE VESSELS AND ESTABLISHING A MINIMUM SIZE LIMIT FOR DOLPHIN IN THE MID-ATLANTIC AND NEW ENGLAND AREAS.
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

MOTION #3: DIRECT STAFF TO DEVELOP A DETAILED DECISION DOCUMENT EVALUATING ACLS, AMS, BAG LIMIT SALE PROHIBITION, AND SIZE LIMIT FOR USE AT THE JUNE 2009 MEETING
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE