

FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT
DOLPHIN WAHOO COMMITTEE
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Jekyll Island, GA
March 4, 2019

The Committee approved minutes from the December 2018 meeting and the agenda.

Status of Commercial Catches versus ACLs

NMFS Southeast Regional Office (SERO) staff delivered briefings to the Committee on the status of commercial landings of dolphin and wahoo relative to ACLs as of 02/26/19. The commercial sector was not close to reaching the sector ACLs for either species.

Amendment 10 (Revise Dolphin and Wahoo Management Measures)

The amendment would accommodate revised recreational data from the Marine Recreational Information Program, redefine optimum yield in the dolphin fishery, accommodate adaptive management of sector annual catch limits, and implement various other management revisions in the dolphin wahoo fishery. At the December 2018 meeting, the Committee directed staff to begin work again on the amendment after being suspended since March 2017 due to anticipated revised recreational data. The Committee provided the following guidance and made the following motions:

GUIDANCE:

- Apply catch level recommendations to actions as appropriate when available.
- In Action 9, include sub-alternatives to accommodate the following gears:
 - American lobster traps
 - Spiny lobster pots
 - Stone crab pots
 - Black sea bass pots
- Include information on HACCP training that may be required for for-hire vessel operators or crew if bag limit sales are allowed.
- Bring back information on adding buoy gear to the list of allowable gears.

MOTION #1: ASK THE SSC TO CONSIDER MONROE COUNTY RECREATIONAL LANDINGS WHEN MAKING CATCH LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DOLPHIN AND WAHOO.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #2: REMOVE ACTION 1 FROM AMENDMENT 10.

Action 1. Revise acceptable biological catches (ABCs), annual catch limits (ACLs), and annual catch targets (ACTs) for dolphin and wahoo.

Alternative 1 (No Action). ~~Acceptable biological catches, annual catch limits, and annual catch targets for dolphin and wahoo are based on data from the commercial accumulated~~

landings system, NMFS headboat survey, and Marine Recreational Information Program using the Coastal Household Telephone Survey method. ~~The ABC=ACL.~~

~~**Alternative 2.** Revise acceptable biological catches, annual catch limits, and annual catch targets for dolphin and wahoo with landings from the commercial accumulated landings system, NMFS headboat survey, and Marine Recreational Information Program using the Fishery Effort Survey method. The ABC=ACL.~~

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #3: REMOVE ALTERNATIVES 3 AND 4 FROM ACTION 9.

Action 9. Allow properly permitted commercial fishing vessels with gear onboard that are not authorized for use in the dolphin wahoo fishery to possess dolphin and wahoo.

Alternative 1 (No Action). The following are the only authorized commercial gear types in the fisheries for dolphin and wahoo in the Atlantic EEZ: Automatic reel, bandit gear, handline, pelagic longline, rod and reel, and spearfishing gear (including powerheads). A person aboard a vessel in the Atlantic EEZ that has on board gear types other than authorized gear types may not possess a dolphin or wahoo.

Alternative 2. A vessel in the Atlantic EEZ that possesses both an Atlantic Dolphin/Wahoo Commercial Permit and a valid Federal commercial American lobster permit endorsed for trap fishing only is authorized to target dolphin and wahoo with rod and reel while in possession of lobster traps. A person aboard a vessel in the Atlantic EEZ that has on board other gear types that are not authorized in the fisheries for dolphin and wahoo may not possess a dolphin or wahoo.

~~**Alternative 3.** Allow the possession of dolphin or wahoo on properly permitted commercial vessels with gear types onboard that are not authorized in the dolphin wahoo fishery. The amount of dolphin or wahoo allowed onboard cannot exceed a certain percentage of the total commercially harvested species onboard by weight. (note: need sub-alts for percent of total harvest).~~

~~**Alternative 4.** Allow the possession of dolphin or wahoo on properly permitted commercial vessels with gear types onboard that are not authorized in the dolphin wahoo fishery. The amount of dolphin or wahoo allowed onboard cannot exceed the incidental limit (note: need sub-alts for incidental limit).~~

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #4: ADD ACTION 11, ALTERNATIVES 1 AND 2, TO AMENDMENT 10.

Action 11. Allow bag limit sales of dolphin for dually permitted for-hire and commercial permit holders.

Alternative 1 (No Action). Bag limit sales of dolphin landed from a vessel that is issued a federal for-hire dolphin wahoo permit is prohibited if operating on a trip under a for-hire mode. If the vessel is also issued a federal commercial dolphin wahoo permit and necessary state commercial permits, dolphin landed from the vessel may be sold if not operating on a trip under a for-hire or private recreational mode.

Alternative 2. Allow bag limit sales of dolphin landed from a vessel that is issued a federal for-hire dolphin wahoo permit, commercial dolphin wahoo permit, and necessary state commercial permits, regardless of whether on a commercial or for-hire trip.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #5: ADD ACTION 12 WITH ADDITIONAL SUB-ALTERNATIVES FOR REGIONAL MANAGEMENT.

Action 12. Modify the recreational vessel limit for dolphin.

Alternative 1 (No Action). The recreational daily bag limit is 10 dolphin per person, not to exceed 60 dolphin per vessel, whichever is less, except on board a headboat where the limit is 10 dolphin per paying passenger.

Alternative 2. The recreational daily bag limit is 10 dolphin per person, not to exceed:

Sub-alternative 2a. 40 dolphin per vessel, whichever is less, except on board a headboat where the limit is 10 dolphin per paying passenger.

Sub-alternative 2b. 42 dolphin per vessel, whichever is less, except on board a headboat where the limit is 10 dolphin per paying passenger.

Sub-alternative 2c. 48 dolphin per vessel, whichever is less, except on board a headboat where the limit is 10 dolphin per paying passenger.

Sub-alternative 2d. 54 dolphin per vessel, whichever is less, except on board a headboat where the limit is 10 dolphin per paying passenger.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #6: INCLUDE ACTION 13 IN AMENDMENT 10.

Action 13. Modify gear, bait, and training requirements in the commercial longline fishery for dolphin and wahoo to align with Highly Migratory Species requirements.

Alternative 1 (No Action). The owner or operator of a vessel for which a commercial permit for Atlantic dolphin and wahoo has been issued and that has on board a pelagic longline must post inside the wheelhouse the sea turtle handling and release guidelines provided by NMFS. Such owner or operator must also comply with the sea turtle bycatch mitigation measures, including gear requirements and sea turtle handling requirements, as specified in 50 C.F.R. §635.21(c)(5)(i) and (ii). There are no protected species handling, release or identification training, circle hook, hook material, or gangion length requirements.

Alternative 2. Require the following for vessels with a commercial dolphin wahoo permit when using pelagic longlines:

Sub-alternative 2a. Must possess valid Safe Handling, Release, and Identification Workshop certificate onboard for both the owner and operator.

Sub-alternative 2b. Must possess and/or use only corrodible (i.e., non-stainless steel) circle hooks.

Sub-alternative 2c. Must possess and/or use only 18/0 or larger hooks with an offset not to exceed 10 degrees, and/or 16/0 or larger non-offset hooks.

Sub-alternative 2d. Must use whole finfish and/or squid as bait.

Sub-alternative 2e. If the total length of any gangion plus the length of any floatline is less than 100 meters, then the length of all gangions must be at least 10 percent longer than the length of the floatlines.

Sub-alternative 2f. Cannot deploy a pelagic longline that exceeds 20 nautical miles in length in the Mid-Atlantic Bight.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Bullet mackerel, frigate mackerel, and other potential ecosystem component species for the Dolphin Wahoo Fishery Management Plan

The Committee discussed a white paper on mechanisms and regulatory parameters for adding ecosystem component (EC) species to a fishery management plan (FMP), ways that other Councils have addressed EC species in FMPs, as well as background information on fisheries for bullet mackerel, frigate mackerel, and other major prey species for dolphin and wahoo. The Committee agreed to send the topic out for scoping but the following motion is necessary to do so:

MOTION #7: HOLD SCOPING FOR THE TOPIC OF ADDING UNMANAGED PREY SPECIES AS ECOSYSTEM COMPONENTS TO THE DOLPHIN WAHOO FMP IN THE SPRING OF 2019. (FOCUSING ON BULLET AND FRIGATE MACKEREL)

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Other Business

There was no other business discussed.

MOTION #8 (TIMING AND TASKS):

DIRECT STAFF TO:

1. CONTINUE WORK ON AMENDMENT 10 FOR REVIEW AT THE JUNE 2019 MEETING.
2. REVIEW THE DOLPHIN WAHOO FMP GOALS AND OBJECTIVES AT THE JUNE 2019 MEETING.
3. PROVIDE LANDINGS OF DOLPHIN OCCURRING ON VESSELS THAT POSSESS PERMITS TO LAND HMS SPECIES WITH PELAGIC LONGLINE GEAR AND ON VESSELS WITHOUT SUCH PERMITS BUT HOLD A DOLPHIN/WAHOO PERMIT FOR REVIEW AT THE JUNE 2019 MEETING. FOCUS ON THE PAST 10 YEARS OF AVAILABLE DATA.
4. REVIEW SCOPING COMMENTS ON BULLET AND FRIGATE MACKEREL IN JUNE 2019.