

**SUMMARY REPORT
DOLPHIN WAHOO COMMITTEE
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Webinar
December 9, 2020**

The Committee approved amended minutes from the September 2020 meeting and the agenda.

Status of Amendments under Formal Review

The Committee was updated on the status of Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 12 that adds bullet mackerel and frigate mackerel to the Dolphin Wahoo Fishery Management Plan and designates them as Ecosystem Component species. This amendment was submitted to the NMFS Southeast Regional Office on December 3, 2020 and is undergoing rule making.

Summary report for the October 2020 Dolphin Wahoo Advisory Panel meeting

The Dolphin Wahoo Advisory Panel (AP) met on October 28, 2020 via webinar to discuss items pertaining to the dolphin wahoo fishery. Christopher Burrows, the AP Chair, delivered the report to the Committee. The AP received updates on recent Council actions, developing amendments, and other relevant topics. In addition, the AP provided input for a Fishery Performance Report on wahoo.

Revise Dolphin and Wahoo Management Measures: Amendment 10

Amendment 10 includes actions that accommodate updated recreational data from the Marine Recreational Information Program by revising the annual catch limits and sector allocations for dolphin and wahoo. The amendment also contains actions that implement various other management changes in the fishery including revising recreational accountability measures, accommodating possession of dolphin and wahoo on vessels with certain unauthorized gears onboard, removing the operator card requirement, reducing the recreational vessel limit for dolphin, and allowing filleting of dolphin at sea onboard for-hire vessels North of the Virginia/North Carolina border.

The Committee discussed the amendment and provided the following guidance as well as made the following motions:

MOTION #1: APPROVE THE IPT'S SUGGESTED PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENTS IN AMENDMENT 10.

The *purpose* of Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10 is to revise the catch levels [acceptable biological catch (ABC) and annual catch limits (ACL)], sector allocations, accountability measures, and management measures for dolphin and wahoo. Management measures address authorized gear and the operator card requirement in the dolphin and wahoo fisheries, as well as recreational vessel limits and allowing fillets at sea onboard for-hire vessels in the dolphin fishery.

The *need* for Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10 is to base conservation and management measures on the best scientific information available and increase net benefits to the Nation, consistent

with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and its National Standards.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #2: APPROVE THE IPT'S SUGGESTED EDITS IN ACTION 3.

Action 3. Revise sector allocations and sector annual catch limits for dolphin

Note: The revised total annual catch limit in Alternatives 1 (No Action) through 4 reflects Preferred Alternative 2 in Action 1 in Amendment 10 to the Fishery Management Plan for Dolphin and Wahoo of the Atlantic. The revised total annual catch limit includes recreational landings from Monroe County, Florida, and incorporates recreational data as per the Marine Recreational Information Program using the Fishery Effort Survey method, as well as updates to commercial and for-hire landings.

Alternative 3. Allocate 93.00% of the revised total annual catch limit for dolphin to the recreational sector. Allocate 7.00% of the revised total annual catch limit for dolphin to the commercial sector. This is based on the Council's intent to explore alternatives for sector allocations that would not result in a decrease in the current pounds of dolphin available to either sector.

Alternative 4. Allocate 92.00% of the revised total annual catch limit for dolphin to the recreational sector. Allocate 8.00% of the revised total annual catch limit for dolphin to the commercial sector. This is based on the Council's intent to explore alternatives for sector allocations that would not result in a decrease in the current pounds of dolphin available to either sector.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #3: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE IN ACTION 3.

Action 3. Revise sector allocations and sector annual catch limits for dolphin

Alternative 3. Allocate 93.00% of the revised total annual catch limit for dolphin to the recreational sector. Allocate 7.00% of the revised total annual catch limit for dolphin to the commercial sector. This is based on the Council's intent to explore alternatives for sector allocations that would not result in a decrease in the current pounds of dolphin available to either sector.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #4: APPROVED THE IPT'S SUGGESTED EDITS IN ACTION 4.

Action 4. Revise sector allocations and sector annual catch limits for wahoo

Note: The revised total annual catch limit in Alternatives 1 (No Action) through 4 reflects Preferred Alternative 2 in Action 2 in Amendment 10 to the Fishery Management Plan for Dolphin and Wahoo of the Atlantic. The revised total annual catch limit includes recreational landings from Monroe County, Florida, and incorporates recreational data as per the Marine Recreational Information Program using the Fishery Effort Survey method, as well as updates to commercial and for-hire landings.

Alternative 4. Allocate 97.00% of the revised total annual catch limit for wahoo to the recreational sector. Allocate 3.00% of the revised total annual catch limit for wahoo to the commercial sector. This is based on the Council's intent to explore alternatives for sector allocations that would not result in a decrease in the current pounds of wahoo available to either sector.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #5: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 4 AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE IN ACTION 4.

Action 4. Revise sector allocations and sector annual catch limits for wahoo

Alternative 4. Allocate 97.00% of the revised total annual catch limit for wahoo to the recreational sector. Allocate 3.00% of the revised total annual catch limit for wahoo to the commercial sector. This is based on the Council's intent to explore alternatives for sector allocations that would not result in a decrease in the current pounds of wahoo available to either sector.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #6: CHOOSE ALTERNATIVE 5 AS PREFERRED IN ACTION 5.

Action 5. Revise the trigger for the post-season recreational accountability measures for dolphin

Alternative 5. Implement post season accountability measures in the following fishing year if the total (commercial and recreational combined) annual catch limit is exceeded.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #7: ADD ALTERNATIVES 5, 6, AND 7 TO ACTION 6.

Action 6. Revise the post-season recreational accountability measures for dolphin

Alternative 5. In the following fishing year monitor landings and if landings are projected to meet the sector ACL, reduce the bag limit and/or the vessel limit (*Sub-alternatives 5a and/or 5b*) first and if needed reduce the length of the recreational fishing season by the amount necessary to prevent the annual catch limit from being exceeded. However, the vessel limit, bag limit, and/or recreational fishing season will not be reduced if the Regional Administrator determines, using the best available science, that it is not necessary.

Sub-alternative 5a. Reduce the bag limit by the amount necessary but not below X fish per person per day (*Council to fill in the number*).

Sub-alternative 5b. Reduce the vessel limit by the amount necessary but not below X fish per vessel per day (*Council to fill in the number*).

Alternative 6. In order to prevent the annual catch limit from being exceeded in the following fishing year, reduce the bag limit first, and, if necessary, shorten the length of the recreational fishing season. The bag limit will not be reduced below X fish per person per day (*Council to fill in the number*). However, the bag limit, and/or recreational fishing season, will not be reduced if the Regional Administrator determines, using the best available science, that it is not necessary.

Alternative 7. In order to prevent the annual catch limit from being exceeded in the following fishing year, reduce the vessel limit first, and, if necessary, shorten the length of the recreational

fishing season. The vessel limit will not be reduced below X fish per vessel per day (*Council to fill in the number*). However, the vessel limit, and/or recreational fishing season, will not be reduced if the Regional Administrator determines, using the best available science, that it is not necessary.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #8: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 5 AS PREFERRED IN ACTION 6.

Action 6. Revise the post-season recreational accountability measures for dolphin

Alternative 5. In the following fishing year monitor landings and if landings are projected to meet the sector ACL, reduce the bag limit and/or the vessel limit (*Sub-alternatives 5a and/or 5b*) first and if needed reduce the length of the recreational fishing season by the amount necessary to prevent the annual catch limit from being exceeded. However, the vessel limit, bag limit, and/or recreational fishing season will not be reduced if the Regional Administrator determines, using the best available science, that it is not necessary.

Sub-alternative 5a. Reduce the bag limit by the amount necessary but not below X fish per person per day (*Council to fill in the number*).

Sub-alternative 5b. Reduce the vessel limit by the amount necessary but not below X fish per vessel per day (*Council to fill in the number*).

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #9: MOVE ALTERNATIVE 6 AND 7 IN ACTION 6 TO THE CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED SECTION.

Action 6. Revise the post-season recreational accountability measures for dolphin

~~**Alternative 6.** In order to prevent the annual catch limit from being exceeded in the following fishing year, reduce the bag limit first, and, if necessary, shorten the length of the recreational fishing season. The bag limit will not be reduced below X fish per person per day (*Council to fill in the number*). However, the bag limit, and/or recreational fishing season, will not be reduced if the Regional Administrator determines, using the best available science, that it is not necessary.~~

~~**Alternative 7.** In order to prevent the annual catch limit from being exceeded in the following fishing year, reduce the vessel limit first, and, if necessary, shorten the length of the recreational fishing season. The vessel limit will not be reduced below X fish per vessel per day (*Council to fill in the number*). However, the vessel limit, and/or recreational fishing season, will not be reduced if the Regional Administrator determines, using the best available science, that it is not necessary.~~

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

DIRECTION TO STAFF FOR ACTION 6:

- Examine a vessel limit of 10, 20, and 30 fish.
- Examine a bag limit of 2, 3, 4, and 5 fish.
- Examine combinations of bag limit and vessel limits whichever is less (emphasis on most restrictive measure).

MOTION #10: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS PREFERRED IN ACTION 7.

Action 7. Revise the trigger for the post-season recreational accountability measures for wahoo

Alternative 2. Implement post season accountability measures in the following fishing year if the recreational annual catch limits are constant and the 3-year geometric mean of landings exceed the recreational sector annual catch limit. If in any year the recreational sector annual catch limit is changed, the moving multi-year geometric mean of landings will start over.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

DIRECTION TO STAFF FOR ACTION 7:

- Revisit geometric vs arithmetic mean and provide examples.

MOTION #11: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS PREFERRED IN ACTION 8.

Action 8. Revise the post-season recreational accountability measures for wahoo

Alternative 2. Reduce the length of the following recreational fishing season by the amount necessary to prevent the annual catch limit from being exceeded in the following year. However, the length of the recreational season will not be reduced if the Regional Administrator determines, using the best available science, that it is not necessary.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #12: ACCEPT THE IPT'S EDITS TO ACTION 9.

Action 9. Allow properly permitted commercial fishing vessels with trap, pot, or buoy gear on board that are not authorized for use in the dolphin wahoo fishery to possess commercial quantities of 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 Exclusive Economic Zone: automatic reel, bandit gear, handline, pelagic longline, rod and reel, and spearfishing gear (including powerheads). A person aboard a vessel in the Atlantic Exclusive Economic Zone that has on board gear types (including trap, pot, or buoy gear) other than authorized gear types may not possess a dolphin or wahoo. The current commercial trip limit for wahoo is 500 pounds. The current trip limit for dolphin is 4,000 pounds once 75 percent of the commercial sector annual catch limit is reached. Prior to reaching 75 percent of the commercial sector annual catch limit, there is no commercial trip limit for dolphin.

Alternative 2. A vessel in the Atlantic Exclusive Economic Zone that possesses both an Atlantic Dolphin/Wahoo Commercial Permit and the necessary state and/or valid federal commercial permits for required to fish trap, pot, or buoy gear or is in compliance with permit requirements specified for the spiny lobster fishery in 50 C.F.R. §622.400 are is authorized to retain dolphin and wahoo caught by rod and reel while in possession of such gears. The wahoo commercial trip limit will remain at 500 pounds. A person aboard a vessel in the Atlantic Exclusive Economic Zone that has on board other gear types that are not authorized in the fisheries fishery for dolphin and wahoo may not possess a dolphin or wahoo. Dolphin retained by such a vessel on trips when trap, pot, or buoy gear are on board shall not exceed: (~~Sub-alternatives 2a through 2d~~)

Sub-alternative 2a. 250 pounds gutted weight

Sub-alternative 2b. 500 pounds gutted weight

Sub-alternative 2c. 750 pounds gutted weight

Sub-alternative 2d. 1,000 pounds gutted weight

Alternative 3. A vessel in the Atlantic Exclusive Economic Zone that possesses both an Atlantic Dolphin/Wahoo Commercial Permit and valid federal commercial permits required to fish trap, pot, or buoy gear or is in compliance with permit requirements specified for the spiny lobster fishery in 50 C.F.R. §622.400 is authorized to retain wahoo caught by rod and reel while in possession of such gear types. A vessel in the Atlantic Exclusive Economic Zone that has on board other gear types that are not authorized in the fisheries for wahoo may not possess a wahoo. The wahoo commercial trip limit will be 500 pounds.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #13: SELECT SUB-ALTERNATIVE 2B AND ALTERNATIVE 3 AS PREFERRED IN ACTION 9.

Action 9. Allow properly permitted commercial fishing vessels with trap, pot, or buoy gear on board that are not authorized for use in the dolphin wahoo fishery to possess commercial quantities of dolphin and wahoo

Alternative 2. A vessel in the Atlantic Exclusive Economic Zone that possesses both an Atlantic Dolphin/Wahoo Commercial Permit and valid federal commercial permits required to fish trap, pot, or buoy gear or is in compliance with permit requirements specified for the spiny lobster fishery in 50 C.F.R. §622.400 is authorized to retain dolphin caught by rod and reel while in possession of such gears. A vessel in the Atlantic Exclusive Economic Zone that has on board other gear types that are not authorized in the fishery for dolphin may not possess a dolphin. Dolphin retained by such a vessel shall not exceed:

Sub-alternative 2b. 500 pounds gutted weight

Alternative 3. A vessel in the Atlantic Exclusive Economic Zone that possesses both an Atlantic Dolphin/Wahoo Commercial Permit and valid federal commercial permits required to fish trap, pot, or buoy gear or is in compliance with permit requirements specified for the spiny lobster fishery in 50 C.F.R. §622.400 is authorized to retain wahoo caught by rod and reel while in possession of such gear types. A vessel in the Atlantic Exclusive Economic Zone that has on board other gear types that are not authorized in the fisheries for wahoo may not possess a wahoo. The wahoo commercial trip limit will be 500 pounds.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #14: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AND ALTERNATIVE 3 AS PREFERRED IN ACTION 10.

Action 10. Remove the requirement of vessel operators or crew to hold an Operator Card in the Dolphin Wahoo Fishery

Alternative 2. Neither a vessel operator nor any crewmember is required to have an Operator Card for an Atlantic Charter/Headboat for Dolphin/Wahoo Permit to be valid.

Alternative 3. Neither a vessel operator nor any crewmember is required to have an Operator Card for an Atlantic Dolphin/Wahoo Commercial Permit to be valid.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #15: ADD A SUB-ALTERNATIVE UNDER ALTERNATIVE 3 IN ACTION 11 OF 30 FISH PER VESSEL.

Action 11. Reduce the recreational vessel limit for dolphin

Alternative 3. In Florida only, the recreational daily bag limit is 10 dolphin per person, not to exceed:

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #16: ADD A SUB-ALTERNATIVE UNDER ALTERNATIVE 2 IN ACTION 11 OF 30 FISH PER VESSEL.

Action 11. Reduce the recreational vessel limit for dolphin

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

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #17: ADD AN ALTERNATIVE THAT IS THE SAME AS ALTERNATIVE 3 IN ACTION 11, BUT INCLUDES GEORGIA, SOUTH CAROLINA, AND FLORIDA.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #18: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 1 IN ACTION 12 AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE.

Action 12. Allow filleting of dolphin at sea on board charter or headboat vessels in the Atlantic Exclusive Economic Zone north of the Virginia/North Carolina border.

Alternative 1 (No Action). Dolphin possessed in the Atlantic Exclusive Economic Zone must be maintained with head and fins intact, with specific exceptions for fish lawfully harvested in the Bahamas. Such fish harvested from the Atlantic Exclusive Economic Zone may be eviscerated, gilled, and scaled, but must otherwise be maintained in a whole condition.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #19: APPROVE ALL ACTIONS IN DOLPHIN WAHOO AMENDMENT 10, AS MODIFIED, FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS TO TAKE PLACE BEFORE THE MARCH 2021 MEETING.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

OTHER DIRECTION TO STAFF FOR AMENDMENT 10:

ADD AN ACTION TO REVISE BAG AND VESSEL LIMITS FOR WAHOO (WITH UNDERSTANDING THAT ANALYSES MAY NOT BE READY FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS AND STAFF SEND DRAFT LANGUAGE TO COUNCIL CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR AND COMMITTEE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR BEFORE PUBLIC HEARINGS)

- INCLUDE 1 FISH PER PERSON BAG LIMIT
- RANGE OF VESSEL LIMITS FROM 2-8 FISH

Other Business

There were no items discussed under other business.

Timing and Tasks:

MOTION #20: APPROVE THE FOLLOWING TIMING AND TASKS:

- CONDUCT PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR AMENDMENT 10 BEFORE THE MARCH 2021 MEETING.
- CONTINUE WORK ON AMENDMENT 10 FOR REVIEW AT THE MARCH 2021 MEETING.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL