

OVERVIEW

Highly Migratory Species Committee Meeting

DoubleTree by Hilton Atlantic Beach Oceanfront
2717 W. Fort Macon Road
Atlantic Beach, NC 28512

December 8, 2016

The committee will (1) receive a presentation on implementing management measures consistent with the 2016 stock assessment update to end overfishing and rebuild Atlantic dusky sharks, followed by committee discussion and action as necessary and (2) discuss other business as appropriate.

1. Presentation on Draft Amendment 5b to the 2006 Consolidated Atlantic HMS FMP which implements management measures consistent with the 2016 stock assessment update to end overfishing and rebuild Atlantic dusky sharks (Attachment 1)

Guy DuBeck/Steve Durkee, NMFS Highly Migratory Species (HMS) staff, will give the HMS committee a presentation on Amendment 5b to the 2006 Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan. This amendment includes a requirement for HMS permit holders fishing for sharks recreationally to obtain a shark endorsement, which requires completion of an online shark identification and fishing regulation training course, plus additional recreational fisheries outreach. Additionally, the amendment would require the use of circle hooks by all HMS permit holders fishing for sharks recreationally and when using natural baits and using wire or heavy (200 lb or greater test) monofilament or fluorocarbon leaders.

Commercial fishermen with an Atlantic shark limited access permit with pelagic longline gear onboard would be required to release all sharks not being retained using a dehooker or cutting the gangion less than three feet from the hook. The amendment would also require completion of a shark identification and fishing regulation training course as a new part of all Safe Handling and Release Workshops for HMS pelagic longline, bottom longline, and shark gillnet vessel owners and operators. Commercial measures also include an increase in dusky shark outreach and awareness through development of additional outreach materials, and require HMS pelagic longline, bottom longline, and shark gillnet vessels to abide by a dusky shark fleet communication and relocation protocol. All HMS directed shark permit holders using bottom longline gear will also be required to use circle hooks.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Discuss the presentation and take action as appropriate.

2. Other Business

The Committee will address other items as necessary.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Discuss and take action as appropriate.