

FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT
HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES COMMITTEE
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
FORT LAUDERDALE, FL
June 13, 2018

The Committee approved minutes from the June 2017 meeting and the agenda.

Incorporating Spawning Special Management Zones into Highly Migratory Species Bottom Longline Regulations

Council staff reviewed a white paper on incorporating spawning Special Management Zones (SMZs) into Highly Migratory Species (HMS) bottom longline regulations. The white paper focused on two main topics, with one being the potential for shark bottom longline gear to be fished in some spawning SMZs. The other topic covered a discrepancy between the specified coordinates listed in Snapper Grouper and HMS regulations for the Charleston Deep Artificial Reef site. The Committee discussed the presented material, with members noting that bottom longline gear is not a compatible gear for use in spawning SMZs and that the coordinates for the Charleston Deep Artificial Reef site need to align in federal regulations.

The Committee approved the following motion:

MOTION #1: SEND COMMENT LETTER TO HMS TO INCLUDE BOTTOM LONGLINE GEAR RESTRICTIONS IN SPAWNING SMZ SITES AND UPDATE COORDINATES FOR THE CHARLESTON DEEP ARTIFICIAL REEF MPA SITE.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Other Business

The Committee also discussed previous approval by NOAA Fisheries of exempted fishing permits (EFPs) that allow limited use of pelagic longline (PLL) gear in a portion of the East Florida Coast PLL Closed Area as well as retention of dolphin and wahoo during the EFP sanctioned fishing activity. The discussion covered perceptions of SAFMC comments on the EFP applications in relation to approval of the EFPs. No motions were passed by the Committee but the following motion was offered and did not pass.

MOTION: THE SAFMC SEND A LETTER TO CHRIS OLIVER WITH A COPY TO WILBUR ROSS STATING THAT THE SAFMC DID NOT TAKE A POSITION ON THE KERSTETTER/DAY BOAT EFP TO LONGLINE IN THE CONSERVATION AREA OFF THE EAST COAST OF FLORIDA. THE COUNCIL DID NOT TAKE A POSITION ON THE ISSUANCE OF AN EFP WHICH WOULD ALLOW KERSTETTER/DAY BOAT TO RETAIN AND SELL DOLPHIN AND/OR WAHOO CAUGHT DURING THE OTHER EFP OPERATIONS.

MOTION FAILS

MOTION: THE SAFMC SEND A LETTER TO CHRIS OLIVER WITH A COPY TO WILBUR ROSS STATING THAT THE SAFMC DID NOT TAKE A POSITION BUT RATHER EXPRESSED CONCERNS REGARDING THE KERSTETTER/DAY BOAT EFP TO PELAGIC LONGLINE IN THE CONSERVATION AREA OFF THE EAST COAST OF FLORIDA. THE COUNCIL DID NOT TAKE A POSITION ON THE ISSUANCE OF AN EFP WHICH WOULD ALLOW KERSTETTER/DAY BOAT TO RETAIN AND SELL DOLPHIN AND/OR WAHOO CAUGHT DURING THE OTHER EFP OPERATIONS.
APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Note: Council staff drafts the timing and task motion based on Committee action. If points require clarification, they will be added to the draft motion. The Committee should review this wording carefully to be sure it accurately reflects their intent prior to making the motion.

Timing and Tasks

MOTION: Direct Staff to do the following:

- Send a letter to HMS outlining the comments and concerns of the Council in regards to the use of bottom longline gear in spawning SMZs and to update the coordinates for the Charleston Deep Artificial Reef site.
- Send a letter to HMS outlining the comments and concerns of the Council in regards to the pelagic longline EFP.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL