

# **SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

## **DOLPHIN WAHOO ADVISORY PANEL**

### **Webinar**

**August 22, 2019**

### **Summary Minutes**

#### **Dolphin Wahoo AP Members**

Ray Rosher, Chair  
Fred Kinard  
Jonathan Reynolds  
Charles Yeomans

Wendell Barnett  
Daniel Owsley  
Tim Scalise

#### **Council Members**

Anna Beckwith  
Mel Bell

David Whitaker

#### **Council Staff**

Gregg Waugh  
Chip Collier  
Kelly Klasnick

Brian Chevront  
Julia Byrd

#### **Other Observers and Participants**

Don Landrum  
Kelly Hoggard  
Michael Travis  
Pam Lyons Gromen  
Tracey Bauer

Leda Cunningham  
Nikhil Mehta  
Rick Robins  
Wessley Merten

Other observers and participants attached.

The Dolphin Wahoo Advisory Panel of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened via webinar on August 22, 2019 and was called to order by Chairman Ray Rosher.

MR. HADLEY: We'll get up and running, and, before I hand it over to Ray, I just wanted to -- Since this is our first webinar together, I just wanted to run through a few things. We've gone through the mic check, and I have unmuted, I believe, everyone, and so, as I mentioned, if you could mute and unmute yourself, and it's up to you, but, if you're not speaking, I do ask that, if you could, mute yourself. It's helpful so we don't have a whole lot of hot mics going at once, where you hear a bunch of background noise, but I will unmute everyone on my end, and so it's up to you.

As far as -- You will see there is a little hand icon in the toolbar on your webinar, and we'll be using that. If you have any issues, if you're having a mic problem or what have you, feel free to go ahead and raise your hand, and I will try to address that, or you can type a question in the question box, if you're saying, hey, I'm not hearing the audio or something like that, and feel free to do so, but we'll also be using -- If the AP does make any motions during this webinar, we will be using that hand as a voting mechanism, essentially, and so, when we say all in favor please raise your hand, by that, by I mean go ahead and raise your digital hand, so to speak, and so we'll be using that as the tool for voting.

As a general reminder, particularly towards the beginning, if everyone could go ahead and -- I know it's a little bit awkward at first, but, before you speak, if you could say your name, and that helps out a lot with some of the audio, and particularly when we're typing up the minutes, so we know who's speaking, and so if you wouldn't mind doing that. With that, if we have any questions, I'm happy to field them at any time, and, otherwise, I will go ahead and hand it over to Ray to take care of the initial agenda items. Before we jump into the update of the FMP amendments, we'll take a break for any public comments, and so thank you. With that, I will hand it over to you, Ray.

MR. ROSHER: Thank you, everyone, for being here, and I know this is kind of a first. I know I'm having my challenges just getting to the control screen, but I read over things, and I know we're trying to approve this agenda, and so I don't quite know the protocol on approving it, but I think everything that I've seen on the agenda is all pertinent information that I approve, and how does that work, John, in terms of voting? Is there any way to approve the -- Do we approve the agenda through votes at this point?

MR. HADLEY: You can go ahead and ask if there are any objections.

MR. ROSHER: Are there any objections to the agenda that's listed?

MR. HADLEY: All right. Seeing none, it looks like the agenda is approved.

MR. ROSHER: Okay. Just so you know, John, I am having trouble opening that main screen for some reason, and I'm sorry. I am computer challenged.

MR. HADLEY: That's okay.

MR. ROSHER: If you can help me along here until I get it re-opened.

MR. HADLEY: All right, and I will say that I know that this is the first webinar that we've had, and there's, obviously, some bumps in the road getting up and running, but I appreciate everyone's patience, and we'll get this going, and it has worked fairly well with some of our other groups, but there certainly is a learning curve there, and so I appreciate folks' patience with the webinar, but, moving forward, the next item is Approval of the April 2017 AP Meeting Minutes. That was the last time that we got together, and so if there are any objections to approving those minutes from any of the AP members. Seeing none, Ray, with your approval, should we go ahead and take any public comments at this time?

MR. ROSHER: I think so.

MR. HADLEY: All right. If anyone wants to make a public comment, if you could raise your hand, digitally speaking. I see two hands up, and so, Pam, if you could go ahead.

MS. LYONS-GROMEN: This is Pam Lyons-Gromen, and I work with an organization called Wild Oceans, which was founded by anglers and is still supported by anglers. We are one of the groups that submitted comments on Amendment 12, what is now called Amendment 12, and I was really impressed, just looking through that comment record, at how many individuals, in addition to the groups and organizations, who submitted comments, and they were really thoughtful, and I was just impressed that so many people in the region took time to generate comments.

I also serve in the Mid-Atlantic on advisory panels, and I was part of the advisory panel discussions that led to their unmanaged forage omnibus, and I realize how important the AP dialogues are to coming up with regulatory measures and recommendations that are effective as well as practical, and so, anyway, I'm just on the call today because I'm following this action, and I look forward to your discussion. Thank you.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Thank you, Pam. Rick.

MR. ROBINS: I would like to thank the Chair and the committee for making this available by webinar. I hadn't expected to be able to participate today. We're having our tournament today up here in Virginia Beach, and it's blowing some. I fish for marlin out of Virginia Beach, and I previously chaired the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and I really appreciate what the South Atlantic Council is doing to try to bring these species under some level of protection, on the bullet tunas and the frigate mackerels.

I think, right now, this is probably the most important species, ecologically, in the offshore system that doesn't have any protection, and we tried very hard up here to include them in our unmanaged forage fish amendment, when we passed that, and that action brought like fifty or more different taxa under some basic levels of protection, but the agency thwarted the council on the issue of Auxis, primarily because we didn't manage the predator species, and so they're very important up here for billfish, and they're number one in the stomach contents of blue marlin, and, as you know, they're at the top of the list in the wahoo stomach contents, but we don't manage either of those, and so the agency didn't let us do it, but they're very important.

The concern about these, for us, is it's not an academic concern, because we watched what happened in the tinker mackerel fishery, where that went from basically a non-consequential level of incidental harvest in the illex squid fishery to where they had a bad year in the illex fishery one

year, and they went out and targeted them, and there aren't a lot of boats that can trawl for small tunas, because it takes a lot of power to overtake them in the trawl net, but there are a handful, and they have tremendous fishing power, and so, when they went out and did it, they caught over 500,000 and 600,000 pounds in individual trips, and one of those boats broke down that year, and they said, if they hadn't broke down, they would have caught several times the five-million pounds that they caught, and so the possibility of something like this developing is, I think, still a significant risk in the system and our management system.

It leaves a gap, and so I think I would encourage the council and the committees to continue to work towards designating them as an ecosystem component species, and that designation alone won't protect them, but you can accompany that with some just basic regulatory protections, like trip limits and reporting requirements and those administrative aspects of that, but this is well precedented. I mean, they've done it.

The agency approved it in the Mid-Atlantic, and not for that species, but that combination of measures of ecosystem component designations and basic trip limits, and they have done it in the Pacific, and the agency has approved it in the North Pacific also, and so it's a well-precedented approach, and it allows the council to implement some basic protections, but that would, I think, sort of follow along an ecological role of just protecting the ecosystem structure and function as it relates to the dolphin and wahoo fisheries, and I appreciate the opportunity to comment. Thank you, Cameron, and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. HADLEY: Thank you. If there are no other -- I am not seeing any other hands or comments. Okay. Then, moving along, we will jump into an update on some of the recent dolphin wahoo amendments. There is only -- This will be fairly brief, but, just as a brief update, we have Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 9, which is part of an omnibus for-hire electronic reporting amendment from the South Atlantic Council, and I believe we actually discussed this at our last meeting in 2017, and so this amendment has moved along towards completion, and the South Atlantic Council was notified on June 12, 2018 that the amendment was approved by NMFS. However, we're still waiting on the publication of the final rule.

The reason, one of the major reasons, for this is that the Gulf Council has also been developing their own for-hire reporting amendment, and the end goal there is to try to make sure that both of these amendments go into place, essentially, the rules for these amendments go into place at the same time, so you don't have some people reporting to the Atlantic for a while and then they have to report over to the Gulf, and so we're trying to avoid some confusion there, and we've kind of held up -- Well, the South Atlantic Council's amendment has been held up, as far as being implemented, to coincide with the Gulf. That's really -- That's in the works, and it's expected to go into place fairly soon.

Moving along, we have Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10, and this amendment has been in the works for a while. We did discuss it at our last Dolphin Wahoo AP meeting. However, essentially, the amendment at the time looks very different than the way it looks now. Initially, Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10 was being developed to look at different ways to share quota between the commercial and recreational sectors for dolphin and some other actions. However, in the meantime, while the South Atlantic Council was developing Amendment 10, we had a major revision to recreational data from the Marine Recreational Information Program.

The council knowing that this major revision was coming along, and the fact that the dolphin and wahoo fisheries are primarily recreational fisheries, they decided to go ahead and put the development of the amendment on hold, and that was on hold for about a year-and-a-half or so, and that's one of the reasons why the AP hasn't met, because, really, with that kind of recreational catch and effort information in purgatory, that kind of put the amendment in purgatory. We really couldn't move forward, and so that's one of the reasons that dolphin wahoo really didn't see a whole lot of development on the amendment front, but, in December of 2018, the council discussed Amendment 10, and the revised recreational information was available, and so the council has been working on Amendment 10 since then.

However, at that meeting, at the December meeting last year, there were several different items that were added to Amendment 10, and some of these included looking at changing some of the bag limits, potentially allowing for-hire bag limit sales, and looking at mirroring the highly migratory species regulations for pelagic longlines in the longline fishery for dolphin and wahoo, and so this is kind of what the council has been discussing over the past six months or so, and, during the June 2019 meeting, which was held in Stuart, Florida, the council reviewed Amendment 10 and some of the major changes that were made for Amendment 10.

The council added an action that would allow the for-hire fleet north of Virginia, the Virginia/North Carolina border, to fillet dolphin at-sea. This action was requested by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and so the South Atlantic Council heard this request and decided that it could be considered in Amendment 10, and so that action was added to Amendment 10.

The other major item is the council also voted to remove an action that would allow bag limit sales of dolphin for dually-permitted for-hire and commercial dolphin wahoo permit holders, and there really was a very lengthy discussion on this at the June meeting. It was put in there in December. However, the council discussed it over two meetings, and, at the June meeting, the council noted that there had been recommendations from the Law Enforcement AP and the Mackerel Cobia AP, as well as public comments advising against pursuing bag limit sales for dolphin.

Additionally, the council noted that pursuing the action may be contrary to the goals and objectives of the FMP, and it would provide some challenges to accounting for dolphin landings, particularly between commercial and recreational landings and where those landings would end up. It may lead to requesting bag limit sales for other species, and it may incentivize additional harvest of dolphin that would not have occurred otherwise, and it also could provide an unfair disadvantage for full-time commercial fishing operations that land dolphin.

During the discussion of this action, the council also noted that dolphin does have a very large bag limit in comparison to other species, and, at times, customers may not want to harvest -- They may not want all fish harvested, and so those unused fish, so to speak, could be sold. Harvest is capped at the recreational limit, and so the total landings per trip are relatively low compared to those of commercial operations.

The challenges with accounting may be able to be overcome, and allowing bag sales would provide domestically-caught fish for the marketplace, and also economic opportunities for charter boats, and so there was a -- Like I said, there was a lengthy discussion kind of weighing the cost and the

benefits, so to speak, of this action, and, in the end, the council potentially felt that the potential downsides of the action outweighed the potential upsides.

With that, at this time, the council will be considering Amendment 10 at their September meeting, and that's going to be held in Charleston, and the amendment itself now includes actions that would revise the ACLs for dolphin and wahoo to accommodate the new recreational landings data that I mentioned, potentially revising sector allocations, as a result of those new ACLs, looking at revising the optimum yield definition for dolphin, allowing adaptive management of sector ACLs, revising accountability measures, allowing properly-permitted vessels with trap, pot, or buoy gear onboard to possess dolphin and wahoo, and so this is more looking at sort of an incidental trip, where these gears cannot be onboard the boat while dolphin and wahoo are in possession, and so looking at kind of an exception there that's been requested, originally by New England lobster fishermen.

We're looking at removing the requirement of the operator card in the dolphin wahoo fishery, reducing the recreational vessel limit for dolphin, modifying the gear and training requirements to mirror those of highly migratory species for the pelagic longline fishery, and, there again, allowing filleting of dolphin at-sea onboard for-hire vessels in the waters north of the Virginia/North Carolina border.

Before I take a break, and I imagine there will be some questions on that, but Amendment 10 is in its early stages of development, with the next step in the amendment being public scoping, and so we're very, very early in the process. Scoping will likely occur after the December 2019 meeting, and the Dolphin Wahoo AP will likely review this amendment in detail at the AP's spring 2020 meeting, and so, with that, I imagine there might be a few questions on Amendment 10, and I will take a break for those.

MR. ROSHER: Do you think it's wise to -- Since I'm going to carry, I guess, the results of this meeting to the council next month, would it be wise to kind of go item-by-item and let me hear comments, so that I can relay those to the council?

MR. HADLEY: Yes, we could do that. Do you want to go ahead and do that?

MR. ROSHER: Sure. One of the comments, or maybe I should take questions, but I have on this very first item, revise annual catch limits for dolphin and wahoo to accommodate new recreational landings data, I mean, obviously, this is something that is going to be a lengthy process, to try to understand the new landings. I presume -- Is it correct, John, that this is going to be related to the electronic reporting, and is that what they're waiting on?

MR. HADLEY: No, and so, essentially, this is -- It's a result of the revised recreational data, and so, once you have that data -- The ACLs for dolphin are based on landings, and so there's not a stock assessment for either species, and so they're based on landings, and so, basically, those revised landings need to go to the SSC, the Scientific and Statistical Committee, and so they're going to discuss it in October, and they will come to the council in December with saying here's your new catch level recommendation, and here's the new ABC, potentially, for dolphin and wahoo, and then the council will say, okay, we're going to consider new catch limits based on that catch level recommendation.

MR. ROSHER: Got it. I mean, it's a -- I remember, in some of the past meetings, we've had pretty lengthy discussions about allocations and sharing allocations, and I think, obviously, this is something that I think we all have to have a lot more information on what those landings are before there's really much commentary on it. Does anybody have any questions or comments on this?

MR. HADLEY: Just to follow up on that, that is kind of crux of why we didn't bring the Amendment 10 to the AP to discuss in detail, because we're really waiting on that necessary piece of information, because a lot of these decisions, like you said, can't be made until you know kind of what you're working with, so to speak, for the revised ACLs, and so, there again, hopefully next spring, we'll have all that information, and the AP can really dive into it in detail.

MR. ROSHER: Okay. Are there any -- I guess, as we go down this list, are there any comments that anybody in the group feels are pertinent for me to share with the council?

MR. REYNOLDS: Is that not -- The data that we're looking for, is that not part of the appendix of these revised recreational landings that we're looking at, at the last page of the FMP goals and objectives?

MR. HADLEY: Yes, those are, essentially, the revised -- Yes, absolutely. There is a few -- Those are the landings, but there's a few decision points that need to come from the SSC, essentially, to get those new ACLs, one of which being the way that it has been handled in the past is that, for unassessed species, and so this is across-the-board if it doesn't have a stock assessment, the recreational landings aren't included in the ACL for Monroe County, the reason being because they could be from the Gulf and they could be from the Atlantic.

Obviously, for dolphin and wahoo, most of those landings are going to come from the Atlantic, but one of the decision points from the SSC will be that, now that we have this revised MRIP dataset, which seems superior to the old dataset, we can now kind of differentiate landings, particularly in the Keys, between the Gulf and the South Atlantic, and they will be discussing whether or not to go ahead and include the Monroe County landings in there, and so that's -- Really, it's up to the SSC, as far as what they want to recommend, but the council discussed this, and they suggested that the SSC consider going ahead and including that whole pie, so to speak, for the recreational side, including Monroe County, and so it's not necessarily like they're going to take these numbers and go forward with them. There's a few decision points there, but, back to your original point, these are the -- In the document that we're going to get into next, at the very end of the appendix, there are to, so to speak, older, original recreational numbers and then the revised recreational numbers for dolphin.

MR. REYNOLDS: Okay. Good. So what Ray was saying about going through each one, I guess, we have some data that we've collected, especially on Monroe County and recreational effort and actual numbers of visitors, and so I don't know if this would be the time to say that or as we go through each one of these, and I don't know how the format is going to go, and so I was just asking now, so we make sure that I can at least input that into some of this, and there's some really strong data that goes into the whole thing here, especially that has to do with Monroe County.

MR. HADLEY: Ray, I will leave that up to you, as far as how you want to address that. I will remind everybody that we also have a kind of other business agenda item, at the very end, if we wanted to get into other topics, and we can also use that time as well.

MR. ROSHER: John, tell me your concern. Is this related to the allocation, trying to understand the quota of Monroe County and whether it should be included in the South Atlantic?

MR. REYNOLDS: Yes, Ray. It's overall allocation. Just with extremely increased demand, recreational demand, for dolphin especially, since 2015, is what most of the numbers are showing, and a giant influx of increased tourism and visitors, about 40,000 more visitors alone, just tied to like the series *Bloodline*. There was some really good studies done by the Monroe County Tourist Development Council about increased visitors.

45 percent of all these visitors that are visiting Monroe County now in the Keys are participating in fishing activities, and then it breaks it down also into annual visitors and timeframes of when they're visiting, which aligns with our dolphin season and the increased recreational effort of Monroe County, and so that's all. Just most of that was for sector allocations, and some of the newest options that are included in Amendment 10 in sector allocations that would apply to that.

MR. ROSHER: I have been concerned about shifting allocations away from unused recreational to commercial. I mean, I have engaged in a lot of commercial fishing in my life, and so I'm not an anti-commercial person at all, but one of my main I think focuses is to keep people fishing, and, if you look at the money, the revenue, that is created, like you're mentioning, with all the tourism that really depends on it and is tied to fishing, my biggest concern on this list is the reduction of the recreational vessel limit for dolphin and allocation shifting, because I think we just have to be careful that we don't create a situation where we cause roadblocks for successful recreational and charter fishing.

If you really think about it, if the bag limit sales were on the table, and it sounds like they have fought pretty hard to take that -- They've taken it out of this Amendment 10, but, if bag limit sales were on the table, then I could see a logic for reducing vessel limits for dolphin, because one of their concerns was an increase in pressure on the population, and the harvest levels might increase, but, if we're not talking about selling any fish, what basis do you have for reducing this vessel limit?

I remember a meeting, years ago, a dolphin wahoo meeting, where there was a proposal to reduce the wahoo harvest, and I can't remember the number, and it was like one per person, and the guys in North Carolina spoke up and said, you know, our wahoo is the one fish that kind of keeps us alive in the fall, and, if you go down to one per person, there is a chance that we won't book as many charters, because people may not -- If there's only three people in the group, they may not book a \$2,000-plus charter for three wahoo, and so it's kind of back to this allocation and I guess the importance of these fish for the charter and recreational fisheries, and I think we have to be careful in agreeing to too many things that might limit or inhibit people from engaging in recreational charter fishing. I mean, that's really my two-cents. Does that relate, John, to your concerns, I guess? You're trying to keep the charter fishery in the Keys with --

MR. REYNOLDS: I guess that was more directed towards the recreational vessel limit, which there is some options in Amendment 10 for that, it seems, but more for sector allocations. With a large amount of data that shows a large increase in recreational and charter demand for this species, especially in recent years, there is just supporting possibly -- Especially when we examine the goals of the fishery are to keep historical allocations between commercial and recreational landings



in line, and so there is just some data, but I can share that data throughout the meeting or put it into some public input at a later time, but I just wanted to voice that, and we can continue to move forward.

MR. ROSHER: I think we'll go through the agenda, and, like John said, we can bring up some of these issues at the end, and maybe that would be the right time to get deeper into that. My biggest concern is having all the facts in front of us before we recommend changes to harvest levels and sharing allocations and increasing maybe commercial harvest away from recreational. That's just a little concerning to me, but that's just my personal opinion, but I wanted to hear everybody's opinion on these matters, but why don't we get into that at the end the meeting, and I will make notes on that, and maybe we can take a vote on some issues, if we come up with some direction that we want to recommend to the council.

MR. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Ray.

MR. HADLEY: Any other questions or comments on Amendment 10, before we move on? All right. Seeing none, the last amendment update will be Amendment 11, and so this is the ABC control rule revision for dolphin and wahoo, and this really affects all species of the council, and it's kind of a general overhaul of the ABC control rule, which is where your acceptable biological catch numbers tend to come from, which ends up playing into how ACLs are set.

There's a lot going on here, but, kind of to the point, particularly affecting dolphin and wahoo, the council is currently considering allowing phase-in and carryover of ABCs, and so this may potentially allow basically unused quota to be carried over to the following year, and this amendment has been discussed a few times, but the council likely won't discuss the amendment until their 2019 or March 2020 meetings, and so we're probably looking at the AP will probably be seeing this in detail, there again, in the spring of 2020, but just an update that that is in the works, and that's it. I will pause for a second and see if there are any other questions on any of the amendments, amendment updates, rather. Otherwise, we'll jump into our next agenda item of revising the goals and objectives of the Dolphin Wahoo Fishery Management Plan.

All right, and so, just to orient everyone, and as a little bit of background, NMFS issued a policy directive regarding a fisheries allocation review policy, and, as part of this, it encourages councils to undergo periodic reevaluation and updating of the management goals and objectives, essentially of a fishery management plan, to ensure that they are relevant to the current conditions and needs.

The council has been in the process of developing an allocation review trigger policy, and, as part of this process, the council will be updating the goals and objectives of all fishery management plans, and that includes sector allocations, to make sure that they're up-to-date and reflect the current needs of the fishery, and, as far as reviewing the goals and objectives, the council will likely be discussing this over the next several meetings. We're fairly early in the process, and we really wanted to get the Dolphin Wahoo AP's input on this, because, really, the goals and objectives are looking at essentially what the current vision, or an updated vision, of what the Dolphin Wahoo FMP or fishery should look like, and also kind of the -- Make sure that it's meeting the needs of the fishery.

Overall, we'll get into the details of it, but the AP is being asked to review the goals and objectives, as I will run through in a second, and provide any recommendations on edits or additional items

that the South Atlantic Council should consider, and, really, the goals and objectives of the Dolphin Wahoo Fishery Management Plan were implemented with the original FMP, which went into place in 2004, and they have not been revised since then.

At the time, just to kind of get in the mindset of the time, the council was proactively attempting to address potential commercial efforts shifts towards dolphin that could have occurred with consolidation of highly migratory species by vessels, or the fleet, so to speak, and really just dealing with concern over increasing landings of dolphin and wahoo.

As a little bit of background from the original FMP, it mentions that the council is concerned that recent increases in landings could result in localized depletion of stocks and a shift in the historic catch levels between the commercial and recreational sector, an increase in landings that has resulted from both the commercial longline fishery and the historic recreational fishery, with the most significant increase in the harvest of wahoo and dolphin coming from the recreational sector, more specifically the charter boat fishery.

Another complicated factor in determining landings by sector is that commercial landings also include fish that were caught by the recreational sector, and so, for addition context, within the Dolphin Wahoo FMP, there is sort of a statement of problems and issues that the FMP was trying to address, and so they were looking at localized reduction of fish abundance due to high fishing pressure, minimizing disruption of markets, and so making sure large quantities don't hit the market at once, addressing conflict or competition between recreational and commercial user groups, looking at potential reduced social and economic benefits, and so looking at what is the best approach to optimize the social and economic benefits of the dolphin fishery. Then potential issues over bycatch, the importance of predator-prey relationships, and then trying to address some of the limited biological, habitat, economic, and social data available for dolphin and wahoo.

The council essentially, at the June meeting this year, the council took an initial look at the old Dolphin Wahoo FMP goals and objectives and provided some recommendations, and what we have here is an initial look at trying to incorporate those recommendations into the goals and objectives of the FMP, and one of those suggestions, or recommendations, from the council was to come up with more of a table approach, where you have a goal, and then you have specified objectives under it that tie directly into that goal.

What I will do is -- This is a little bit difficult to discuss, at times, in a group scenario, but I think the best way to approach this is I will run through the different goals and objectives, just providing an overview, and then we'll come back to each goal and ask for recommendations on -- We'll say, okay, Goal 1, does the AP have any recommendations, is there anything else that the council should be considering. Then we'll go through Goal 2 and do the same thing, et cetera, but I will run through the goals and objectives as they stand now, just so everybody has a baseline on what information is in there.

Goal 1, the council expressed that they wanted to preserve the precautionary approach of the fishery management plan, and so support a precautionary and risk-averse approach to management, which, in the first instance, attempts to maintain historic catch levels and prevent overfishing from occurring.

Under Goal 1, there is two objectives. One is maintaining catch levels that do not exceed catch level recommendations and do not change the balance of landings in comparison to the historic fishery, to the extent that conflict is created between the recreational and commercial sectors. The other objective of Goal 1 is to minimize unutilized bycatch of dolphin and wahoo through development of management measures that reduce or mitigate such bycatch. Essentially, it's trying to address issues such as dead discards and making sure that we're at least minimizing the extent to which dead discards would exist in the fishery.

Goal 2 looks at access, and we kind of touched on this on our discussion of Amendment 10 a few minutes ago, but maintaining access to the dolphin and wahoo resource and promote the recreational and commercial sectors. Under this, there is three objectives. Objective 1 for the recreational sector is adopt innovative management measures that emphasize the importance of continued access to dolphin and wahoo when the fish are regionally available while maintaining sufficiently high abundance that supports elevated catch rates.

Within this objective, the council really wanted to emphasize the recreational sector's sort of objectives, so to speak, of being able to, one, access the fish when they are available, but also maintaining a relatively high abundance, so that, when the fish are around, there is a good chance of interacting with the animal.

Objective 2 for the commercial sector is very similar, to adopt innovative management measures that address the importance of continued access to dolphin and wahoo when the fish are regionally available, and Objective 3 is address potential localized reduction in fish abundance as a result of the possible shift of effort by longline vessels to traditional recreational fishing grounds and the resulting potential reduction in local availability of dolphin and wahoo. This is an objective that was in the original FMP that the council, at least initially, wanted to carry over into this version of the goals and objectives.

We have three more to go through, and so Goal 3 is minimize competition between user groups, and, specifically, the commercial and recreational sectors. Objective 1 ensures effort in catch levels of dolphin do not expand beyond traditional fishing grounds to the point where competition becomes problematic, and there it's looking at the commercial longlining effort and making sure that it doesn't increase to the point where competition may arise if effort shifts to fishing grounds traditionally used by recreational fishermen. Objective 2 is develop communication approaches that provide streamlined and timely information to increase awareness and engage stakeholders.

Goal 4 is looking at the social and economic importance, and so recognizing the social and economic importance of the fisheries for dolphin and wahoo. Objective 1 is managing the dolphin and wahoo resources to achieve optimum yield on a continuing basis to maximize the social and economic benefits. Objective 2 is minimizing market disruption, and so, there again, it's looking at commercial markets may be disruptive if large quantities of dolphin are landed from intense commercial harvest or unregulated catch and landing by charter or other components of the recreational sector. Objective 3 is improve knowledge about social and economic elements of the dolphin and wahoo fishery, and Objective 4 is improve awareness and understanding of how social and economic issues are linked to fishery management measures.

Finally, Goal 5 is ecosystem-based management and research priorities, and this has four objectives. Objective 1 is support improved and expanded monitoring and reporting programs for

the dolphin and wahoo fishery, and Objective 2 is promote research and developing ecosystem-based management of dolphin and wahoo. Very similarly, Objective 3 is support measures that incorporate ecosystem considerations for the management of dolphin and wahoo, where practicable, and Objective 4 is direct research to enhance collection of biological and habitat data on dolphin and wahoo stocks in the fisheries.

There again, we'll jump back up, and we'll look at this goal-by-goal, but, really, as general discussion questions for the AP, does the AP have any suggested changes or edits to the goals and objectives currently being considered, and then are there other topics that should be covered in the goals and objectives, but are currently left out, and so, in other words, what, if anything, should the council consider adding as a goal or an objective to the Dolphin Wahoo Fishery Management Plan? With that, I will jump back up to Goal 1, and I will take a pause and see if we can have a discussion on Goal 1, if there are any suggestions or any additions.

MR. ROSHER: John, it seems like a lot of the answer to this question is going to be based on catch reporting, and when did you say that data would be available, the latest data?

MR. HADLEY: Well, it's available now, as far as the landings. How those are going to be translated into the ACL is to be determined, but the council should be looking at the new ACL information at the December meeting.

MR. ROSHER: Right, and I guess the question is, is there anybody in the group that has any commentary on facts maybe that are changing in their area, effort that has increased or decreased that would affect or relate to any of this? If not, we can move on. Obviously, my opinion is that we want to, obviously, keep catch levels at a point where the greatest number of people can enjoy it and utilize it, but, if nobody has any comments, then we'll move on to the next point.

MR. REYNOLDS: I think this is a good objective, and it goes back to possible vessel limits, but not bag limits, and I think the council has a good direction on that. Most of my charter clientele would be good with less fish, and I think that some of the alternatives in the action involve maybe forty-two or forty-eight, multipliers of six, but not sixty, and so we can have more -- Since there is such a larger, especially in our area, since there is such a larger demand for dolphin fishing now, and a lot more recreational fishermen, I think we could possibly reduce vessel limits and have more people fishing and leaving more abundance in the water, and then the balance of landings, I think, when we really look at -- This will be further down, but, with commercial landings and how those have increased, and how they are specifically increased with the pelagic longline fishery and the imbalance of how that has kind of progressed, and then the recreational effort, and I think those are things that we should consider as we look at that objective. Thank you.

MR. ROSHER: John, what is your thought -- I mean, the reason that I made my comments earlier is I think you have to be careful. When you give up ground, it's hard to get it back, and so you have to make sure that you're correct when you make a recommendation to give up daily bag limits or angler limits.

I do agree with your point about the fishery could probably, the charter fishery at least, and the recreational fishery, could live with a little bit smaller boat limits. It's something that we should approach with caution, but one thought I had is, if you maintained your ten fish per person limit, but, instead of allowing it ten times however many people are on a recreational boat, or, in a charter

boat situation, ten times six, you could -- An easy way that you could accomplish the goal of maybe a little less pressure -- I agree with your points about having a healthy fishery and not taking more than you need, but, if you had say a boat limit across-the-board, recreational and charter, of forty fish per boat per day, ten per person -- Let's say, for instance -- What that does is it helps that situation where you have a small charter party, two or three people, and it's not necessarily five or six fish per person.

They can still catch their ten per person, which gives them an incentive to maybe charter the boat, but do we really need sixty fish at the end of the day? We're not selling the fish. We're cleaning large numbers of fish, and it's not about being lazy, but it's just about how much -- If we're going to give ground on anything, that's something to think about, and I think it should be across-the-board, recreational and charter.

Just to, I guess, counter that thought, a good friend of mine actually processes the trip tickets from really all commercial sectors, and he's had trip tickets, in recent years, with as much as 30,000 pounds of mahi from North Carolina on the longline boats on one trip. Now, I don't know how many days they were out, but the point is there's a -- It does fluctuate, in fairness to the longliners, and I want to say that, last year, the harvest wasn't that great, at least to him, and we didn't have such big numbers, but the point is I just want to bring to everybody's attention that just to be careful trying to tighten our belts so much when there is -- That longline pressure wasn't there, to this degree, maybe ten years ago, and so we have to really look at the big picture, and you've got a lot of pressure that has kind of surfaced, if I'm correct, in the last ten years that kind of -- It just has to be considered.

I am not saying that's a license to kill on all the recreational and charter side, but just keep in mind there is -- You're talking about a fish that only one time in history has the commercial quota been met, and usually the recreational ACLs, your landings, are way below the limits, and so I don't know, and I'm just trying to throw some, I guess, food for discussion out there, and so what are your thoughts, John, on that?

MR. REYNOLDS: I couldn't agree with you more, Ray. I think all of that is really on point, and especially with the ten per person, keeping that, especially for smaller parties on boats, and I think there was an enormous amount of public comment supporting that, to keep bag limits at ten per person, yet possibly considering a smaller overall boat or vessel limit, just for the overall large landings from the recreational sector possibly being reduced, to some degree, and improving the quality of the fishery, possibly, and, yes, everything you said, I agree with. Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: Guys, can I jump in there for a quick second? I've got a question for you guys to consider. As you guys know, I chair the committee at the council for dolphin wahoo. One of the discussions we've had relative to this at the council is for the different states to choose a boat limit that would be different. North Carolina, Georgia, and South Carolina do not seem to be interested in reducing the overall boat limit down from sixty, but we have heard quite a few people from Florida that are, and so I just want a quick comment on how you guys would feel if Florida was reduced to forty. You guys have the bulk of the charter industry down there, and it seems to be an issue, especially in the Florida Keys, whereas North Carolina doesn't feel that it's as much of an issue, and so, if you guys have any comments on that, I would like to hear it.

MR. REYNOLDS: I can see the -- Now that we have so much data back, we know that we all have a part in the same stock, and all of our conservation measures in the whole region determine what's coming to the next region, and so I think, especially for extremely large landings, that is very important, to consider that. As far as recreational fishing goes in the states north of Florida, Georgia and South Carolina and North Carolina, it seems like there is not nearly the degree of pressure, like you said, and so I don't -- I personally don't know if it would have the same impact as reducing the vessel limit in Florida, or matter as much, because of the large reduced recreational pressure in those states, and that's pretty much my input on that.

MR. BARR: This is Brice Barr from Key West. I feel like, if we're going to manage these fish for the South Atlantic Council, that we should manage them through the whole entire council, and, if we're going to mess with limits, that it should be equal across-the-board. I mean, we get affected by a lot of the decisions that are made, based on Georgia and North and South Carolina, and you're going to groupers and other fish that affect us greatly, and so, if they're going to take a little hit on the dolphin, if we are going to choose to do some sort of vessel limit or whatever we decide, I feel like it should be across-the-board on that.

That being said, we are seeing a significant increase in effort down here, even with calmer weather, and you see even more bay boats and flat skiffs and everything else out there in the dolphin fishery, which is affecting -- It's nothing for a bay boat fisherman, whether he's properly permitted or not, and it's hard to say, but to be tarpon fishing in the morning and then run offshore and catch his limit of dolphin and then come back in and try to catch a permit in the afternoon. I mean, we're seeing more and more and more and more of that. That being said, there's a lot more people in the fishery and a lot more pressure on the fish.

My opinion is, if we can get this longline trip limit, something in effect with that, maybe the vessel limit doesn't need to be messed with, but I also -- All of my guys down here feel like the sixty-fish limit is a pretty excessive amount of fish. I do agree with a lot of what Ray says. Once you give it up, you never get it back, but I just know, on my boat in particular -- I mean, even yesterday -- We've had very spotty dolphin fishing here this summer, and I know it's been very good in a lot of places, but it's been very spotty here, and, yesterday, there were actually a lot of fish out there, and we just policed ourselves on this, and I brought thirty-five fish home yesterday, which is one of the better days I've had all summer, honestly.

I mean, we've just had a very poor fishery with it this year, but my guys are completely onboard with around a forty-fish limit. If they want to do the multipliers of six, which seems to be what's on the table, we're fine with that. The multiplier of six doesn't really matter to us, but, if we do the ten per person and then a forty-fish vessel limit, I'm onboard with that, along with a lot of our guys.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Any other discussions on that? If not, I guess I was sitting here thinking, and I was trying to get the AP's input on some of the -- I think what we're discussing plays into the goals and objectives quite a bit, actually, particularly maintaining access and that sort of thing, but a question that I have for the AP is do you think that the council is kind of covering all the bases necessary through the goals, and so Goal 1 being looking at a precautionary approach, Goal 2 maintaining access, Goal 3 minimizing competition between user groups, Goal 4 emphasizing the economic and social importance of the fishery, and then Goal 5 is you have ecosystem-based management and research priorities.

Out of those goals, does the AP feel like the council is really covering the bases that need to be covered for the dolphin wahoo fishery, or is there another goal that the council consider to play into kind of the overarching view on what you want to emphasize in management of dolphin and wahoo? Is it good as-is, or are there other areas that the council should also be looking, as far as when setting these goals and objectives?

MR. REYNOLDS: I think the objectives are extremely strong, and I think the council has done a really good job and now just necessary facts and input and data to move forward with the goals and objectives are what's necessary, but I would agree with all of the goals and objectives, and I think they're really strong.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. Thank you. Any other thoughts? Does everyone agree with what we have or have any other suggestions of other areas that the council should be looking, or is it pretty good, good to go?

MR. ROSHER: I think we can go on.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. All right. I appreciate that, and, if there's no further discussion on the goals and objectives, we will jump into the next agenda item.

MR. ROSHER: John, I had a question on that last page we were on, on Goal 5. Can you click back to that screen? We're going to talk more about this -- Never mind. We'll keep moving on. I misunderstood what that was referring to. I had a recommendation from Pam, that spoke earlier from Wild Oceans, about adding a written goal on that Goal 5 of support research that advances ecosystem science and incorporate ecosystem-based management approaches that maintain healthy dolphin and wahoo populations. This ties into the bullet and frigate mackerel, but we're going to get into that next anyway, and so we could possibly add that.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. Yes, we can certainly get around to that, and, really, just before we jump into that, and I'm glad you brought that up, the council is kind of considering -- Since the goals and objectives are moving forward at the same time as the bullet and frigate mackerel and addressing ecosystem-component species and ecosystem issues, that's kind of where Objective 3 came from, support measures to incorporate ecosystem considerations for management of dolphin and wahoo, where practicable. The idea is that this bullet and frigate mackerel issue would play directly into that objective, or address that objective, but that's a good point, and we could certainly jump back to this after the bullet and frigate mackerel presentation.

MR. ROSHER: Okay.

MR. HADLEY: All right. What I'm going to provide here is just a general overview of the topic that's being addressed, and so adding bullet and frigate mackerel as ecosystem component species in the Dolphin Wahoo FMP. We'll get into where this issue stands, but this is Amendment 12, and so the council, in June, discussed this and decided that they wanted to pursue this topic, and we are very, very early in the process on developing Amendment 12, but, essentially, I will give you a background on where this issue came from, or a little bit of information on bullet mackerel and frigate mackerel. Then we'll get into some of the nuts-and-bolts, as far as what is an ecosystem component species, how other councils have addressed unmanaged forage and bringing them in as

ecosystem component species, and then we'll finish up with kind of what the council is considering at the moment, as far as different options.

With that, starting off with some background, the council is considering adding these two mackerel species, bullet mackerel and frigate mackerel, as ecosystem components in the Dolphin Wahoo Fishery Management Plan, and, on the bottom-left there, you can see a bullet mackerel, and, on the bottom right, you can see a frigate mackerel. They're very similar looking small mackerels.

Really, the council is considering this action in acknowledgment of the role that the two play, the two unmanaged mackerel species play, as important prey for both dolphin and wahoo. Just as a reminder on which regions would be affected, the Dolphin Wahoo Fishery Management Plan covers the whole U.S. EEZ from Maine through the Florida Keys, and so you're looking at the entire east coast, and so a change in the FMP has the potential to affect some fisheries in the EEZ throughout the U.S. Atlantic, and, just as a reminder, the South Atlantic Council serves as the lead management council for dolphin and wahoo, but they do manage them in cooperation with the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council and the New England Fishery Management Council through seats on the Dolphin Wahoo Committee, which meets during the South Atlantic Council's quarterly meetings.

The initial request for considering bullet and frigate mackerel species came from the Mid-Atlantic Council, and this was in March of 2018, when the Mid-Atlantic Council wrote a letter to the South Atlantic Council requesting consideration of managing bullet and frigate mackerel as ecosystem component species in the Dolphin Wahoo Fishery Management Plan.

Really, these two mackerel species were originally included in the Mid-Atlantic's unmanaged forage omnibus amendment. However, the two species were removed before this amendment was approved, and those two species were essentially disapproved by the National Marine Fisheries Service, largely stating concerns over inconsistency with National Standard 2, which addresses best scientific information available, and the crux of that was from the Mid-Atlantic's Scientific and Statistical Committee had given some size recommendations on helping the Mid-Atlantic Council consider which forage species would be in that omnibus amendment, and the bullet mackerel and frigate mackerel fell outside of that recommendation, and so there was some best scientific information concerns. Then, also, the agency cited insufficient connection to the Mid-Atlantic's managed fisheries.

Looking at the distribution and connection of the two mackerel species to dolphin and wahoo, bullet mackerel are found from Cape Cod all the way through the Gulf of Mexico. Frigate mackerel are mostly found from North Carolina through Florida. This is largely in the South Atlantic region. However, there is a pretty large distribution there, and both species have been identified in the diets of dolphin and wahoo in the north Atlantic.

Wahoo have a particularly strongly reliance on bullet and frigate mackerel as forage, and the two species have been observed as the most dominant forage species by mass and number in wahoo diets. Dolphin tend to have a more diverse diet and a lower reliance on the two mackerel species, but bullet and frigate mackerel have been identified as important prey for dolphin at times.

Moving over to a little bit of information on the current fisheries for bullet and frigate mackerel, commercial landings have been reported, and we looked at bullet and frigate mackerel over the



past twenty years by dealers in the Mid-Atlantic and New England regions. They were all reported as frigate mackerel, and this could be that there is some species ID issues that could be there. Also, it might be maybe the bullet mackerel just weren't picked up on the trip ticket codes, but, essentially, when you look at the commercial landings, they are all reported as frigate mackerel, but, in general, commercial landings are typically fairly low, at the moment.

We have approximately 4,500 pounds, on average, over the twenty-year time series that was looked at. The ex-vessel value of the landings is typically around \$2,400, with an ex-vessel price of about ninety-three-cents a pound. There are some years where landings have greatly increased above the average. Approximately 37,000 pounds were landed commercially in 1999, and 20,000 pounds were landed in 2000.

However, landings in recent years have been, typically, pretty low, and so, moving over to the recreational side, recreational landings of bullet and frigate mackerel have been variable and really sporadic. However, on average, there is approximately 4,700 pounds of landings for both species combined. Many years, however, there are no reported landings, or no recorded landings, recreationally, and there have been some years where recreational landings have spiked. In 2012, there were approximately 52,000 pounds of bullet and frigate mackerel landed, and, in 2013, it was approximately 18,000 pounds, and so, as with the commercial sector, there are these sporadic years where you see some spikes in landings.

Recreational catches of bullet and frigate mackerel have largely occurred in the South Atlantic region. However, there are some catches that have been reported in the Mid as well, and so, now, that's some of the background information on bullet and frigate mackerel, and we'll move over into sort of the regulatory parameters of ecosystem component species, and so what is an ecosystem component species and how would a council add that to a fishery management plan.

Really, there is no ecosystem component mentioned in the Magnuson-Stevens Act itself. The basis is derived from multiple references to ecosystem and the authority for councils to conserve target and non-target species and habitats through fishery management plans, and so there is some guidance provided on how councils should consider ecosystem component species that are captured in the National Standard Guidelines.

Looking at what is an ecosystem component species, they are defined as stocks that a council or the Secretary has deemed do not require conservation and management, but desire to list in an FMP, in order to achieve ecosystem management objectives. Really, the council has not necessarily specified ecosystem management objectives in the FMP. However, as we just saw in looking at the goals and objectives, these are being considered in the revised goals and objectives of the Dolphin Wahoo Fishery Management Plan, and so we're trying to capture some of those ecosystem management objectives.

Looking at how a council can add a species and designate a species as an ecosystem component, councils may choose to identify stocks within their FMPs as ecosystem component species if a council determines that the stocks do not require conservation and management, and the management measures can be adopted for many reasons, but it includes collection of data of the ecosystem component species, minimizing bycatch or bycatch mortality, protecting the associated role in the ecosystem, and to address other ecosystem issues, and so a little bit of flexibility there.

In a nutshell, it appears that frigate and bullet mackerel may have the potential to be listed as ecosystem component species for dolphin and wahoo, in the Dolphin Wahoo FMP, and this would occur if the council and the Secretary agree that the species do not fit requirements for implementing conservation and management measures and if it's determined that the species are important in relation to ecosystem management of the dolphin and wahoo stocks.

To add a species to an FMP as an ecosystem component, the council must make an amendment, and, in this case, it's Amendment 12. There is different ways that councils can do this. Some councils, such as the Pacific and Mid-Atlantic, have designated ecosystem component species through a comprehensive approach, and so, really, adding these unmanaged species to all of their fishery management plans at once. However, that's not necessarily required, and a council can add a species to a single fishery management plan.

Looking at some of the examples on how other councils have designated unmanaged prey as ecosystem component species, the Mid-Atlantic Council, as mentioned, did it all through their unmanaged forage omnibus amendment, and this comprehensively implemented management measures for seventeen species, or groups of species, with sixteen being designated as ecosystem components in all of the Mid-Atlantic's fishery management plans, and that was intended to prevent develop of new or expanded directed commercial fisheries for those ecosystem component species until adequate information could be gathered to assess the potential impacts, and, as mentioned, the Mid-Atlantic Council received input from their SSC, Scientific and Statistical Committee, on how to narrow down important forage species.

Looking at what the Mid-Atlantic Council implemented through their amendment, there was a possession limit, and so a 1,700-pound possession limit for all of their ecosystem component species combined, and there was a permit requirement to commercially possess and land those species, and there were transit provisions put in place that would allow vessels to transit through the Mid-Atlantic's management unit in excess of those possession limits, provided that they were caught outside of the management unit. Then, finally, recordkeeping and reporting requirements that require vessel operators and seafood dealers to report the catch and sale of the ecosystem component species on existing trip forms and reports.

The Pacific Fishery Management Council developed a similar amendment, through their Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment 1, or CEBA 1, and, there again, they comprehensively implemented management measures for multiple species across four of the Pacific Council's finfish fishery management plans, and they took a comprehensive approach, and it was intended to prevent development of new directed fisheries on unmanaged forage until adequate information could be gathered to assess potential impacts, and so they were kind of freezing the footprint, so to speak, of current fisheries. They also adopted Council Operating Procedure 24, which was a process that the council used to consider research proposals intended to develop the necessary scientific information that may lead to potential future directed fisheries.

Looking at the general measures that the Pacific Council established, they had a retention limit. They had general measures and then trawl-gear-specific measures. On the general measures front, they had a retention limit that the ecosystem component species could not be onboard without any other species as well, and so you couldn't just harvest those ecosystem component species.

There was a trip limit of ten metric tons per vessel, and there was also an annual limit for each vessel to only land up to thirty metric tons of the ecosystem component species in a calendar year, and so they had a trip limit and an annual limit and also a processing limitation of at-sea processing for those species. They also had trawl-gear-specific measures looking at trip limits and annual limits within the trawl fishery, specifically focusing on squid.

Then the North Pacific Council recently classified squid as an ecosystem component in their groundfish fishery management plans, and the North Pacific noted that squid are important prey species for marine mammals, fish, and other squid, and so the ecosystem goal, so to speak. Although squid did not require conservation and management, it was still appropriate to take measures to minimize squid bycatch, to the extent practicable. The North Pacific established recordkeeping and reporting requirements and also had a retention limit, and so those are some kinds of tools in the toolbox, so to speak, that they decided to use.

Then, finally, the South Atlantic Council has listed several ecosystem component species in the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan, and so these are not directly implemented, due to concerns over protection of prey species, and so they weren't coming at it from the forage perspective. However, there were no regulations associated with the ecosystem component species listed in the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan, but the species did stay within the fishery management unit. Having this listing, essentially keeping the species listed as ecosystem components, has prioritized the species for continued data collection, and that may help with future ecosystem modeling and ecosystem-based fishery management efforts, and so it keeps them in the management unit and also prioritizes them for data collection, essentially.

Looking at some of the implications, and so what happens if a species is listed as ecosystem component, and it certainly recognizes the ecosystem role of the species as prey for a species that the council directly manages, and it can provide protection for the species from an unexpected ramp-up in directed effort or landings, and it allows for orderly growth of directed fisheries, if desired, it addresses bycatch concerns, and it prioritizes the species for research and monitoring.

There is the potential cost to fishery participants by capping potential revenue streams if management measures are put in place, and there is also a cost to the council and NMFS, essentially an administrative cost, by dedicating resources to adding the ecosystem component species to an FMP and implementing regulations, as well as providing monitoring.

Looking at some of the potential options that the council has for moving forward that have been identified so far, as shown through past actions of the South Atlantic Council and other councils, there are multiple options that the South Atlantic Council has, and the seemingly somewhat flexible guidance in the National Standard Guidelines appears to encourage novel ideas on the part of the council, provided that the ideas remain within the existing constraints, and so there's some out-of-the-box thinking, so to speak there, and it's somewhat encouraged.

I will run through the potential options that the council is currently examining. Option 1 is requesting guidance from the SSC on identifying the different prey species to be listed as ecosystem components. Option 2 is the council could simply designate bullet and frigate mackerel as ecosystem component species with no management-related items. There again, this does elevate the importance of the species for research and monitoring, as well as data collection.

Option 3 is prohibit or limit a directed fishery through a trip limit, or Option 4 is prohibit or limit a directed fishery through an annual vessel limit, and so you can have an annual limit or a trip limit. Option 5 is implement a reporting requirement, and Option 6 is implement a permit requirement, and so, essentially, a permit would be necessary to land bullet and frigate mackerel, and then, in Option 7, implement a protocol for building directed fisheries for bullet and frigate mackerel, and this is really establishing a mechanism similar to that that was put in place by the Pacific Fishery Management Council or the Mid-Atlantic Council, to make sure that the necessary data is gathered first before moving forward with any expansion of directed fisheries.

Option 8 is kind of a catch-all category. As I mentioned, under the National Standard Guidelines, management measures can be adopted in order to address other ecosystem issues, and so are there other ecosystem issues that need to be addressed in the Dolphin Wahoo Fishery Management Plan and management measures that could be put in place to address some of those issues, particularly in regard to bullet and frigate mackerel.

In addition to these options, the council also expressed interest in exploring a prohibition on the sale of bullet and frigate mackerel as an additional option outside of the eight options listed, and just a quick update on where this issue stands now. The topic was scoped in May, and a similar presentation was given, giving background on bullet mackerel and frigate mackerel, and, really, we got several responses from scoping, and the vast majority of commenters expressed support for the council moving forward to add bullet and frigate mackerel as ecosystem component species in the Dolphin Wahoo FMP.

Initially, the Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panels strongly recommended that the council take proactive actions for bullet and frigate mackerel, due to the sound science regarding their importance as prey, particularly for wahoo, but also dolphin, and so, as mentioned earlier, at the June 2019 meeting, the council voted to begin working on Amendment 12 to the Dolphin Wahoo Fishery Management Plan.

Looking at some of the potential timing, we're fairly early in the process. The council will be reviewing an options paper at the September meeting on the different actions that could be added to this amendment, and then, really, you're looking at the -- The council will probably review this over several meetings, potentially taking final action in September of 2020, with the final rule publishing probably sometime in the spring of 2021, and so this is the rough timeline of how this amendment could go, there again emphasizing that we're very early in the process of where this amendment stands.

With that, I wanted to jump over to the discussion document. What's included in the discussion document is a table of the different options that were mentioned in the presentation, and so you have the eight different options here, and, also, there is an additional option on potentially exploring a prohibition on the sale of bullet and frigate mackerel.

Looking at some of the potential discussion questions for the AP, as a general question, does the AP have any comments on Amendment 12 at this time? Is there an opinion on whether or not there is a need to establish proactive measures to protect bullet and frigate mackerels, since the two species are forage for dolphin and wahoo? There again, particularly for wahoo, and there is a strong connection there.

Are there additional options that the council is not considering out of these nine options but they should be considering, and so is there another potential action that the council should consider in this amendment? Out of the options that the council is considering, are there some that the AP particularly recommends, or, on the other hand, particularly recommends not developing, and so are some of these options more palatable, so to speak, than others, and, also, are there others that maybe should not see further consideration? With that, I will stop here, and I have the table up on the board, and I will turn it over.

MR. ROSHER: Are there any hands raised?

MR. REYNOLDS: I think, from talking to the fishermen and guys that I know, mainly up the way, like the Virginia area, or guys that experience and actually see the large landings or transfer of a targeted species, and kind of where all this plays into is I think it would be a good idea to definitely consider these. We know, especially wahoo, when we're targeting wahoo, we're trolling through the bullet bonitos, and we're trolling, and we're using speedos, and we're using tinker mackerels, and they're definitely a choice prey.

I mean, not only from the biological standpoint, with gut samples, but just as fishermen with experience. We know they play a really large role in a wahoo's diet, and so, if there's something that we can do to help manage these and designate them as an ecosystem component and then maybe even establish a trip limit, or some kind of regulatory measure, just to ensure that there is no giant landings, or sporadic giant landings, from year to year, to kind of throw the whole balance of the ecosystem off, I think that would be a good idea. Thank you.

MR. ROSHER: I think I'm in full agreement, John. If you look at parts of the world where you have really robust fisheries, like take the bluefin fishery in Canada. If you want to catch a big bluefin, you go there, and it really boils down to they take a very conservative approach on harvesting their prey species, and I want to say that the number -- Last time I was there, I heard one of the Canadians talking about 10 percent, and that's what they allow, for aerial surveys, and so I don't know that that's entirely accurate, but the point is, when you protect the prey, you benefit the predators, and so I think that's the goal of -- It should be the goal of all of us here.

I think it's important to send a strong message to the council that we're in support, if everybody is, and maybe take a vote, but just establishing them as an ecosystem component and whether there is -- I will let the vote send the message, but there is currently no limits or protection for them now, and I think we're at least -- At least all the comments that I have heard so far outside of this meeting, in conversations I've had, everybody is in support of making sure that that population of prey is healthy, and so I will turn it back over to you, John Hadley.

MR. BARR: I was just going to -- I mean, I was going to reiterate it, but Ray pretty much said it there, and I personally would like to see them added as an ecosystem component species, with a commercial trip limit, and I think that is essential to protecting the species as well, and so I am in favor of that as well. Definitely you protect the forage fish and the predators will benefit.

MR. ROSHER: John, would it be appropriate to take a vote on this or somehow create a motion that we would vote on?

MR. HADLEY: Yes. If anyone wants to make a motion, I can type it up on the screen here.

MR. ROSHER: Okay. **How about a motion that reads something like the Dolphin Wahoo AP recommends that the council designate bullet and frigate mackerel as an ecosystem component, and we're in favor of them proactively -- The council proactively conserving their role as prey.**

MR. HADLEY: The second part was also endorse the concept of --

MR. ROSHER: **That the South Atlantic Council is proactively conserving these species as prey, or something to that effect.** If anybody wants to clean that up, they can, if there's something that I'm leaving out.

MR. REYNOLDS: Something like through regulatory actions, or through associated regulatory actions, and that would throw the commercial trip limit into play, I think.

MR. ROSHER: Maybe even mention it through possible trip limits or no commercial sale. One of the things you've got to think about is that prohibiting any harvest can negatively impact recreational fishermen, and so you don't want to go that far, that you can't harvest any, but it's really the mass harvest that I think we have to be afraid of and that we're concerned about, and so, if it can be written where it could either be through trip limits or a no commercial sale option. I think there's going to be a lot of discussion before anything happens anyway, and so this is really just to get the ball rolling to give me something to produce to the council.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. If I could make a suggestion, if it's okay with everyone, if we could kind of split those off into multiple motions, and so I'm thinking -- I heard three things there. One is kind of endorsing the concept of designating them as ecosystem component species, proactively protecting them as prey, and then maybe we could get a couple of separate motions on some of the options that the AP is in favor of, and I heard no sale and also -- Potentially implementing no sale and potentially implementing a trip limit, and would that be okay?

MR. ROSHER: Yes, that sounds fine.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. To start off with, do we have a second for this initial motion? There again, we'll get into the other two motions in a minute. I see John with your hand raised.

MR. REYNOLDS: That was just my second. I don't know if that's the way to --

MR. HADLEY: All right. The motion is on the table. Is there any other discussion that anyone has on this motion? Brice, I see your hand is raised.

MR. BARR: I was just raising it as a second.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. Gotcha. If there is no further discussion, should we go ahead and take a vote? Ray, is that okay with you?

MR. ROSHER: Yes, that's fine.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. The way we're going to do this is everyone in favor, if you go ahead and digitally raise your hand, and I will take that as in favor, and then I'll put everyone's hands down, and then those that are opposed can raise their hand. **At this time, all in favor, please raise your hand, six in favor; anyone opposed to this motion; anyone that would like to abstain from the motion. I am seeing six in favor, no opposed, and no abstentions. The motion passes.**

With that, do we want to get into a motion, as we discussed, on potentially some of the options that the AP particular thinks that the council should consider?

MR. ROSHER: It probably wouldn't be a bad idea to make both proposals, and I don't know what everybody's feeling is, but do we need to go down this road of advising them on whether we would want the recommendation to be specific enough to say that we think it should be, for instance, trip limits or a prohibition of sale? I am not sure that we're equipped to make those kind of recommendations, because of all the information that needs to be considered, and I don't know. I am not opposed to making a vote and making a recommendation, but I just wanted to get a consensus.

MR. BARR: I don't know if we need more information on that or not. I mean, I don't know, and I guess that's just open for discussion.

MR. HADLEY: That's certainly up to the AP, and you all are more than welcome to make a motion. I think, at this point, certainly we captured it in the discussion, and that would be -- That would end up in the AP's report to the council, that there was some discussion and initial support for -- I heard potentially exploring a no-sale provision and also implementing a trip limit. If you do want to send a clear endorsement, so to speak, a motion would certainly do that as well, but I think the discussion will be captured in the AP report.

MR. REYNOLDS: **I would make a motion just to consider regulatory actions in conjunction with adding bullet and frigate mackerel as an EC component.** I think that will be general enough to where the council can -- That looks good to me, if that's -- They will have the options of regulatory actions that will further be voted on after that, but definitely consider regulatory action along with an EC component.

MR. ROSHER: John, do you think it's important to add to that that the goal is to prohibit increased effort? I don't know if that -- In other words, it looked like, in 1999 and 2000, there were about 20,000 pounds harvested. There was a spike, and I think it was discussed at the very beginning of the meeting, talking about increased effort and then decreased effort. I think the goal is just to not allow any kind of strong fishery to develop for something that could be kind of quietly critical to the predator populations, and not just dolphin wahoo, but, obviously, marlin and swordfish and so on. I've caught swordfish on frigate mackerel, or bullet, and I don't know which one we had, but we jigged them right at dusk and caught them, and we caught a swordfish that night on it, and so I remember that. It's a fish that's important to more species than we realize, I guess is my point.

MR. HADLEY: I think, within the AP report, sometimes we'll have a motion, and then we can have an additional note, so to speak, kind of explaining that motion, and I think we could capture that. If it's okay with you, we could capture that, what you just discussed, in explanation of the motion. Does that sound suitable?

MR. ROSHER: That's fine.

MR. HADLEY: All right. **We have a motion on the table, and it's a motion to consider regulatory actions in conjunction with adding bullet and frigate mackerel as an ecosystem component.** It has not been seconded. Is there anyone that would like to second it?

MR. ROSHER: I can do it, if you want.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. All right. It looks like we have a second there, and is there any further discussion? Does anyone want to discuss the motion any more? Brice, I see you hand up. Is that for discussion or for voting?

MR. BARR: I was just attempting to second it. I mean, I don't know if we verbally second or just raise your hand or whatever.

MR. HADLEY: Gotcha. I just saw it up there, but okay. If there's no further discussion, I have put everyone's hand down. **All those in favor, please raise your hand, five in favor, Wendall, Tim, Ray, John, and Dan.** Brice, did I see your hand up?

MR. BARR: My hand seems to be eternally stuck up, but, yes, it's up.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. Duly noted. **I am seeing six in favor.** I am putting everyone's hand down. **Anyone opposed, please raise your hand now. Seeing no one opposed, the motion passes. Any abstentions? Anyone that would like to abstain, raise your hand. The motion passes.**

Is there any other discussion on the options that the council is currently considering for Amendment 12? I think we've had some good discussion here, and we have a couple of motions that kind of point towards the direction that the AP is leaning towards on the topic. Does anyone else have any more comments?

MR. REYNOLDS: Is there going to be a time where we go into motions for Amendment 10 as well?

MR. HADLEY: We can circle back around to that in Other Business, which is the next item, if that's okay with you.

MR. REYNOLDS: Okay. Thank you.

MR. HADLEY: Sure. No other comments on Amendment 12, bullet and frigate mackerel? All right. Well, thank you, everyone, and, if we want to come back to that, we can, but that leads us to Other Business, and, Ray, I will hand it back over to you.

MR. ROSHER: Okay. I think it's probably good to back up to 10, and there were quite a few points in there that probably deserve some discussion, and, John, I will start with you, John Reynolds.



MR. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Ray. Along these lines, I mean, we're talking about the vision for the dolphin fishery and that we're seeing and how much the amendment has changed and the data that's been input, and I think two of the main concerns of pressure, like we were talking about, possibly, the largest amount of recreational effort is probably coming from Florida, and the largest amount of commercial effort is coming from North and South Carolina, and these are probably two of the largest changes, and then we have to consider regulatory actions that we want to see in the future for a precautionary measure on the fishery and access to everyone.

Also, as an ecosystem component, as we're considering bullet and frigate mackerel, this last week, and, I mean, everyone who fishes a lot knows this, especially for dolphin, but, this last week alone, I can't even tell you how many blue marlin were caught in Islamorada from fish that popped up in schoolies, and guys pitched them another schoolie, or however it went down, but most of those fish, blue marlin, are feeding on dolphin.

They're a big component and to be considered in the ecosystem management as well, and so, along the same lines as we're thinking of bullet and frigate mackerel, that brings me back to thinking of all of this at once and thinking of increased longline efforts and looking at, biologically, dolphin being a key component of tropical and sub-tropical -- The food web, as a predator and as a prey for predator species and considering trip limits.

We still don't have a commercial trip limit in place for dolphin from the beginning of the season, and, if we're considering the economic value of about -- I think it's \$456 million annually to the full South Atlantic, \$267 million of that deriving from Florida alone, and how all of these play into the whole future of the fishery and what we want to do with it from a social and economic standpoint. I wanted to consider dolphin as an ecosystem component as well, possibly, to the extent that we could make that practical, and make a motion to establish a commercial trip limit for the beginning of the dolphin season. Thank you.

MR. HADLEY: All right, and so I'm hearing -- John, would you like to go ahead and make a motion now, or is that your intention?

MR. REYNOLDS: Yes.

MR. ROSHER: John, I would like to talk just for a second before a motion is created. I have always found it strange that, on a charter, I can't sell a single dolphin, but I can go out the next day and catch 10,000 pounds, if I were capable of it. It is, I think, important to consider both sides of their role as predators and prey. They are kind of a unique species. They are filters of the blue water, really, and so it's important to have a healthy fishery, for all the reasons you mentioned, but what we need to consider is that, if we -- This is one of the challenges being in the South Atlantic, and you see it with like the -- We talk about daily boat limits and filleting fish at sea, and there's lots of things that are kind of unique to one state and not the others.

It might be worth talking a little bit about what the ultimate goal is if we talked about trip limits commercially. Are we targeting the longliners, primarily, or are we targeting hook-and-line fishermen? From what I have seen, and this is just a comment kind of touching on the prohibition of sale, and I've had several restaurants that I used to sell dolphin to, years ago, talk about, in recent months, the lack of quality of the product that they get, which is almost all, almost 95 or 98 percent, imported fish today, because we have taken away that fresh, local infusion of fish that

came from charter boats, and there just aren't very many dedicated commercial dolphin fishermen in Florida. There are just not that many. I mean, there's just little bits that will come into these fish houses, just here and there, but it's not even as much as when it was allowed when for-hire sales were allowed, it seems.

I used to remember guys coming into Key Largo Fisheries and other places, where it's pretty routine to see a recreational guy bringing in his catch. I think there's been a variety of limitations put on the average recreational/commercial fisherman, the guy that has a boat, a recreational boat, but, in years past, you used to be able to commercial fish pretty freely. Now there is so many requirements, all the way down to vessel safety gear, and there are so many things that have changed that we're seeing a tremendous reduction in the amount of small scale commercial fishing, and so let's talk a little bit about what the goal would be.

Are we trying to restrict the goal of the small-time, commercial fisherman, rod-and-reel fisherman, or are we trying to look at the bigger picture of greater harvest in the Carolinas, and this is a subject that we could talk for a long time about, but I just think it's worth bringing it up to this group and get everybody's input, and then let's make a motion that is tangible and fair and meaningful.

MR. REYNOLDS: I couldn't agree more, Ray. I think everything that you said just reiterates kind of the total overall thinking that I was having.

MR. ROSHER: I don't know what the solution is, but I think it starts with trip limits on the large-scale vessels, but, again, there's a lot to be discussed there. I mean, you've got boats that -- We're not trying to -- We don't want to put recreational or charter boats out of business because of unnecessary restrictions, and we really don't want to put longliners in the Carolinas out of business if their impact is not negatively affecting the stock.

I really want to hear more input from this group before we try to tell people what they should be doing. It's just we have a pretty heavy responsibility. If we make a recommendation, it needs to be heard by the council and considered, and we don't want to -- We just don't want to steer people down the wrong road or react in a knee-jerk manner because we heard something or somebody said something about this or that. It's really important.

As somebody that is engaged in all three categories, recreational, charter, and commercial, and it's like the prohibition of for-hire sale of fish, and that impacted my life a lot, and my crew's life, and it changed our business. We went from mates that were really engaged and real hard-working, because they looked for a little bonus at the end of the day, to now we catch -- I notice that my mates are a lot less engaged.

They still do their job, but twenty is plenty is the word on the dock, and it's -- I am not saying it's good or bad, and I'm kind of ambivalent on -- I am torn between whether -- There is pluses and minuses to both, but the point is these laws and decisions have far-reaching effects. It changed our world just with one law prohibiting the sale of leftover fish that we had on a charter, and it changed kind of the nature of crews.

Crews are not as hungry as they used to be, and it's not entirely bad. Again, there is two sides to it. Our crews are more focused on service now, and it's not about having tons of bait ready and tons of rods and leaders and being just go, go, go. They are more focused on just catching a few

of these and a few of those, and so I can't say whether that's good or bad, but the point is -- Not to get off track, but the point is, if we make a recommendation on trip limits commercially, we could be affecting other people's lives and prohibiting people from accomplishing things which are maybe not totally bad, and so let's just all talk about that for a few minutes, and I invite everybody's commentary, but let's try to go into this as educated as we can.

MR. REYNOLDS: Okay. That sounds good, Ray. Just a little bit of my input. What we have is everything is clear with data, I guess. Mainly looking at landings that have risen in the PLL fishery, and so we have about an average of 610,000 pounds annually that were landed, from about 2004 to 2013, with only about 60 percent of those, on the commercial fishery, caught on pelagic longline gear. Now we're up to about 990,000 pounds annually, in the commercial ACL, but about 90 percent of that is harvested on PLL gear, and so that's a big change.

Most of those fish that are being landed in the larger numbers on PLL gear, which has changed a lot, are caught from May to July, and that just happens to be one of the peak spawning times for large dolphin off of the Carolinas, and this is all backed with good NOAA data and National Ocean Science data, and so, thinking of how this relates to overall stock and quality of the fishery and abundance, and not only that, but how it relates to other commercial fishermen in different regions, and even in the same region, in smalltime commercial fishermen and how the pelagic longline fishery has taken over most of the commercial ACL, I think that establishing a trip limit that would be fair and equitable to all would be a good idea.

MR. ROSHER: Are there other comments? The one thing I would like to mention, and I've done quite a bit of harvesting of mahi for the University of Miami Rosenstiel School, and they have a fish hatchery, and I have learned a lot from those guys about the life cycle of dolphin. They start -- These are just some of the bullet points.

They start producing viable eggs at about 250 grams, which is right around a half-pound, and, from what they gather in their filters, in the tanks that they keep the fish, the females lay about 5 percent of their body weight in eggs every other day, and so, if you look at a twenty-pound dolphin laying about a pound of eggs, and I don't know what the number of eggs would be in that size dolphin, because, obviously, as the body size increases, you see their egg size increase also, but we did have a fish that we put in the tank at about five pounds, and, nine-and-a-half months later, it weighed, on a digital scale, 56.4 pounds.

It shows you, obviously, that those were ideal conditions, being fed all that it wanted to eat and having no predators, and not having to migrate, but it shows you, physiologically, how fast they can grow and how important those larger fish are to perpetuating the species, and so, again, I'm not an anti-commercial guy, but I do think that, over the last few years, I have seen fewer -- I have seen tougher conditions for the recreational fishery in Florida.

That being said, I have a gut feeling that placing some restrictions on the longline effort could help the overall population of fish, and I know there's other factors, and that's kind of what I wanted to open the floor up to, is what is the greatest limiter of dolphin stocks? Is it harvest, or is it environmental, or is it -- There is many things that could affect it, and so, any comments that anybody has, I would like to hear, but my initial feeling is having some form of a trip limit on the longline fishery could help stem the tide of an increased harvest of what are really critical fish to

the spawning stock, just to increase the biomass of that population, and I just think that we ought to be careful harvesting larger fish in big numbers, and so anybody's thoughts?

MR. BARR: I have a quick question regarding this amendment, and they've messed with it kind of back and forth, and can somebody tell me if -- I know that, initially, they had the hook size, and they were going to mess with the hook size again and take them back up to the larger, and I believe it was a 14/0 hook, and is that still in the amendment, or did they take out, because they have put things in and taken them out a lot.

MR. HADLEY: Yes, that's still in the amendment, and so what the council, the South Atlantic Council, is looking at is mirroring all of the essentially gear and training requirements of the HMS pelagic longline fleet. Part of that is when fishing pelagic longlines -- I believe it's either you can have a 14/0 non-offset, or it has to be at least a 16/0 offset circle hook, and it's a fairly big hook, and, to answer your question directly, that is still in the amendment.

MR. BARR: Okay. I was just -- Because it seems like that, when they reduced that hook size, it was in direct correlation with an increased mahi catch, dolphin catch, and so I am strongly in favor of putting catch limits on some of these longline fisheries, and I do hope that that will increase -- Help increase the fishery overall. We just feel that it's too many fish out of the water too quickly, and that's my opinion on that topic.

MR. ROSHER: Brice, have you noticed, over the last say three or four years, a reduction in what you would call average availability, or average catch, over the summer?

MR. BARR: 100 percent, Ray. There is so many topics on this, and I was strongly in favor of the charter boat sales, and, I mean, you touched on all of the major points with that, as far as just the imports and so on. I feel like, if they could have considered that, that, with the requirements, there wouldn't be that many charter fishermen in that category, but, also, to answer your question, our stock has gone down significantly. We talk about the good old days, and the good old days for us was literally within ten years ago. I would say within the last five years, we've seen a drastic decline in our dolphin.

MR. ROSHER: Yes, and, obviously, I was -- As most of you know, I was at the forefront of trying to re-allow the sale of for-hire fish, but, like I mentioned a few minutes ago, we have adapted, and our focus has become more service, and we're getting home a lot earlier, but not that any of those things should supersede the decision and the importance of good-quality fish being put in the marketplace locally. I mean, that's what I look at the most.

Obviously, it's nice to make extra money, but it's really, I think, hurting the restaurants a lot. They don't have the quality of fish that we used to provide, but the only other thing that has made me, I guess, a little less adamant about allowing the sale of for-hire fish is we haven't seen the numbers that we used to see that I felt justified the sale of those fish, and I hate to say that, but that's really the truth. It just doesn't seem like we have the fish on-hand like we used to, and that's why I brought up, a few minutes ago, that I'm inviting discussion of anybody's input on why that is.

The only obvious change is what John Reynolds mentioned, that the effort has increased on the longline front, and I mentioned my friend that is seeing trips that have 30,000, and a lot of 10,000 to 20,000-pound trips, and, I guess, in fairness to the longline boats, you have to probably catch a

pretty large quantity to make the trip justifiable, but what is enough, and what is a fair number that can still allow them to make a living, but maybe not take as many fish out of the water?

I think those fish are really critical fish, and that's just my opinion, and so this is really what I was after. I wanted some dialogue on where everybody's head is on available stocks in our area over the last few years, historically, and does anybody have any good, I guess, insight into why, and everything I've heard over the last three to five years is that the number of dolphin have become fewer, at least in southeast Florida, the eastern side of Florida, and it concerns me. I think it's our job to try to make some good recommendations, and so, based on that, I will open the floor to anybody's either comments on this matter or if someone would like to make a motion that they want to pass on to the council.

MR. HADLEY: If I could interject, I saw that Wendell has had his hand up for a while, and, also, I think, Tim, you had your hand up briefly and then took it down, but some folks, I think, were wanting to chime in.

MR. SCALISE: This is Tim Scalise in Charleston, South Carolina. Just what I see with -- There is a good many longline boats in May and June fishing out of here, primarily swordfish boats that switch gears when the dolphin move through, and I don't think that, for any of them, the dolphin is their livelihood, and I think it's just an easy catch.

One thing I did notice is, and I have watched them unload a couple of times, is the size of the fish. A lot of them are smaller size, six -- I asked myself, what is the commercial value of a six to eight-pound dolphin, as opposed to the value when the recreational or charter/for-hire side catches a six to eight-pound dolphin, and I just think, at the end of the day, once that fish is broken down, and it's not really big enough, in size portions, to serve in a restaurant, and I would like to see a larger size limit for the commercial and for the longliners.

Maybe that boat size has something to play in that. I think some of the ones they catch is not necessarily in the longline gear, but, as we all know, fish get attracted to the bigger fish that are hooked onto the gear and to the floats and stuff like that, and they may hook-and-line or handline small fish, and, opposed to throwing it back, they're just going to keep everything. I don't know if anybody has any thoughts on that.

MR. ROSHER: One of the challenges, Tim, and that was a great comment, and thank you, and one of the challenges is that, in some cases, on longline gear, I don't -- Do you have any insight, Tim, into how many times out of a hundred fish that the fish would come up dead? How quickly are they servicing the gear? My fear is you put a size limit and then you're releasing dead discards, and that is never a good thing.

That is where maybe the hook requirement, a larger hook requirement, could possible take effect, although I have seen awful small fish on a big circle hook, like tile fishing, and I would think that dolphin are kind of the same way. They will fit whatever they can in their mouth, and so it's -- I am not sure that there's an easy answer, but I am really open to ideas.

MR. SCALISE: I think some of the catch is just bailing fish that come up as they're hauling gear, and so, if you can eliminate a lot of that, and, I mean, a little bit may go a long way.

MR. ROSHER: Got it. I didn't realize that they were bailing them when they got the big fish up to the boat, but that makes a lot of sense, and that is a possible solution, because -- Like they do with swordfish, they could go with a fork length, or they could go with a weight, which a swordfish, commercially, they could go either way, with a caudal fin measurement or the weight. All of those are good ideas. Being out of that area, Tim, I appreciate any input you can give us on this, because I am not exposed to it.

MR. SCALISE: In the catch that I saw unloaded, I would say the vast majority -- I don't know, and I'm just guessing, but 75 percent was probably under twelve pounds, and so I just have a hard time thinking that all of that is caught on the longline gear. I mean, I didn't look and see what size hooks they're using and stuff like that, but, I mean, I am definitely not a proponent of discards, but I think there's a median in there somewhere.

MR. ROSHER: Yes. All right. Any other comments? I really think this is all important to consider.

MR. BARNETT: I think that -- Like, in the last meeting, I think the size limit needs to be increased on the recreational and the commercial. The recreational people go out and catch twenty or thirty little, baby dolphin that's a five to six-pound average, and you figure that commercially is -- It doesn't have any value, and so, basically, if you increase the size on the commercial, it wouldn't hurt them, really, that much in dollar figures.

MR. ROSHER: Right. Those are good points. The one thing that I've noticed, and it kind of goes back to my comments about how fast they grow, but, in Florida, or in south Florida, there are days, recently even, where might look at a hundred fish under twenty inches and one or two fish over twenty, and there are just schools of fish, and they're all juveniles, and so, for us, on a charter, there's been a lot of days this summer where I know that it sounds small, but that's the hand we're dealt in this region, but there are many days where we've only had five to ten keeper dolphin. We could have caught 300, if we wanted to just catch and release, but there's just not that many available fish, especially this summer.

Now, this time of the year that we're getting into, we do see an increase in size, August and September, but the reason I mentioned this is I think most of the fish that get into the Carolinas, and definitely up into New England and the Mid-Atlantic, they're all, generally, a four to eight-pound fish, which would be legal by our standards, and the reason I'm talking about all of this is it feels like, in my heart, that the twenty-inch limit is hard to decrease in our area, because we're flooded with really, really juvenile fish, and I know that it doesn't seem like there's enough to mess with on a fish that small, but you would be surprised at the people that will pay a charter and be happy to take home five or ten fish that are twenty to twenty-four inches, because now they have something to eat and something to take home to their friends and family.

It scares me to think of going down on our size limit, only because I grew up at a time when there was no size limit, and there were a lot of fish caught smaller than that, and so twenty inches feels healthy here, but I do believe that it wouldn't hurt to raise that bar as those fish go north and mature, and most of the research that Don Hammond has done seems to indicate that those fish are generally moving north. Occasionally, you get a tag move south, but it seems like they're moving their way to the north and growing by the day, as they get up there. What is everybody's feeling about that?

MR. BARR: I agree with you, Ray, on the twenty inch. I'm remembering days where there wasn't a size limit, and it's my opinion, if we do have clients that want to keep a handful of fish, and we're picking through these smaller fish and trying to find some that are legal, I mean, if we have them, and we don't just de-hook them over the side, if we actually try to measure him, and he's nineteen-and-a-half, or nineteen-and-three-quarters inches, and we let that fish go, a lot of times it is a dead discard. I mean, it's very difficult to measure.

Some of our guys have even said maybe go back to a no size limit and have a lower boat limit. I know, me personally, and I can't say for a lot of the people, but, me personally, I would still fish for, obviously, larger fish, but, if I had a handful of fish that -- I was in a school trying to find a handful of legal fish, but raising the size limit, for us, would be detrimental.

MR. ROSHER: Remember the comment that I made earlier about in the Carolinas and talking about a very restrictive wahoo limit. They would get to a point where they couldn't run the trip, because it would limit the people that would be able to afford a trip and justify it for whatever the fish is that they hoped to catch on that charter.

I want to be careful to do the same thing. I want to keep boats running in all three categories, recreational, charter, and commercial. Remember there is the possibility of creating some slot limits, meaning, just to throw it out there as food for thought for the whole group, you know what they did to barracuda recently, where you're allowed a certain number of fish, and I think it's two per person, from eighteen to thirty-six inches, and then you're allowed one fish over thirty-six inches.

The point is you can also, if you want to go down this road, and, again, it's a group decision, but you could consider -- Again, we've got to be careful what we ask for, but if you wanted to have a certain number per person that are any size and then, beyond that number, they have to be in a bigger slot, or maybe not even a bigger slot, but a larger minimum size.

I am a little concerned about opening that can of worms right now, only because I'm not sure that it's necessary, but, if the group feels it's important, I think it's no problem to make a motion for any of the two decisions or discussions that we just had of is it important to maybe raise the minimum size on commercial landings and do we want to mess with size limits regionally, for Florida versus the Carolinas, Georgia and the Carolinas. All of those things are on the floor, and I think these are all really important subjects, and so I will leave it to you guys to discuss what you think would be a good recommendation.

AP MEMBER: One thing is you talk about giving ground and not being able to get it back, but there may be a compromise in there to the recreational and for-hire limit, the trip limits per person, and then, on the commercial side, have the size minimum.

MR. ROSHER: Yes, and all of that is -- I think it all has some benefits. You could still maintain -- We have really talked about three things. We have also talked about maintaining the ten fish per person bag limit and lowering the boat limit to forty on recreational, and maybe that's a proposal that we put -- It doesn't make sense, John Hadley, to put multiple thoughts together, almost like a contingency, and like, if we're going to raise this, we're going to raise that, or do you need to vote on each of those independently, and is that more successful?

MR. HADLEY: I mean, it's really up to the AP on what you would like to do. If everyone -- I think issues have arisen if you kind of put everything together, and we've had some folks that say, you know, I can support three of those, but not two of those, and so I can't support the motion and that kind of thing, whereas, if you list them out, then you can say, yes, I support that, and I support that, and I don't support that. That's the problem that you can run into, at times, but it's really up to the AP. If you want to have a whole list of recommendations, we can certainly do that as well, in one fell swoop.

MR. ROSHER: Okay. What's the feeling in the group? Tim, could you help us state maybe a -- Let's start with the longline and maybe talk about a minimum size there, and, again, these are just recommendations. They are by no means anywhere near the finish line, but what we want to do is promote reasonable and wise recommendations, and so maybe we start with a recommendation for the size limits and/or trip limits for the longline effort and what would everybody feel comfortable promoting. In other words, I would rather include, in the motion, things that the group feels good about, so it's not an even vote, or close to an even vote, against and for. Let's talk about things that we all can agree on. Tim, what would your thought be on size and trip limits that you think would be reasonable for the Carolinas, for the longline effort?

MR. SCALISE: To be honest, I haven't really given it a lot of deep thought, but I don't know what a -- As far as what a fish is versus pounds, and I don't know, but I don't think anything smaller than a ten-pound fish has any real commercial value.

MR. ROSHER: Something to think about is, if you limit the size, you're kind of limiting the trip. In other words, you can kind of accomplish both things with one rule. If you limit the size of the fish, your landings are going to decrease, because they're going to be releasing more fish, and that might be the way to cause them to, first of all, not harvest so many young fish, and, secondly, try to focus their gear on larger fish, and so just the size limit alone seems, to me, to be the most sensible solution to create the desired result.

MR. SCALISE: I agree with that. One point that I meant to make earlier is that there is -- Like there is one longline boat that typically will switch gear for a couple of trips when the fish are moving through, and, recreationally, we had a really good year for dolphin. There were dolphin out there, and the commercial guys targeting dolphin were catching them, but there were a couple of longline boats that didn't switch gear, and they were catching -- It was more money for swordfish, and so they just stuck with the swordfish. I don't know if there is something in there that -- That sort of sent a message to me that how important is the dolphin fishery to the longliners, and I just think it's more of a convenience, and they could probably make more money if they just kept on swordfishing.

MR. ROSHER: Right.

MR. SCALISE: Getting back to the -- I think the commercial guys, if they know they can't keep something under ten pounds, they're smart, and they will switch gears, or tactics, and they will not -- But I am worried about the mortality rate, as far as the releases, but I think there is something here to give some thought to.



MR. ROSHER: Well, I mean, one of the things that would happen is let's just say, just for conversation's sake, that they had a twenty-eight-inch fork, right, and that's a -- I'm just guessing that that's a ten-pound fish. They're going to see those small fish swim up, and they won't even target them if there's no ten-pounders swimming around. It's like Brice said. You kind of learn. On our boats, we learn to look at them, and, really, if we've got to do a lot of measuring, we just de-hook them over the side. You get your eye calibrated pretty well over time.

Like this summer, we had so many small fish, and I would say nine out of ten fish we never even brought in the boat, and we just would use light tackle, and we would use our bait rods, actually, and let them throw jigs and just have fun with the fish and de-hook them, and the bottom line is I think the same thing would happen in the commercial fishery if they had let's say a twenty-eight-inch fork length. They're just not going to focus on bailing small dolphin, and can anybody give me an estimate of what they think an approximate ten-pound fish would be? Would it be twenty-eight inches or thirty inches? I don't know.

MR. BARR: Twenty-eight sounds about right, Ray, I would say, somewhere right around there.

MR. ROSHER: Well, regardless of whether it's exactly perfect, it just gives a benchmark. You know, we could even say, in the motion, that we're trying to target a ten-pound fish, an approximately ten-pound fish, whatever the appropriate fork length is, or we could put in twenty-eight inches, whatever you guys think.

MR. REYNOLDS: Would it be okay to make a motion?

MR. HADLEY: We could. Before we make that motion, I just had a couple of -- Listening to the discussion, I had a couple of clarifying questions, and just a reminder. One, this recommendation sounds like it would be for vessels fishing pelagic longlines only, and is that correct, and not the troll fishery, so to speak?

MR. ROSHER: Right.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. Then the other -- There was some discussion of trip limits, implementing trip limits, and I just wanted to remind folks that this is fairly recent, and it hasn't been triggered, but there is a provision in place where this a trip limit once 75 percent of the ACL has been caught, and it's just in the past few years that that provision has been put in place, and the commercial sector has not harvested 75 percent of the ACL, and so there is certainly kind of a slow-down mechanism there, but that is different than, I think, some of the discussion on commercial trip limits.

MR. ROSHER: Just to kind of put this all in perspective for everybody too, if you start putting an increased size limit on longline boats, then they're going to want to apply that, possibly, to a hook-and-line fisherman, and so now the chance of a guy in Florida to go out and hook-and-line fish dolphin is almost gone, and so just know that it's kind of a double-edged sword, and I'm not saying that you couldn't pass it only on longline boats, but they could, in turn, say, well, we caught these not on the longlines and we used the rod-and-reel. That's the reason that I was approaching all of this with caution. You've got to be careful what you vote for, because it could cause far-reaching effects that you're not thinking about.

MR. REYNOLDS: Just on the scientific biological note, what Ray was talking about earlier, I have had the opportunity to work with some scientists too and just understand that, especially in the wild, about dolphin and spawning, and we couldn't specifically call them spawning aggregations, by scientific terminology, but there are specific areas where these dolphin, and specific times of year where dolphin, have their highest spawning rates, by far, about 60 percent greater than every other time.

One of those areas is off the Carolinas, between May and July, and so, if we're removing this many fish in a short period of time from those areas where we are affecting the spawn, and we're looking at a fourteen-pound average, I think is what we came up with in April of 2017 in the meeting, when we talked about the average longline fish was about a fourteen-pound fish, and so we're looking at a fish that holds close to six-million eggs, which, at a 1 percent survival rate, from what all the science is telling us, that fish can produce about 6,000 live stock coming into the cycle of fish that are going to come around the whole bend and grow and create quality stock, and so we're looking at just an increase -- If we just look at just the recent increase in longline landings, just the increase and not the total, we're looking at about a 40,000-fish increase in PLL landings, which results, with a 1 percent survival rate, of about 240 million live stock, and so I think that's a really good biological way to look at this.

When we consider the vision of the future and the greater demand for larger fish, larger fish start with smaller fish, and increased pressure by different sectors that -- I think that's a really strong thing to consider, and, the more small fish, the more large fish, and the less we take large fish in great quantities, and we have really good options here to allow different commercial fishermen to land these fish, and this is all in Amendment 10. We want to allow properly-permitted guys with trap pot buoy gear -- We can change the way we land these fish commercially and spread this throughout and not hammer them during these somewhat aggregate spawns to create greater stock and quality over time, but still produce local fish from many different sources.

I think that's the idea that I'm getting at there, and that's why a trip limit would really come into place, to cut back large landings from one directed fishery and then create greater stock and quality to spread throughout, so that many other commercial fishermen and charter boat fishermen, all other user groups, can have greater stock and quality.

MR. ROSHER: I agree with you 100 percent. I don't know how to write that, but all of that makes a lot of sense, and maybe a trip limit is the better way to approach that, and it would be regional. It's kind of what we talked about a minute ago, that, off the east coast of Florida, we have a much different fishery than you have in the Carolinas or the Mid-Atlantic states, and, supposedly this year, the Mid-Atlantic and New England had tremendous dolphin fishing, and so we could analyze all of this all day long, but I think it's smart to try to promote a motion that John Hadley thinks is well written and we all agree on, and, John Reynolds, do you want to try to do that?

MR. REYNOLDS: Okay. Just one more bit of information, I guess, to throw out, and I do have a couple of friends that work on these longline boats, and then also friends that they used to be charter fishermen, and also friends that used to be longline fishermen, that are now charter fishermen, and there is definitely an increased effort in the last few years, and I think, after speaking to almost all other hook-and-line commercial fishermen, or any other guys who would want to catch dolphin, target them, produce local fish, most other user groups would never really catch -- I know, from my experience of hook-and-line commercial fishermen fishing through the

years, even when there was a lot larger fish around in the past, 1,000 pounds would be probably the maximum that we would ever land, and so a commercial trip limit isn't going to really affect that many other users. **I would motion to implement a start of season commercial trip limit in the dolphin fishery of 3,000 pounds.**

MR. ROSHER: The only challenge with that, John, is that sometimes those boats need more than that to justify a trip, with their expenses, if they're going to target it directly. 5,000 might be a more reasonable number, and I don't know, but, Tim, do you have any thoughts on this, or anybody else?

MR. BARNETT: One thing you all need to look at is the longline boats start in Florida, and they work up the whole east coast, and so they stay out there two to three weeks. They don't keep running back to shore every time they get a boatload.

MR. ROSHER: That's right.

MR. BARNETT: The price on dolphin, when they come to shore, the price drops a couple of dollars a pound.

MR. ROSHER: Yes. What would a reasonable number be in your mind that accomplishes the goals that we're talking about?

MR. BARNETT: That's a very good question. I don't really know. I guess you would figure so many pounds per day and figure on a three-week basis staying out there or something like that.

MR. ROSHER: Yes, and that's the tough part, is long-term trips, and you -- That's why I said in the very beginning that it's a lot of things to consider, but I do agree with John Reynolds about -- I think that's a critical spawning zone, and I have seen -- Almost kind of almost in relation to the increased harvest of longline-caught dolphin, I have seen a decrease in the population of fish that we see in our season, and so I can't say 100 percent it's all caused by longline effort, but, in light of what I've seen in the last four or five years, I feel like there needs to be some means of protecting the spawning stocks. That's really my main goal.

MR. BARNETT: The longline boats -- I think most of you all are from Florida, but the longline boats go out like 100 miles offshore from here, and they follow the stream up in the main core of it, and they don't have the luxury of just running back, and so, to be fair, I think somebody needs to really analyze the situation, but I do think that a size limit should be like forty inches on them, and that's probably an eight to nine-pound fish, would be my guess.

MR. ROSHER: Maybe, John Reynolds, maybe there's a way to write this where we just task the council with ways to cause some harvest reduction or just show some effort to protect the spawning stocks in that fishery, and the longline fishery seems to be the one element that has changed dramatically in the last say ten years, and so we -- Again, I am not totally educated in all the information that needs to be considered, but I think it's important to send a -- All we're really doing is sending a message to the council that this need attention, and however we do that I think is important, as long as we do it the right way. If you start getting too specific, I think it just kind of gets ignored. Anna Beckwith, are you still on the line?

MS. BECKWITH: I am.

MR. ROSHER: I didn't want to put you on the spot, but I just wanted to get your two-cents' worth, because, as a council member, you have some insight into what you think might be received well, and that's all we're trying to do, is not waste your time.

MS. BECKWITH: I was contemplating kind of piping in anyway, but I wanted to hear what you guys had to say. One of the things that we think about at the council level is -- You know, you guys are concerned about the spawning stock, and I hear that. I hear the concerns about the localized depletion issues, but, overall, as a council, one of the things we consider is that our ACLs, our biological catch limits, they are set with consideration of kind of having a sustainable stock, and so, if the amount of fish that is harvested is under that amount, then we technically have achieved that goal, which is to sustain the stock and to have a healthy amount of harvest and to take care of the spawning stock and all that sort of stuff.

There is, obviously, tweaks that need to be done within that, if there is a particular size of fish or adult population or spawning stocks that are being targeted and all those sorts of things, but I hear a lot of focus on the longline guys, and I get the localized depletion thing, but their harvest, for a long period of time, not only has stayed below the commercial trip limit, but it is pretty miniscule compared to the recreational harvest, and so these are things that we think about at the council, and we have put a trip limit on them, and we also, because of the state of the longline fishery and how this interacts with sort of ICCAT and the swordfishing harvest and their overall impact as a fishery and the data that's collected through longliners, because they have got monitoring and observers and all sorts of stuff on their boats, the council has generally not wanted to be overly -- Any more restrictive.

We wanted to protect the commercial harvest and make sure that, if the longliners happen to run into these large catches, because we had high availability while they were fishing, we wanted to make sure that there was never a shutdown for the hook-and-line component of the commercial fishery, if we could avoid it, and, like you guys said, the majority of that longline harvest is happening say in May and June, and so, by June, it's pretty much done, and we know what was harvested, and that's sort of over, and we have maintained, hopefully, that, if it's triggered, 25 percent and a trip limit, to make sure that the hook-and-line guys can make it through the rest of the season.

I hear what you guys are saying, but I just kind of wanted to offer you guys a perspective that the council has taken in the past, and I don't know if there's a lot of oomph from National Marine Fisheries Service to implement a trip limit, and we have attempted that in the past, and it has been kicked back to us, and so we tried to put in a trip limit many years ago, and, until we had that closure, and then we tried again at the 75 percent point, to instill a 4,000-pound trip limit, and National Marine Fisheries Service has not deemed that a trip limit on commercial harvest of dolphin has been necessary. If you guys have specific questions, but that's kind of a history of at least where the discussion at the council has gone.

MR. ROCHER: Anna, today -- Are you saying that that 4,000-pound trip limit does not exist at the 75 percent trigger?

MS. BECKWITH: It does, but it just hasn't been triggered. It exists, and it has not been triggered since we implemented it, and so the commercial guys have been under their harvest limit ever since the closure.

MR. ROCHER: Right, and remember, about four or five years ago, when they did close the commercial harvest on June 30, was that trigger in place then, or that trigger got implemented -- It was implemented as a result of that?

MS. BECKWITH: As a result of, yes, to prevent that from happening again.

MR. ROCHER: Okay, and so I guess the answer, John Reynolds, is it sounds like they have already accomplished that, I guess, method to keep the hook-and-line guys in business, because I remember preparing to hook-and-line fish that year, and I actually bought a boat and had it permitted and ready to go, and, before I got to catch the first fish, it closed for the first time ever, and so I kind of remember the pain of that, and then I remember, in some of the AP meetings, discussing all of that, and I'm glad that it got implemented, and I never really followed-up on what happened, and so thank you, Anna, and I'm sorry to put you on the spot.

MS. BECKWITH: No problem. That's what I'm here for. If you guys need me, just shout, and it will just take me a couple of seconds to get unmuted.

MR. ROCHER: No worries. John Reynolds, with that in place, I think your odds of getting much more restriction on them, I think, is probably difficult, and is that correct, do you think, Anna?

MS. BECKWITH: Anything is possible, and we welcome any advice that you guys have, and we will certainly consider it, and just sort of recognize that that component of the fishery has been discussed thoroughly, and, because there hasn't been another closure, the general consensus, I suspect, although I cannot speak for the council in its totality, would be that what is the need for additional -- What are the reasons that we would put additional restrictions if the ACL, which, in theory, is sort of there to protect the stock, has not been overreached?

MR. ROCHER: Okay. Well, thank you very much, Anna. John Reynolds, I don't disagree that we're seeing some, I guess, decreased populations, and I think Brice chimed in on that too, and I don't know what the solution is. It's still possible to make a motion, but, again, that's why, at the beginning of this discussion, I wanted to really hear everybody's thoughts on it, because we want to make sensible recommendations.

MR. SCALISE: One thing that I would imagine with a trip limit is the guys out of here in May and June that are swordfishing -- They do have a bycatch of larger-sized dolphin, your commercial, and so it may push more of them -- Like the one guy, he didn't switch gear over to strictly dolphin, and you may have guys who just go out and just set their normal swordfish gear with maybe some intentions of catching a bycatch of dolphin, and I think that would be -- A trip limit would push somebody in that direction.

MR. ROCHER: Right.

MR. REYNOLDS: I agree with that. I think the biological responsibility is more -- You know, I think that's more of where I'm headed with it, and it's not that a hook-and-line fisherman may not

have access. It's that a -- With that other trip limit in place, it's that, with the existing catches, or large catches, in those spawning regions, we're not really avoiding long-term adverse effects on the fishery in these spawning times, and I think that's the biggest thing, and just an overall increase in stock and quality of the fishery, and, if we're having objectives that focus on the future of the fishery and increased stock and quality of the fishery and social and economic benefits of the fishery and the goals of the council with the objectives, I think that's probably a very important thing as we move forward with the amendment, to consider cutting back on large catches, mainly to increase stock and quality in the fishery and to avoid long-term adverse effects.

MR. BARR: I was going to say, along the same lines, if the trip limit is off the table and so on, can we possibly, or potentially, put in this motion and just at least discuss what you guys feel about maybe as it's been discussed prior to now, and I don't know, and this is my first meeting with you guys, but endorsing that they go back to that 14/0 circle hook versus them being allowed to use any size hook that they want right now, which does allow them to target, potentially, smaller species of dolphin? What do you guys feel about that?

MR. ROCHER: That would be, Brice, on the longline gear? Is that what you're promoting, the use of that hook on longline gear, because we've got to differentiate between hook-and-line, rod-and-reel, commercial dolphin fishermen and longline.

MR. BARR: I understand, yes, and I was just saying on the allowable longline gear.

MR. ROCHER: John Hadley, did you say that that's already in place as a proposal?

MR. HADLEY: Yes, and so what I have in front of you is what was -- This is the decision document from the June meeting that the council reviewed from Amendment 10, and so they're looking at, essentially, modifying gear, bait, and training requirements to align with the highly-migratory species requirements, and so part of that is Sub-Alternative 2c, which the council is considering, and so, if you have a highly migratory species permit that allows pelagic longlining, you must use only 18/0 or larger hooks with an offset not to exceed ten degrees or a 16/0 or larger non-offset hook, and so those are the kind of minimum hook sizes that are currently being considered, and those are in place for HMS. The council is just considering putting those in place for the dolphin and wahoo fishery for pelagic longlines. I don't know if everyone can see that there.

MR. ROCHER: That's an interesting -- This is the first time I've seen that. ‘

MR. HADLEY: That's kind of a -- This action kind of came about, and it's been a priority of just having the same regulations, and, essentially, you could have a vessel that is fishing pelagic longline gear and doesn't have an HMS permit, and they didn't have the minimum hook size requirement, right next to a vessel that has the HMS permit, and they have to abide by these additional regulations, and so the council is really looking at making those -- Basically, kind of leveling the playing field for vessels fishing pelagic longline gear, and so, whether or not you have a dolphin wahoo permit or an HMS permit, you're under very similar regulations.

MR. BARR: One more question. If the longline boat -- If they were to have to use these hooks, they would still be allowed to bail them hook-and-line, and is that correct?

MR. HADLEY: Yes. This only applies for the longline gear itself.

MR. BARR: Okay. That clears that up.

MR. ROCHER: Would it be possible, John Hadley, to voice support for say Alternative 2?

MR. HADLEY: Sure. I mean, that would be an endorsement saying that you support -- I am trying to think of the best way to word that, but I can --

MR. ROCHER: It's Action 15, Alternative 2.

MR. HADLEY: Yes, and what I can do is, if the AP wants to support this action in Alternative 2, we can just make a motion that says the AP supports Action 15, and what I will do is I will copy-and-paste this below the action, so everybody can see kind of what they're supporting, and that might be the cleanest way to do it.

MR. ROCHER: I don't see anything that looks like a problem in any of those sub-alternatives, but is it possible just to vote in agreement or disagreement of Alternative 2, or do you have to break each one of those sub-alternatives out?

MR. HADLEY: If the AP wants to support Alternative 2 kind of wholesale, that is certainly an option.

MR. ROCHER: I feel that there's nothing in there that is -- I mean, I am not an expert on some of these other gangion length and -- The gangion is -- Those are in there for different reasons, but I don't see anything in there that bothers me in any way and that seems like something that I couldn't be in support of, but that might just be -- I guess what I'm trying to do is just make it a statement that's easy for the council to understand.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. I think, if the AP wants to do that, we can make a motion just saying that the AP supports Action 15 from Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10, and then I will copy-and-paste that below the motion.

MR. ROCHER: All right.

MR. HADLEY: Action 15, Alternative 2.

MR. ROCHER: Yes. Then we can take a vote on it and just let everybody --

MR. HADLEY: While I have the mic at the moment, we do have this motion on the table that John initially made, and it did not have a second, and so, based on the discussion, I wasn't really sure which way the AP wants to go with this motion. Do you want to kind of remove the motion, or do you want to go ahead and second it and take a vote on it? What is the consensus?

MR. ROCHER: Is there a way that we can remove the poundage, just so that the council considers a start-of-season commercial trip limit and they can -- Kind of what we did with the ecosystem component stuff with bullet and frigate mackerel, just so that we have a motion so that they understand that we feel that it's a good idea to consider. Is that worth talking about?

MR. HADLEY: **John, if you're okay with that, since you're the maker of the motion, if you want me to edit it to just say consider a start-of-season commercial trip limit in the dolphin fishery, and I will remove the rest, and does that sound good?**

MR. REYNOLDS: **Yes, that sounds good.** Thank you.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. John, I believe this is the motion that you're making. **It's consider a start-of-season commercial trip limit in the dolphin fishery.** Do we have a second for that? Wendall, I see your hand raised. Is that a second?

MR. BARNETT: I'm not sure yet.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. Does anybody else want to second it?

AP MEMBER: I will second it.

MR. HADLEY: Okay, and so we have a second, and we'll go to discussion on this motion, and then we'll jump into the motion for pelagic longline gear that we just discussed, but I just wanted to go ahead and make sure that this motion is taken care of, since it was on the table. Any further discussion on this motion?

MR. REYNOLDS: I think that this is mainly just to avoid extremely large, excessive catches that have happened, along the same lines as putting regulatory commercial trip limits in place for like bullet and frigate mackerel. It's the same idea, that, if there's no regulations in place, we can have extremely excessive large landings, especially in prime spawning grounds, and so just to have something in place to avoid those extremely large landings would be a good idea.

MR. HADLEY: Any other discussion?

MR. ROCHER: I didn't hear what you said.

MR. HADLEY: If there was no further discussion, I was going to see if you all wanted to take a vote.

MR. ROCHER: Okay.

MR. HADLEY: I am going to put everyone's hands down. **All in favor of this motion to consider a start-of-season commercial trip limit in the dolphin fishery, please raise your hand, five in favor; anyone opposed to this motion, not seeing any opposition; any abstentions. The motion passes.**

With that, Ray, should we go ahead and address the Action 15 that we were just discussing, and would anyone like to make a motion?

MR. ROCHER: Sure. **I can make that motion.**



MR. HADLEY: If you want to help me with the wording, but I was thinking that I heard the AP support Action 15, Alternative 2. If you give me just a second, I will go ahead and copy-and-paste that in there. Okay. There is Action 15 that we discussed, and so it's Action 15, Alternative 2, just so it's clear which action the AP is supporting, and these are the different provisions that would be implemented in the dolphin wahoo fishery for pelagic longlines that are currently in place for highly migratory species.

MR. ROCHER: Just to be clear, do you want to take Alternative 1 out, just so there's no confusion? Then, in the motion, I think you need to put "AP supports Action".

MR. HADLEY: Yes. That was important. Thank you.

MR. ROCHER: Thank you.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Ray, did you want to make the motion?

MR. ROCHER: **Sure, I will make it.**

MR. HADLEY: Did anyone want to second it?

MR. REYNOLDS: I will second it.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. **Ray, you made it, and, just to read it in, the AP supports Action 15, Alternative 2 in Amendment 10.** Any further discussion? Not seeing any discussion, we'll go ahead and take a vote. There again, I will put everyone's hands down. **All in favor of this motion, please raise your hand, six in favor; anyone opposed, please raise your hand, no opposition; any abstentions. The motion passes.**

MR. ROCHER: One thought I just had is I'm wondering if the way that you could be certain that -- The intent of this motion is to, as Tim was talking about, decrease the size of the fish that the longliners are targeting. Would the group feel that it's important to add to this that any longline boat that is using pelagic longline gear and selling dolphin can't mix rod-and-reel-caught fish, which can be twenty inches or whatever their regional limit is, because then you -- It's just a question. Do you think that the 16/0 circle hook solves the problem, and, if they can catch them on a rod-and-reel, that should be allowed, or should that boat not be able to sell fish that are smaller? I think it's not -- I don't feel very strongly either way, but I just wanted to bring it up.

As long as they're using that hook size on their longline gear, that probably solves that issue, and then it's probably fair to let them use whatever hook they want on a rod, and so just -- I just wanted to bring it up for discussion, and, if everybody is okay with it the way it is, that's fine, and, if somebody wants to interject, now is the time. No comments? Good. That makes it easy.

I just wanted to bring that up, that, if the intent was to keep the small fish off the longline boats, you would have to put something in there that talks about rod-and-reel catch and limiting it to non-longline trips, but I think, if we accomplish this action, that alone will help accomplish, I think, what you talked about, John Reynolds. Any other thoughts or concerns that we want to bring to the table now? If nobody has any more thoughts or concerns, John Hadley, do you have anything to add?

MR. HADLEY: No, I think we're getting pretty close to our noon cutoff here, but we could certainly -- We can hang around as long as folks want to discuss dolphin wahoo, but I certainly appreciate everyone's input, and I think that it's extremely helpful, and it's something that we can certainly carry back to the council.

I think I heard, loud and clear, for our next meeting that I will try to put together some detailed information on pelagic longline landings and whatnot, because that certainly seems to be a topic of interest for the AP, and so, for the next meeting, I will certainly try to have more information available for you.

Just looking at, very quickly, going forward, we're looking at trying to have an AP meeting next spring, and hopefully this will be an in-person meeting, and we'll probably go over what is the end result of the goals and objectives, based on the input that's been received and as the council sort of narrows down those goals and objectives and finalizes them, and then we'll probably go over the bullet mackerel and frigate mackerel topic again, as it evolves, and then, certainly, last but not least, we'll have an in-depth discussion on Amendment 10.

At that time, we should have the necessary information that we need to have a full discussion, an informed discussion, on all of these different actions, and so that's kind of what's coming up in the near future, for next spring, but, other than that, I certainly appreciate it, and I appreciate everyone being patient with the webinar and some of the technical difficulties at the very beginning, but I think we worked through them and had a great discussion, and so thank you.

MR. ROCHER: Thank you, guys. I appreciate all your help, and girls.

MR. REYNOLDS: We didn't discuss anything about the filleting of dolphin. Does anyone -- Is there any more insight on that or why that's -- Is there any reasoning behind that, or does anyone want to discuss that at all?

MR. ROCHER: I think, in the Carolinas, John, if I'm not mistaken, there is no size limit, and so, like in Florida, we can't fillet our fish at-sea, because it could be an undersized fish. Up there, that doesn't apply, and they have long run in, and so I think it's a way for the charter boats to be able to have -- If they had a couple of dolphin that they wanted to clear for their charter on the way in, they were able to do that.

MS. BECKWITH: I will speak to that, guys. This is a request that came to us from the Mid-Atlantic Council, and they allow their charter boats to fillet fish on those long runs home, and they have requested that we allow them to fillet dolphin. The council is pretty clear that that would be happening north of the North Carolina line and that, in our region, we are not interested in seeing filleting at-sea, outside of the exceptions that we've already done for the Bahamian folks, the folks that are in the Bahamas coming over. This would be -- As we consider this, at the moment, it seems like we're concentrating on allowing it for the charter fleet north of North Carolina.

MR. ROCHER: Okay. Thank you, Anna.

MR. REYNOLDS: Thank you. I understand. Thank you.

MR. ROCHER: All right. Thanks again, everybody, for all the input. I think it was really important that we talked, and it was educational, and I appreciate you guys taking time away from your schedules and sharing it for the future of the fishery. John Hadley, did you have anything?

MR. HADLEY: No. With that, I will just reiterate that thank you, everyone, for taking your time, and we had a great discussion here, and I think that's important information for the council to hear. You guys are the eyes and ears, so to speak, on the water, and so it's helpful to hear everyone's different perspective and what they're seeing across the different states and across the region, and so thank you.

MR. ROCHER: Thank you, Anna, for spending your time with us.

MS. BECKWITH: My pleasure. I appreciate you all's time, and I listen very closely to what the APs have to say, and so I'm glad that you guys made the time to participate. Thanks so much.

MR. ROCHER: You guys have a great day, and girls.

MR. HADLEY: Thanks, everybody.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on August 22, 2019.)

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Certified By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Transcribed By:  
Amanda Thomas  
September 17, 2019

## Dolphin Wahoo AP Webinar August 22, 2019

Last Name	First Name
Beckwith	Anna
Cheuvront	Brian
Barr	Brice
Yeomans	Charles
collier	chip
Owsley	Dan
Whitaker	David
landrum	don
Kinard	Fred
Waugh	Gregg
L	I
Reynolds	Jonathon
Byrd	Julia
Klasnick	Kelly
Hoggard	Kelly
Cunningham	Leda
Bell	Melvin
Travis	Michael

Mehta	Nikhil
Lyons Gromen	Pam
Rosher	Ray
Robins	Rick
Scalise	Timothy
Bauer	Tracey
barnett	wendell
Merten	Wessley