

American Fishermen's Research Foundation News (AFRF)©

The American Fishermen's Research Foundation (AFRF) Board of Directors will meet in Astoria, OR on April 1, 2015 at the Holiday Inn Express from 0800 - 1300. For those interested in research that supports local fishermen's access to the ocean and resource of albacore tuna and want to attend we welcome you. AFRF has a diverse board which is open to ideas for research and data as well as public education on albacore tuna stocks, health, history and its' harvesting/processing segment. If anyone has questions please feel free to call us for further information.

AFRF Board Members: According to AFRF bylaws AFRF has up to 16 members on the board of directors. Eight are albacore fishermen and do not have to be WFOA members since AFRF supports research for the entire troll and baitboat fishery. The other eight are elected as processor/buyer directors by the processors. The bylaws have been changed in 2014 deleting the clause that there be three designated seats for "Charter Members of AFRF" which included Bumble Bee, Chicken of the Sea, and Star Kist. This is no longer the case but also does not exclude them. The processors will have to have a new vote this spring thus if an albacore processor/buyer is interested in serving, let AFRF know prior to the April 1 meeting.

Vessel Logbooks: From 2014 data it appears that not all logbooks were submitted for albacore. This is still preliminary but we encourage vessels to send it in even from 2013 and especially for 2014. Issuance of HMS permits will be held up if you have a logbook outstanding. WFOA suspects most of the delinquent logbooks are from smaller boats that have small landings of which many who are not members of any association may be unaware the logbooks are required.

North Pacific Albacore Archival Tagging Project: After a late deployment of 39 tags in 2014 there will be more than 100+ tags to deploy in 2015. Since there will be no wait in procuring and testing the 2015 tags, AFRF in cooperation with SWFSC - NOAA hopes to do an early tagging trip and a later one in 2015. This should work out as it has been an issue receiving tags from the manufacturer and testing them during the season, and by the time that happens the season is wrapping up.

Interested vessels should contact AFRF ASAP and request a charter application for 2015.

Since 2001 AFRF has deployed nearly 900 tags, with about 35 recovered including a few dummy tags used early on. We are awaiting results of the latest tag recoveries which should be interesting. One recent tag recovery was out for three years, the longest of any to date.

Otolith Sampling and measuring: AFRF is requesting vessels and crews to take part in sampling in 2015. AFRF did not pursue it as we should have in 2014. We do need a few boats to collect at random over the season a few sample fish and leave them at a designated albacore buyer during the season. The vessel will be compensated more than the dock price. Kits will be made available from SWFSC prior to the season, and we are hoping to have some kits available to members at the spring annual meeting in Astoria at the end of March.

The overall total of fish needed is only about 100 random albacore for the entire fleet. We also encourage fishermen with AFRF measuring boards to continue to measure fish at random. We will get

AFRF DIRECTORS ' 2014 - 2015'

Kevin McClain
Bumble Bee Seafoods

Kevin Bixler
William Gounder
Chicken of the Sea

Cary Gann
Joseph Choi
Star Kist Seafoods

Anthony Vuoso
John Zuanich
Tri-Marine
International

Pierre Marchand
Ilwaco Fish Company

Bill Carvalho
Wildplanet, Inc.
(Secretary)

Larz Malony
Pacific Seafoods
(Vice-President)

Christa Svensson
Bornstein Seafoods

Wayne Moody
WFOA

Harvey Cosky
WFOA

Shawn Ryan
WFOA

John LaGrange
WFOA
(President)

Lewis Hill
WFOA

Karl Johnson
WFOA

Mark Halvorsen
WFOA

Barry Nelson
WFOA

better details on this as the season approaches. AFRF can construct some new measuring boards if necessary. The information on these two projects is very informative and useful in the science community and supports your local fishery when it comes to international and federal management support.

SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT MEETINGS:

ISC Management Strategy Evaluation Workshop: April 16-17, 2015 - Yokohama, Japan

Management Strategy Evaluation is a process that is being advanced as a means of providing information to management bodies as a means to better assess consequences of a range of management strategies and evaluating the results of the various management strategies.

The Yokohama meeting is a first attempt to develop an MSE for tuna. The ISC recognized the benefits of MSE and agreed they should be used to evaluate alternative management procedures for ISC species of interest. The WCPMC Northern Committee concurred with the ISC and selected North Pacific albacore tuna for the first attempt at producing an MSE evaluation.

The purpose of the ISC Management Strategy Evaluation Workshop is to review the objective, benefits, and requirements to implement an MSE, as well as recent progress made by tuna RFMOs towards adopting and implementing the MSE process. To facilitate completion of this MSE it is important that managers, stakeholders and scientists fully understand the key components required in developing an MSE, and the role each group plays.

Dr. Vidar Weststad will be attending the meeting, which is being held prior to the Albacore Working Group meeting, under the sponsorship of AFRF and AAFA. More information can be found on the ISC website (<http://isc.ac.affrc.go.jp>),

NOAA Fisheries Releases 2015 Report to Congress on IUU Fishing: NOAA Fisheries has released its 2015 Biennial Report to Congress highlighting U.S. findings and analyses of foreign illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities and of bycatch of protected species and shark catch on the high seas for foreign fleets.

Six nations-Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Nigeria, Nicaragua, Portugal-were identified in the 2015 Report as having vessels engaged in IUU activity. On behalf of the United States, NOAA Fisheries will engage in consultations with each of the nations to press for corrective action to address these activities and improve their fisheries management and enforcement practices relating to IUU fishing.

Ten nations identified as having vessels engaged in IUU in the previous 2013 Report to Congress-Colombia, Ecuador, Ghana, Italy, Korea, Mexico, Panama, Spain, Tanzania, Venezuela-received a positive certification following consultations with the U.S. Government and taking appropriate action through amending laws or adopting new laws and regulations, sanctioning the vessels, and improving monitoring and enforcement. However, due to bycatch of endangered sea turtles, certification of Mexico has been delayed until May 2015. Mexico has made meaningful progress in adopting a regulatory program to address the problem and NOAA Fisheries will continue to consult with Mexico to expedite its implementation.

Combating IUU fishing continues to be a top priority for NOAA Fisheries and the United States, as is demonstrated by the establishment of the Presidential Task Force to Combat IUU Fishing and Seafood Fraud. NOAA will continue to work with foreign governments to track, expose, and deter these and other unsustainable fishing practices.

To view the full report, please click here and go to the full report link. <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ia/>

Laurel Bryant - Chief, External Affairs - NOAA Fisheries Communications - Laurel.Bryant@noaa.gov

Nation's Fishery Scientists Tackle Climate, Ecosystem and Other Uncertainty Issues

HONOLULU (25 February 2015) Scientists from throughout the United States gathered Feb. 23 to 25, 2015, in Honolulu to explore ways of incorporating climate, ecosystems and other areas of uncertainty into the sustainable management of the nation's fisheries. The scientists included 40 representatives from the Scientific and Statistical Committees (SSCs) of the eight Regional Fishery Management Councils (RFMCs), established by Congress in 1976 to manage fisheries operating in the US exclusive economic zone, as well as a dozen fishery experts providing keynote presentations. This week's public meeting was the fifth gathering of the National SSC. The meeting was hosted by the Western Pacific RFMC, which is based in Honolulu and whose jurisdiction includes Hawai'i, American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and eight remote islands in the Pacific. Findings from the meeting will be forwarded to the Councils Coordination Committee, a group of the leadership from the eight RFMCs, which is scheduled to meet June 22 to 25, 2015, in Key West, Fla.

The National SSC this week deliberated on several key points regarding the incorporation of ecological, environmental and climate variability in stock assessments and ecosystem-based fishery management. These points include keystone species, regime shifts or other major environmental changes, and ecosystem dynamics and effects of natural and anthropogenic factors on production. The scientists noted that, in addition to incorporating ecosystem considerations into stock assessments, ecosystem considerations can be taken into account in management decisions.

"The past three days have shown that fisheries are dynamic and probably becoming more so with climate change," noted Charles Daxboeck, chair of the National SSC meeting. "Councils and SSCs tend to be reactive to single species issues such as stock declines, bycatch problems or protected species interaction issues. Ecosystem-based management can look at these as a series of interconnected events. In addition to climate vulnerability, it's important to look retrospectively at factors that have altered ecosystems and their impacts on fisheries."

The National SSC also discussed regional habitat considerations, differences in how stock assessments are determined for species and species-complexes for which there is limited data, how the requirement for the best-scientific available information should be determined, and evaluation of the control rules for acceptable biological catch, from which annual catch limits are determined.

The final findings of the National SSC will be posted on the RFMC website at <http://fisherycouncils.org/>.

Bigeye Tagging Opportunity:

The Secretariat for the Pacific Community (SPC) has been conducting tuna tagging, focused on bigeye tuna, in the equatorial central Pacific since 2008. Our tagging work has been focused on tuna schools aggregated beneath the Tropical Atmosphere and Oceans (TAO) oceanographic data moorings. This tagging work provides crucial information for tuna stock assessments, and the understanding of tuna movement behaviour in particular. Reports for the cruises undertaken to date can be found on the SPC website at <http://www.spc.int/tagging/en/publications/tagging-publications/viewcategory/12>.

SPC invites proposals for the charter of commercial tuna fishing vessels for two tuna tagging cruises to be conducted in the second half of 2015, and , subject to funding, in 2016 and 2017.

All term of references and charter requirement could be found at :
<http://www.spc.int/en/on-going-tenders.html>

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Fishery Notice - Canada

Subject:FN0103-COMMERCIAL - Pelagics: Tuna - Draft 2015-2017 Albacore Tuna Integrated Fisheries Management Plan. Fisheries and Ocean Canada is soliciting comments regarding the draft 2015-2017 Albacore Tuna Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (IFMP).

Comments are welcome for approximately 30 days, starting February 13, 2015. The draft 2015-2017 Albacore Tuna IFMP will also be circulated to the Tuna Advisory Board, interested parties and First Nations through the established consultation process.

The draft 2015-2017 Albacore Tuna IFMP, which is now a multi-year plan, has primarily received updates to catch and effort information, 2014 stock assessment results and the commercial fishing plans for the Canadian/high seas and U.S.A. fisheries zones.

The document is available for review and comment by contacting Jordan Mah at (604) 666-2188 or Jordan.Mah@dfo-mpo.gc.ca, or you may download it at:

<https://db.tt/Tq0W2Nx8>

Please provide your comments by Friday, March 13, 2015 to Jordan Mah:

Email: Jordan.Mah@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Interesting Supreme Court case Involving a Fisherman and NMFS:

Yates v. United States: Issue: Whether Mr. Yates was deprived of fair notice that destruction of fish would fall within the purview of 18 U.S.C. § 1519, which makes it a crime for anyone who “knowingly alters, destroys, mutilates, conceals, covers up, falsifies, or makes a false entry in any record, document, or tangible object” with the intent to impede or obstruct an investigation, where the term “tangible object” is ambiguous and undefined in the statute, and unlike the nouns accompanying “tangible object” in section 1519, possesses no record-keeping, documentary, or informational content or purpose.

See: <http://www.scotusblog.com/case-files/cases/yates-v-united-states/>

American Fishermen’s Research Foundation (AFRF) founded in 1971, is involved in the ongoing stock assessment of North Pacific albacore as well as the management and regulation in both hemispheres of the Pacific ocean. At considerable expense AFRF continues to represent the U.S. albacore trollers and baitboats at management and scientific forums, and continues to be involved in the scientific process through the International Science Committee - Albacore Working Group (ISC-ALBWG). AFRF represents all U.S. albacore trollers and baitboats in maintaining research and data collection that benefits ALL US albacore vessels. AFRF is funded by a per ton assessment paid by AFRF contracted buyers. AFRF also secures research grant funding in cooperation with NOAA/NMFS for items such as archival tagging expenses.

AFRF Contracted Buyers: Bornstein Seafoods Inc., Bumble Bee Seafoods, Chicken of the Sea International, Driscoll's Wharf, High Seas Tuna Inc., Interocean Fisheries, Island Trollers Inc., Jessie's Ilwaco Fish Company, JK Fisheries, Ilwaco Landing LLC, New Day Fisheries, Pacific Seafood Group, Papa George Gourmet Albacore, Pelican Packers Inc., Seafood Producers Co-op, Star Kist Seafoods, Starvin Marvin Seafoods, Trident Seafoods, Tri-Marine International, Wild Planet Foods Inc

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