

Response: Serious injury and mortality forms will be sent to the fishery permit holders, and by law, participants in the fishery are required to report serious injury/mortalities within 48 hours of return.

Comment 66: One commenter noted that in the SAR for Hawaiian monk seals there is a statement that fishery interactions with the species "remain to be thoroughly evaluated..." However, the stock assessment cites a 1993 paper by Nitta and Henderson that found one "event" per 34.4 hours of fishing. This sort of study should be repeated with a better attempt to obtain confidence intervals. A brief discussion of efforts that are underway would help in understanding whether these impacts are being assessed and/or addressed. The commenter requested an evaluation of fishery impacts.

Response: With regard to the bottomfish fishery, NMFS is discussing and planning for increased observer coverage. Also, new data forms for observers are being developed to collect more information on protected species. However, the type and degree of observer coverage needed in the bottomfish fishery has yet to be determined.

Comment 67: One commenter recommended that the SAR for Hawaiian monk seals include discussion of some of the research alluded to in previous stock assessments including scat analysis and at-sea tracking. This research had been recommended since at least 1995.

Response: An extensive study of at-sea movements of monk seals was funded and resumed in 2000. Because this SAR only covers information through 1999, this information is not included. A description of the study will appear in the 2002 SAR. No new reports or data summaries are available at this time.

Comment 68: One commenter noted that, although it appears that 246 Hawaiian monk seals have been entangled since 1982, there is little discussion as to when many of these entanglements were observed and no speculation on average annual serious injury and mortality. It is also not clear from the text whether this number is separate from or inclusive of later discussion of monk seals hooked in the pelagic longline fishery and recreational fisheries.

Response: The SAR does not state that 246 seal entanglements in marine debris have occurred. Rather, the report notes that there have been 197 entanglements observed, plus 6 deaths attributed to entanglement in debris. A parenthetical phrase indicating that the three longline

hookings are included in the total count of hookings has been added. A reference to a newly published paper has also been added to the revised report, which summarizes the data on entanglement in detail.

Dated: March 4, 2002.

David Cottingham,

Deputy Director, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 02-5617 Filed 3-7-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 022002B]

Caribbean Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of Public Meetings.

SUMMARY: The Caribbean Fishery Management Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC), Habitat Advisory Panel (HAP), and Advisory Panel (AP) will hold meetings.

DATES: The SSC meeting will be held on March 19, 2002, the HAP meeting will be held on March 20, 2002, and the AP meeting will be held on March 21, 2002. All meetings will be from 10 to 4 p.m.

ADDRESSES: All meetings will be held at the Embassy Suites Hotel, Isla Verde Avenue, Isla Verde, Carolina, Puerto Rico.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Caribbean Fishery Management Council, 268 Munoz Rivera Avenue, Suite 1108, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00918-2577, telephone (787) 766-5926.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The SSC, HAP and AP will meet to discuss the items contained in the following agendas:

March 19, 2002—SSC

Call to Order

Adoption of agenda

Queen Conch

Recovery Plan

Habitat

EFH Final Guidelines

MRAG America's Inc. Outline and Discussion of Issues on Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)

Coral Reef Conservation

Opportunities for Grant Proposals

Other Business

March 20, 2002—HAP

Call to order

Adoption of agenda of Issues on EFH

Procedure for HAP Comments on Proposed Projects

Fishing Gear Impact on EFH

Coral Reef Conservation

Opportunities for Grant Proposals

Other Business

March 21, 2002

Call to order

Adoption of agenda

Education/Orientation

Comments

Other Business

The meetings are open to the public, and will be conducted in English.

However, simultaneous interpretation (Spanish-English) will be available during the AP meeting (March 21, 2002). Fishers and other interested persons are invited to attend and participate with oral or written statements regarding agenda issues.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in this agenda may come before this group for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. For more information or request for sign language interpretation and other auxiliary aids, please contact Mr. Miguel A. Rolon, Executive Director, Caribbean Fishery Management Council, 268 Munoz Rivera Avenue, Suite 1108, San Juan, Puerto Rico, 00918-2577, telephone (787) 766-5926, at least five days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: March 05, 2002.

Richard W. Surdi,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 02-5623 Filed 3-7-02; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 022602G]

Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.