



**International Fisheries/Pelagics Standing Committee  
Tuesday, June 13 2000  
104<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting  
Maui Prince Hotel  
Makena, Hawaii**

## **Introduction**

Pelagic Fisheries Co-Chair, Roy Morioka opened the Pelagics Standing Committee at 9.00 am

### **1. American Samoa framework measure**

Paul Dalzell gave a brief account of the history of this measure, which had yet to be resolved. The original demand by American Samoan fishermen for a 100 nm closed area for vessels > 50 ft (LOA) in 1997 had been modified to a 50/30 nm closed area combination in 1998 and submitted to NMFS for approval. The measure was subsequently disapproved by NMFS due to lack of evidence in the administrative record for a closure and that the framework measure document did not address all the Magnuson Act National Standards. Dalzell noted that advice from NMFS was to re-submit the document for a 50 nm closure with a better rationale based on National Standard 8 for fishing communities. Such a document was prepared for the 102<sup>nd</sup> Council Meeting, but it was apparent at that meeting that fishermen in American Samoa were still in favor of a 100 nm closure. The Council was asked to revise the framework document accordingly.

Subsequently, it appeared that NMFS would likely approve a 50 nm closure based on the new framework measure document, but probably could not accept a 100 nm closure. The Council had therefore suspended any further action on the document until consensus was reached on how to proceed.

In the discussion that followed, the American Samoa Council members (Frank McCoy, Aitofele Sunia, Ray Tulafono) explained that two recent meetings had been held with fishermen in Pago Pago to explain the realities of getting a 100 nm closure, in the face of opposition by NMFS. However, fishermen had voted unanimously at both meetings for the 100 nm. Council members had tried to explain the difficulties inherent in getting a framework measure through the Department of Commerce system, but this had not swayed fishermen to accepting a smaller 50 nm closure. Council members felt it incumbent on themselves to represent the opinion of the American Samoan fishermen, although they personally disagreed with the 100 nm closed area.

NMFS acting SW Region Administrator Rod McInnis asked the two meetings in Pago had included discussion on the 50ft size limit for vessels, and if a limited entry program had been

discussed. Vessel size was discussed and the fishermen maintained that this was a suitable threshold size for the closed areas. Limited entry, however, was not discussed. There may be some interest in a limited entry program as a different means to achieving the same ends, i.e. protection for the locally-based longline fleet. McInnis stated that there was strong opposition in the past to an area closure of any size, but the revised draft framework measure document had made a strong case for a 50 nm closure, but probably not for a 100 nm closure. He concluded by stating he would be interested in discussing the potential for a limited entry program.

Discussion on this agenda item drew to a close with a request for McInnis and the American Samoa Council members to meet and discuss options for the longline fishery prior to the full Council meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> June.

## **2. Shark management**

### ***1. Pelagics FMP amendment for shark management***

Paul Dalzell stated that an amendment to the pelagics FMP, had been sent to the Regional Administrator for approval. If approved, this amendment would:

1. implement harvest guideline of 50,000 blue sharks in the Hawaii-based longline fishery.
2. impose a trip limit of one non-blue shark per trip which must be landed with fins and carcass.
3. ban the use of bottom-set or demersal longline gear for Pelagic MUS in the US EEZ around Hawaii.

Dalzell explained that the submission was delayed through procedural errors at the 102<sup>nd</sup> Council meeting, where the demersal longline ban was excluded from the wording of the recommendation. Dalzell stated that this part of the amendment was later voted on at the 103<sup>rd</sup> CM in May and then entire amendment was then able to be sent for approval.

Council chair Jim Cook asked about the framework measure to change the quota. Under the present Pelagics FMP the framework requires two meetings to pass a framework measure prior to submission to NMFS for approval. There was also some discussion of the recent petition by the conservation NGO, the Western Pacific Fisheries Coalition, for secretarial intervention on shark management in the Western Pacific, and to implement a shark finning ban. The final decision on this petition would be based on an analysis of the issue and not on the volume of letters received for or against this measure.

### ***2. State of Hawaii legislation and management of shark fishing***

Tim Johns stated that the shark bill which had passed through the State Legislature was now in the veto period, awaiting signature by the Governor of Hawaii. Johns stated that the Governor was scheduled to sign the bill on June 22. In response to questions on how the bill would be

enforced, Johns noted that the bill had sent the bill to the State Attorney General and was waiting for a response from the AG's office. Even if the bill is passed it would not be enforced until the AG's report was received. Jim Cook noted that a group of fishermen in Hawaii would mount a legal challenge to the bill as soon as it was signed into law.

### ***3. Federal shark fin legislation***

Paul Dalzell explained the changes to the Magnuson Act which were included in House Bill 3535, introduced by Cgr Duke Cunningham and which would impose a ban on shark finning throughout the USA. The bill would likely also apply to foreign fishing vessels coming into US ports for re-supply and which may have fins onboard. According to Kitty Simonds, this was the intent of the bill and this was confirmed by Cunningham's staff. There followed discussion concerning the circumstances under which shark fins could be landed and when they could not. Magnuson Act manages fishing and fishing vessels, and not commerce so cargo vessels may still be able land shark fins from abroad when they were international cargo. Similarly, foreign vessels could probably still tranship fins through the territorial ports in the Western Pacific, not subject to the Nicholson Act. There was also discussion about whether the bill would apply to US vessels on the high seas or only in US EEZ waters, and whether US vessels could land fins into foreign ports. This was still unclear

Council Chair Jim Cook stated that shark finning would not be stopped by this bill. Pacific Island countries had intimated very clearly that they would be pleased to see a finning ban implemented in Hawaii, as this would inevitably mean more business for them, particularly if foreign longline fleets moved to their islands for re-supply etc. Kitty Simonds noted that another bill had been drafted by Sen. Olympia Snowe which calls for changes to the Magnuson Act, including a ban on shark finning, and the certification of shark fin imports from fisheries known to conform to US practices, i.e. with full retention policies. The text of the Snowe bill was more or less the same as an earlier bill drafted by Sen. Inouye, but which omitted many of the research and utilization initiatives included in the original.

There were comments about both bills from Council members from American Samoa and Guam concerning the lack of understanding of the socio-economic circumstances of the Pacific Islands. Judy Guthertz stated that the persons framing legislation in Washington had little to no appreciation about how their actions would affect the communities in the Western Pacific Region, who had been struggling with poor economic circumstances for many years. The political representation of the insular territories in Washington was unable to vote and so had little influence politically. The insular territories had not enjoyed the same economic success as the US mainland, due to the downturn in the Asian economy. She continued that there were few economic opportunities available for Pacific Island communities, and one source of income was the re-provisioning of foreign vessels. Would the US government compensate ports such as Guam and Pago Pago if vessels relocated elsewhere to home-port, because shark fin sales were illegal? She asked representatives of the federal government to impress on Congress these issues and that American citizens in the US Pacific Islands were tired of being dismissed as unimportant. She felt that the federal government was over-reacting to the bogus claims of conservation groups who had a narrow focused agendas that did not consider impacts on

indigenous communities in the Pacific. The US territories were struggling economically and could not afford to lose lucrative sources of commerce, with a concomitant swelling of the number of people on welfare.

The comments by Judy Guthertz would be translated into a Council resolution.

Discussion on this topic finished with questions on the process required to bring HB3535 into law. It was likely that the Senate bill introduced by Sen. Snowe would prevail, being part of a more complete package on the Magnuson Act and not piecemeal legislation such as HB3535.

### **3. Turtle management**

#### ***1. Status of litigation***

#### ***4. Observer program***

Charles Karnella combined agenda items 3.1 and 3.4 as they were closely connected. He noted that three weeks ago, budget constraints had led to the downsizing of the observer program for the Hawaii-based longline fishery had led to only two observers being retained in the program.

On the recent turtle/longline litigation, Karnella stated that Judge Ezra had asked NMFS to submit a recommendation for a time/area closure and had given the plaintiffs and interveners a chance to comment on these, and to also to comment on the replies. The judge would hear all parties on June 20-21.

To complicate matters, the annual NMFS report on turtle takes and mortalities had been generated incorporating 1999 data. The subsequent values showed that the estimates for the mortality levels of Olive Ridley turtles every year since 1995 had exceeded the incidental mortality numbers in the 1998 no-jeopardy biological opinion (BO). Due to these new figures, the BO must be reopened and a new consultation begun. Given the healthy nature of Olive Ridley populations the BO may not be a problem in itself, but was a complicating factor for the turtle/longline litigation along with the observer down-sizing.

Karnella referred to a recent paper in the scientific journal, *Nature*, which indicated dramatic declines in leatherback mortalities in the E & W Pacific. This information needed to be incorporated into the BO, and the NOAA attorney had asked for a six week deferment to consider a new BO incorporating this additional information. The judge had refused this request and asked NMFS PIAO to report on the probable response of foreign longline fishing vessels to a complete closure of the Hawaii-based fishery. NMFS PIAO had worked with the Honolulu Laboratory and the SPC-OFP to formulate a response, which was due on June 14<sup>th</sup>.

Karnella mentioned two additional threats of litigation from the Earthjustice, concerning Shortail albatross BO and on the downsizing of the observer program. Both letters indicated that legal action would be conducted within 60 days under the Endangered Species Act. With respect to the former USFWS had collaborated with NMFS on the Shortail albatross BO and this was expected to be available on June 16<sup>th</sup>. USFWS Administrator Robert Smith noted that the BO contained a

no-jeopardy opinion, and was therefore puzzled by the threat of litigation. Discussion on the Shorttail albatross revealed that only two at-sea sightings had been reported and in neither instance had there been evidence of the birds exhibiting interest in baited hooks set by longline vessels. The Earthjustice letter indicated that the plaintiffs would seek injunctive release from the ESA perspective that the continued operations of the fishery represented an irreversible and irretrievable commitment of resources. According to Robert Smith, this was only relevant where there was a jeopardy opinion.

Rod McInnis noted that the Section 7b of the ESA was a relatively new feature and that its origin was based on construction of large scale enterprises such as dams or felling of old growth forests by lumber companies. He believed that there would be an increasing number of legal challenged under Section 7b, and that it would be for the court's to determine the interpretation of this part of the ESA.

There was discussion of BOs in general involving more than one species, and could the BO only focus on individual species in a multi-species assemblage such as turtles? Legal advice suggested that in the case of the turtle/longline interactions that a full BO on all species would provide the firmest legal footing. Discussion also focused on the recent paper in Nature on Leatherback turtles. There was insufficient data in the paper for NMFS scientists to properly evaluate the population model used and the conclusions therefrom. Further, there had been a shift in the respect accorded to BOs and to the work of NMFS scientists by judges, who were now more prone to questioning NMFS data.

Karnella discussed the second litigation threat resulting from the observer downsizing. The letter implied that NMFS could not estimate turtle interactions with a reduced observer coverage. However, the NMFS staff at the Honolulu Lab and PIAO were working on a method that would allow take estimates to be made from logbook data. But, without work the observers would find new jobs, and the corporate pool of knowledge and skill will be lost, requiring additional training of new recruits when funding was restored.

There was also discussion of the use of cameras by observers following the publication by Hawaii Fishing News of highly emotive photos of dead and captured protected species taken by observers and acquired under FOIA. There were no regulations for observers governing cameras but they were useful for recoding unknown species. The solution to maintaining the confidentiality of all photographs may be to ensure that all include vessel names. Other observer issues such as coverage rates, and the means to improve them were touched on briefly. However, it was also noted that this and other issues to do with the observer program will be discussed in detail at a special meeting to be hosted by the Council on 19<sup>th</sup> June.

## ***2. Draft Environmental Assessment***

Karnella stated that the draft EA had recently been forwarded to NMFS HQ and is awaiting signature of the NMFS Administrator, Penny Dalton. The completion of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was also discussed, with Karnella indicating a likely completion date of October 2001. Karnella cautioned against the belief that the restrictions on the longline fishery

will be removed once the EIS is completed. The situation may not revert back to the status quo. NOAA Southwest Regional Counsel Judson Feder stated that Judge Ezra found that NMFS had failed to comply with NEPA in regulating the pelagics fishery and therefore required restrictions to protect sea turtles pending completion of the NEPA analyses. Whatever time/area configurations are decided upon after the June 20-21 will be non-binding following the completion of the EIS, but changing the time/area regime will probably require some additional rule making.

### ***3. Federal import embargoes related to incidental turtle catch***

Judson Feder described instances where the US Government had enacted embargoes of seafood imports with respect to domestic regulations concerning protected species interactions. This included shrimp imports from countries that did not take measures to reduce turtle mortality in shrimp trawls, and yellowfin tuna from countries not taking measures to protect dolphins from purse seining. Importation of shrimps required certification that fisheries were prosecuted in such a manner as not to harm turtles i.e. by using excluder devices, or had no interactions due to no turtles present in the fishery. The shrimp embargo had been challenged by several South and Southeast Asian nations through the World Trade Organization (WTO). WTO had upheld the embargoes but was critical that the certification regulations were not sufficiently transparent and interpretable. Similar regulations might also be considered for imports of longline caught fish where foreign longline fisheries were also interacting with turtles.

## **4. International**

### ***1. Outcome of MHLC6***

Paul Dalzell summarized the outcome of the sixth and possibly penultimate Multi-lateral High Level Conference to establish a management commission for highly migratory species in the West-Central Pacific. Dalzell used the Chairman's closing statement to comment on progress and outstanding issues including; area of application, scientific advice, decision-making, financial arrangements, observer program, transshipment, compliance and enforcement (including vessel monitoring system), boarding and inspection, final clauses and entry into force

The meeting had also discussed a formula for assessing a country's financial obligations to the new management commission. This included:

- \$ an equal basic fee which should be kept as low as possible.
- \$ a wealth payment which would reflect the development status of the member and the ability to pay
- \$ a variable fee based upon catch from the convention area (excluding archipelagic waters for the purpose of budget issues) with a weighting factor to be applied to the catch taken by developing States by their own flag vessels in their own EEZ.

Consideration as to the value of the catch may also be appropriate.

Other outstanding issues included the omission of Philippine and Indonesian Archipelagic waters from the MHLC area, with wording in the draft articles specifically excluding the South China Sea. The China-Taiwan question was also dealt with given China's objection to Taiwan having full membership status and voting rights. There were also concerns about the ability of French territories to join the full convention and vote, given that France remained in charge of enforcement in their EEZs.

Japan and Korea stated that they can not accept the United Nations Implementing Agreement on the Law of the Sea as the legal foundation of the MHLC convention as both governments have not ratified that UNIA. Japan and Korea cannot accept the boarding and inspection on the high seas requirements stipulated in the MHLC convention articles nor can Japan and Korea accept the current proposed decision making process that calls for both consensus and 4/5 majority vote process.

Small developing countries in the region, e.g. atoll micro-states such as Kiribati and Tuvalu are concerned about how much it will cost for them to join the MHLC convention. They don't have the funds to join up and want a subsidy from the developed nations to participate.

Philippines is concerned that it will be unable to install VMS on their high seas fleet of bancas or canoes. The Philippines also want to eliminate the provision limiting high seas transshipment due to their current reliance on at-sea transshipment for their purse seine fishery.

## ***2. Tongan HMS FMP***

Paul Dalzell explained that the Tongan Government had recently published a draft pelagic fisheries management plan, which limited entry to 25 longline vessels. Dalzell explained that while there were less than 25 Tongan vessels based in Tonga, the Tongan Government was willing to entertain the possibility for joint-venture fishing with foreign companies. Fishing companies from Taiwan and Korea were believed to be interested in fishing in the Tonga EEZ. Previously, all foreign longline fishing had been banned from the Tonga EEZ. Foreign vessels would be displaced, however, as more Tongan vessels enter the fishery.

## ***3. Purse seining and untethered FAD fishing***

Paul Dalzell reviewed the increase in purse seine fishing with untethered FADs in both the Central-West and Eastern Tropical Pacific. In the CW Pacific, the US fleet had made 90% of sets on untethered FADs in 1999. Dalzell produced various graphs and tables showing that untethered FAD sets were marked by catches of small or juvenile bigeye tuna, which was canned, and a greater incidence of bycatch, nearly all of which was discarded. Dalzell showed a summary table that showed a probable 80,000 mt catch of small bigeye by purse seiners across the Pacific. This was of great concern to stakeholders in the Pacific tuna fisheries, due to the possible effects on subsequent recruitment of larger adult bigeye to longline fisheries.

Dalzell also reported on possible European expansion of purse seining into the Pacific, with the possible inclusion of French vessels based in New Caledonia and the issue of lost or 'ghost' FADs. Ghost FADs would continue to aggregate fish but not catch them so were not as serious a threat as ghost gill nets. They did represent a threat to longline fishing if concentrated in a high density as in Papua New Guinea and could be a marine debris issue if washed up on beaches or coral reefs. There was additional discussion on issues such as FAD ownership and construction. Jim Cook suggested that the Council maintain this item on Council agendas in the future, given the importance of bigeye in the Hawaii longline fishery.

## **5. Recommendations**

Paul Dalzell gave the Pelagics Advisory Panel and Pelagic Plan team recommendations arising from the recent meeting in April and May 2000 respectively. Dalzell noted the AP recommendations endorsed by the Plan Team. Paul Callaghan followed and reviewed the SSC recommendations, and the review and comment by the SSC of the Advisory Panel and Plan Team recommendations

### **ADVISORY PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS**

- A. Recommendations arising from AP Agenda in 1999. Carried forward or modified for 2000 AP report**
1. The AP recommends that HDAR improve the collection of Hawaii's offshore recreational fisheries catch and effort data.
  2. The AP strongly urges the Council to convince NMFS to approve the framework adjustment to the Pelagics FMP which would implement a 100 nm. area closed to pelagic vessels > 50ft in length, and which would include Swains Island.
  3. The AP asks the Council to direct council staff to draft letters for council members to their federal representatives to defend, protect and preserve fisheries resources as they are the only major resources in the small islands of the Western Pacific.
  4. The AP requests that the council continue to support a synthesis of economic studies on recreational fisheries in Hawaii with the goal to identify appropriate economic multipliers, and to ensure that this analysis include a thorough review of similar studies undertaken in Texas, Florida, California, Costa Rica, Puerto Rico, Mexico and Panama, and their management implications.
  5. The AP recommends that in studying the effects of blue dyed bait on CPUE, the experimental methods include alternating on a one to one ratio dyed and undyed bait on longlines. Continue to evaluate mitigation methods.



**B Non agenda Recommendations arising from AP 1999. Carried forward or modified for 2000 AP report**

1. The AP recommends that for any seafood product to be labeled as Hawaii seafood they must be landed in the State of Hawaii by fishermen holding a valid State of Hawaii commercial fishing license.
2. The AP requests that the Council recommend to DLNR to explore a minimum size of aku for commercial sale because of fishermen's concern about the exploitation of juvenile fish.

**C New recommendations arising from 2000 AP**

1. The AP asks the Council to investigate current or future federal or state vessel buy out programs for the possible vessel relocation to the Pacific insular areas in order to assist in the emerging island fisheries industries.
2. The AP asks the Council to investigate the impact and legal issues concerning untethered FADs in the Central-West Pacific.
3. The AP expresses strong concern about the recent entry of the Spanish purse seine fleet to the West-Central Pacific, and request the State Department to convey these concerns to the MHLC, with respect to the impact of the Spanish fleet and other possible new entries.
4. The AP requests the Council to continue to improve the various information and communication services on its website (meeting notices, agendas, calendar, meeting minutes, summaries)
5. The AP requests the Council to investigate a longline closed area for Tutuila and Manu'a of 12 nm offshore to protect nearshore recreational and subsistence pelagic fisheries in American Samoa.
6. The AP requests the Council to consider the creation of a recreation advisory panel, and the panel to include charter vessel fisheries.
7. The AP recognizes the value of observer programs and supports the NMFS PIAO efforts to secure additional funding to maintain or increase coverage for pelagic fisheries.
8. The AP requests the Council to ensure that the US MHLC representation understands that the value of skipjack tuna goes beyond its use for consumption, but is essential for the success of sport fishing targeting blue marlin.
9. The AP requests the Council to continue its efforts to obtain funding to investigate the increased utilization of blue sharks.

10. The AP requests the Council to recommend that the boundary above which longline-albatross mitigation measures be used remain at 25 deg N, and not as recommended in the USFWS BO at 23 deg N.
11. The AP requests the Council to ask NMFS to quantify what effect the turtle area closure to the Hawaii longliners has had on reducing turtle mortality rates from longline fishing within the closed area.
12. The AP requests the Council to request the Dept of Defense to examine alternatives to practice bombing the island of Farallon di Medinilla in CNMI.

## **PLAN TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Region-wide recommendations**

1. The Council should support an analysis of trends in mahimahi and ono landings and catch rates, and other incidental catches (i.e. opah, pomfret, rainbow-runner etc), throughout the western Pacific region, including data from EEZ and distant water fisheries
2. Because the longline fishing is expanding in terms of ports of landings the Council should authorize NMFS to use VMS information to monitor logbook compliance. The Plan Team believes this information to be vitally important for other fishery monitoring and assessment purposes. At a minimum VMS data on noon positions should be provided to allow some approximate validation of logbook reported positions
3. All of the annual report modules should attempt to address bycatch reporting requirements of the SFA.
4. Council should seek similar provisions excluding tagged and/or released fish from being counted as bycatch as are given for Atlantic HMS.

**The Plan Team also endorsed AP recommendations: A4, A5, C2, C4, C7, C9 and C10.**

## **SSC RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The SSC heard the presentation on the stock assessment of blue shark in the North Pacific Ocean and is pleased with the progress that has been made to date with these analyses and encourages further development of this work. The SSC notes that the stock assessment takes a very conservative approach, counting all sharks taken in longline and drift gillnet fisheries as fishing mortality.
2. On the question of research on shark species other than the blue shark, the SSC believes that other issues such as the post hooking survival of blue sharks, marlins and turtles are

of more immediate concern. The SSC notes the conservative quota of one non-blue shark per trip and does not anticipate any immediate problems with these species resulting from Council managed fishing.

3. On seabird mitigation, the Council's strategy was to give fishermen an opportunity to experiment with different measures and elect which they favored most. SSC members noted that there was both economic and social science literature to show that mandated approaches are not always effective, and the SSC approved this approach being taken by the Council which allowed the fishermen to be part of the decision making process.
4. The SSC congratulated Kathy Cousins on the successful outcome of the follow-up workshop on Blackfoot Albatross and concurred with the workshop recommendation to form a permanent steering committee to guide and monitor USFWS albatross population biology studies in the Hawaiian Archipelago
5. On turtle/longline interactions and subsequent litigation, the SSC recommends that:
  1. the US should pursue international cooperation on turtle population recovery in an appropriate international forum;
  2. NMFS should mount with the cooperation of industry a tagging program to tag all turtles brought aboard or alongside longline vessels;
  3. NMFS should continue the observer program on the Hawaii-based longline vessels at an enhanced coverage rate;
  4. NMFS should complete an inventory of the sources of mortality at all stages and locations in the lives of turtles;
  5. NMFS should increase emphasis on the need to document the population dynamics of turtle populations and to promote the wider use of the TURTSIM model;
  - 6 fishing be allowed within the longline closed area under controlled conditions, including 100% observer coverage.
6. On the Recreational Fisheries Data Task Force, the SSC supported recommendations 1-3, however, suggested better wording than 'quick fix' be used in recommendation number 1.
  1. The Council should conduct a 'quick fix' mail and phone survey to estimate the total pelagic catch for Hawaii.
  2. The Council and TF need to organize an education outreach program to encourage voluntary reporting of recreational fishery data.

3. The potential of the Div. of Boating & Ocean Recreation and the US Coast Guard data bases for assisting in generating recreational catch data should be investigated.
4. Beyond the recreational data issues the TF should continue to represent the interests of recreational fishermen in Hawaii.

**The SSC supported the following AP recommendations, A1, A4, C2, C4, C7, C9, C10 and C11. The SSC recommended that recommendations C2 be edited as follows:**

**The Advisory Panel asks the Council to investigate the ecological and fisheries impacts and legal issues concerning untethered FADs in the Central-West Pacific.**

The SSC also recommended that, given the recent down-sizing of the Hawaii longline observer program, C7 be reinforced with stronger language as follows:

**The AP recognizes the value of observer programs and supports the NMFS PIAO efforts to secure additional funding to restore the coverage in the Hawaii longline fishery at least to the previous 3-5% level or if possible to expand beyond this minimum level of coverage.**

The SSC endorsed the region-wide Plan Team recommendations, but were concerned about recommendation 4. Although this recommendation sought consistency with recreational fishing in the Atlantic, catch and release of fish was not a zero-mortality issue. The SSC perspective was that this measure unfairly absolved recreational fisherman from bycatch responsibilities as stipulated by the Magnuson Act.

### **PELAGICS STANDING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Pelagics Standing Committee voted to accept the SSC recommendations and the AP and PT recommendations as modified by the SSC. The Standing Committee noted that AP recommendation C11 be edited as follows:

**The AP requests the Council to ask NMFS to quantify what effect the turtle area closure to the Hawaii longliners has had on reducing turtle mortality rates by the longline fishery.**

and that SSC recommendation 5.6 be edited as follows:

**The SSC recommends that.....**

**fishing be allowed within the longline closed area under controlled conditions, including 100% observer coverage for the purpose of acquiring data to monitor conditions in the closed area and for scientific management purposes.**

The meeting concluded at 12.45 pm.

