



**WESTERN  
PACIFIC  
REGIONAL  
FISHERY  
MANAGEMENT  
COUNCIL**

**ACTION MEMORANDUM**

175<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting  
December 17, 2018  
Council Office  
Honolulu, Hawaii  
And by Teleconference/Webinar

***Regarding the Management of Leatherback Sea Turtle Interactions in the Hawaii Shallow-set Longline Fishery, the Council:***

1. Reiterated its recommendation from its 173<sup>rd</sup> Meeting requesting that NMFS provide funding to support research in minimizing trailing gear to further reduce post-hooking mortality rates of loggerhead and leatherback turtles. Available observer data since 2004 indicate that reducing trailing gear on leatherback turtles would reduce post-hooking mortality rates. Development of additional tools and techniques would be warranted to allow quick and safe removal of trailing gear for large turtles that cannot be brought on board, consistent with existing requirements to disentangle and remove the gear, or cut the line as close as possible to the hook or entanglement. The Council further recommended that NMFS review the application of its sea turtle post-hooking mortality criteria to interactions in the Hawaii longline fishery to reduce uncertainties in mortality estimates.
2. Deferred action on additional leatherback turtle mitigation measures until such time that the draft Biological Opinion and more complete information on the impacts of the fishery on the Western Pacific leatherback turtles are available to fully inform the Council decision.