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July 26, 2006

TO: Sheryan Epperly,  
Protected Resources Branch

FROM: Dennis Lee,  
SEFSC Observer Coordinator

SUBJECT: Longline gear Incidental Take summary for quarter 2, 2006. **(Revised)**

The Miami Laboratory Pelagic Observer Program (POP) is providing you with a summary report of the incidental take of marine mammals, turtles, and birds that have been recorded by observers aboard longline vessels for April 1 to June 30, 2006. The POP completed an overall coverage rate of 7.6% of the selected pelagic longline fleet for this quarter (Table 1). During the quarter, observers recorded 17 sea turtles (10-leatherbacks-alive; 5-loggerheads-alive), in addition to one (1) marine mammals (1-Pilot Whale-alive) and no (0) seabirds.

Due to a recent PR reporting requirement, you and your staff were already provided the original Sea Turtle Life History (STLH) forms submitted by observers during the regular longline coverage. The photographs of the sea turtles will be provided with this document. The POP will maintain copies of the STLH forms in our files until you or Lesley Stokes have completed your data review or entry. I recommend that the original STLH forms be returned to the POP staff or the file cabinets in Rm 324 when the reviews have been completed.

In closing, in addition to the POP reporting of Protected Resource (PR) species recorded during observed longline fishing, observers have been requested to inspect the turtle handling and dehooking gear available aboard the vessels as a requirement of the 2004 Biological Opinion (BO). As a requirement of the BO tasking for the Miami Laboratory, I am providing you, as well as Lance Garrison, with copies of the Miami PR Turtle Gear check list form either filled out by the observer or by POP staff during debriefing from quarter 2. A PDF file will be created and will be posted on the SEFSC-POP secured website. Although it is not clear how this information will be processed, the originals will remain on file in the observer office, room 314. Analyses associated with Turtle Take Estimates (TTE) nor the Net Mortality Ratio (NMR) mentioned in the 2004 BO are not provided, as the POP staffing does not have the expertise to provide these results.

Attachments

Table of the Incidental Take summary for second quarter of 2006 by geographical area and effort (sets and hook count) observed; Original STLF forms (previously provided) and associated turtle photographs for regular longline coverage; and photocopies of the Turtle Gear check list forms.

cc: POP office files;  
Gerry Scott, Jim Bohnsack (cover letters only).

Table 1: Percent coverage (by sets),the incidental take of Protected Resource species (turtles, mammals, seabirds), and hook effort summarized by geographical area for April 1 -June 30, 2006. (A=Alive, D=Dead, LB=Leatherback, LH=Loggerhead, U=unknown). **Revised**

AREA	REQUIRED		TURTLES		MAMMALS		BIRDS	
	TOTAL SETS OBSERVED	8% COVERAGE	A	D	A	D	A	D
GOM-2	99(7%)	113	5/ 2/ 0	0	1	0	0	0
FEC-3	12(8%)	11	1/ 1/ 0	0	0	0	0	0
SAB-4	36(8%)	35	0/ 0/ 0	0	0	0	0	0
MAB-5	3(1%)	14	0/ 0/ 0	0	0	0	0	0
NEC-6*	<u>15(8%)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4/ 2/ 0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL	165(7+%)	173	10/ 5/ 0	0	1	0	0	0

Hook effort Summary:

<u>Area</u>	<u>Hook effort</u>
GOM	75,456
FEC	4,523
SAB	22,045
MAB	1,735
NEC*	<u>12,773</u>
TOTAL	116,532

\*Note: A third quarter selected vessel departed port near the end of quarter 2 and made three sets in the NEC area prior to July 1. The haulback of the third set took place on July 1. For consistency, this set effort and any associated takes will be counted in quarter 3, 2006.