

Southeast Fisheries Science Center
Miami Laboratory
75 Virginia Beach Drive
Miami, FL 33149

August 1, 2008

TO: Sheryan Epperly,
Protected Resources Branch

FROM: Larry Beerkircher,
POP Observer Coordinator

SUBJECT: Longline gear Incidental Take summary for quarter 2, 2008.

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, 2008. The POP completed an overall coverage rate of 32.8.1 % of the selected pelagic longline fleet for this quarter (Table 1), which included target coverage of 100% in the Gulf of Mexico during April 1st to June 9th. In addition, the POP monitored effort inside areas normally closed to pelagic longlining as part of a cooperative research project with NOVA Southeastern University, as well as experimental “weak hook” gear testing in the Gulf of Mexico (Table 2). During the quarter, observers recorded fifty-six (56) sea turtles (46-leatherback-alive, 2-leatherback-dead, 1-leatherback-unknown; 7-loggerhead-alive), four (4) marine mammals (2-Risso’s dolphin-alive, 1-Killer whale-alive, 1-Sperm whale-alive) and one (1) seabird (1-Brown pelican-alive) in regular fishery operations. During experimental fishing, observers documented four sea turtles (4) (4-leatherback-alive).

Attached for you are the original Sea Turtle Life History (STLH) forms submitted by observers during Quarter 2, along with copies of the associated haul logs. The photographs of the sea turtles, and any associated biopsy samples, 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 STLF 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 filled out by the observer from Quarter 2. A PDF file will be created and will be posted on the SEFSC-POP secured website. 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 (1) of the Incidental Take summary for the second quarter of 2008 by geographical area and effort (sets and hook count) observed in the regular fishery; Table (2) of the Incidental Take summary for the second quarter of 2008 by geographical area and effort (sets and hook count) observed in the experimental fishery; STLH Forms and associated turtle photographs and biopsy samples, photocopies of the Turtle Gear check list forms.

cc: POP office files;
 Guy Davenport, Jim Bohnsack (cover letters only).

Table 1: Percent coverage (by hauls), the incidental take of Protected Resource species (turtles, mammals, seabirds), and hook effort summarized by geographical area for April 1 to June 30, 2008 during regular fishing operations.
 (A=Alive, D=Dead, U=Unknown. LB=Leatherback, LH=Loggerhead, O=other)

AREA	TOTAL HAULS OBSERVED	REQUIRED	TURTLES			MAMMALS		BIRDS		
		8% COVERAGE	A	D	U	A	D	A	D	
			LB/LH/O							
GOM-2	562(70.3%)	64	45/	3/0	2	1	4	0	1	0
FEC-3	23(11.5%)	16	0/	1/0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SAB-4	18(3.6%)	40	0/	2/0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MAB-5	11(4.0%)	22	1/	1/0	0	0	0	0	0	0
OFFSHORE	0(0.0%)	8	0/	0/0	0	0	0	0	0	0
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TOTAL	614(32.8%)	150	46/	7/0	2	1	4	0	1	0

Hook effort Summary:

<u>Area</u>	<u>Hook effort</u>
GOM	416,467
FEC	9,797
SAB	14,665
MAB	8,670
TOTAL	449,599

Table 2: Effort (hauls and hooks) and the incidental take of Protected Resource species (turtles, mammals, seabirds summarized by geographical area for April 1 to June 30, 2008 during experimental fishing operations. Hauls outside the GOM were inside closed areas. (A=Alive, D=Dead, U=Unknown. LB=Leatherback, LH=Loggerhead, O=other)

AREA	TOTAL HAULS OBSERVED	TURTLES			MAMMALS		BIRDS		
		A	D	U	A	D	A	D	
GOM-2	61	4/	0/0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FEC-3	1	0/	0/0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SAB-4	9	0/	0/0	0	0	0	0	0	0
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TOTAL	71	4/	0/0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Hook effort Summary:

<u>Area</u>	<u>Hook effort</u>
GOM	36,897
FEC	500
SAB	4,615
TOTAL	42,012