

Take Reduction Teams: the good, the bad and the ugly

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THE MMPA AND TRTs

- 1994 amendments mandated TRTs for a stock over PBR or a fishery interacting significantly with multiple stocks.
- Intent was to include involved stakeholders from multiple perspectives (fishery, science, conservation, state and federal managers, gear specialists, etc.)
- Goal of the plan: takes reaching PBR within 6 months and ZMRG by 5 years.
- Team encouraged to reach consensus or else agency is the deciding member.



The Method in the Madness

- Members “can speak for” their stakeholder group.
- All share information on an equal footing
- Members get to know the individuals not the icons
- Time develops trust
- All collaborate on finding solutions everyone can live with
- A neutral facilitator helps encourage dialog and find common ground



NMFS Take Reduction Teams

- ✓ Harbor Porpoise*
- ✓ Atlantic Large Whale
- ✓ Bottlenose Dolphin
- ✓ Atlantic Trawl Gear
- ✓ False Killer Whale
- ✓ Atlantic Pelagic Longline
- Pacific Offshore Longline
- ❖ Atlantic Offshore TRT
- ❖ Mid-Atlantic TRT



What Happened ?

- Bottlenose Dolphin ★
- Atlantic Trawl Gear ★
- False Killer Whale ★
- Atlantic Pelagic Longline ★
- Pacific Offshore Longline ★
- Atlantic Large Whale ☹️
- Harbor Porpoise ★ ☹️



2 defunct teams had initial consensus but were subsumed into other TRTs

Learning from the History of the Harbor Porpoise TRT ?

1993 NMFS proposes to list under ESA (>2,000 M&SI)

1996 TRT Convened (PBR 483, M&SI 2,040)

1998 Final Rule Published

1999 bycatch at 323 (<PBR of 483)

2001 bycatch at 79 (ZMRG : PBR=747)

2002-2004 non-compliance increased bycatch each year

2005 bycatch at 1,100

2008 TRT meets and reaches consensus on a “consequence strategy” : closure if take rate is tracking to >PBR. On-water fishermen are now a minority of fishery reps; most are hired

2010 Regulations put the strategy in place



Consequence Closure Areas

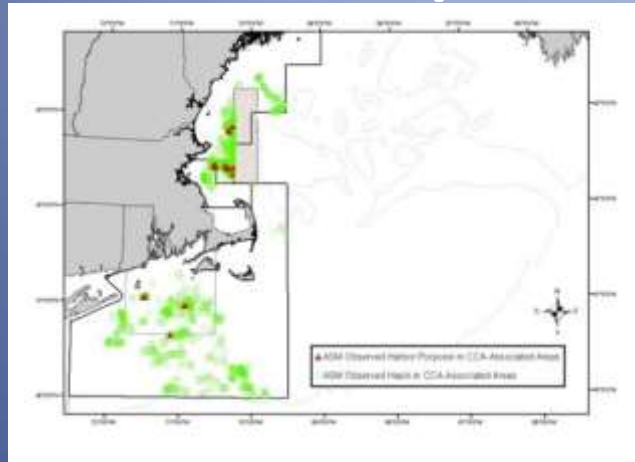


Figure 4. At-Sea-Monitor (ASM) observed gillnet hauls and harbor porpoise bycatch locations for the 2011-2012 Harbor Porpoise Take Reduction Plan (HPTRP) management season. Hatched area represents the year-round Western Gulf of Maine Closure Area under the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (FMP). For a corresponding figure for the 2010-2011 season, see Orphanides and Paika (2012).

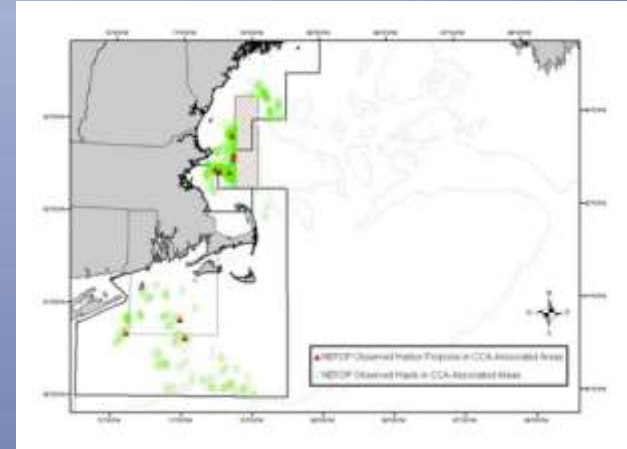
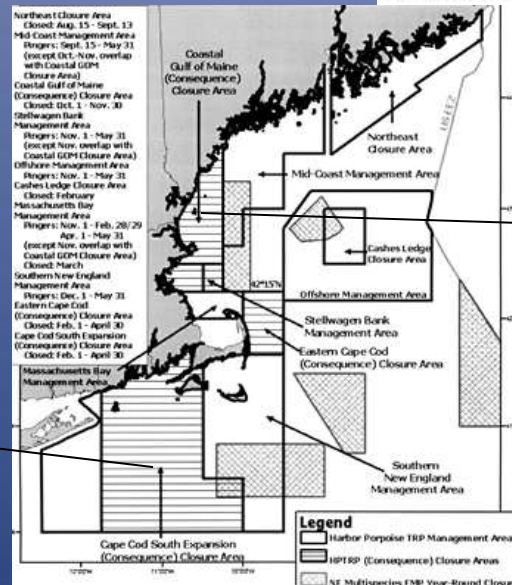


Figure 3. Northeast Fishery Observer Program (NEFOP) observed gillnet hauls and harbor porpoise bycatch locations for the 2011-2012 Harbor Porpoise Take Reduction Plan (HPTRP) management season. Hatched area represents the year-round Western Gulf of Maine Closure Area under the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (FMP). For a corresponding figure for the 2010-2011 season, see Orphanides and Paika (2012).



And then....

- 5-year average of takes is subsequently projected to be >PBR in wake of new abundance model and higher PBR, but take rate high and over trigger.
- April 2012 NMFS informs industry of impending October closure due to bycatch rates in excess of the 'trigger' for the consequence strategy.
- Fishery & politicians ask NMFS to abate the closure, TRT not informed
- October 2012, NMFS notifies TRT that agency is shifting the closure date from fall to February 2013, amending the plan without the TRT.
- TRT meets February 2013 and May 2013 and for the first time fails to reach consensus.
- June 2013 NMFS informs TRT in conference call that it is rescinding the regulation requiring the trigger and consequence strategy
- Drs. Andy Read and Scott Kraus resign "science" seats on the TRT and HSUS resigns conservation seat on the TRT
- 2015 draft SAR: PBR = 706. 5-year average mortality = 563. Bycatch in NE has remained <PBR, largely due to dramatically decreased fishing effort.

SOOOOO....?

- Take Reduction Teams can be very effective if properly representative (with actual fishermen), well-informed and kept updated.
- Members have to believe at TRT is there is no BATNA
- Changing measures must be done in an inclusive manner involving the whole TRT
- Once a TRT is “broken” (i.e., can’t reach consensus, has lost key members) it’s not clear that it can be “fixed.”



