U.S. National Bycatch Report
First Edition Update 1

Monitoring and estimating marine fisheries bycatch is an important part of NOAA Fisheries’ efforts to sustain fisheries and recover protected species populations. The National Bycatch Report helps NOAA Fisheries monitor bycatch trends, improve stock assessments, and set fishery monitoring priorities.

Highlights
- This Update includes fish bycatch estimates for a total of 573 fish stocks nationwide, an increase from 480 stocks in the first edition.
- Alaska longline fishery seabird bycatch was 3,712 birds for 2010, compared to 6,353 birds for 2005.
- The bycatch ratio (ratio of total fishery bycatch to total fishery catch) for the Gulf of Mexico shrimp trawl fishery was 0.64 for 2010, compared to 0.76 for 2005.
- Northeast bycatch estimates were provided for 10 new protected species, including seals, bottlenose dolphins, and loons.

Catch and bycatch on a Pacific hake vessel. Photo courtesy of Mark Lomeli, Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission.

The First Edition of the U.S. National Bycatch Report, published in 2011, documented bycatch estimates, using observer data and self-reported logbook data, for all fisheries for which this information was available in 2005.

NOAA Fisheries has now released the First Edition Update 1 to the U.S. National Bycatch Report. This update includes species-specific bycatch estimates for species included in the first edition, as well as updated bycatch estimates for all fisheries in the first edition with some consolidation of fisheries.

This Update, as well as the First Edition of the report, is available on the NOAA Fisheries National Observer Program website: http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/observer-home/index

Importance of Bycatch Reduction and Observers
Bycatch occurs when fishing operations discard fish or interact with marine mammals, sea turtles, protected fish species, corals, sponges, or seabirds. Bycatch can have significant biological, economic, and social impacts on fisheries. Excessive bycatch can prevent overfished stocks from rebuilding, and bycatch and gear interactions can lead to the decline of endangered marine mammals, sea turtles, seabirds, and fish and prevent their recovery. To help minimize these impacts, NOAA Fisheries monitors bycatch in U.S. fisheries through observers and other methods and subsequently estimates bycatch levels that are incorporated into stock assessments.

NOAA Fisheries is required to address bycatch reduction under several federal laws—the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, Endangered...

NOAA Fisheries has been using observers to collect fisheries data, including bycatch information, from 1972 to the present. In 2012, NMFS carried out observer programs in each of its regions, with 974 observers and over 83,000 sea days observed in 47 fisheries nationwide. In 2012, total federal fisheries observer funding from all sources (including industry funding) was approximately $69 million for observer coverage and program infrastructure.

**For more information:**
Contact: Lee Benaka, lee.benaka@noaa.gov
Visit: [http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/observer-home/index](http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/observer-home/index)