



Ministry of Environment and Home Affairs
Department of Environment and Maritime Affairs
Lower Bight Road, Providenciales
Turks and Caicos Island Government



Jim Baker
Caicos Pride Seafood
South Caicos

And

Scott Taylor
Dayboat Seafood
Lake Park, Florida.

Dear Sirs,

Re: Conditions of Approval for Caicos Pride and Dayboat Pelagic Fisheries Research Permit

Please be advised that the Department of Environment and Maritime Affairs (DEMA) has reviewed the proposal submitted by Caicos Pride and Dayboat Seafood to conduct scientific research for pelagic, longline fisheries, and offers the following comments and Conditions of Approval:

Comments

The proposed study is intended to assess the stock characteristics and commercial viability of pelagic fisheries in the Turks and Caicos Islands' (TCI) Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Outputs of this study will include detailed catch statistics, in addition to analyses to determine the maximum sustained yield (MSY) and total allowable catch (TAC) for each targeted species.

The proponents of the study will be permitted to sell the catch obtained in order to recoup and supplement the costs associated with the study.

The study will be conducted for a maximum period of two (2) years from the date of signing the Access Agreement between Caicos Pride, Dayboat Seafood and the TCI Government. The Conditions of Approval will be subject to review and modification after six months of operation and after one year of operation.

All methods of fishing, including authorized species, prohibited species, retention limits, minimum sizes, landing restrictions, gear specifications, depth regimes, length and type of line, type of species and regulations governing catch will be in accordance with the current Highly Migratory Species Commercial Compliance Guide, prepared by the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and National Marine Fisheries Service. Any deviation from the above Compliance Guide will be subject to approval by DEMA prior to implementation.

The methods and target species of pelagic, long-line fisheries are subject to a number of international agreements and agencies, of which TCI is a signatory or party to, or is compliant with, including but not limited to the Bonn Convention on Migratory Species, ICCAT and CITES.



Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) will not be used.

A Mouchoir Bank License will be applied for and issued separately.

DEMA will wave all fees for permits and licenses during the first year of the study. After review at the end of year one, if the catch proves to be economically viable, full permit and licence fees will apply during the second year.

Conditions of Approval

Employment of Belongers

CRFM recognizes that pelagic fisheries are relatively undeveloped or under-developed in the Caribbean Region (CRFM, 2010, p.7) and that the development of pelagic stocks can be positive if such development results in reduced pressures on nearshore fisheries stocks. The research should be directed to show the benefits to the wider TCI community.

The study should therefore include provisions for the training of interested Belongers in the skills and technologies of pelagic fisheries in the second year. However, a single crew position shall be advertised for each vessel in accordance with the Fisheries Protection Ordinance, which stipulates that at least one Belonger must be on-board each fishing vessel at all times.

In order to comply with the above regulation, this condition may be fulfilled in any of the following ways:

1. A Belonger DEMA Officer
2. A Belonger Scientific Research Assistant
3. A Belonger permanent crew member

If none of the above Belongers is available at the time of heading to sea, due to a lack of response to advertisements or the lack of available DEMA staff, the lack of an available Belonger will not prevent the vessel from fishing research activities.

A Scientific Research Assistant, sponsored by the applicant and approved by DEMA, will monitor all activities on board vessels at sea and report directly to DEMA. Furthermore, DEMA reserves the right to install Conservation and Scientific Officers on-board vessels at any time for monitoring purposes.

Belongers that demonstrate the ability and desire to operate a pelagic fishery in the TCI EEZ will not be excluded from any reasonable opportunity to develop a commercial pelagic fishery operation.

Fleet, Methods and Gear

Detailed specs of the vessels and equipment to be used are to be provided to DEMA, in addition to specs for the long-line configuration of gear.



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The fleet will be limited to two vessels. Each vessel shall be equipped with fleet tracking devices that will enable DEMA to keep track of vessels at sea at all times of operation.

Gear may be subject to restriction and regulation if bycatch of unintentional species cannot be controlled by other means.

Bait may be subject to restriction and regulation if bycatch of unintentional species cannot be controlled by other means.

Other methods and equipment, such as the use of intermittent flashing light sticks, may be required depending on bycatch data.

Reporting

All catch data is to be submitted to DEMA at the conclusion of each voyage and shall include the following:

- Location of line setting (lat/long), including depth.
- CPUE of all catch (including bycatch (fish and non-fish, including seabirds) in terms of the number of each species/hook.
- Number of catch kept and number of catch released for each species.
- Length will be reported as required by species.
- Weight will be reported as required by species.
- Mortality at hauling for all catch, including bycatch.
- Surface and sub-surface (when available) sea temperatures.
- Description and number of gear used, for example light stick, line and hook specs.

Bycatch

At any time if the level of bycatch of non-target species, both fish and non-fish, is deemed to be detrimental to a population or involves any internationally protected species or the use unacceptable methods, the study proponents will make every effort by whatever means are available to reduce bycatch to the satisfaction of DEMA.

DEMA recommends that lines are night-set in order to reduce or eliminate seabird bycatch. Accidental bycatch mortality of seabirds must be reported as BPUE (birds per unit effort), determined as number of birds per hook. Species must be reported as BPUE individually. If at any time, seabird bycatch is deemed to be detrimental to the population or involves internationally protected species, the study proponents will make every effort by whatever means are available to reduce bycatch to the satisfaction of DEMA.

If cetacean bycatch or entanglement is deemed to be detrimental to species populations or involves internationally protected species, the study proponents will make every effort by whatever means are available to reduce bycatch to the satisfaction of DEMA.



If sea turtle bycatch or entanglement is deemed to be detrimental to species populations or involves internationally protected species, the study proponents will make every effort by whatever means are available to reduce bycatch to the satisfaction of DEMA.

Elasmobranchs (Sharks and rays) are also vulnerable as bycatch from longline fishing methods (Gilman, 2011). If elasmobranch bycatch is deemed to be detrimental to species populations or involves internationally protected species, the study proponents will make every effort by whatever means are available to reduce bycatch to the satisfaction of DEMA.

The above species are particularly vulnerable due to their K-selected life history strategies; however, if by-catch of any species is deemed to be detrimental to species populations or involves internationally protected species, the study proponents will make every effort by whatever means are available to reduce bycatch to the satisfaction of DEMA.

DEMA reserves the right to halt operations if bycatch is deemed to be detrimental to species populations and/or involves internationally protected species and methods employed fail to reduce bycatch mortality.

Accurate reporting of all bycatch is *mandatory*. Any false reporting of bycatch will result in the immediate revocation of the Research Permit.

Other Conditions

No bottom longline or purse seine gear is to be used during the course of this study.

The activities associated with this project are not to violate any international agreements such as the Bonn Convention on Migratory Species, which explicitly prohibits the bycatch of sea turtles, and agreements between TCI and ICCAT, FAO, CRFM or any other organization.

All activities will comply with the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (CCRF).

A Total Allowable Catch (TAC) may be implemented if the rate of harvest is deemed to be unsustainable.

If any harm is done to the seafloor due to methods employed, DEMA reserves the right to revoke permission.

Provisions of the Marine Pollution Ordinance, Coast Protection Ordinance, National Parks Ordinance and other relevant legislations may apply.

All fish caught within this study must be received by Dayboat Seafood as US quota and will be reported as such to ICCAT.



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The applicant must at all times observe allowable quotas for relevant species by ICCAT and/or CITES.

ICCAT established limits on swordfish and Bluefin tuna for length, weight, percentage of small fish in landings the retention as such shall be the governing authority.

Measure limits for blue and white marlin established by ICCAT shall be observed at all times and there shall be no retention of live billfish species other than swordfish.

Identification of any spawning areas will be reported and fishing will thereafter be suspended in such areas.

A "no fishing zone" of ten miles, outlined by the proponents in their proposal and identified as the sport fishing area off Providenciales, shall be observed. An additional "no fishing zone" encompassing the area of the Columbus Passage within 10 miles of the western shoreline of Grand Turk, extending to Salt Cay shall also be observed.

Additional "no fishing zones" may be implemented at the discretion of DEMA if activities associated with the study are deemed to be detrimental to other economic interests, such as the sport fishing sector.

DEMA reserves the right to halt operations at various locations throughout the whale migration period if entanglement is observed to be detrimental to individual cetaceans.

All provisions of the Fisheries Protection Ordinance, Marine Pollution Ordinance, National Parks Ordinance, Coast Protection Ordinance and any other relevant policy and legislations apply.

By signature, the undersigned parties agree to the above conditions:

Dated this^{9th}.....day of September 2013

For and on behalf of DEMA
Kathleen Wood
Director

For and on behalf of Caicos Pride
Edwin Dickenson
Owner

For and on Behalf of Day Boat
Howard Bubi
Owner