

Proposed Regulatory Changes for the Recreational Bluefin Tuna Fishery

Fish and Game Commission Meeting
April 8, 2015
Marci Yaremko
Marine Region



By: Brian J. Skerry/National Geographic



Background

- The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission found Pacific bluefin tuna to be overfished and recommended a 20-45 percent catch reduction throughout its range
- In November 2014, the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) decided to reduce the daily bag limit to two fish. This included public comment and industry input
- In April 2015, the National Marine Fisheries Service will publish a proposed rule reducing the bag limit
- The Department is proposing regulation changes to conform to these changes in federal rules

Federal Rulemaking Status

- Proposed Rule to be published in April 2015
- Open for public comment for 15-30 days
- The Final Rule is expected to take effect May 2015



Brian J. Skerry, National Geographic Stock

Summary of Public Comment

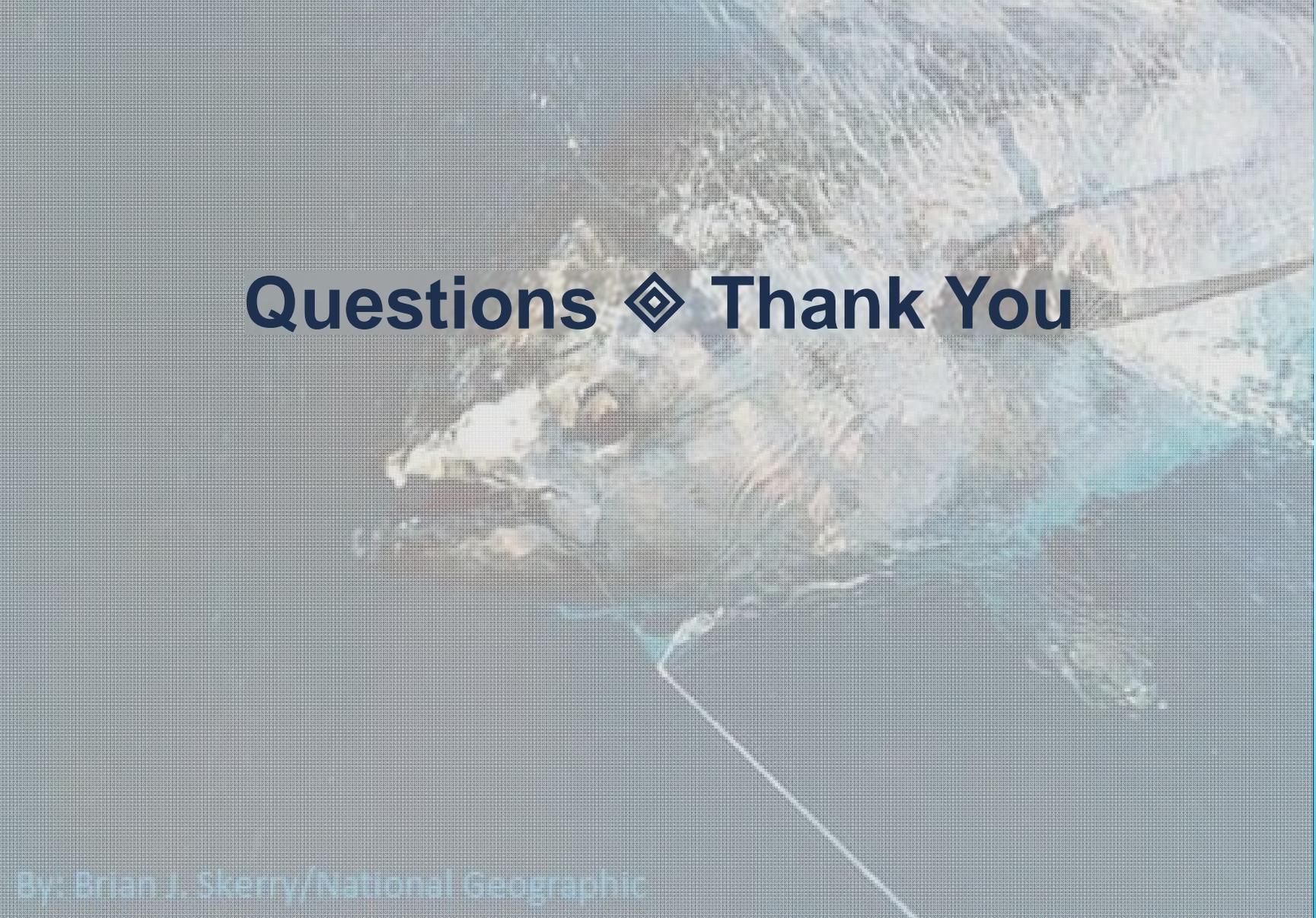
- The Commission received written comment from four individuals
- Areas of concern - fillet requirements primary source of comment:
 - Exception for skipjack
 - Justification for proposed fillet specifications
 - Labeling and bagging requirements
 - Justification for requiring all tuna species
 - Geographic area affected

Public Comment Response

- No exception for skipjack → must conform to federal rule
- Justification for proposed fillet specifications → additional traits are required to accurately identify between tuna species
- Labeling/bagging requirements for all tuna species → allows wardens to accurately count all tuna onboard
- Geographic area affected → bluefin uncommon north of Point Conception

Additional Public Comment and Responses

- Application of requirements to trips in Mexican waters
→ Applies to all fish possessed in CA waters
- Concern that proposed changes are not science based
→ Changes based on international assessment
- Request to re-evaluate the bag reduction after 2016
→ Changes to these rules must originate with PFMC
- Changes being made to commercial bluefin regulation
→ Commercial catch is also being significantly reduced



Questions ♦ Thank You

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