



Marine Life Protection Act



Photo by Dave Rudie

Commercial Fishing in the MLPA South Coast Study Region

Susan Ashcraft, California Department of Fish and Game
Presentation to the South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group
November 19, 2008 • Ventura, CA



Information from Commercial Fishermen

Background: Fishermen on MLPA South Coast Regional Stakeholder Group volunteered to inform the SCRSO of relevant fisheries and how they operate.

Information requested by the California Department of Fish and Game from commercial fishery and harbor interests on the SCRSO:

1. Description of fishing fleet by port
2. Highlight important fisheries in the study region
3. Importance/relevance of fisheries to ports and harbors
4. Gear operations and habitat interactions
5. Spatial importance: Identify important fishing grounds, seasonal shifts



Fishermen Providing Information

- Phil Beguhl (Santa Barbara)
- Jeff Maassen (San Diego)
- Mike McCorkle (Santa Barbara)
- Gerry Richter (Santa Barbara)
- Dave Rudie (San Diego)
- Bruce Steele (Santa Barbara)



Six Key Fisheries in Study Region

- Sea urchin
- Coastal Pelagic Species (anchovy, mackerel, sardine, and squid)
- California halibut
- Lobster and crab
- Nearshore rockfish and finfish
- Sea Cucumber

Red Sea Urchin

Depth and Habitat Fished

- Shallow subtidal
- Kelp forests and rocky habitats



Photo by Dave Rude

Red Sea Urchin

Gear Type

- Diving on surface-supplied air system ("hooka")

Operation

- Divers hand-pick urchin
- Tool ranges from a small metal hook to a bionic arm



Photo by Dave Rude

Red Sea Urchin

Other Fishery Information

- Fishery depends on market demand
- Fishery active throughout the study region

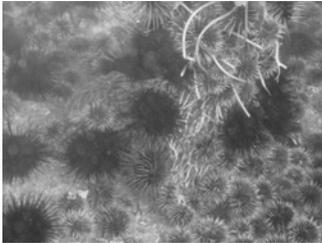


Photo by Dave Rude

Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Anchovy, mackerel, sardine and squid

Depth and Habitat Fished

- 10 to 50 fathoms (60 to 300 feet)
- Pelagic, coastal



Photo by Diane Pleschner-Steele

Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Anchovy, mackerel, sardine and squid

Gear Type

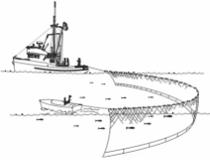
- Purse seine / drum seine
- Light boat (squid fishery)

Operation

- Net encircles fish and bottom pursed
- Fish brailled or pumped into fish hold
- Bright lights aggregate squid
 - Light shield required to minimize light scatter



Photo by Diane Pleschner-Steele



Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Anchovy, mackerel, sardine and squid

Other Fishery Information

- CPS resources are pelagic, seasonal, subject to dynamic natural cycles
- Fishery Management Plan
- Quota limits, stock assessment
- Restricted access limits participation in the fishery



Photo by Diane Pleschner-Steele

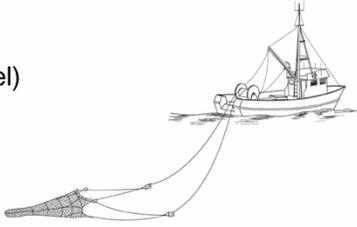


Photo by Diane Pleschner-Steele

California Halibut

Depth and Habitat Fished

- 2 to 50 fathoms (10 to 300 feet)
- Soft bottom (sand, mud, or gravel)

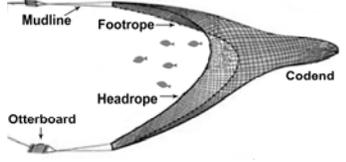
California Halibut

Gear Type

- Trawl net
- Hook-and-Line

Operation

- Trawl nets skim the ocean floor
- Hook-and-Line: rod-and-reel
- Valuable live fish fishery

California Halibut

Other Fishery Information

- Bottom trawling is allowed in certain state waters from Point Arguello (Santa Barbara county) to Point Mugu (Ventura county)
- Limited entry trawl fishery
- Trawl season in state waters: June 16 to March 14
- Mandatory observer coverage
- Trip limits
- Vessel Monitoring System mandatory
- Minimum size: 22 inches total length

Lobster and Rock Crab

Depth and Habitat Fished

- 2 to 50 fathoms (12 to 300 feet)
- Rocky reef (lobster)
- Sandy bottom, near rocky substrate (crab)



Lobster and Rock Crab

Gear Type

- Set on the bottom with a float at surface
- Traps selective for larger individuals, with destruct device if gear lost

Operation

- Traps 'soak' for 1-2 days (maximum 4 days)
- Self destruct device



Photo by Dave Rude

Lobster and Rock Crab

Other Fishery Information

- Lobster season opens October 1, 2008 to March 19, 2009
- Rock crab fished year round
- Rock crab include: red, yellow and brown

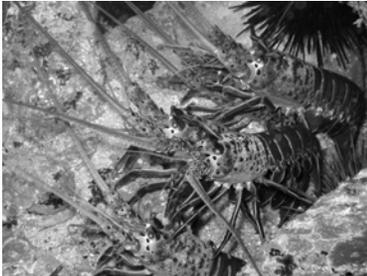


Photo by Dave Rude

Nearshore Rockfish and Finfish

Depth and Habitat Fished

- 0 to 67 fathoms (0 to 300 feet)
- Nearshore rocky habitat, kelp beds
- Contact with bottom habitat occurs with some gear types



Nearshore Rockfish and Finfish

Gear Type

- Hook-and-line
- Trap

Operation

- Hook-and-line: Several baited hooks. Bottom contact avoided.
- Traps : Set on sea floor and retrieved; allows release of bycatch
- Valuable live fish fishery



Nearshore Rockfish and Finfish

Other Fishery Information

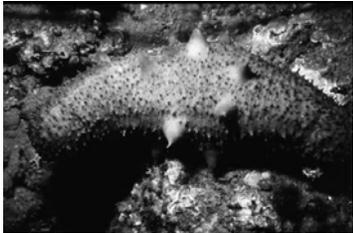
- Restricted access fishery
- Shallow nearshore permits allow hook-and-line gear; trap fishing requires an endorsement
- Deeper nearshore permits have no gear restrictions
- Small quotas + high price/lb = good income
- Spatial availability is concern - residential rockfish, potential for localized depletion



Sea Cucumber

Depth and Habitat Fished

- 3 to 13 fathoms (20 to 80 feet)
- Rocky reef, sand and gravel sediment



Sea Cucumber

Gear Type

- Diving on surface-supplied air system ("hooka")
- Trawl (Federal waters)

Operation

- Divers collect sea cucumbers by hand

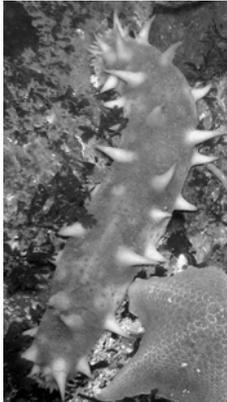


Photo by Kaitly

Sea Cucumber

Other Fishery Information

- Restricted access fishery
- Dive permits
- Trawl permits
- Most cucumbers shipped to markets in Asia

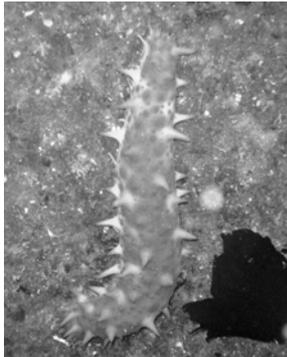


Photo by Dave Rude