

Digest of Federal Resource Laws of Interest to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Dolphin Protection Consumer Information Act

16 U.S.C. 1361 - 1370 Dolphin Protection Consumer Information Act -- Public Law 101-627, November 28, 1990 (104 Stat. 4465) establishes conditions for protection of dolphins by ocean vessels when harvesting tuna with purse seine nets. It provides labeling standards for tuna products that are exported from or offered for sale in the United States, and it sets the penalty for noncompliance at not to exceed \$100,000 for any, single action.

Public Law 102-523, October 26, 1992, 106 Stat. 3425, the International Dolphin Conservation Act, directed the Secretary of Commerce to conduct a study in the eastern Gulf of Mexico on the effects of feeding noncaptive dolphins by humans.

Public Law 103-238, April 30, 1994, 108 Stat. 557, 559, 565 allows the Secretary to issue permits to take a marine mammal for scientific research, public display or to enhance the survival and recovery of the species in the wild if the permit is reviewed by the Marine Mammal Commission. Also allows the incidental take of marine mammals during commercial fishing operations.

International Dolphin Conservation Program Act -- Public Law 105-42, August 15, 1997 (111 Stat. 1122) amends the 1990 law by changing the labeling standards and definition of "dolphin safe." The law codifies the Declaration of Panama, an international agreement between twelve countries that use purse seine nets to fish for yellow-fin tuna in the Eastern Tropical Pacific Ocean. The agreement establishes the International Dolphin Conservation Program to limit dolphin mortality while establishing a viable fishing program for catching yellow-fin tuna. The agreement allows the importation into the U.S. of tuna caught using purse seine nets if no observed mortality occurred. This changes the definition of "dolphin safe" to mean no dolphins were killed, instead of continuing to ban tuna caught using purse seine nets. The law requires a study to determine the impacts of purse seine fishing on dolphin health and safety.

[Return to List of Resource Laws](#)