

MERCURY BIOTRANSFORMATIONS IN THE PACIFIC BLUE MARLIN,  
MAKAIRA NIGRICANS

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## ABSTRACT

Tissue samples from the Pacific Blue Marlin, Makaira nigricans (previously classified as M. *ampla*), have been collected at three consecutive International Billfish tournaments at Kona, Hawaii. The marlin is shown to be carrying out an extensive biotransformation of methyl to inorganic mercury such that about 90 percent of the total body burden of mercury is in the inorganic form. To date a total of eight different tissues have been sampled and analyzed for total and organic mercury. A specific analysis was carried out on a subsampling of the tissues collected at the 1973 tournament to verify that the difference between the total and organic results was indeed inorganic mercury.