

Dolphin Wahoo Advisory Panel

The Dolphin Wahoo AP will receive a presentation on recent findings from the Dolphinfish Research Program and updates on recent Council actions relative to Amendment 10 to the Dolphin Wahoo Fishery Management Plan. The amendment includes actions to address Optimum Yield for the dolphin fishery, revise the recreational Annual Catch Target for dolphin, establish a commercial Annual Catch Target for dolphin, allow adaptive management of sector annual catch limits for dolphin, revise accountability measures for dolphin, revise the acceptable biological catch control rule for dolphin and wahoo, allow vessels with gear onboard that are not authorized for use in the dolphin fishery to possess dolphin or wahoo, and removes the Operator Card requirement. The AP will also discuss potential items to include in future amendments to the Dolphin Wahoo Fishery Management Plan. The AP will provide recommendations as appropriate.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for auxiliary aids should be directed to the SAFMC office (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 business days prior to the meeting.

Note: The times and sequence specified in this agenda are subject to change.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: March 17, 2017.

Jeffrey N. Lonergan,

Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

RIN 0648-XF263

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fisheries; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement; Scoping Process; Notification of Scoping Meetings; Request for Comments

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; intent to prepare an environmental impact statement;

scoping process; notification of scoping meetings; requests for comments.

SUMMARY: The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council announces its intent to prepare, in cooperation with NMFS, an environmental impact statement in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. An environmental impact statement may be necessary to assess potential effects on the human environment of an amendment to manage Atlantic chub mackerel (*Scomber colias*) as a stock in the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fishery Management Plan. This notice announces a public process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying significant issues related to Council management of Atlantic chub mackerel, including setting annual catch limits, accountability measures, and other conservation and management measures required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act for stocks in the fishery.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before May 31, 2017.

ADDRESSES: Written comments may be sent by any of the following methods:

- Email to the following address: nmfs.gar.chubmackerel@noaa.gov;
- Mail to Dr. Christopher M. Moore, Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 North State Street, Suite 201, Dover, Delaware 19901. Mark the outside of the envelope "Chub Mackerel Amendment Scoping Comments";
- Fax to (302) 674-5399; or
- Verbally or in writing at six public scoping meetings.

More information on this amendment is available at <http://www.mafmc.org/actions/chub-mackerel-amendment>. A scoping document will be posted to this site on or around April 18, 2017.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Christopher M. Moore, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 North State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901, (telephone 302-674-2331).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Background**

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council manages Atlantic mackerel, longfin squid and *Illlex* squid throughout the U.S. east coast from Maine through Florida and butterfish from Maine through Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, under the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Current measures include limited entry, permit and reporting requirements, catch limits, possession limits, and gear restrictions, among others.

A targeted commercial chub mackerel fishery developed in the Mid-Atlantic and Southern New England in recent years, averaging 2.86 million lb of landings over 2013–2015. In August 2016, the Council approved an annual landings limit and a possession limit for chub mackerel as part of the Unmanaged Forage Fish Omnibus Amendment. Rulemaking to implement these measures is currently being developed by NMFS. These measures would be the first regulations for chub mackerel fisheries off the U.S. Atlantic coast, if approved by the Secretary of Commerce. As proposed, these measures are temporary, and would expire three years after implementation. This is because the Council intends to develop alternatives for longer-term management of chub mackerel fisheries by integrating this species into the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish FMP.

The Council initiated an amendment to consider managing Atlantic chub mackerel as a "stock in the fishery" under the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish FMP in December 2016 when they approved their 2017 Implementation Plan. The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) lists several required provisions of FMPs for stocks that are in the fishery, including:

- Annual catch limits (ACLs) specified in relation to acceptable biological catch limits recommended by the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee;
- Accountability measures for when the ACLs are exceeded;
- Essential fish habitat designations; and
- Definition of the management unit.

The Council may also consider management measures not explicitly required by the Magnuson-Stevens Act, but which may be necessary to prevent overfishing and promote long-term stability of Atlantic chub mackerel fisheries. These measures could include, but are not limited to:

- Permit requirements;
- Limited access;
- Commercial and/or recreational annual catch targets;
- Commercial quotas;
- Recreational harvest limits;
- Possession limits;
- Commercial and/or recreational minimum fish size restrictions;
- Gear restrictions;
- Reporting requirements; and
- Commercial and/or recreational fishing seasons.

This amendment will affect targeted commercial chub mackerel fisheries

and, depending on the management measures considered, may also affect fisheries that catch chub mackerel incidentally (e.g., the *Illex* squid fishery) and recreational chub mackerel fisheries.

Public Comment

The Council seeks comments on the scope of alternatives to be considered in this amendment, as well as general comments or concerns relating to Council management of Atlantic chub mackerel. In addition to the public comment period provided for in this announcement, the Council will also hold multiple public scoping hearings on this amendment. The dates and locations of these hearings are listed below. The public will have the opportunity to provide additional comments during these hearings. After the scoping process is completed, the Council will begin development of alternatives for chub mackerel management measures, and may prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) to analyze the impacts of the range of alternatives. If NMFS determines that the management alternatives under consideration are not expected to have significant impacts on the human environment, the Council and NMFS may prepare an environmental assessment (EA) in place of an EIS. This determination will depend on the scope of issues raised and the alternatives developed. Information obtained during the scoping process will be used to develop either an EIS or an EA as appropriate. If an EIS is developed to support this action, the Council will hold future public hearings to receive comment on the draft amendment and on the analysis of its impacts presented in the Draft EIS.

Scoping Hearings

Six scoping meetings to facilitate public comment will be held on the following dates and locations:

1. Thursday, May 4, 2017. 7:00–9:00 p.m. Kingsborough Community College, Room V-219. 2001 Oriental Boulevard, Brooklyn, NY 11235. Telephone: 718-368-5000.
2. Monday, May 15, 2017. 6:00–7:30 p.m. Virginia Marine Resources Commission 4th Floor Meeting Room. 2600 Washington Avenue, Newport News, VA 23607. Telephone: 757-247-2200.
3. Tuesday, May 16, 2017. 6:30–8:00 p.m. Princess Royale Oceanfront Resort & Conference Center. 9100 Coastal Highway, Ocean City, Maryland 21842. Telephone: 410-524-7777.
4. Tuesday, May 23, 2017. 6:30–8:00 p.m. Congress Hall Hotel. 200 Congress

Place, Cape May, NJ 08204. Telephone: 888-944-1816.

5. Wednesday, May 24, 2017. 6:30–8:00 p.m. 215 South Ferry Road, Narragansett, RI 02882. Telephone: 401-874-6222.

6. Wednesday, May 25, 2017. 6:00–7:30 p.m. Webinar. Audio and visual access available at <http://mafmc.adobeconnect.com/chubscoping/>. The webinar can be accessed via phone only by calling 1-800-832-0736, Room #5068871.

The scoping hearings are accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aid should be directed to M. Jan Saunders (302-674-2331, ext. 18) at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: March 16, 2017.

Emily H. Menashes,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS®) Advisory Committee

AGENCY: National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of open meeting.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given of a meeting of the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS®) Advisory Committee (Committee) in Washington, DC.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 19, 2017, from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Thursday, April 20, 2017, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. These times and the agenda topics described below are subject to change. Refer to the Web page listed below for the most up-to-date meeting agenda.

ADDRESSES: On Wednesday, April 19, 2017, the meeting will be held in the Conference Room, 11th Floor, Consortium for Ocean Leadership, 1201 New York Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20005. On Thursday, April 20, 2017, the meeting will be held in the Conference Room, 4th Floor, Consortium for Ocean Leadership, 1201 New York Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Carl Gouldman, Designated Federal Official,

U.S. IOOS Advisory Committee, U.S. IOOS Program, 1315 East-West Highway, Second Floor, Silver Spring, MD 20910; Phone (240) 533-9456; Fax (301) 713-3281; Email carl.gouldman@noaa.gov or visit the U.S. IOOS Advisory Committee Web site at <http://ioos.noaa.gov/community/u-s-ioos-advisory-committee/>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Committee was established by the NOAA Administrator as directed by Section 12304 of the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act, part of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (Pub. L. 111-11). The Committee advises the NOAA Administrator and the Interagency Ocean Observation Committee (IOOC) on matters related to the responsibilities and authorities set forth in section 12302 of the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009 and other appropriate matters as the Under Secretary refers to the Committee for review and advice. The Committee will provide advice on:

- (a) Administration, operation, management, and maintenance of the System;
- (b) Expansion and periodic modernization and upgrade of technology components of the System;
- (c) Identification of end-user communities, their needs for information provided by the System, and the System's effectiveness in dissemination information to end-user communities and to the general public; and
- (d) Any other purpose identified by the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere or the Interagency Ocean Observation Committee.

The meeting will be open to public participation with a 15-minute public comment period on April 19, 2017, from 4:35 p.m. to 4:50 p.m. and on April 20, 2017, from 2:30 p.m. to 2:45 p.m. (check agenda on Web site to confirm time.) The Committee expects that public statements presented at its meetings will not be repetitive of previously submitted verbal or written statements. In general, each individual or group making a verbal presentation will be limited to a total time of three (3) minutes. The Designated Federal Official should receive written comments by April 18, 2017, to provide sufficient time for Committee review. Written comments received after April 18, 2017, will be distributed to the Committee, but may not be reviewed prior to the meeting date. Seats will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.