

ruled in favor of the plaintiff concluding that NMFS' 2024 decision was arbitrary and capricious because the agency's rationale was inconsistent with the MMPA and it failed to adequately explain its rationale and support its determinations with documentary evidence. The court vacated and remanded the 2024 Decision Memorandum supporting the comparability findings with instructions to NMFS to issue remand comparability findings for New Zealand's West Coast North Island multi-species set net and trawl fisheries no later than January 6, 2026. NMFS filed its remand comparability findings with the court on January 6, 2026.

In an unrelated action, on September 2, 2025, NMFS published a Notice in the **Federal Register** announcing NMFS' final comparability findings for the entire group of harvesting nations (135 nations covering approximately 2,500 fisheries) seeking to export fish and fish products to the United States under section 1371(a)(2) of the MMPA. *See* 90 FR 42395 (Sept. 2, 2025). The issuance of final comparability findings for all harvesting nations was required because the regulations obligated NMFS to determine whether to issue comparability findings for Export and Exempt fisheries no later than November 30, 2025 (the year when the exemption period was set to expire) and because a court order in *Natural Resources Defense Council, et al. v. National Marine Fisheries Service, et al.*, 1:24-cv-00148 (CIT) directed that NMFS issue comparability findings for all harvesting nations and submit those findings to the **Federal Register** on or before September 1, 2025. Pursuant to the requirements of the Final Rule and the court's order, NMFS issued new comparability findings for all of New Zealand's commercial fisheries, which were published in the **Federal Register** on September 2, 2025.

Māui and Hector's Dolphin Defenders NZ Inc. filed another lawsuit on January 5, 2026, alleging that NMFS' September 2, 2025, comparability findings for New Zealand's fisheries involving commercial set net and trawl gear violated the MMPA and APA. *See Maui and Hector's Dolphin Defenders NZ Inc. v. National Marine Fisheries Service, et al.*, Case No. 1:26-00060 (CIT) (*MHDD v. NMFS II*). *MHDD v. NMFS II* challenged NMFS' findings for the following 15 North Island and South Island set net and trawl fisheries—Fishery IDs 1883, 1968, 1969, 1977, 1978, 2041, 2046, 2047, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2064, 2067, and 2077. The primary difference between *MHDD v. NMFS I* and *MHDD v. NMFS II* relates

to scope, namely that in *MHDD v. NMFS II* the Plaintiffs claimed that NMFS did not adequately address the effects of the South Island set net and trawl fisheries on Hector's dolphins and other potentially affected marine mammals.

NMFS' Comparability Findings for New Zealand's North Island and South Island Multi-Species Set Net and Trawl Fisheries

NMFS has conducted a discretionary review pursuant to 50 CFR 216.24(h)(8)(vii) of the findings it made on September 2, 2025, pertaining to New Zealand's North Island and South Island multi-species set net and trawl fisheries solely to consider whether the information obtained by NMFS during the remand period in *MHDD v. NMFS I*, and other readily available information from public sources and the GNZ, continued to support comparability findings for the additional 13 fisheries that were not included in the remand. Having concluded that this additional information does not support altering the previous results, NMFS issues the following comparability findings.

A comparability finding means that each of the harvesting nation's Export and/or Exempt fisheries covered by the finding meet the applicable conditions specified in the Final Rule and becomes valid upon publication in the **Federal Register**. *See* 50 CFR 216.24(h)(8)(i) and (iv). NMFS has evaluated the documentary evidence provided by the GNZ and other relevant, readily available information, addressed the concerns identified in the court's August 26, 2025, Opinion and Order, and the applicable regulatory conditions at 50 CFR 216.24(h)(6) and (h)(7), and has determined that the GNZ's regulatory program for its North Island and South Island multi-species set net and trawl fisheries is comparable in effectiveness to the United States' regulatory program under the MMPA. The comparability findings announced in this Notice incorporate the remand comparability findings for Fishery IDs 1969 and 1977 that were filed with the court on January 6, 2026, and new comparability findings for New Zealand's North Island and South Island multi-species set net and trawl fisheries that are the subject of *MHDD v. NMFS II* (Fishery IDs: 1883, 1968, 1969, 1977, 1978, 2041, 2046, 2047, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2064, 2067, and 2077) and the new findings supersede NMFS' previously published comparability findings for the same fisheries (*i.e.*, Fishery IDs: 1883, 1968, 1969, 1977, 1978, 2041, 2046, 2047, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2064, 2067, and 2077) referenced in NMFS's Notice of

Comparability Findings and Implementation and Continuation of Trade Restrictions for Certain Fish and Fish Products dated September 2, 2025. *See* 90 FR 42395 (Sept. 2, 2025). All of the other comparability findings for New Zealand's Export and/or Exempt fisheries (*i.e.*, purse seine (ID 1881), trolling lines (ID 1971), surface longline (ID 1972 and 1975), bottom trawl (ID 2074, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2093, 2099), bottom trawl/midwater trawl (ID 10581), bottom longline (ID 1882, 2075, and 2095), fish pots/fish traps (ID 2043 and 12480), pots/traps (ID 2050), lobster traps (ID 2089), and aquaculture (ID 2090)) identified in the September 2, 2025, **Federal Register** Notice and accompanying report for these New Zealand fisheries are unaffected by this Notice and remain valid.

As a result of these findings, NMFS announces the issuance of comparability findings that will allow the continued importation into the United States of fish and fish products harvested by New Zealand's set net and trawl fisheries (Fishery IDs: 1883, 1968, 1969, 1977, 1978, 2041, 2046, 2047, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2064, 2067, and 2077) operating off the North Island and South Island. A more detailed analysis of NMFS' comparability findings for the GNZ's North Island and South Island multi-species set net and trawl fisheries (Fishery IDs: 1883, 1968, 1969, 1977, 1978, 2041, 2046, 2047, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2064, 2067, and 2077) is contained in NMFS's Decision Memorandum dated March 2, 2026, and can be found at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/international-affairs/2025-marine-mammal-protection-act-comparability-finding-determinations>.

Dated: March 6, 2026.

Samuel D. Rauch III,
Deputy Assistant Administrator for
Regulatory Programs, National Marine
Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Telecommunications and Information Administration

NTIA Innovation Fund AI RAN Listening Session

AGENCY: National Telecommunications and Information Administration, Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of open meeting.

SUMMARY: The National Telecommunications and Information

Administration (NTIA) will convene a hybrid industry listening session on the Public Wireless Supply Chain Innovation Fund (“Innovation Fund”). The session will discuss Innovation Fund progress to date and solicit industry input to help inform a future funding opportunity.

DATES: The listening session will be held on March 23, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 12 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time.

ADDRESSES: The session will be held hybrid, with participation available both via Microsoft Teams and in-person at The MITRE Corporation’s location in McLean, Virginia. Online slide share and dial-in information to be posted at www.ntia.gov/program/innovation-fund.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Please direct questions regarding this Notice to Richard Upchurch at innovationfund@ntia.gov, indicating “Innovation Fund Listening Session 2026” in the subject line, or if by mail, addressed to National Telecommunications and Information Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20230; telephone: 202-482-3806. Please direct media inquiries to NTIA’s Office of Public Affairs, press@ntia.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background and Authority

The Innovation Fund is authorized under section 9202(a)(1) of the *William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021* (Pub. L. 116-283; 47 U.S.C. 906(a)(1)). It supports U.S. leadership in the global telecommunications ecosystem, fosters competition, and strengthens our supply chain. The Secretary of Commerce, acting through the NTIA Administrator, shall establish criteria for grants awarded to support the following:

(i) Promoting and deploying technology, including software, hardware, and microprocessing technology, that will enhance competitiveness in the fifth-generation (commonly known as “5G”) and successor wireless technology supply chains that use open and interoperable interface radio access networks.

(ii) Accelerating commercial deployments of open interface standards-based compatible, interoperable equipment, such as equipment developed pursuant to the standards set forth by organizations such as the O-RAN Alliance, the Telecom Infra Project, 3GPP, the Open-RAN Software Community, or any successor organizations.

(iii) Promoting and deploying compatibility of new 5G equipment

with future open standards-based, interoperable equipment.

(iv) Managing integration of multi-vendor network environments.

(v) Identifying objective criteria to define equipment as compliant with open standards for multi-vendor network equipment interoperability.

(vi) Promoting and deploying security features enhancing the integrity and availability of equipment in multi-vendor networks.

(vii) Promoting and deploying network function virtualization to facilitate multi-vendor interoperability and a more diverse vendor market.

Listening Session Focus: This listening session will focus on advancing AI-native telecommunications networks through the Innovation Fund. This effort is aligned with the Administration’s July 2025 AI Action Plan and the Executive Order on Promoting the Export of the American AI Technology Stack with the goal of establishing U.S. leadership in secure AI technologies.

Time and Date: NTIA will convene the public listening session on Monday, March 23, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 12 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time. Please refer to NTIA’s website, www.ntia.gov/program/innovation-fund for the most current information.

Place: For those attending in-person, the listening session will be held at The MITRE Corporation located at 7525 Colshire Drive, McLean, VA 22102. For those attending virtually, online slide share and dial-in information will be posted at <https://www.ntia.gov/program/innovation-fund>. Please refer to NTIA’s website, for the most current information.

Other Information: The meeting is open to the public and the press on a first-come, first-serve basis. The hybrid meeting is accessible to people with disabilities and/or individuals requiring accommodations such as real-time captioning. Those individuals who need other ancillary aids should notify the Department at innovationfund@ntia.gov at least seven (7) business days prior to the listening session. Access details for the meeting are subject to change. Please refer to NTIA’s website, <https://www.ntia.gov/program/innovation-fund> for the most current information.

Dated: March 6, 2026.

David Brodian,

Chief Counsel, National Telecommunications and Information Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Department of the Army

[Docket ID: USA-2026-HQ-0199]

Proposed Collection; Comment Request

AGENCY: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Department of the Army, Department of Defense (DoD).

ACTION: 60-Day information collection notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the *Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995*, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announces the proposed extension of an approved public information collection and seeks public comment on the provisions thereof. Comments are invited on: whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; the accuracy of the agency’s estimate of the burden of the proposed information collection; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and ways to minimize the burden of the information collection on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

DATES: Consideration will be given to all comments received by May 11, 2026.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by docket number and title, by any of the following methods:

Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.

Mail: Department of Defense, Office of the Director of Administration and Management, Privacy, Civil Liberties, and Transparency Directorate, Regulatory Division, 4800 Mark Center Drive, Mailbox #24, Suite 05F16, Alexandria, VA 22350-1700.

Instructions: All submissions received must include the agency name, docket number and title for this **Federal Register** document. The general policy for comments and other submissions from members of the public is to make these submissions available for public viewing on the internet at <http://www.regulations.gov> as they are received without change, including any personal identifiers or contact information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To request more information on this proposed information collection or to obtain a copy of the proposal and associated collection instruments,