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Chair


Gulf of Mexico
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Dr. Thomas Frazer
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North Pacific
David Witherell
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Pacific
Chuck Tracy
Executive Director
Marc Gorelnik
Chair


South Atlantic
John Carmichael
Executive Director
Mel Bell
Chair


Western Pacific
Kitty Simonds
Executive Director
Taotasi Archie Soliai
Chair

November 6, 2020

Mr. Chris Oliver
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
NOAA Fisheries
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Chris,

The Council Coordination Committee (CCC) heard the presentations on aquaculture with interest at its recent meeting via Webex, September 23-24, 2020. We are pleased to see development on a number of aquaculture activities and request the ability for the Regional Fishery Management Councils (RFMC) participate in the process. This will provide opportunity for the RFMCs to review, provide input and address fishing and fishery management needs prior to implementation. In the development of the Aquaculture programmatic environmental impact statement that assesses the impacts of siting aquaculture facilities, the CCC recommended that NMFS coordinate a review with the Councils prior to seeking public comment. Given the timing of the RFMC meetings, we would like to request early engagement with the RFMCs to ensure a thorough and timely review.

The CCC also recommends that prior to the identification of Aquaculture Opportunity Areas (AOA), NMFS provide the spatially referenced data, including coordinates, bathymetry, habitat type, oil and gas locations, renewable energy, and other applicable data sources, that were used to identify the AOA. The information provided should encompass the same variables, resolution, and geographic scope used to identify the applicable AOA. Receiving this information will allow the RFMCs to address data concerns and make decisions and recommendations based upon the best available data. To accommodate this request, the CCC requests NMFS provide opportunity for the RFMC to participate on the AOA implementation teams.

Sincerely,


Taotasi Archie Soliai, Chair
Western Pacific Fishery Management Council


Marc Gorelnik, Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council



Dr. John Quinn, Chairman
New England Fishery Management Council


Simon Kinneen, Chair
North Pacific Fishery Management Council


Mike Luisi, Chair
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council


Marcos Henke, Chair
Caribbean Fishery Management Council


Mel Bell, Chair
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council


Dr. Thomas Frazer, Chair
Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council