

- Ship strikes was ranked as having an unknown but potentially low impact.
- Fishery interactions in the Atlantic Ocean/Mediterranean Sea and Pacific Ocean disturbance from whale watching and other vessels, disease, injury from marine debris, disturbance due to research, predation and natural mortality, direct harvest, competition for resources, and cable laying were ranked as having a low impact; and

No threats were identified as having a medium or high impact relative to the recovery of the fin whale.

The Recovery Plan identifies nine measures that need to be taken to ensure the recovery of sperm whales in the Atlantic Ocean/Mediterranean Sea, Pacific Ocean, and Indian Ocean. The key features of the proposed recovery program for the sperm whale are to: (1) Coordinate State, Federal, and international actions to implement recovery efforts; (2) develop and apply methods to estimate population size and monitor trends in abundance; (3) determine population discreteness and stock structure; (4) conduct risk analyses; (5) identify, characterize, protect, and monitor habitat essential to sperm whale populations; (6) investigate causes of and reduce the frequency and severity of human-caused injury and mortality; (7) determine and minimize any detrimental effects of anthropogenic noise in the oceans; (8) maximize efforts to acquire scientific information from dead, stranded, and entangled sperm whales; and (9) develop a post-delisting monitoring plan.

Criteria for the reclassification of the sperm whale are included in the final Recovery Plan. In summary, the sperm whale may be reclassified from endangered to threatened when all of the following have been met: (1) Given current and projected threats and environmental conditions, the sperm whale population in each ocean basin in which it occurs (Atlantic Ocean/Mediterranean Sea, Pacific Ocean, and Indian Ocean) satisfies the risk analysis standard for threatened status (has no more than a 1 percent chance of extinction in 100 years) and the global population has at least 1,500 mature, reproductive individuals (consisting of at least 250 mature females and at least 250 mature males in each ocean basin). Mature is defined as the number of individuals known, estimated, or inferred to be capable of reproduction. Any factors or circumstances that are thought to substantially contribute to a real risk of extinction that cannot be incorporated into a Population Viability Analysis will be carefully considered before downlisting takes place; and (2) None of the known threats to sperm

whales are known to limit the continued growth of populations. Specifically, the factors in 4(a)(1) of the ESA are being or have been addressed: (A) The present or threatened destruction, modification or curtailment of a species' habitat or range; (B) overutilization for commercial, recreational or educational purposes; (C) disease or predation; (D) the inadequacy of existing regulatory mechanisms; and (E) other natural or manmade factors. The population will be considered for delisting if all of the following can be met: (1) Given current and projected threats and environmental conditions, the total sperm whale population in each ocean basin in which it occurs (Atlantic Ocean/Mediterranean Sea, Pacific Ocean, and Indian Ocean) satisfies the risk analysis standard for unlisted status (has less than a 10 percent probability of becoming endangered (has more than a 1 percent chance of extinction in 100 years) in 20 years). Any factors or circumstances that are thought to substantially contribute to a real risk of extinction that cannot be incorporated into a Population Viability Analysis will be carefully considered before delisting takes place; and (2) None of the known threats to sperm whales are known to limit the continued growth of populations. Specifically, the factors in 4(a)(1) of the ESA are being or have been addressed.

Time and cost for recovery actions are contained in the Recovery Plan. The recovery program for the sperm whale will cost \$2.4 million dollars for the first 5 fiscal years and \$173.9 million dollars to full recovery, assuming 15 years for recovery starting in 2011 for the Atlantic Ocean/Mediterranean Sea and Pacific Ocean regions and 25 years for the Indian Ocean.

In accordance with the 2003 Peer Review Policy as stated in Appendix R of the Interim Endangered and Threatened Species Recovery Planning Guidance, NMFS solicited independent peer-review on the draft Recovery Plan concurrent with the public comment period. Independent peer-reviews were requested from three scientists and managers with expertise in recovery planning, statistical analyses, fisheries, and marine mammals. Many of the recommendations that were made by the reviewers were addressed and provided in detail in the final Recovery Plan. New information, research results, and references that have become available since the draft Recovery Plan was released were also incorporated into the final Recovery Plan.

## Conclusion

NMFS revised the final Recovery Plan for the sperm whale and evaluated all comments received by the public as well as independent peer-reviewers. NMFS concludes that the Recovery Plan meets the requirements of the ESA.

**Authority:** 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*

Dated: December 21, 2010.

**Therese Conant,**

*Acting Chief, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**RIN 0648-XA114**

### Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

**ACTION:** Council to convene public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council will convene a meeting of the Ad Hoc Reef Fish Limited Access Privilege Program Advisory Panel.

**DATES:** The meeting will convene at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, January 25, 2011, and conclude by 4 p.m.

**ADDRESSES:** The meeting will be held at the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 2203 North Lois Avenue, Suite 1100, Tampa, FL 33607; telephone: (813) 348-1630.

*Council address:* Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 2203 N. Lois Avenue, Suite 1100, Tampa, FL 33607.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Assane Diagne, Economist; Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; telephone: (813) 348-1630.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Ad Hoc Reef Fish Limited Access Privilege Program Advisory Panel will meet to discuss individual fishing quota financing under the Fisheries Finance Program, NOAA's catch share policy, and, issues related to the design, adoption, implementation, and, evaluation of limited access programs for the commercial and/or recreational sectors.

Copies of the agenda and other related materials can be obtained by calling (813) 348-1630.

Although other non-emergency issues not on the agenda may come before the Advisory Panel for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Actions of the Advisory Panel will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in the agenda and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under Section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take action to address the emergency.

#### Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Trish Kennedy at the Council (*see ADDRESSES*) at least 5 working days prior to the meeting.

Dated: December 22, 2010.

**Tracey L. Thompson,**

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

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#### DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

##### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**RIN 0648-XA112**

##### Western Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

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

**ACTION:** Notice of public meetings.

**SUMMARY:** The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold meetings of its Marianas Archipelago Plan Team (PT), Guam Regional Ecosystem Advisory Committee (Guam REAC), Mariana Archipelago Advisory Panel (AP) and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Regional Ecosystem Advisory Committee (CNMI REAC).

**DATES:** The PT meeting will be held on January 19–20, 2011, Guam REAC on January 21, 2011, AP on January 22, 2011 and CNMI REAC on January 24, 2011. For specific times and agendas, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

**ADDRESSES:** The PT, Guam REAC and AP meetings will be held at the Guam Hilton and Resort, 202 Hilton Road, Tumon Bay, Guam. The CNMI REAC will be held at the Saipan World Resort, P.O. Box 500066, Saipan, MP.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Kitty M. Simonds, Executive Director; telephone: (808) 522-8220.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Public comment periods will be provided. The order in which agenda items are addressed may change. The meetings will run as late as necessary to complete scheduled business.

Schedule and Agenda for PT meeting:

#### 9 a.m.–4 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, January 19–20, 2011

The Marianas PT will meet to hear reports on, discuss and consider developing recommendations on the following items:

- A. Status of Fishery Monitoring Programs and Research Projects
- B. Update on Marianas Recommendations from the 2009 Fishery Data Workshop
- C. Marianas Archipelago Fishery Ecosystem Plan draft annual report.
- D. Proposals for improving fishery data collection for stock assessments
- E. Council meeting actions
  - 1. CNMI bottomfish regulatory changes to allow spear fishing of bottomfish management unit species
  - 2. Federal annual catch limit scoping
- F. Other business

#### 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Friday, January 21, 2011

The Guam REAC will meet to hear reports on, discuss and consider developing recommendations on the following items:

- A. Report on previous REAC recommendations and actions
- B. Coastal Marine Spatial Planning
- C. Overview of traditional access and spatial planning
- D. Panel presentations and discussion on traditional access and history of change
- E. Guest presentation on Shoreline access restrictions in relation to fishermen deaths
- F. Panel presentations and discussion on Maintaining access to marine resources
- G. Local initiatives and actions
  - 1. Military efforts to mitigate marine spatial closure impacts on the fishing community
  - 2. Guam Fisheries Act
  - 3. Indigenous Fishing Rights
  - 4. Guam MCP

#### H. Other business

Schedule and Agenda for Marianas AP meeting:

#### 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Saturday, January 22, 2011

The Marianas AP will meet to hear reports on, discuss and consider developing recommendations on the following items:

- A. Coastal Marine Spatial Planning
  - 1. Shoreline access restrictions in relation to fishermen deaths
  - 2. Military build-up impacts to Marianas fishing community
  - 3. Review of Kahoolawe Transition
  - 4. Report on REAC outcomes
- B. Ecosystem monitoring and community issues
  - 1. Mariana programs and projects
  - 2. Federal programs and projects
- C. Local legislative activities
- D. Upcoming meetings and conferences
  - 1. Marianas archipelago lunar calendar workshop
  - 2. Offshore aquaculture workshop
  - 3. Mariana islands green sea turtle workshop
- E. Fisheries Development
  - 1. Guam Marine Conservation Plan
  - 2. CNMI Marine Conservation Plan
- F. Other business

Schedule and Agenda for CNMI REAC meeting:

#### 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday, January 24, 2011

The CNMI REAC will meet to hear reports on, discuss and consider developing recommendations on the following items:

- A. Status of 2010 REAC Recommendations
- B. Coastal Marine Spatial Planning Initiative
  - 1. Regional Ocean Partnership
  - 2. Monument Activities and Status
  - 3. Military build-up impacts to Marianas fishing community
- C. Ecosystem monitoring and community issues
  - 1. CNMI bio-sampling program
  - 2. Impact of land-based pollution in fish from Saipan Lagoon
  - 3. Saipan Lagoon net fishing data analysis
  - 4. Annual catch limit scoping
- D. Community Development
  - 1. Status of Mariana longline fishery
  - 2. CNMI Marine Conservation Plan
- E. Upcoming meeting/conferences/workshops
  - 1. Mariana Archipelago Lunar Calendar Workshop
  - 2. Offshore Aquaculture Workshop
  - 3. Mariana Islands Green Sea Turtle Workshop
- F. Other business