

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; South Pacific Tuna Act**

**AGENCY:** National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

**DATES:** Written comments must be submitted on or before October 11, 2013.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at [Jjessup@doc.gov](mailto:Jjessup@doc.gov)).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to Tom Graham, (808) 944-2219 or [tom.graham@noaa.gov](mailto:tom.graham@noaa.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:****I. Abstract**

This request is for extension of a current information collection.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) collects vessel license, vessel registration, catch, and unloading information from operators of United States (U.S.) purse seine vessels fishing within a large region of the western and central Pacific Ocean, which is governed by the Treaty on Fisheries between the Governments of Certain Pacific Island States and the Government of the United States of America. The Treaty, along with its annexes, schedules and implementing agreements, was signed in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, in 1987. This collection of information is required to meet U.S. obligations under the Treaty.

The Treaty authorizes U.S. tuna vessels to fish within fishing zones of a large region of the Pacific Ocean. The South Pacific Tuna Act of 1988 (16 U.S.C. 973-973r) and U.S. implementing regulations (50 CFR part 300, Subpart D) authorize the collection

of information from participants in the Treaty fishery. Vessel operators who wish to participate in the Treaty Fishery must submit annual vessel license and registration (including registration of vessel monitoring system (VMS) units) applications and periodic written reports of catch and unloading of fish from licensed vessels. They are also required to ensure the continued operation of VMS units on board licensed vessels, which is expected to require periodic maintenance of the units. The information collected is submitted to the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) through the U.S. government, NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). The license and registration application information is used by the FFA to determine the operational capability and financial responsibility of a vessel operator interested in participating in the Treaty fishery. Information obtained from vessel catch and unloading reports is used by the FFA to assess fishing effort and fishery resources in the region and to track the amount of fish caught within each Pacific island state's exclusive economic zone for fair disbursement of Treaty monies. Maintenance of VMS units is needed to ensure the continuous operation of the VMS units, which, as part of the VMS administered by the FFA, are used as an enforcement tool. If the information is not collected, the U.S. government will not meet its obligations under the Treaty, and the lack of fishing information will result in poor management of the fishery resources.

**II. Method of Collection**

All forms are to be submitted in hard copy, via mail.

**III. Data**

*OMB Control Number:* 0648-0218.

*Form Number:* None.

*Type of Review:* Regular submission (extension of a currently approved collection).

*Affected Public:* Business or other for-profit organizations.

*Estimated Number of Respondents:* 40.

*Estimated Time Per Response:* License application, 15 minutes; registration application, 45 minutes; catch report, 1 hour; and unloading logsheet, 30 minutes.

*Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours:* 408.

*Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public:* \$122,202 in recordkeeping/reporting costs.

**IV. Request for Comments**

Comments are invited on: (a) 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; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: August 6, 2013.

**Gwellnar Banks,**

*Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.*

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

**RIN 0648-XC802**

**New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings**

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

**ACTION:** Notice; public meetings.

**SUMMARY:** The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold public meetings of two of its advisory bodies, the ABC Control Rule Working Group (ABC WG) and Electronic Monitoring Working Group (EM WG).

**DATES:** The first meeting of the ABC Control Rule Working Group will be on Tuesday, September 3, 2013. The meeting will be held at the Doubletree by Hilton in Danvers, MA and it will start at 10 a.m. Additional meetings may be held between August 15, 2013 and January 31, 2014. Specific information about the dates, times and places for the meetings will be posted on the Council's Web site, <http://nefmc.org/>.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director,

New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465-0492.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Council has established these working groups to develop background information and approaches to problems and issues to be considered by the Council and its committees. The working groups will not make any final decisions about the selection of approaches or alternatives that might be adopted by the Council.

The purpose of the ABC Control Rule Working Group is to prepare a work plan on how the Council should proceed in developing acceptable biological catch (ABC) control rules that incorporate the Council's risk tolerance into the process for setting ABCs. The work plan will enable the Council to approve a process for developing the risk policy as a Council priority.

The purpose of the Electronic Monitoring Working Group is to identify barriers or necessary steps to the approval by NMFS of Northeast Multispecies (Groundfish) sector operations plans that rely on electronic monitoring to achieve the compliance and catch attribution requirements for groundfish sectors.

#### Special Accommodations

The meetings will be physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, at (978) 465-0492, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: August 7, 2013.

**Tracey L. Thompson,**

*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-XC792

#### Western Pacific Fisheries; Approval of a Marine Conservation Plan for Pacific Insular Areas; Western Pacific Sustainable Fisheries Fund

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

**ACTION:** Notice of agency decision.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS announces approval of a marine conservation plan for Pacific

Insular Areas other than American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

**DATES:** This agency decision is effective from August 1, 2013, through July 31, 2016.

**ADDRESSES:** Copies of the marine conservation plan, identified by NOAA-NMFS-2013-0126, are available from [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), or the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council), 1164 Bishop St., Suite 1400, Honolulu, HI 96813, tel 808-522-8220.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jarad Makaiau, Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office, 808-944-2108.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Section 204(e) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) authorizes the Secretary of State, with the concurrence of the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) and in consultation with the Council, to negotiate and enter into a Pacific Insular Area fishery agreement (PIAFA). A PIAFA would allow foreign fishing within the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) adjacent to any Pacific Insular Area other than American Samoa, Guam, or the Northern Mariana Islands, that is, in the EEZ around the Pacific remote island areas (PRIA). The PRIA are Baker Island, Howland Island, Jarvis Island, Johnston Atoll, Kingman Reef, Midway Island, Wake Island, and Palmyra Atoll. Before entering into a PIAFA, the Council must develop a 3-year Marine Conservation Plan (MCP) providing details on uses for any funds collected by the Secretary under the PIAFA.

The Magnuson-Stevens Act requires that payments received under a PIAFA, and any funds or contributions received in support of conservation and management objectives for the PRIA, be deposited into the Western Pacific Sustainable Fisheries Fund (Fund) for use by the Council. Additionally, amounts received by the Secretary attributable to fines and penalties imposed under the Magnuson-Stevens Act for violations by foreign vessels occurring within the EEZ off any PRIA are also deposited into the Fund for use by the Council.

An MCP must be consistent with the Council's fishery ecosystem plans, must identify conservation and management objectives (including criteria for determining when such objectives have been met), and must prioritize planned marine conservation projects. The Council, at its 157th meeting held June 26-28, 2013, reviewed and approved this MCP and recommended its

submission to the Secretary for approval.

The MCP contains five conservation and management objectives, and identifies major task areas for planned activities, as follows:

*Objective 1.* Support quality research and obtain the most complete scientific information available to assess and manage fisheries within an ecosystem approach.

a. Support cooperative research on U.S. purse seine vessels fishing on fish aggregation devices in the PRIA.

b. Support tagging studies in the PRIA to provide better understanding of pelagic species.

c. Support collection and analysis of life history characteristics of federally managed species through bio-sampling.

*Objective 2.* Conduct education and outreach to foster good stewardship principles and broad and direct public participation in the Council decision-making process by supporting education and outreach activities related to sustainable fisheries management of pelagic fisheries in the PRIA.

*Objective 3.* Promote regional cooperation to manage domestic and international fisheries, by participating in international fishery policy development in Pacific Regional Fishery Management Organizations.

*Objective 4.* Encourage development of technologies and methods to achieve the most effective level of monitoring, control, and surveillance, and to ensure safety at sea.

a. Support pilot programs to test new technologies for information gathering, in coordination with federal, state, and industry representatives.

b. Support observer programs or other monitoring efforts that are adequate to monitor the harvest, bycatch, and compliance of foreign fishing vessels that fish under a PIAFA in the PRIA.

c. Participate in Pacific-wide vessel monitoring system consultations.

*Objective 5.* Support activities that promote western Pacific community demonstration projects and the western Pacific community development program.

Section 204(e)(7)(C) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act authorizes the Council to use monies deposited into the Fund to meet conservation and management objectives in the State of Hawaii, consistent with the Fishery Ecosystem Plan for the Hawaii Archipelago. The MCP includes an appendix describing these objectives. At the 157th meeting, the Council recommended amendments to the appendix relating to fisheries research.

The MCP also outlines a process by which the Council's Executive