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[FR Doc. 2019-16979 Filed 8-7-19; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****50 CFR Part 635**

[Docket No. 190214111-9513-01]

RIN 0648-BI51

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Fisheries; Pelagic Longline Fishery Management; Correction

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

ACTION: Proposed rule; correction.

SUMMARY: The National Marine Fisheries Service is correcting an error in the alternatives section of a proposed rule that published on July 12, 2019. In that proposed rule, NMFS proposes to adjust regulatory measures that reduce bluefin tuna bycatch in the pelagic longline fishery for Atlantic highly migratory species (HMS). The preferred alternative for the Spring Gulf of Mexico Gear Restricted Area includes an evaluation period to determine whether current area-based management measures remain necessary to reduce and/or maintain low numbers of bluefin tuna discards and interactions in the pelagic longline fishery. The description of this alternative included two timing errors, one about the evaluation period and one about the applicable months for actions within the alternative. This action corrects the errors.

DATES: Comments on the proposed rule must be submitted on or before September 30, 2019.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on this document, identified by NOAA-NMFS-2018-0035, by any one of the following methods:

- *Electronic Submission:* Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2018-0035, click the "Comment Now" icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

- *Mail:* Submit written comments to Craig Cockrell, NMFS/SF1, 1315 East-West Highway, National Marine Fisheries Service, SSMC3, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

Instructions: Please include the identifier NOAA-NMFS-2018-0035

when submitting comments. Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the close of the comment period, may not be considered by NMFS. All comments received are a part of the public record and generally will be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (*e.g.*, name, address), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter "N/A" in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous). Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jennifer Cudney, 727-824-5399 or Craig Cockrell, 301-427-8503.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Need for Correction**

On July 12, 2019, NMFS published a proposed rule in the **Federal Register** (84 FR 33205) that would adjust regulatory measures put in place to reduce bluefin tuna bycatch in the pelagic longline fishery for Atlantic highly migratory species (HMS). Specifically, the proposed measures address the Northeastern United States Closed Area, the Cape Hatteras Gear Restricted Area, and the Spring Gulf of Mexico Gear Restricted Area as well as the weak hook requirement in the Gulf of Mexico. As described in the proposed rule, the preferred alternative for the Spring Gulf of Mexico Gear Restricted Area included an evaluation period to determine whether the current area-based management measure remains necessary to reduce and/or maintain low numbers of bluefin tuna discards and interactions in the pelagic longline fishery. The description of this alternative cited both incorrect timing for the three-year evaluation period and incorrect timing for the months during which the pelagic longline fishery would be allowed to fish within a previously closed area under specific conditions. Corrections are necessary to provide an accurate description of this preferred alternative, which will be useful to the public as they prepare comment on the proposed rule.

The proposed rule provides a summary of how the Spring Gulf of Mexico Gear Restricted Area would be managed under the preferred alternative, appearing in bullet form on page 33208 of the **Federal Register**. The sentence preceding the bullets states

that "This alternative would have a three-year evaluation period (January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2022) for the Monitoring Area . . .". The parenthetical is incorrect and should instead read that the three-year evaluation period would be from "(January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2022)." The first bullet under this sentence incorrectly states that "The Monitoring Area would initially remain open to pelagic longline fishing from June 1 through June 30". This bullet should instead note that the Monitoring Area would initially remain open to pelagic longline fishing from April 1 through May 31. The fourth bullet under this sentence states that "On or after the effective date of the notice, the Monitoring Area would be closed to pelagic longline fishing each year from June 1 through June 30, unless NMFS takes further action." This bullet should instead state that "On or after the effective date of the notice, the Monitoring Area would be closed to pelagic longline fishing each year from April 1 through May 31, unless NMFS takes further action," to correct the dates.

The same corrections need to be made in the IRFA that was prepared to meet requirements of Section 603 of the Regulatory Flexibility Act (RFA). Column 3 of page 33212 of the **Federal Register** provides a summary of how the Spring Gulf of Mexico Gear Restricted Area would be managed under the preferred alternative in bullet form. The sentence preceding the bullets states that "This alternative would have a three-year evaluation period (January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2022) for the Monitoring Area . . .". The parenthetical is incorrect and should instead read that the three-year evaluation period would be from "(January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2022)." The first bullet under this sentence incorrectly states that "The Monitoring Area would initially remain open to pelagic longline fishing from June 1 through June 30". This bullet should instead note that the Monitoring Area would initially remain open to pelagic longline fishing from April 1 through May 31. The fourth bullet under this sentence states that "On or after the effective date of the notice, the Monitoring Area would be closed to pelagic longline fishing each year from June 1 through June 30, unless NMFS takes further action." This bullet should instead state that "On or after the effective date of the notice, the Monitoring Area would be closed to pelagic longline fishing each year from April 1 through May 31, unless NMFS

takes further action,” to correct the dates.

Dated: August 5, 2019.

Samuel D. Rauch III,

Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[Docket No. 190802-0010]

RIN 0648-BI93

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fisheries; Framework Adjustment 14

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

ACTION: Proposed rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS proposes modifications to aspects of the commercial and recreational summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass management program, as recommended by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council. NMFS proposes these management measure adjustments to provide an opportunity for public comment. The intent of this action is to allow for more flexibility in the management of these species.

DATES: Comments must be received by September 9, 2019.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on this document, identified by NOAA-NMFS-2019-0049, by either of the following methods:

Electronic submission: Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal.

- Go to www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2019-0049,

- Click the “Comment Now!” icon, complete the required fields
- Enter or attach your comments.

OR

Mail: Submit written comments to Michael Pentony, Regional Administrator, Greater Atlantic Region, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930.

Instructions: Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or

individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered by NMFS. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter “N/A” in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).

An environmental assessment (EA) was prepared for this action that describes the proposed measures and other considered alternatives, and provides an analysis of the impacts of the proposed measures and alternatives. Copies of the EA are available on request from Dr. Christopher M. Moore, Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Suite 201, 800 North State Street, Dover, DE 19901. These documents are also accessible via the internet at http://www.mafmc.org/s/SFSBSB_Framework14_EA.pdf.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Emily Gilbert, Fishery Policy Analyst, (978) 281-9244.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

General Background

The summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass fisheries are managed cooperatively under the provisions of the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan (FMP) developed by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, in consultation with the New England and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils. The management units specified in the FMP include summer flounder (*Paralichthys dentatus*) in U.S. waters of the Atlantic Ocean from the southern border of North Carolina northward to the U.S./Canada border, and scup (*Stenotomus chrysops*) and black sea bass (*Centropristis striata*) in U.S. waters of the Atlantic Ocean from 35°13.3' N lat. (the approximate latitude of Cape Hatteras, North Carolina). States manage these three species within 3 nautical miles (4.83 km) of their coasts, under the Commission’s management plan for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass. The applicable species-specific Federal regulations govern vessels and individual fishermen commercially fishing in Federal waters of the exclusive economic zone, as well as vessels possessing a summer flounder, scup, or black sea bass Federal charter/

party vessel permit, regardless of where they fish. This rule proposes management measures intended to provide more flexibility in the commercial and recreational fisheries for these species and includes the following modifications to the FMP:

- Include conservation equivalency as an annual management consideration for the black sea bass recreational fishery;

- Create a Federal waters transit zone for non-federally permitted vessels fishing in state waters around Block Island Sound; and

- Incorporate a maximum recreational size limit in the list of potential specification measures for summer flounder and black sea bass.

These measures, which are further explained below, are consistent with the recommendations of the Council and the Commission’s Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board for this action.

Proposed Management Measures

Black Sea Bass Conservation Equivalency

This action proposes to allow conservation equivalency for future use in the recreational black sea bass fishery based on the process currently used for summer flounder. Under conservation equivalency, the Council and Board would decide each year whether to use Federal coastwide measures or conservation equivalency to manage the recreational black sea bass fishery. Conservation equivalency would waive Federal measures so long as the states implement appropriate measures. If they agree to use conservation equivalency, they must also develop a set of non-preferred coastwide measures (minimum and/or maximum fish size limit, possession limit, and season) that would be expected to prevent harvest from exceeding the annual recreational harvest limit. The Council and Board must also recommend a suite of precautionary default measures that would apply to all recreational anglers and Federal party/charter permit holders fishing in Federal waters and landing black sea bass in states that do not develop and implement Commission-approved conservationally equivalent measures.

If the Council and Board agree to use conservation equivalency in a given year, the Board would determine the states’ management program to implement conservation equivalency for black sea bass in any given year through a separate action. After reviewing and approving the state/regional proposals, the Commission would submit a letter