

overfished. There has been considerable discussion about the utility of the concept of MSST, the definition of MSST contained in the guidelines, difficulties in estimating the MSST (especially in data-poor situations), and identifying appropriate proxies for MSST.

2. Calculation of rebuilding targets appropriate to the prevailing environmental regime. Currently, the guidelines do not address how rebuilding targets should accommodate changing environmental conditions. Rebuilding rates based upon current stock productivity may be inconsistent with rebuilding targets based upon historical stock productivity when there are persistent, long-term changes in environmental conditions.

3. Calculation of maximum permissible rebuilding times for overfished fisheries. The SFA established a maximum allowable 10-year rebuilding time for a fishery, except where the biology of the fish will not allow it or the fishery is managed under an international agreement. If the minimum time for a fishery to rebuild is 10 years or greater, the maximum allowable rebuilding time under the guidelines becomes the time to rebuild in the absence of any fishing mortality, plus one mean generation time. This has created a discontinuity where the difference in allowable rebuilding times between a stock with a minimum rebuilding time of 9 years and another stock with a minimum rebuilding time of 11 years, may be several decades in the case of long-lived species. This results in the need for much more restrictive management measures in the first case compared to the second, even though there is not much difference between them in terms of rebuilding potential.

4. The definitions of overfishing as they relate to a fishery as a whole or a stock of fish within that fishery. There are currently over 900 fish stocks identified for the purpose of determining their status with regard to overfishing, many of which are caught in small amounts and whose status is unknown. Combining assessments and status determination criteria for assemblages of minor stocks may make more sense biologically and economically than attempting to assess and manage them one by one. Further guidance is needed on the most ecologically sound and economically expedient ways to manage these fisheries.

5. Procedures to follow when rebuilding plans require revision after initiation, especially with regard to modification of the rebuilding time

frame. The guidelines do not currently address what to do when observed rebuilding rates are greater or lower than expected or when new assessments change estimates of rebuilding targets or other parameters.

NMFS solicits input from the public regarding: (1) whether or not the national standard 1 guidelines should be revised and (2) if revisions are desired, what parts of the national standard 1 guidelines should be revised, how they should be revised, and why. NMFS will use the information in determining whether to proceed with a revision to the existing guidelines, and if so, the issues to be addressed.

The ANPR was published in the **Federal Register** on February 14, 2003 (68 FR 7492). The comment period for that action was scheduled to end on March 17, 2003. NMFS decided to extend the comment period for the ANPR for another 30 days to give the public additional time to review the national standard guidelines in 50 CFR part 600 as they pertain to national standard 1.

This advance notice of proposed rulemaking has been determined to be significant for the purposes of Executive Order 12866.

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

Dated: February 25, 2003.

**Rebecca Lent,**

*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

[I.D. 020503A]

#### Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Spiny Dogfish Fishery; Scoping Process; Correction

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

**ACTION:** Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS); notice of scoping meeting; request for comments; correction.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS published a notification announcing that the Mid-Atlantic and New England Fishery Management Councils (Councils) intended to prepare jointly, in

cooperation with NMFS, an EIS in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act to assess potential effects on the human environment of alternative measures for managing the spiny dogfish (*Squalus acanthias*) fishery pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA). The Councils are developing Amendment 1 to the Spiny Dogfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP) to address rebuilding targets and timeframes, methods to estimate discard mortality and reduce discarding, the quota allocation scheme, and other potential management measures as well. The notification announced a public process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues relating to management of spiny dogfish and requested public participation in the process. The intent of this document is to correct the date of the scoping meeting announced in the February 18, 2003, published notification.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Daniel T. Furlong, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 302-674-2331.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On February 18, 2003, NMFS published the notice of intent to prepare an EIS in the **Federal Register** (68 FR 7749). In addition to issues related to the preparation of the EIS, NMFS announced a scoping meeting to be held on Monday, March 17, 2003, at 7 p.m., at the Sheraton Oceanfront Hotel (36th Street & Atlantic Ave.), in Virginia Beach, VA. This document corrects the date of the scoping meeting from March 17, 2003, to March 18, 2003, at 7 p.m. at the same location.

#### Need for Correction

As published, the document of February 18, 2003 (68 FR 7740), which was the subject of document FR Doc. 03-3845, is corrected as follows:

1. On page 7749, third column, under **DATES**, third line, remove "Monday, March 17," and add "Tuesday, March 18," in its place.

2. On page 7749, third column, second paragraph, under **ADDRESSES**, second line, remove "March 17," and add "March 18," in its place.

3. On page 7750, second column, under Public Scoping Meeting Schedule, third line down, remove "March 17" and insert "March 18".

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

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Dated: February 24, 2003.

**Bruce C. Morehead,**

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

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