

reference to identify and alert the user to taxa on the consolidated list that also are of concern to other Federal agencies.

This action still is in the conceptual stage and comments or suggestions are welcomed. This notice was prepared under the authority of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Dated: February 21, 1996.

George T. Frampton, Jr.,

Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks.

[FR Doc. 96-6453 Filed 3-18-96; 8:45 am]

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50 CFR Part 17

Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Finding on Petition and Initiation of Status Review for Cheetah in Namibia

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of petition finding and status review.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announces the 90-day finding that a petition to change the classification of the cheetah in Namibia from endangered to threatened has presented substantial information indicating that the action may be warranted. A status review of this population is initiated.

DATES: The finding announced herein was made on March 8, 1996. Comments and information may be submitted until July 17, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Comments, information, and questions should be submitted to the Chief, Office of Scientific Authority; Mail Stop: Room 725, Arlington Square; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Washington, D.C. 20240 (Fax number 703-358-2276). Express and messenger-delivered mail should be addressed to the Office of Scientific Authority; Room 750, 4401 North Fairfax Drive; Arlington, Virginia 22203. The petition finding, supporting data, and comments will be available for public inspection, by appointment, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, at the Arlington, Virginia address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Charles W. Dane, Chief, Office of Scientific Authority, at the above address (phone 703-358-1708).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 4(b)(3) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, requires that within 90 days of receipt of a petition to list, delist, or reclassify a species, or to revise a critical habitat designation, a

finding be made on whether the petition has presented substantial information indicating that the requested action may be warranted, and that such finding be published promptly in the Federal Register. If the finding is positive, Section 4(b)(3) also requires commencement of a review of the status of the involved species. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) now announces a 90-day finding on a recently received petition.

The petition was submitted by John J. Jackson, III (Jackson and Stovall, Attorneys and Counsellors at Law, One Lakeway Center, Ste. 1380, 3900 Causeway Boulevard, Metairie, Louisiana 70002), on behalf of the Republic of Namibia and Safari Club International. It was dated August 11, 1995, and was received by the Service on August 17, 1995. It requests that the population of the cheetah (*Acinonyx jubata*) in Namibia be reclassified from endangered to threatened.

The cheetah is a large spotted cat that once occurred over most of Africa and southwestern Asia. It has nearly disappeared in Asia and has declined substantially in Africa because of hunting for its attractive skin, conflict with human agricultural interests, habitat disruption, and possible deterioration of genetic viability. It was classified as endangered throughout its range in the Federal Register of March 30, 1972 (37 FR 6176).

The petition presents information, including recent reports from authorities on the species, suggesting that the population of cheetah in the country of Namibia, in southwestern Africa, is relatively large (possibly 2,500-3,000 cats out of a worldwide total of only 9,000-12,000) and stable, as compared to that in most other regions. The petition also basically suggests that a threatened classification would allow issuance of special regulations, pursuant to the Endangered Species Act, authorizing the importation of sport-hunted trophies of cheetah into the United States. Sportsmen from the United States then would be willing to spend substantial sums of money to hunt cheetah in Namibia, thereby providing a financial stimulus to landowners in that country to conserve the species and its habitat.

The Service has found that the petition presents substantial information indicating that the requested action may be warranted. Also, pursuant to Section 4(b)(3), the Service hereby commences a review of the status of the involved species. Submission of appropriate data, opinions, and publications regarding this petition is encouraged. In

accordance with Section 4(b)(3), within 12 months of receipt of the petition, the Service will make another finding as to whether the requested action is warranted, not warranted, or warranted but precluded by other listing measures.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1531-1544. 3500; unless otherwise noted.

List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 17

Endangered and threatened species, Exports, Imports, Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, and Transportation.

Dated: March 8, 1996.

John G. Rogers,

Acting Director, Fish and Wildlife Service.

[FR Doc. 96-6572 Filed 3-18-96; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 659

[I.D. 031196A]

Shrimp Fishery Off the Southern Atlantic States; Amendment 1

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

ACTION: Notice of availability of an amendment to a fishery management plan and request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) has submitted Amendment 1 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Shrimp Fishery of the South Atlantic Region (FMP) for review, approval, and implementation by NMFS. Written comments are requested from the public.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before May 9, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Comments must be sent to the Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 9721 Executive Center Drive North, St. Petersburg, FL 33702.

Requests for copies of Amendment 1, which includes an environmental assessment, an initial regulatory flexibility analysis, a social impact analysis, and a regulatory impact review, should be sent to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 1 Southpark Circle, Suite 306, Charleston, SC 29407-4699, telephone (803) 571-4366, FAX (803) 769-4520.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Peter J. Eldridge, 813-570-5305.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson Act) requires that a council-prepared amendment to a fishery management plan be submitted to NMFS for review and approval, disapproval, or partial disapproval. The Magnuson Act also requires that NMFS, upon receiving an amendment, immediately publish a document in the Federal Register stating that the amendment is available for public review and comment.

Amendment 1 would: (1) Add rock shrimp to the management unit of the FMP; (2) prohibit trawling for rock shrimp between 27°30' N. lat. and 28°30' N. lat. in the area extending shoreward of the 100-fathom (183-m) depth contour (as shown on the latest edition of NOAA chart 11460) to 80°00' W. long.; (3) require dealers involved in the rock shrimp fishery to obtain an annual dealer permit; (4) require an annual vessel operator's permit; (5) require an annual vessel permit for a

person on board a vessel to harvest or possess rock shrimp in or from the exclusive economic zone (EEZ); (6) require permitted dealers to maintain and submit basic information essential for proper management of the fishery; and (7) require that the initial sale, trade, barter, or transfer of rock shrimp harvested from the EEZ occur only between permitted dealers and permitted vessels.

Based on a preliminary evaluation of the amendment, the Director, Southeast Region, NMFS, (Regional Director) has disapproved the provision requiring a vessel operator permit because it is not a matter of sufficient scope and substance warranting review under section 304(a)(1)(A) of the Magnuson Act. The vessel operator permit was intended to provide vessel operators with greater responsibility and accountability regarding compliance with fishery regulations. The Regional Director determined that adequate regulatory compliance can be achieved

via the existing penalty schedule without incurring the additional costs and public paperwork burdens of implementing a new class of permits. The vessel operator permit does not minimize costs and, therefore, is inconsistent with the Magnuson Act's national standard 7, which requires that management measures shall, where practicable, minimize costs and avoid unnecessary duplication.

Proposed regulations to implement the remaining management measures of Amendment 1 are scheduled for publication within 15 days.

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

Dated: March 13, 1996.

Richard W. Surdi,

Acting Director, Office of Fisheries Conservation and Management, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 96-6479 Filed 3-13-96; 5:04 pm]

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