

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The National Institute of Standards and Technology received letters dated May 10, 1994, and October 31, 1994, from the American National Standards Institute requesting to have the ANSI-RAB American National Accreditation Program for Registrars of Quality Systems recognized under NVCASE. The request seeks U.S. Government assurance of the competency of the ANSI-RAB program to accredit registrars so that they can in turn register organizations in satisfaction of foreign mandatory regulatory requirements.

The NVCASE procedures at 15 CFR Part 286 require NIST to seek public consultation when it receives requests for evaluation. The original request was published in the **Federal Register** at Vol. 60, No. 20/Tuesday, January 31, 1995, page 5901. A 30-day public comment period ended on March 2, 1995. The comments received are discussed below.

No action was taken on the request until now, pending conclusion of U.S.-EU MRA negotiations. The MRA was initiated on June 20, 1997. NIST is now proceeding with establishment of criteria and initiation of the application process.

NIST received responses from 15 different organizations during the public comment period on the original ANSI request and also considered an additional letter received after the official period closed.

Of the 16 letters considered, nine indicated general support, five opposed specific sectoral areas included in the request, one indicated general non-support and one provided only a general comment. The specific sectors to which the five commenters voiced opposition are not planned for inclusion under the proposed NVCASE program. The pressure vessel sector is not presently part of the U.S.-EU negotiations (three opponents), and the medical device sector is under the jurisdiction of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA); NIST will not take action in that sector without full agreement from FDA (two opponents). Further, NIST will not accept any application for recognition in these two sectors without notifying the opposing entities and other members of the sectoral community.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to respond nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

Dated: August 22, 1997.

Elaine Buntin-Mines,

Director, Program Office.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 080697D]

Request for Nominations of Individuals for the Federal Investment Task Force

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

ACTION: Notice of request for nominations.

SUMMARY: The Sustainable Fisheries Act (SFA) requires the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) to establish a task force to study the role of the Federal Government in subsidizing fleet capacity and influencing capital investment in fisheries. NMFS requests nominations of qualified individuals to serve on the task force.

DATES: Nominations will be accepted through September 5, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Nominations should be sent to Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, 1444 Eye Street, NW, 6th Floor, Washington, DC 20005, ATTN: Federal Investment Task Force. Nominations may be submitted by fax, (202) 289-6051.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Robert Beal, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, (202) 289-6400.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Introduction

In accordance with section 116(b) of the SFA (Public Law 104-297), the Secretary is establishing a task force of interested parties to study the role of the Federal Government in (1) subsidizing the expansion and contraction of fishing capacity in fishing fleets managed under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), and (2) otherwise influencing the aggregate capital investment in fisheries. The task force will report the findings of the study to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Resources of the House of Representatives.

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) has contracted with NMFS to establish the Federal Investment Task Force and complete the

tasks necessary to prepare and submit the report to Congress. ASMFC is in the position of being knowledgeable about the issues associated with the Federal Investment Study, while lacking a vested interest in the outcome of the task force's work.

Procedures and Guidelines

A. Procedures for Establishing the Task Force.

Individuals with definable interests in fisheries will be considered as members of the task force. Nominations may include, but are not limited to, individuals who are associated with commercial or recreational fishing, environmental organizations, academia, or quasi-governmental entities. Selection of task force members will not be limited to individuals who are nominated.

Nominations are invited from all individuals and constituent groups. The nomination should include:

1. The name of the applicant or nominee and description of his/her interest in or association with the role of the Federal Government in subsidizing fleet capacity and influencing capital investment in fisheries.
2. A statement of background and/or qualifications.
3. A written commitment that the applicant or nominee will actively participate in good faith in the duties of the task force.

B. Participants.

The task force will consist of no more than 15 individuals who have a substantial interest in fisheries. Nominations will be accepted to represent commercial and recreational fishing interests, the conservation community, and the academic community. ASMFC and NMFS believe that all interests should be represented on the task force. The intent is to have a group that, as a whole, represents all interests fairly and supplies the necessary expertise to complete all assigned tasks. Current employees of NOAA will not be considered for the task force.

ASMFC will provide the necessary administrative support, including technical assistance, for the task force. ASMFC will also reimburse all travel expenses that are directly related to the activities of the task force. However, ASMFC will be unable to compensate participants with additional monetary support of any kind.

C. Tentative Schedule.

The task force is tentatively scheduled to meet five times between September 1997 and May 1998. These meetings will focus on programs that both

directly and indirectly increase the capacity and capitalization of commercial and recreational fishing fleets. The task force will also evaluate the extent to which Federal programs have been successful at reducing the capacity and capitalization of fishing fleets managed under the Magnuson-Stevens Act. U.S. Coast Guard vessel mortgage records will be reviewed to evaluate the influence of the Federal Government on vessel financing. The final report of this task force will be submitted to Congress by September 1, 1998.

Dated: August 22, 1997.

George H. Darcy,

Acting Office Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. 97-22860 Filed 8-22-97; 4:51 pm]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 072597B]

Advisory Panel on Highly Migratory Species Fisheries

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

ACTION: Notice of intent; request for nominations.

SUMMARY: NMFS solicits nominations for the Highly Migratory Species (HMS) advisory panel (AP). The purpose of the AP will be to assist NMFS in the collection and evaluation of information relevant to the development of a comprehensive HMS management plan for Atlantic tunas, swordfish, and sharks. The AP will include representatives from all interests in HMS fisheries.

DATES: Nominations must be submitted on or before September 29, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Nominations should be submitted to Rebecca Lent, Highly Migratory Species Management Division, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD, 20910. Nominations may be submitted by fax; 301-713-1917.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jill Stevenson or Liz Lauck (301) 713-2347.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Introduction

In accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, (Magnuson-Stevens Act), 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*, as amended

by the Sustainable Fisheries Act, Public Law 104-297, an Advisory Panel (AP) will be established to consult with NMFS in the collection and evaluation of information relevant to the development of a comprehensive HMS fishery management plan (FMP) for Atlantic tunas, swordfish and sharks.

The purpose of the AP is to assist NMFS in the development of an FMP for the Atlantic shark, swordfish, and tuna fisheries. Among the first issues to consider will be the development of rebuilding programs for those species that are overfished. The AP will assist NMFS in meeting requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act throughout the FMP development process.

In response to a *Federal Register* notice of April 4, 1997 (62 FR 16132) NMFS received comments that supported the establishment of separate APs for sharks, swordfish, and tunas. Other comments suggested various combinations of APs. NMFS has concluded that one AP with an extended meeting period, species working groups (composed of AP members with particular species interests), and a detailed agenda by species will allow members to address their species-of-concern at relevant portions of the meeting and will be more effective in addressing the overlapping issues in these related fisheries. One of the long-term goals of HMS management has been to better coordinate the management of Atlantic tunas, swordfish and sharks. There is considerable species overlap in several recreational (e.g., rod and reel fisheries for sharks, yellowfin tuna, bluefin tuna, and billfish) and commercial HMS fisheries (e.g., longlining for yellowfin tuna, bigeye tuna and sharks; purse seining for bluefin tuna, yellowfin tuna, and albacore tuna). Preparation of one HMS FMP is consistent with the Presidential Regulatory Reform Initiative and will lead to a more holistic approach to fishery management, consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act. Furthermore, a single HMS AP reflects the structure of the U.S. Advisory Committee to the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) which also has one panel for all HMS species with supporting species working groups. Finally, combination of tunas, swordfish and sharks under one management plan and one AP will minimize the financial and time burden on the affected constituency. The overlap in fisheries could result in considerable repetition in representation on separate panels. NMFS wishes to minimize the time and financial burdens to panel members

while simultaneously promoting better integration of Atlantic tuna, swordfish and shark management.

Procedures and Guidelines

A. Procedures for Establishing the Advisory Panel.

Individuals with definable interests in the recreational and commercial fishing and related industries, environmental community, academia, governmental and quasi-governmental entities will be considered as members of the AP. Selection of AP members will not be limited to those that are nominated. Individuals previously nominated to the Atlantic Tunas Negotiated Rulemaking Advisory Committee will be considered for membership on the HMS AP.

Nominations are invited from all individuals and constituent groups. The nomination should include:

1. The name of the applicant or nominee and a description of their interest in or connection with highly migratory species (HMS) or one species in particular from among sharks, swordfish, and tunas;

2. A statement of background and/or qualifications;

3. A written commitment that the applicant or nominee shall actively participate in good faith in the tasks of the AP.

B. Participants.

The AP shall consist of not less than seven (7) members who are knowledgeable about the pelagic fisheries for Atlantic HMS, particularly fisheries. Nominations will be accepted to allow representation from recreational and commercial fishing interests, the conservation community, and the scientific community. NMFS does not believe that each potentially affected organization or individual must necessarily have its own representative, but each interest must be adequately represented. The intent is to have a group that, as a whole, reflects an appropriate balance and mix of interests given the responsibilities of the AP. Criteria for membership include one or more of the following: (a) Experience in the recreational fishing industry involved in catching swordfish, tunas, or sharks; (b) experience in the commercial fishing industry for HMS; (c) experience in connected industries (marinas, bait and tackle shops); (d) experience in the scientific community working with HMS; (e) former or current representative of a private, regional, state, national, or international organization representing marine fisheries interests dealing with HMS.

NMFS will provide the necessary administrative support, including technical assistance, for the AP.