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

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

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](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