

Outcomes Statement and Recommendations

Council Coordination Committee

**MARRIOTT BEACH RESORT
ST. THOMAS, U.S.V.I.
MAY 24-26, 2016**

Marine National Monuments

The Council Coordination Committee (CCC) notes the successes of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act in managing fishery resources of the United States as well as the marine ecosystems of the United States Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the CCC recognizes that there have been a number of proposals regarding the designation of new, or the expansion of existing, Marine National Monuments within the U.S. EEZ.

Whereas, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) was originally passed by Congress in 1976 for the specific purpose of sustainably managing the nation's fishery resources to provide a food source, recreational opportunities and livelihoods for the people of the United States;

Whereas Congress, in passing the Magnuson-Stevens Act, found that "Commercial and recreational fishing constitutes a major source of employment and contributes significantly to the economy of the Nation."

Whereas, the Magnuson-Stevens Act created eight Regional Fishery Management Councils that are charged with managing, conserving, and utilizing fishery resources as well as protecting essential fisheries habitat, minimizing bycatch, and protecting listed species within the United States Exclusive Economic Zone;

Whereas, through the implementation of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and through the actions of the Regional Fishery Management Councils, the United States has become a global leader in the successful management of its fishery resources and associated ecosystems in a proactive sustainable manner;

Whereas, the Regional Fishery Management Councils and the National Marine Fisheries Service have made great strides in managing fisheries in an ecosystem-based manner;

Whereas, the Magnuson-Stevens Act requires that fisheries management actions be developed through a public process, in a transparent manner, and based on the best scientific information available;

Whereas, the Regional Fisheries Management Councils and the National Marine Fisheries Service manage fisheries stocks throughout their range and concerns have been raised that designations such as marine monuments may disrupt the ability of the Councils to continue to manage fisheries throughout their range and in an ecosystem-based manner;

Whereas, the designation process of marine national monuments under the Antiquities Act of 1906 does not explicitly require a robust public process or that decisions be based on a



science-based environmental analyses, and does not require fishery management or conservation as an objective;

Whereas, the Regional Fishery Management Councils have a strong history of implementing spatial habitat and fisheries conservation measures (over 1000 individual spatial management measures) in a public, transparent, science-based manner through the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

Whereas, concern has been raised that decisions to close areas of the U.S. EEZ, through statutory authorities such as through the Antiquities Act of 1906, may not take into account requirements to achieve optimum yield (OY) from the Nation's fishery resources, may negatively affect domestic fishing jobs, recreational opportunities and undermine efforts by the Regional Fishery Management Councils to develop and implement ecosystem-based management;

Therefore be it resolved, the CCC reiterates its support for the public, transparent, science-based process and management required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

Therefore be it further resolved, the CCC recommends that if any designations are made in the marine environment under authorities such as the Antiquities Act of 1906 that fisheries management in the U.S. EEZ waters continue to be developed, analyzed and implemented through the public process of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

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