



November 29, 2022

Samuel D. Rauch III
Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs
National Marine Fisheries Service
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Mr. Rauch:

At the October 2022 meeting, the CCC reviewed the report of the working group formed at the May 2022 CCC meeting to consider changes to the ESA Policy Directive 01-117 to integrate ESA Section 7 with MSA. The working group created a redline version of the Policy Directive with changes to help resolve the high priority issues identified by the Councils. The CCC recommended that NMFS review the redline version of the ESA Policy Directive and implement the changes drafted by the working group as soon as possible.

In providing preliminary feedback on the redline changes at the CCC meeting, you indicated that NMFS does not want to reopen the Policy Directive to make changes until they complete region-specific discussions among NMFS Sustainable Fisheries, Protected Resources and Council staff. However, the proposed changes are intended to improve the overarching policy that is applicable across all regions and various consultation situations, including consultations that are triggered external to the Council process. The CCC believes these redline changes are an important first step that should be taken prior to the regional coordination effort that will be led by NMFS.

You also indicated that more specific feedback on the redline changes would require more time to review. Given this, the Executive Directors would like to schedule a call with you in January 2023 to discuss the redline changes once a more detailed review has been completed.

Please reach out to Kitty Simonds to schedule the call in January 2023.

Caribbean

Executive Director: Miguel Rolon
Chair: Marcos Hanke

Gulf of Mexico

Executive Director: Dr. Carrie Simmons
Chair: Dale Diaz

South Atlantic

Executive Director: John Carmichael
Chair: Dr. Carolyn Belcher

Mid Atlantic

Executive Director: Dr. Christopher Moore
Chair: Mike Luisi

New England

Executive Director: Thomas Nies
Chair: Eric Reid

North Pacific

Executive Director: David Witherell
Chair: Simon Kinneen

Pacific

Executive Director: Merrick Burden
Chair: Marc Gorelnik

Western Pacific

Executive Director: Kitty Simonds
Chair: Archie Taotas Soliai

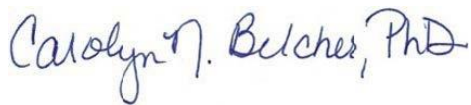
Sincerely,



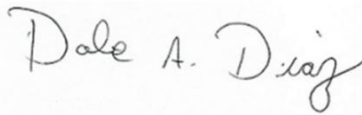
Mike Luisi, Chair
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council



Eric Reid, Chair
New England Fishery Management Council



Dr. Carolyn Belcher, Chair
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council



Dale Diaz, Chair
Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council



Marcos Hanke, Chair
Caribbean Fishery Management Council



Simon Kinneen, Chair
North Pacific Fishery Management Council



Marc Gorelnik, Chair
Pacific Fishery Management Council



Archie Taotasi Soliai, Chair
Western Pacific Fishery Management Council