



August 26, 2022

Dr. Richard Spinrad
Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere & NOAA Administrator
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

Ms. Janet Coit
NOAA Fisheries Assistant Administrator
1315 East-West Highway 14th Floor
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Dr. Spinrad and Ms. Coit:

On August 16, 2022, President Joseph Biden signed the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA) into law. Title V of this law provides \$2.6 billion to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The Councils encourage you to use part of these funds to address shortfalls in data collection for marine fishery stock assessments. These assessments are crucial for supporting a key element of the Blue Economy: commercial, recreational, and subsistence fishing that generated 1.8 million jobs and added \$117 billion to the nation's economy in 2019.

Over the last several years, rising costs have made it difficult to acquire the resources needed to support reliable fishery stock assessments. This includes shortfalls in the data necessary for assessments and the personnel needed to complete them. This nationwide problem could be addressed with IRA funds.

The importance of collecting these data and increasing funding for stock assessments cannot be overemphasized and should not be overshadowed by a focus on new technologies. Fisheries are on the front line of climate change. Better data, and the ability to process that data efficiently, will reduce the uncertainty in our assessments, increase the adaptive capacity of the Councils and NMFS to respond to these changes, and ultimately increase the benefits to the nation from a thriving fishing industry, in all its forms.

Fishing has been a key economic driver for coastal communities for centuries and is a key economic and cultural element in many underserved communities. With the appropriate investments in data collection and assessments, fisheries will continue to support those communities and the American public.

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: Melvin Bell

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

The Regional Fishery Management Councils urge NOAA to use IRA funds to support the oldest, and arguably one of the most publicly visible, part of the nation's Blue Economy.

Sincerely,



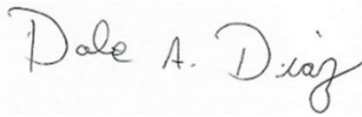
Mike Luisi, Chair
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council



Eric Reid, Chair
New England Fishery Management Council



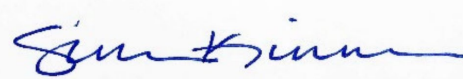
Melvin Bell, Chair
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council



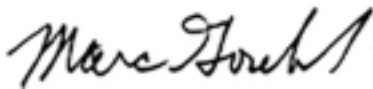
Dale Diaz, Chair
Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council



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