



THE NCMC

# MARINE BULLETIN

PUBLISHED BY  
NATIONAL COALITION FOR MARINE CONSERVATION, INC.  
P. O. BOX 23298 SAVANNAH, GEORGIA 31403

JANUARY 1986

No. 1

## ATLANTIC BILLFISH PLAN PUT ON HOLD

Atlantic billfish conservation has run up against its first hurdle in the latest effort to implement a fishery management plan. The Mid-Atlantic, South Atlantic, Gulf and Caribbean Councils have reached agreement on measures necessary to protect the valuable recreational fisheries for marlins and sailfish in their areas, but the council representing New England, where billfishing is relatively minor, is holding out. Commercial interests on that council, which have a decisive 8 to 2 advantage over other interests, object to provisions designed to prohibit commercial fishermen from possessing and/or selling incidentally-caught billfish.

The billfish committees of the five councils met in joint session in Miami on January 28 and 29 to vote on the specifics of the Atlantic billfish plan. They were unanimous in supporting a ban on the use and possession of drift entanglement nets in federal waters and on a data collection system based on mandatory reporting of catch by commercial vessels and recreational billfish tournaments. They also agreed on the concept of minimum size restrictions for billfish with the exact weight limits for white marlin, blue marlin and sailfish to be worked out by council staff later. They hit a snag, however, on the proposals to outlaw the sale of billfish (except for the traditional Caribbean handline fishery) and to forbid commercial fishing vessels from retaining billfish caught in the course of fishing for other species.

The New England Council said it could not support these measures because they discriminate against one group of fishermen in favor of another. The other four councils countered that giving billfish gamefish status was necessary to curtail the developing commercial market for marlins in New England and elsewhere and that to allow the possession of billfish by vessels carrying commercial gear would seriously hamper their ability to enforce other provisions of the plan. The councils, obviously at an impasse, left Miami with the understanding that New England would be given the opportunity to devise an alternate regime for its region to be submitted for consideration by all five at the next intercouncil session.

This turn of events is extremely disappointing, first because the New England Council's position is ill-founded (see Editorial) and secondly because it will mean further delays in plan development, pushing the date of its implementation even further into the future. And two more prodigious hurdles lay ahead for the billfish plan, ones that will require, at the very least, strong intercouncil unity to overcome. These will be getting the Department of Commerce to drop its resistance to preventative measures and approve a ban on drift nets, and the State Department to permit additional restrictions on foreign tuna longliners killing billfish in U.S. waters as part of an amended Atlantic swordfish plan.

MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL MANAGEMENT  
TOPIC OF 11TH MRF SYMPOSIUM

"Fish Know No Boundaries," the eleventh annual Marine Recreational Fisheries Symposium, will be held at the Bay Harbor Inn in Tampa, Florida on May 1 and 2, 1986. The subject of the 1986 symposium is Multi-Jurisdictional Management of Marine Fisheries. This timely and important conference is organized by the National Coalition for Marine Conservation, in cooperation with the Sport Fishing Institute and the International Game Fish Association. The National Marine Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are co-sponsors.

The management of all important marine fisheries is, in one way or another, multi-jurisdictional. Fish obey natural, not political, laws. The life cycles and seasonal migrations of oceanic fish can take them from fresh to salt water, across state lines, back and forth between state and federal waters, beyond the domain of nations, and into the no man's land of the high seas -- with no regard for man's attempts to impose jurisdictional boundaries.

Fishermen go where the fish are. Marine fisheries management, therefore, can involve agencies within the same state, more than one state, state and federal governments, international regimes or even all of these. So to the fundamental management issues of conservation and allocation must be added reconciling and integrating the activities and goals of the various institutions that have management responsibility for the fish, those who catch the fish, and the habitat upon which the fish depend.

The purpose of the May 1986 symposium is to examine current problems and deficiencies in marine fisheries management which result from multiple jurisdictions, and to consider proposals for altering current management patterns to enhance the prospects for future management success. The symposium will bring together acknowledged experts from a number of disciplines whose experience in marine fisheries issues makes them eminently qualified to discuss this critical subject.

The two-day symposium consists of seven panels (see Program on next two pages). The first panel will define the challenge by looking critically at the ways in which current management thinking and institutional structures are influenced by the multi-jurisdictional nature of marine fisheries. This will be followed by two panels describing unique problem areas, using specific fisheries as examples. Panel four will present suggested methods of improving the ability of state and interstate management structures to deal with interjurisdictional fisheries. Panels five and six will examine two issues of immediate consequence: federal preemption of state regulatory authority, and fisheries management under the 200-mile fisheries law, the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act, which is currently being reviewed by Congress. The final panel will summarize and review the proceedings.

Fishermen, fishery managers, elected officials, representatives of salt water fishing clubs and marine conservation organizations are invited and encouraged to attend this symposium and to participate in the dialogue. (Information on how to register is at the bottom of page four.) Each panel will conclude with an open discussion involving panel members and the audience. All discussions will be tape recorded, transcribed and included in the printed record along with all papers presented at the symposium. The proceedings will be published as Volume 11 in the MARINE RECREATIONAL FISHERIES series.

FISH KNOW NO BOUNDARIES  
Multi-Jurisdictional Management of Marine Fisheries

Program

Thursday, May 1

Introductory Remarks - Symposium General Chairman: Frank Carlton,  
Vice Chairman, National Coalition for Marine Conservation

Keynote Speech - Speaker To Be Announced

Panel One PUTTING THE CHALLENGE INTO PERSPECTIVE

An Overview of the Major Fisheries - Richard J. Leard, Director,  
Mississippi Bureau of Marine Resources

Biological and Socio-Economic Factors Involved in Multi-Jurisdictional  
Management - Eric Fraser, Gulf Coast Conservation Association

Political Boundaries: Institutional and Legal Factors - Alison  
Rieser, Director, Marine Law Institute, University of Southern Maine

Panel Two INTERJURISDICTIONAL PROBLEMS

Intrastate Management: Tarpon, Bonefish and Snook - Jerry Bruger,  
Florida Department of Natural Resources

Interstate Management of Striped Bass - James Weaver, U.S. Fish and  
Wildlife Service

Multi-Council Management - Duane Harris, Chairman, South Atlantic  
Fishery Management Council

Luncheon - with Featured Speaker to be Announced

Panel Three CASE STUDIES

State/Federal: Red Snapper and Gag Grouper - Steve Bortone,  
University of West Florida

Multi-State/Federal: King Mackerel - Alex Jernigan, Gulf of Mexico  
Fishery Management Council

Highly Migratory Species: Billfish and Tuna - James Joseph, Director  
of Investigations, Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission

Panel Four NEW DIRECTIONS FOR MANAGEMENT

Improving State Management Capability: The Salt Water Fishing  
License - Norville Prosser, Vice President, Sport Fishing Institute

Friday, May 2

Panel Five TO PREEMPT OR NOT TO PREEMPT: A DEBATE

The Case for Federal Preemption - Jack Brawner, Southeast Regional  
Director, National Marine Fisheries Service

The Case Against Federal Preemption - Gary C. Matlock, Chief of  
Coastal Fisheries, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Panel Discussion: Allen Peterson, National Marine Fisheries Service;  
Maurus Claverie, New Orleans Big Game Fishing Club; James Crutchfield,  
Natural Resources Consultants

Panel Six NMFS, THE COUNCILS AND THE ACT

Fine Tuning the Present System - John M. Green, Chairman, National  
Coalition for Marine Conservation

Overhauling the System - Lee J. Weddig, Executive Vice President,  
National Fisheries Institute

Panel Discussion: Mike Sissenwine, National Marine Fisheries Service;  
John Rybovich; Don Collinsworth, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish  
and Game

Panel Seven SUMMARY BY PANEL CHAIRMEN

Panel One - Lee G. Anderson, College of Marine Studies, University of  
Delaware

Panel Two - Walter Fondren, Chairman, Coastal Conservation Association

Panel Three - George M. Barley, Chairman, Florida Marine Fisheries  
Commission

Panel Four - Carmen J. Blondin, Deputy Assistant Administrator,  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Panel Five - Carl Sullivan, Executive Director, American Fisheries  
Society

Panel Six - Joseph H. Kutkuhn, Associate Director of Fishery  
Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

\* \* \* \* \*

REGISTER NOW: Advance registration fee is \$40 (\$45 at the door) and  
includes attendance at all sessions, luncheon with a featured speaker,  
refreshments, and a copy of the published proceedings. To register, or for  
further information, contact: Ken Hinman, Coordinator, Marine Recreational  
Fisheries Symposium, P.O. Box 23298, Savannah, GA 31403, (912) 234-8062.

## NEW REQUEST FOR KINGFISH RELIEF

Several members of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council have filed a Minority Report with the Secretary of Commerce asking him to take immediate emergency action to halt fishing on the Gulf of Mexico migratory group of king mackerel. The unprecedented request, which comes from all three members of the South Atlantic Council's Florida delegation, asks the Secretary to implement a Total Allowable Catch (TAC) of not more than 2.34 million pounds for the 1985-86 season, a level that has already been exceeded.

The South Atlantic and Gulf Councils, co-drafters of the Federal Fishery Management Plan for Coastal Pelagics (mackerels), have recommended amending the existing plan to reduce the TAC to 5.2 million pounds, which is approximately the amount of fish taken from the beleaguered Gulf stock in recent years. This joint position, which was not unanimous on either council, was a compromise on recommendations ranging from an emergency moratorium to an even higher catch level to accommodate fishermen in the western portion of the Gulf. The authors of the Minority Report base their limit of 2.34 million pounds on the Mackerel Stock Assessment Group's recommendation of August 1985, which they cite as the "best scientific information available" on the status of the fish. The National Coalition for Marine Conservation, which proposed a Gulf closure last September after the release of the latest stock assessment, has registered its support for the minority action.

Meanwhile, new limits on the catch of king mackerel from the Atlantic migratory group have been approved and will go into effect on April 1. A bag limit of three fish per angler per trip will apply to all sport fishermen. Commercial fishermen will have to stop fishing when they collectively reach a total of 3.6 million pounds. The new regulations are not popular with charter captains, commercial fishermen and sponsors of the many kingfish tournaments in North and South Carolina. Nonetheless, they are necessary, says NCMC executive director Ken Hinman. "In order to avoid an economically devastating collapse such as has occurred in the Gulf of Mexico," he warns, "preventative measures must be taken in the south Atlantic even though the fishing seems pretty good right now. As the number of fish in the Gulf group dwindles, the displaced effort is moving to the Atlantic migratory group, including the big gill net boats out of Florida. The fishing pressure the Atlantic stock is experiencing now is unprecedented in its history. It would be foolish to do what was done in the Gulf - that is, wait for a crisis to develop before doing anything."

## NATIONAL REEF PLAN COMPLETED

A National Artificial Reef Plan, prepared by the National Marine Fisheries Service, has been published and is available to all interested persons and/or groups. The Plan was developed pursuant to the National Fishing Enhancement Act of 1984, which established national policy recognizing that artificial reefs can enhance marine habitat and contribute to opportunities for U.S. fishermen, if they are properly designed, constructed and located.

The Plan provides detailed guidance for privately and publicly funded reef projects to enable them to conform to national objectives in fisheries resource use and management, and to assist in the development of state and regional planning efforts geared to local conditions and needs. A single copy of the National Artificial Reef Plan can be obtained free of charge by writing National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA, Washington, D.C. 20235.

**EDITORIAL: THE BILLFISH PLAN IS A RECREATIONAL PLAN**

Is the New England Fishery Management Council making everyone else sit and wait while it stands on principle, or is there something else going on? The problem they have with certain aspects of the Atlantic billfish plan is, they say, philosophical. Even though they allow that longlines fishing New England waters rarely catch marlin, the commercial majority on the council is plainly uneasy about the proposed possession and sale restrictions in the plan which would enforce the status of marlin and sailfish as gamefish. In their view, this would discriminate against commercial fishermen and is a precedent they don't want to set.

Well, that argument just doesn't hold water. The primary objective of the billfish plan, clearly stated and agreed upon by every council involved in its development including New England, is to maintain the highest availability of billfish to the recreational fishery and to optimize the social and economic benefits that derive to the nation from recreational billfishing. Every measure now being considered has been proposed with that single goal in mind. It is a recreational plan to conserve a recreational resource for recreational fishermen. The issue of discrimination, therefore, is not germane.

It is no secret that smoked marlin are appearing on the tables of more and more gourmet restaurants. These fish reportedly come from the expanding U.S. longline fishery and from "sport" fishermen. This trend is a potentially serious threat to the traditional recreational fishery. The sale of billfish must be banned to shut down this market, and possession of billfish by commercial fishermen restricted to keep a tight lid on a black market. A billfish management plan without these measures, or one where they apply everywhere but in New England, won't do the job.

Ken Hinman

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FEBRUARY 1986

No. 2

## REAGAN PROPOSES NATIONAL LICENSE TO FISH

In the 1987 federal budget President Reagan presented to Congress is a proposal for an Ocean Sportfishing License, a proposal that includes most of the bad ideas about how to license salt water anglers and very few of the good. The President has asked the U.S. Department of Commerce to draw up legislation to authorize the federal license so the specifics remain somewhat vague. But from what the administration has said thus far, the license shapes up as nothing more than a tax on anglers devised to help pay off the national debt.

The administration proposal is for a "federal license fee to sportfish in the ocean, with the receipts shared equally by the coastal states and the federal government." The fee would be a minimum of \$10 per angler per year. The states would collect the fee and automatically turn over \$5 to the federal government. The remainder may be used by the state for administering the program and for "fishery management." Information on the number of licenses sold by each state would be provided to the Department of Commerce. The license, no matter where purchased, would be honored in every state.

The administration reasons that because sportfishermen who fish in federal waters receive the benefit of using public resources which are managed by government agencies (NMFS, the Councils) at public expense, they are justified in asking these fishermen to "pay more of the costs" involved. The logic may be sound, but as naturalist Joseph Wood Krutch once said, "logic is the art of going wrong with confidence," and the administration proposal goes wrong in nearly every respect.

The money returned to the federal government from license sales will go into the federal treasury, and that money which stays in the state could, presumably, go into the state treasury. There is no stipulation that the revenues must, or even should, be dedicated to marine fisheries management, much less recreational fisheries. The predictable result is that this proposal would, in fact, hurt rather than help programs that benefit the fisheries. The administration is pushing very hard, as it has done each year since it assumed office, to slash the budget of the National Marine Fisheries Service substantially (see HARD TIMES...) With the new license fees going into the general fund, cuts in federal fisheries programs will not be offset at all by the new revenues, which will instead be applied to reducing the national debt. So rather than shifting some of the responsibility for funding fisheries programs from the general taxpayers to the resource users, as the administration claims it is doing, it is actually levying an extra tax on salt water fishermen. Congressman Walter Jones (NC) of the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee put

it succinctly: "At a time when federal fisheries programs are being torn from fin, we will be hard pressed to make a case for further private support for fewer public programs."

The NCMC supports a marine recreational fishing license because of its potential for directly benefiting the salt water angler, but it must be initiated and administered on the state level with all proceeds from license sales earmarked for state marine recreational and fisheries conservation projects only. The administration's proposal for a national license is totally unacceptable and should be resisted by sportfishermen, anglers' groups, and state fisheries agencies, as it undoubtedly will be.

#### HARD TIMES FOR FEDERAL FISHERIES PROGRAMS

Federal ocean fisheries programs get no respect in the President's Fiscal Year 1987 budget plan, which would slash total funding for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) by 40 percent. Congress, with Gramm-Rudman-Hollings hovering over it like a hungry vulture, will have a tough time rescuing the targeted funds as it has the last five years. And even as Capitol Hill prepared to wrestle with the new budget, GRH made its first automatic reductions in FY 1986 (current) spending on March 1st, taking 4.3 percent from the operating funds of NOAA.

Ocean and coastal programs would lose \$39 million under the Administration budget proposal, a loss of almost one-third. Fisheries programs conducted by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) would fare even worse; fisheries appropriations are slated to be cut from \$159 million down to \$97 million (minus \$62 million or 39 percent). Program area cuts are as follows:

Information collection and analysis: - \$31 million. This includes sizable cuts in assessing and monitoring fisheries stocks, oceanography and survey technology, protected species biology, habitat research, stock enhancement and disease research, PCB contamination research, habitat resources evaluation, Chesapeake Bay resource assessments, gear entanglement studies, salmon enhancement, and others.

Conservation and management: - \$15 million. Hit hardest are the regional fishery management councils and habitat conservation activities, among others.

State and industry assistance programs: - \$16 million. Big losers here would be striped bass research, anadromous fisheries grants, and an assortment of other fisheries grants to states.

In addition, the Coastal Zone Management Program and the National Sea Grant College Program would be zero-funded, which is budget speak for eliminated.

All in all, the proposed cuts in fisheries and marine habitat programs would significantly erode the federal government's obligation to carry out its responsibilities regarding stewardship of the nation's ocean resources. "The research, management and conservation programs of NOAA/NMFS are, quite simply, an investment in the future of the nation's ocean fisheries," says NCMC president Chris Weld. "Cuts of the magnitude proposed by the Administration would seriously impede our ability to respond to the real needs of the fisheries we are trying to manage, and the needs of the fishermen and fishing industries that rely on them."

On February 20, the NCMC wrote Secretary of Commerce Malcolm Baldrige asking him to take immediate action to implement emergency measures to halt fishing on the Gulf migratory group of king mackerel. "If something is not done soon," executive director Ken Hinman warned, "the Councils' efforts to restore the fish will be set back several years."

"Bureaucratic inaction at the Washington level" is endangering the future of king mackerel, said Hinman. Last September a Council recommendation for an emergency moratorium based on biologists' warnings of a collapse in the fishery was rejected by the National Marine Fisheries Service. In November the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Councils submitted a compromise plan to cut the Gulf quota from 14.5 to 5.2 million pounds for the July 1985 - June 1986 fishing year. NMFS rejected the quota for "procedural" reasons. Duane Harris and Julius Collins, chairmen of the South Atlantic and Gulf Councils respectively, vehemently disagreed and on December 19 appealed to NMFS to implement an emergency action to impose the 5.2 million pound catch limit to, in their words, avert "irreparable harm to this important resource." Less than a month later, members of the South Atlantic Council submitted a Minority Report calling for an immediate closure in the Gulf.

As of press time, there has been no response from Washington to either request. The three month silence has Council members perplexed -- and very worried. The catch of king mackerel in the Gulf has, in the meantime, surpassed the 5.2 million level and continues to climb. A relatively good recruitment year has evidently made more fish available for capture this season. These very important additions to the stock, instead of being reserved to help rebuild the depleted Gulf population, are being wiped out.

#### A FINE KETTLE OF FISH

In 18th century England the gentry living along the Tweed River would entertain their friends and neighbors by giving what was known as a 'kettle of fish.' Fresh-caught salmon were boiled along with other items in a giant pot over an open fire and, mixed with good company and good drink, a merry time was had by all. But when something went wrong with the kettle of fish - maybe the chowder was overcooked or the pot turned over - and the picnic was spoiled, an ironic adjective such as fine or pretty was added to denote the occasion ended up a terrible mess.

It appears to NCMC observers that the Canadian Department of Oceans and Fisheries is in a terrible mess due to its recent mishandling of salmon and tuna issues. The Minister of Fisheries and his chief deputy were swept out of office in the wake of last year's "tainted tuna" scandal, and the newly appointed Minister has no experience with fisheries issues. Moreover, the assistant deputy for fisheries has been "reassigned," evidently fallout from the tainted negotiations, if you will, that contributed to the failure of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) to come up with a conservation agreement in 1985.

The Canadian role in the NASCO stalemate was critical. Their surprising decision to make conservation agreements in the North American Commission (Canada and the United States) dependent on separate agreements in the West Greenland Commission (U.S., Canada, the EEC and Denmark) killed U.S. hopes of reducing Canadian interceptions of fish originating in American rivers, which is considered crucial to U.S. salmon conservation and restoration efforts. Canada's linkage of the actions of one commission

with those of another was all the more frustrating because it had been the intent of the framers of the NASCO convention to avoid just this kind of debilitating situation by setting up independent regional commissions.

One ray of sunlight shining through all this, however, is the recent appointment of William Rowat, an experienced and respected fisheries professional, as the head of the Canadian delegation to NASCO. The American and Canadian delegations continue to negotiate on the 1985 U.S. proposal to close the fall salmon fishery off Labrador and Newfoundland to minimize Canadian harvest of U.S. fish, and the U.S. will pursue the issue again at the June NASCO session in Edinburgh.

#### COUNCILS RESUBMIT AMENDED SWORDFISH PLAN

The Regional Councils have toughened their resolve and decided to go to the mat with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) over the Atlantic swordfish plan. The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, on behalf of all five councils involved in developing management measures for the overexploited swordfish, has resubmitted an amended fishery management plan to the Secretary of Commerce for approval. It contains most of the provisions rejected by the Commerce Department last year, measures which the Councils consider vital to the future health of the Atlantic stocks, but with stronger rationale and documentation.

The fishery management plan that went into force last fall established a system of variable season closures designed to shut down the fishery during certain periods in the Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean. The closures are designed to reduce the harvest of young swordfish needed to rebuild the depleted populations while maximizing the value of the commercial fishery by concentrating effort on larger fish. Nearly all of the additional measures proposed by the Councils in the original plan affecting the foreign and domestic fisheries were disapproved.

On the domestic side, the Councils take a firm stand against drift entanglement nets. Where the current fishery management plan allows the limited use of drift nets on an experimental basis, the amended plan would prohibit their use and possession in the swordfish fishery altogether. In reaching this decision, the Councils cited both the overwhelming evidence of the destructive nature of the nets and the inability of NMFS to monitor the use of the nets now in the water, primarily due to obstruction by the vessel operators themselves. As one member pointed out, "They (the driftnetters) were given the opportunity to prove that the gear was not detrimental, and then turned around and obstructed that process."

Among the foreign measures resubmitted is a ban on the importation of swordfish into the United States during the domestic closures. This is meant to limit the foreign harvest of swordfish in the western Atlantic Ocean and the subsequent sale of these fish in the U.S., thus assuring that the benefits gained through reduced U.S. catches will not be counterbalanced by fish caught from the same stock by foreign fishermen.

The Councils also reaffirmed a prohibition on nighttime longlining during the closures which is intended to reduce the by-catch of swordfish in the tuna fisheries. Swordfish are almost exclusively hooked at night. The Councils refuted objections from the State Department that this would deprive foreign fishermen, the Japanese in particular, of a 'reasonable opportunity' to catch tuna in U.S. waters, declaring that, among other things, adjustments in the length of longlines used could enable the Japanese to fish daylight hours only instead of round the clock as they do

now. They also insisted they could not justify restricting the activities of American fishermen without restricting foreign fishermen, too.

Rounding out the foreign measures, the retention of swordfish by longliners and squid trawls during closures was forbidden and a cap was placed on the incidental catch of swordfish. The foreign longline fishery, for instance, would be closed once the by-catch reached 1,100 swordfish. Though the foreign by-catch has reportedly been much lower in recent years, this cap would serve as a trigger mechanism to guard against a potentially destructive return to the unacceptable by-catches of 1982 and earlier.

The resubmitted plan is far from perfect, but does address the key issue of limiting the amount of gear in the water, giving the disastrously overfished swordfish a respite from unrelenting fishing pressure. The ball is now back in the court of the National Marine Fisheries Service. The Councils have spoken, and what they are saying is that how NMFS and the State Department choose to advise the Secretary of Commerce, and nothing else, will determine the fate of the Atlantic swordfish plan.

#### GULF COUNCIL PONDERES TED REQUIREMENT

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and a number of conservation organizations have asked the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council to require all shrimp trawlers to use TEDS, or trawling efficiency devices. The Council, which manages the harvest of shrimp in the Gulf of Mexico, has referred the request to its Habitat and Environmental Management Committee.

When TEDs were first developed in 1977, the initials stood for turtle excluder device, and indeed the primary concern in getting shrimpers to use them today is the survival of several threatened or endangered species of sea turtle which are incidentally captured and drowned in the nets. The National Marine Fisheries Service estimates that 45,000 turtles are caught in shrimp trawls annually, and that of these at least 12,000 die. The Kemp's ridley sea turtle, which used to thrive in the Gulf of Mexico, is by far the most seriously endangered, with fewer than 700 nesting females left. According to the Center for Environmental Education (CEE), the combined effects of egg poaching and shrimping brought the turtle to the brink of extinction. Now it is thought to be shrimping alone that keeps the population of Kemp's ridley and other endangered turtles on the decline.

Early on in researching the use of TEDs on shrimp trawls, there were two unexpected discoveries. First, the devices were found to actually increase the harvest of shrimp by seven percent. A CEE study showed shrimpers could significantly boost their profits by using TEDs because the elimination of unwanted by-catch in the trawls helps maintain the quality of caught shrimp.

The use of TEDs offers another more outstanding benefit: they reduce the by-catch of finfish by 50-70 percent. On average, according to the Gulf Council's own 1981 shrimp management plan, nine pounds of fish are caught and discarded, i.e. wasted, for every one pound of shrimp. That means a staggering total of about one billion pounds of finfish, much of it of commercial and recreational value, is lost each year because the vast majority of shrimpers are not using trawling efficiency devices.

Modifications and improvements in the design of TEDs have made them lightweight, collapsible, and relatively cheap. But less than five percent of the shrimp boats operating in the Gulf and south Atlantic at any given

time are using the devices, says the CEE. Clearly the voluntary approach is not working. The proposal being considered by the Gulf Council would make their use mandatory as of March 1, 1987, giving the shrimpers adequate time to acquire the TEDs and learn how to use them most efficiently.

The National Coalition for Marine Conservation has joined in urging the Gulf Council to require the use of TEDs, and has made the same recommendation to the South Atlantic Council. It makes sense in every respect: for the survival of endangered sea turtles, the conservation of valuable fish resources, and the interests of fishermen, including shrimpers.

**Briefly Noted:**

The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council announced in January the appointment of NCMC executive director KEN HINMAN to its Billfish Advisory Panel.....NCMC director FITZGERALD BEMISS, a member of the National Advisory Committee for Oceans and Atmosphere, is chairing a NACOA panel critically examining the National Marine Fisheries Service, concentrating on ways to improve the agency's performance.

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MARCH 1986

No. 3

## TOURNAMENTS AND CONSERVATION

The alarming decline of such popular game fish as king mackerel and redfish along with increased competition for salt water fish in general is causing the tournament fishing world to re-evaluate its priorities, its image and its impact on the resources. There is emerging a consensus that if tournaments are to survive, much less continue to thrive, as a vital social and economic component of many seaside communities, they must get actively involved in conservation.

How to keep the current boom in salt water fishing tournaments from turning into a bust was a chief topic of discussion at the first annual National Recreational Fisheries Tournament Directors Conference held in Miami on March 18-20. Tournament directors met with fishery professionals and conservationists to discuss a variety of issues, including economics, insurance and liability, sponsorship, and planning and organization. One message, though, was heard above all others: tournaments have an abiding stake in conservation and good fisheries management.

The tournament operators at the meeting exhibited a genuine concern for the future of the fish resources their events depend on. They know some salt water fish are in serious trouble; indeed, the drastic decline in the king mackerel fishery in the southeast framed much of the dialogue. Some even questioned whether mackerel tournaments should be held at all in western Florida and other parts of the Gulf of Mexico this year. The image of sportfishing presented to the public via the highly visible tournament setting, especially when anglers are calling for regulation of the commercial sector, argues the need for tangible efforts at conservation.

Tournaments should enact voluntary conservation programs and measures, the conferees agreed, before restrictions are imposed by state or federal management authorities. Suggestions included awarding prizes on the basis of the largest fish caught, not on the total weight of fish landed, and setting minimum weight limits, particularly for billfish tournaments, with penalty points assessed for undersize fish. Tag and release fishing should be encouraged wherever possible and various ways to implement release events within the competitive tournament structure were discussed. There was also endorsement of the concept of using tournament proceeds to "give something back to the resource," through funding artificial reef construction, habitat protection programs, and scientific research.

The conference concluded with preliminary plans being made to form a national tournament directors association to pursue the ideas discussed at the conference and possibly to develop a uniform code of operations for fishing tournaments nationwide.

The National Coalition for Marine Conservation (NCMC), as one of its first projects in the early 1970s, brought together tournament representatives, fishery scientists and anglers for a national Tournament Management Seminar similar to the conference in Miami. We recognized then the need to utilize the potential that exists in tournament fishing to further the sport fisherman's interest in marine conservation. Since that time, we have consistently and actively supported release tournaments and the use of tournament proceeds for conservation work. The NCMC applauds this most recent development and has pledged to assist the new association in its endeavors.

#### HOUSE PANEL OKS STRIPER BILL

On March 19th the House Subcommittee on Fisheries and Wildlife voted to continue current federal protections for Atlantic striped bass through 1988. H.R. 3358, co-authored by Congressmen Studts (MA) and Breaux (LA), now goes to the full Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee for consideration.

The bill would extend the Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act of 1984, which expires in late April, for another two years. The Striped Bass Act calls for a federally-enforced moratorium on fishing for striper in the waters of any state which does not comply with the interstate management plan developed by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). The law is widely credited with encouraging regional cooperation in enacting stronger conservation measures to protect the beleaguered fish.

The populations of striped bass in the Atlantic remain dangerously low and reproductive success is still abysmal. The recovery of this once abundant species now rests, according to biologists, with the young fish spawned in 1982. The ASMFC last year recommended that the coastal states from Maine to North Carolina adopt a series of incremental minimum size limit increases - beginning with 30 inches this year - to protect these and subsequent year classes of fish until they reproduce.

The National Coalition for Marine Conservation believes the striped bass conservation effort must be a long term proposition. There can be no quick fix, nor can we relent and allow states to backslide even a little bit, which is what could happen if the federal pressure is removed. We are strongly urging Congress to extend the Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act so that we can continue the progress that has been made toward restoring the abundance of this great fish.

#### MISCARRIAGE IN MACKEREL MANAGEMENT

The U.S. Congress and several national task forces are currently taking a critical look at the way the nation's marine fisheries are being managed under the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MFCMA). We suggest they took a long hard look at the history of the management of king mackerel. What they will find is that one of the country's most popular and valuable salt water species is quickly disappearing, while the National Marine Fisheries Service seems determined to prevent the Gulf and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils from doing anything about it.

The rapid decline of king mackerel has been well documented in the pages of the MARINE BULLETIN and elsewhere. Suffice it to say, what was once a flourishing offshore fishery providing recreation for thousands of sport fishermen and livelihood for commercial hook-and-line fishermen, bringing upwards of \$50 million a year to the Florida economy, has been

destroyed. In the words of the Florida League of Angler's Rollie Franzen, one of the earliest and most persistent advocates of measures to protect the kingfish, the fishery has been "managed to a state of virtual collapse."

How could this happen? After all, the Magnuson Act was enacted in 1976 to set up a system for conserving fish resources within 200 miles of our shores for the benefit of American fishermen and the U.S. fishing industry. Regional Fishery Management Councils were established to devise management plans to prevent overfishing and to assure that the optimum yield is achieved from each fishery and shared equitably among commercial and recreational users.

Ten years later, the king mackerel resource is severely depleted. The traditional recreational and commercial fishermen have been driven out of the fishery by large scale netting operations, which were initiated at about the time the MFCMA was being debated in Congress. The recreation and tourist industries are suffering for it and the quality of mackerel sold to consumers has declined. What went wrong?

Without absolving the State of Florida or the Regional Councils of blame in this management disaster - for they surely must bear their share - it is nevertheless fair to say the biggest stone should be cast at the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). At every juncture in the management process, when strict conservation measures were proposed to halt the decline in mackerel numbers, NMFS stepped in and used the authority granted it by the MFCMA via the Secretary of Commerce's veto power to consistently defend the status quo.

The story of NMFS obstruction of Council action begins at the beginning. The fishery management plan for king mackerel was first approved in February of 1983, setting a total allowable catch of 37 million pounds. It was only a short time later that Council biologists confirmed the existence of separate Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico migratory groups and, more importantly, declared that the Gulf stock was being quickly depleted. As a result, the Councils eventually (more than two years later) amended the plan to reduce the catch by 22 percent.

But that's not all the Councils wanted to do. Recognizing that the introduction of power-rigged gill net fishing in the mid-1970s had precipitated the decline in the fishery, restrictions on gill netting were proposed in both the South Atlantic and Gulf Councils as part of a more substantial reduction in the Gulf quota. NMFS, however, seeking to protect what the agency considers an economically efficient method of fishing, applied enough pressure on the Councils, including the threat of a plan veto, to kill any regulation of gill netting.

The second major obstruction by NMFS occurred following another scientific revelation about the true status of the stocks, this one coming before the amended plan could be implemented. Council biologists reported last August that the Gulf migratory stock was in imminent danger of collapsing and recommended cutting the allowable catch from 14.2 million pounds to no more than 2.34 million and preferably less. With the 1985-86 fishing season kicking off in November, the Councils asked for an emergency closure to reassess the situation. On October 10, NMFS rejected the emergency request after giving early indications of its support for a closure.

The Councils went back to the drawing board and came up with a compromise position setting the quota at 5.2 million pounds, roughly equal

to the Gulf catch of recent years. Most observers considered this quota much too high, but the season was already underway and there was no time to argue. (Although a minority report was filed supporting a quota of less than half that amount.) But even this admittedly modest attempt at conservation was turned down by NMFS. The agency cited procedural technicalities in justifying its decision, so the Councils responded in mid-December by asking NMFS to implement the quota immediately through emergency action, arguing in no uncertain terms that the action was necessary to prevent "irreparable harm" to the resource.

This time the request for some action out of Washington was not rejected out of hand. Instead, the Councils were greeted with nearly three months of resounding silence. Meanwhile things in the Gulf were far from quiet, and fishing went on through the winter unrestrained. Finally, on March 7, the word came from NMFS to close the commercial fishery (but, strangely enough, not the recreational fishery). It was too late. The season was virtually over and the liberal quota borne of compromise had already been exceeded.

The evolution of events in king mackerel management raises troubling questions about the ability of fisheries science to keep pace with management needs and the ability of the Regional Council system to respond to rapidly changing circumstances in a timely and effective fashion. These are issues that must be carefully studied and areas where improvement is crucial. Still, notwithstanding these handicaps, the Councils did propose regulations that would have been a far sight more effective than the ones ultimately implemented, except the National Marine Fisheries Service stood in their way. NMFS has a lot of explaining to do regarding its conduct of the mackerel affair. A Congressional investigation into the agency's motives and actions is warranted, leading to big changes in NMFS's role in national fisheries management.

#### DEJA VU

Deja vu may be French for "I think I've seen this all before," but it is, you might say, how it translates to "Spanish" that has so many Florida anglers and conservationists worried. Spanish mackerel is, like its larger offshore cousin the king mackerel, an extremely popular game and food fish in the southeast. Unfortunately, the resemblance to the ill-fated kingfish doesn't end there. For there is every sign that the Spanish mackerel is following in the vanishing wake of the kingfish.

What is most familiar to those who have witnessed the king mackerel debacle is the role that unrestrained commercial gill netting has played in the decline of Spanish mackerel, and the reluctance of the authorities to take bold action to deal with either the large power-rigged gill nets or the innumerable small gill nets. New studies released by the federal government and reported in the April issue of FLORIDA SPORTSMAN magazine show that the recreational catch of Spanish mackerel dropped 83 percent from 1979 to 1984. In the same period of time the net catch fell only 14 percent. But even more revealing is the fact that the netters took 88 percent of the total catch in 1984!

As was the case with king mackerel, the need for substantially reducing or eliminating the plainly unsustainable pressure from gill netting to allow the stocks to rebuild has been stressed ad nauseum. And it hasn't been just conservation groups and recreational fishermen who have been calling for relief from the nets. Last June the executive director of the Florida Department of Natural Resources, Elton Gissendanner, asked for

a ban on the use of gill nets in state waters to catch anything other than bait fish.

Nonetheless, the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils, who have demonstrated little interest in tackling Spanish mackerel in any serious manner, and the Florida Marine Fisheries Commission (MFC) seem destined to replay the too-little-too-late approach that has characterized kingfish management. For their part, the MFC is trying. They recently proposed restricting the season for the big power-rigged gill net boats from December 15 to October 31, limiting commercial netting to weekdays, setting minimum mesh sizes for all gill nets, and allowing sport fishermen only 4 fish per person per day on top of a 12 inch size limit. This, the commission believes, will cut the total harvest by 45 percent. However, an earlier bid for emergency action to reduce the catch by that much during the past winter fishing season was thwarted by commercial lobbying at the state capitol.

#### INTERIOR SITTING ON COASTAL BARRIER EXPANSION

It has been one year since the Department of the Interior issued a draft report which recommended making substantial additions to the nation's Coastal Barrier System. The Coastal Barrier Resource Act of 1982 protects miles of undeveloped shoreline on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts by withholding federal subsidies for development. The draft Interior report suggested expanding this system to include areas on the Pacific coast, the Florida Keys, the shores of the Great Lakes, Alaska and Hawaii.

The National Coalition for Marine Conservation, which lobbied for passage of the 1982 Act, went on record in support of the expansion. Protecting the productive but unstable coastal environment from unwise and unnecessary development saves the taxpayers millions of dollars and conserves millions of acres of valuable fish and wildlife habitat.

But one year later, and Interior has yet to send its final report to Congress, which must approve any additions to the system. Actually, the next stop for the recommendations could be the Office of Management and Budget, where the report would almost certainly undergo months of scrutiny in a hostile atmosphere. To avert another year's delay in obtaining protections for additional barrier islands and other low-lying coastal areas, conservationists are asking members of Congress, including the author of the original legislation Senator John Chafee (RI), to introduce legislation to expand the Coastal Barrier Resource System.

#### PLEASE PASS THE S.A.L.T.

In last month's MARINE BULLETIN we soundly criticized the Reagan Administration's proposal for licensing marine recreational fishermen. This month, we present an alternative in the form of a bill now moving through the Massachusetts state legislature. A citizens group calling itself SALT (Saltwater Alliance for Licensing Today) has sponsored legislation to establish a state fishing license that would, a SALT spokesman told us, "generate political clout that will benefit the entire salt water fishing community in Massachusetts."

The license, which has been approved by a Joint Committee on Natural Resources, would cost \$5.50 for Bay State residents and \$7.50 for non-residents. Revenues would be dedicated to marine programs in addition to existing funding. A Marine Recreational Fisheries Advisory Committee would be appointed to oversee the expenditure of license revenues.

## EDITORIAL: A CARIBBEAN BASIN INITIATIVE

There has been an explosion of longlining activity in the Caribbean. This winter, for instance, one quarter of the U.S. fleet was reportedly down there going after high-priced swordfish. Longline vessels from Taiwan and South Korea, however, come earlier, fish harder and stay longer. Their target is primarily albacore, bigeye and yellowfin, but unlike the U.S. boats which fish only at night, their round-the-clock operations are also taking large numbers of marlin, wahoo, dolphin and other pelagic gamefish.

The Caribbean is an important feeding and spawning ground for many pelagic species. Billfish and tunas funnel through the narrow passes and channels on their migratory travels elsewhere. They are, in other words, extremely vulnerable to capture while residing in or passing through the region. Hence the concentration of fishing effort there.

Last spring the NCMC sounded the alarm over the increased longlining in the international waters of the Caribbean and the potential threat it poses to stocks of fish pursued by American fishermen. We pushed Washington to investigate. Cuba joined with the U.S. in raising the issue at the last ICCAT session. Sportfishing groups in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Venezuela and Mexico, seeing their catches drop sharply, are pressuring their authorities to monitor the extent of the longline catch and to take appropriate action to protect local fishing interests.

The value of the Caribbean fisheries to the region's commercial, recreational and tourist economies is inestimable. The nations bordering on this productive area of the ocean all have a vital interest in working together to ensure that fishermen from 10,000 miles away do not take the fish and run, leaving behind a marine wasteland.

Ken Hinman

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## THE FUTURE FEDERAL ROLE IN FISHERIES

"I'm prepared to work with you in the marine recreational fishing community," NOAA chief Anthony J. Calio told an audience of 140 at the NCMC's 11th annual Marine Recreational Fisheries Symposium. "It's going to take your participation as well. I'm prepared to meet you half way, understand what the issues are, and work with you collectively to make sure that marine recreational fishing gets its fair share and its day in court as far as federal considerations are concerned."

Dr. Calio was the keynote speaker at "Fish Know No Boundaries," a symposium on multi-jurisdictional management of marine fisheries organized by the National Coalition for Marine Conservation and held in Tampa, Florida on May 1 and 2. After delivering his address on the federal role in fisheries management, the new administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) began fulfilling his pledge to the MRF community by staying the duration of the two day conference, candidly answering questions from the audience and meeting informally with representatives of the NCMC and other organizations.

Calio struck three recurring themes in his prepared remarks on the future of fisheries management under his administration: "strong leadership," "accountability" and "minimum federal involvement". Only six months into his administration, the head of NOAA, which includes the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), has already asserted his intent to make big changes, where necessary, in the way the agency conducts its fisheries affairs.

Citing the implementation of the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MFCMA) as the principle federal responsibility in fisheries, Calio reduced the federal role under the MFCMA to two things: conservation and allocation of marine resources. He views the present complex system of interaction between the Regional Fishery Management Councils, the NMFS and the state governments in making conservation and allocation decisions as "a very difficult one." This prompted him, he said, to convene a special Council/NOAA Task Group to study "the way we operate" under the MFCMA. A draft report, entitled "An Evaluation of the Implementation of the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act," has been released for public review, with a final report incorporating public comment expected by the middle of the summer.

In addition, Calio has augmented this study with still another, this one impaneled to look at alternate systems of marine resource management. The report of this "blue ribbon committee" is due on June 15, but the symposium audience got a preview of some of the "alternative concepts" for

conservation and allocation activities being considered. The most intriguing, by far, is the establishment of a "marine resources reserve board" similar to the Federal Reserve Board which controls the nation's money supply. The nine-member board would be responsible for making conservation decisions, i.e., determining acceptable levels of harvest while maintaining an adequate, long-term supply.

Under this scheme, the fish would be allocated to users by a "council structure," the same as or similar to the one that exists today. To depoliticize the council membership, a "major concern" under the present system, the names of prospective members would be submitted to a "screening board" instead of to the state governors. The board would screen the nominees according to a set of national standards and select three qualified persons for each position to submit to the Secretary of Commerce.

Regardless of whether or not there is a new management structure or simply a finetuning of the existing one, the federal role, says Dr. Calio, is to oversee and administer that system, and to support it with scientific research and law enforcement. This is his vision of a "streamlined" federal role in fisheries: research, enforcement, and oversight. There is no place, he stated emphatically and more than once, for federal involvement in marketing and development activities for the commercial or recreational fishing industries.

As for research, Calio said NMFS must be more responsive to the needs of the management councils and the fishing industry, and must design its research programs with a "long term commitment" to meeting these needs. Government research should concentrate on the fish and their ecosystems, he pointed out, leaving the social and economic studies of the fisheries to private industry.

Another objective of his administration, Calio said, will be to build accountability into the system. This means clearly defining responsibilities within the management structure, and then holding those responsible accountable for performing their jobs effectively. For example, NMFS must be held accountable for providing the councils with the necessary research, and the council members must be held accountable for the decisions they make based on the information available to them.

Calio, perhaps aware that his fisheries credentials are not strong and wanting to assure his audience that these issues will receive a fair amount of his attention within the broader NOAA framework, had prefaced his remarks by pointing out that while fisheries activities account for only 15 percent of NOAA's total budget and manpower, he personally has devoted over 50 percent of his time to fisheries issues. This prompted one observer to good-humoredly suggest that he could reduce the amount of time spent worrying about fisheries to 15 percent by simply giving fisheries 50 percent of the NOAA budget.

Actually, the restrictive budgetary climate in Washington, particularly the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings mandatory spending cuts, makes future funding for NMFS programs uncertain, Calio said, but he predicted approximately a 20 percent cut in appropriations for Fiscal Year 1987, a level he says he can live with. The present level of \$170 million is "too much money," he thinks, because it contains too many items for "special interests" that don't belong in the federal budget. However, he also said the President's proposed funding of \$96 million was not enough. "A \$130-140 million level for the NMFS is a very meaningful budget," he said, "where we can do many of the things, if not all the things, we are

responsible to do," which is research, enforcement and oversight of the federal management regime.

Finally, speaking on the subject of the Administration's highly controversial proposal for a marine sportfishing license, Calio indicated the license idea is still very much alive but currently undergoing revision. The license will probably be expanded to cover all salt water fishermen, both recreational and commercial, he said, with the monies raised from license sales going to the "improvement of the fisheries." He promised that marine recreational fishermen will be given a fair opportunity to contribute to this process before licensing legislation is introduced next year.

#### CANADA COMPROMISES ON SALMON INTERCEPTIONS

Canada's Minister of Fisheries has announced new regulations for the 1986 Atlantic salmon fishing season. The Canadian Atlantic Salmon Plan, which is expected to reduce interceptions of U.S.-origin fish by about 15 percent, is being praised by American officials as a boon to salmon restoration efforts in this country.

Under the 1986 regulations, the fall salmon fishery off Labrador and Newfoundland will close on October 15. This meets the Canadian obligation under the international salmon treaty to minimize interceptions of fish originating in U.S. rivers, according to Canada. Actually, it is a compromise on a U.S. proposal, formally introduced at the 1985 North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) meeting, to close the Newfoundland-Labrador fishery on September 1 to cut interceptions by an estimated 25 percent. Nonetheless, the October 15 closure will mean more fish returning to New England rivers to spawn, so the U.S. delegation will push for NASCO approval of Canada's Atlantic Salmon Plan at the upcoming June 1986 session in Edinburgh. The two North American countries will also join together at NASCO and work for a further reduction in catches of North American salmon by other nations, particularly off the coast of Greenland.

The Canadian action is viewed as good for the resource, critical to U.S. restoration of salmon spawning populations, and a great success for NASCO, which is only three years old. "Compared to other international fishery organizations," remarked Frank Carlton, one of three NASCO commissioners representing the U.S., "NASCO is off to a good start, producing tangible results very early on. If approved in Edinburgh, this will be the third significant management measure to come about because of NASCO discussions."

#### CARLTON RECEIVES CONSERVATION AWARD

Frank E. Carlton, past president of the National Coalition for Marine Conservation, is a 1986 recipient of the prestigious Chevron Conservation Award, the oldest such award in the nation. Dr. Carlton, currently the vice chairman of the NCMC board of directors, was honored at a May 22 ceremony in Washington, D.C. in recognition of his many years of personal dedication to the conservation of marine resources.

In learning of the award, Carlton modestly shared his much-deserved national recognition with the organization he founded in 1973. "I'm pleased", he said, "that people are recognizing the work the NCMC is doing. What I did personally could not have been possible without the efforts of our members and staff."

contributions made by the tagging program to fisheries science and management. Tagging studies reveal information about the growth patterns and mortality of the fish, the distribution and migration of the stocks, and their population structure in terms of age and sex.

The cooperative effort between anglers and scientists (NMFS provides the tags to participating fishermen) dates back to 1954 when Frank J. Mather of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute developed the idea of using sportfishermen to help in tagging tunas and billfish. In 1984, anglers participating in the CGFTP tagged 3,724 billfishes and 447 tunas.

#### CONGRESS RENEWS COASTAL ACT

Congress has extended the Coastal Zone Management Act for another five years, overwhelmingly rejecting President Reagan's latest attempt to kill the program. Since the law's enactment in 1972, 28 of 35 coastal states have developed federally-approved management plans to control rampant development on the coastline and protect valuable coastal and marine resources.

The Coastal Zone Management Program is a federal/state partnership designed, according to the original Act, to "preserve, protect, develop, and where possible, to restore or enhance the nation's coastal zone." Under the program, federal funds in the neighborhood of \$35 million are made available each year to participating states in the form of matching grants. This money helps pay for such projects as wetlands and estuarine protection, beach renourishment, improved boating and public beach access, and research to enhance commercial and recreational fishing.

#### NCMC TESTIFIES ON TUNA MANAGEMENT

The following is excerpted from testimony submitted to the U.S. Senate Commerce Committee by the NCMC concerning reauthorization of the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act of 1975. The NCMC took the opportunity to support continued participation in international tuna management and to urge Congress to enhance that participation by extending U.S. management jurisdiction over tunas within U.S. waters.

"The NCMC has been actively involved in the conservation of Atlantic tunas since the organization was founded in 1973. This involvement included support for U.S. ratification of the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas in 1975. Subsequently, the NCMC has worked closely with the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) in promoting Atlantic-wide conservation measures to protect severely depleted stocks of Atlantic bluefin tuna...

"The NCMC supports reauthorization of the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act...and continued participation by the United States in ICCAT. The principal benefit of ICCAT participation to the U.S., its fishing industries, and the fisheries utilized by American fishermen is the stimulation and exchange of scientific and statistical information on Atlantic tunas and the tuna fisheries. A resolution at the 1985 ICCAT Annual Meeting, introduced by the U.S. delegation, to expand this purpose and begin gathering information to assess the status of stocks of Atlantic billfishes will further enhance this benefit to the U.S., where recreational billfishing is of prime importance.

"The success of ICCAT as a conservation and management entity, on the other hand, has been mixed. The fact that international organizations such

as ICCAT can only encourage voluntary participation and compliance tends to ensure that conservation recommendations will reflect only those measures that are acceptable to all involved in the fishery in question, including those nations with a minimal interest in conserving the stocks for the long-term benefit of every member nation.

"It was precisely this concern about the effectiveness of ICCAT as the sole tool for managing highly migratory species in the Atlantic, in particular the Commission's inability to reverse the rapid decline of Atlantic bluefin tuna populations before they bottomed out at current low levels, that led to efforts to include the management of tuna fishing activities in the U.S. 200-mile fishery conservation zone (FCZ) under the jurisdiction of the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MFCMA) of 1976, a move the NCMC continues to advocate.

"After more than a decade of efforts to halt overfishing of bluefin tunas, we are presently in the midst of a tentative recovery, the combined result of agreements made through ICCAT and bilateral agreements between the U.S. and the Japanese. The latter agreements were possible, it should be noted, largely because of continuous pressure in Congress to include tunas in the MFCMA and give the U.S. the authority to enforce management regulations in the FCZ.

"There is another, perhaps more compelling reason for bringing tunas under U.S. management jurisdiction. Marlin, sailfish and swordfish in U.S. waters do come under the management authority of the MFCMA. The management of billfishes, however, has been severely inhibited due to the fact that large numbers of billfish are caught incidentally to tuna longline fishing....As long as tuna fishing operations are exempt from U.S. management jurisdiction, the Regional Fishery Management Councils assigned responsibility for managing and conserving billfish stocks will be unable to develop a management plan that fully addresses all the needs of the fisheries, principally the by-catch problem.

"It is the NCMC's considered opinion, therefore, that continued participation in ICCAT should be complemented by extending U.S. management jurisdiction under the MFCMA to include the regulation of tuna fishing activities in U.S. waters. Management of all fishermen and fishery resources within our FCZ will make regulations devised by the Regional Councils more equitable and more acceptable to U.S. fishermen, and can only improve the U.S. position in international management efforts."

#### Briefly Noted:

On May 9, vice president BETHLYN McCLOSKEY made a presentation on behalf of the NCMC before the PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON AMERICANS OUTDOORS. She alerted the commissioners to the impending threat of coastal wetland loss to one of the nation's most important outdoor recreational activities, marine angling, and proposed a number of solutions, focusing on better coordination among federal agencies whose actions impact on wetlands and using the NMFS Habitat Policy as a national guideline....NCMC executive director KEN HINMAN has been named to the National Advisory Board of the SOUTHEASTERN SPORTFISHING ASSOCIATION, a South Carolina-based organization which promotes conservation on the salt water fishing tournament scene.....PUERTO RICO's sportfishing federation reports that BLUE MARLIN catches in the Caribbean have dropped by more than 50 percent in the last three years. The group is proposing measures to monitor and control the activities of commercial longliners in the area, including the length of line used and restrictions on fishing during daylight hours.

## EDITORIAL: A COOPERATIVE EFFORT BETWEEN ANGLER AND SCIENTIST

What one is most likely to read about the tagging of game fish in the popular angling press are the rare but sensational reports of a billfish, shark or tuna that has been recaptured after, say, spending ten years at liberty or traveling several thousand miles from where it was released.

The real value of tagging, though, is more subtle and perhaps not fully appreciated. The data acquired from releases and recaptures comes in slowly and must be analyzed over time. The knowledge it brings us is cumulative. Each year, we learn more about the seasonal movements of migratory fish, their mortality rates, which fisheries are affecting the stocks and to what degree, the size of the stocks and how quickly they can replenish themselves. For many species, particularly the large pelagics, the most productive and in some cases only way of getting this information is through scientific tagging.

The NMFS Cooperative Game Fish Tagging Program is based on the simple idea of anglers taking an active, hands-on role in helping scientists to achieve a more complete understanding of the life histories of the species they are fishing for. In return, this knowledge enables fishery managers to make better informed decisions that will ultimately benefit the fish and the fishermen.

The National Coalition for Marine Conservation, therefore, is proud to do its part to support the NMFS tagging program by sponsoring an award for the most blue marlin tagged and released each year, and we encourage our members to participate in the program by contacting the office of the National Marine Fisheries Service in your area.

Ken Hinman

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## REDFISH AT RISK

A management problem of crisis proportions is brewing in the Gulf of Mexico, one that threatens the viability of Gulf redfish populations and the inshore recreational and commercial fisheries that have flourished there for over a hundred years.

The netting of spawning-age redfish (known as channel bass on the east coast) off the coasts of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama is increasing at an astronomical rate in order to satisfy the growing demand for blackened redfish, the current vogue in American seafood restaurants. The catch of mature fish, which is done almost exclusively by a dozen purse seiners, was only 54,000 pounds in 1980. By 1985 it had risen to an astonishing 5.4 million pounds and could perhaps go as high as 10 million pounds this year.

Meanwhile, recreational and commercial catches in inshore waters have been steadily declining. These fisheries target juvenile redfish, and heavy exploitation of the brood stock offshore reduces the number of young fish in the estuaries. Aware of the interdependency of the two populations, most Gulf coast states have instituted measures, including banning purse seines, to reduce fishing mortality for redfish and to protect coastal habitat areas, thereby increasing the number of fish that recruit to the spawning stock in the Gulf.

The rapidly expanding purse seine fishery for adult redfish, which is taking place beyond state jurisdiction in federal waters, threatens to negate all these efforts and could, if not controlled, trigger a collapse not unlike the one experienced by king mackerel in the Gulf. However, there is no federal management plan for redfish through which the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council can regulate the catch. Because the process for developing a council plan is notoriously slow, emergency actions are being proposed to deal with the redfish crisis.

In April, Representative John Breaux of Louisiana introduced the "Redfish Conservation and Management Act of 1986," calling on Congress to ban the take of redfish in federal waters until the Regional Councils can develop a management plan. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), prompted by Breaux's bill to assert its authority under the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act, announced in June that it would develop an emergency plan to regulate the Gulf harvest.

Though some sort of federal action is necessary to halt the unrestricted netting and prevent the destruction of the redfish stocks in short order, federal intervention could do more harm than good if it is the wrong action. If, for instance, NMFS sets a quota for the seiners, which

is what the agency is most likely to do, the total landings for the year will continue to rise to unprecedented levels while rendering state conservation efforts ineffectual. Besides, not enough is known about the condition of the offshore stock to set a reliable quota, much less allow any further netting to continue through the fall spawning season.

The National Coalition for Marine Conservation (NCCMC) has asked the Secretary of Commerce to close the redfish fishery in the Gulf of Mexico FCZ immediately instead of setting harvest levels, no matter how conservative. The closure should remain in effect until the Gulf Council and the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, both of which have recently voted to put together regional management plans, working closely with the individual states, can determine the best strategy for managing the redfish resources of the Gulf. The NCCMC also called for NMFS to initiate a cooperative state/federal research effort to assess the size of the offshore spawning stock, recruitment to that stock, growth and reproductive capacity, and the surplus which can be harvested without jeopardizing the established inshore fisheries.

#### EPA DECIDES BURNING WASTE AT SEA NEEDS MORE STUDY

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has finally agreed with its critics that too many questions about the safety of incinerating toxic wastes at sea remain unanswered. The EPA denied Chemical Waste Management, Inc. a permit to conduct a research burn of 700,000 gallons of oil contaminated with PCBs off the mid-Atlantic coast.

No burnings, research or commercial, will be allowed until the federal environmental agency reviews its draft regulations for ocean incineration and produces final regulations that more fully address the potential risks involved in transporting the wastes to the burn site, the impact of incineration on marine life and the public health, and certain legal questions that will arise, such as consistency with state coastal protection laws and liability in the event of an accident. The EPA anticipates finalizing its regulations by next spring, at which time permit requests will again be considered.

#### SWORDFISH PLAN: ONE STEP AT A TIME

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has concluded its second review of the Atlantic Swordfish Plan, and has approved certain measures it had previously rejected while continuing to deny others. The Plan was re-submitted earlier this year by the five Councils responsible for drafting measures to rebuild the severely overfished stocks of broadbill. Among the measures approved by NMFS is a prohibition on nighttime longlining by foreign vessels fishing in the U.S. zone during the seasonal closures. Disapproved was the cap on foreign longline by-catch and the ban on drift entanglement nets.

Approval of the ban on nighttime longlining is a significant victory for the Councils. The State Department has evidently relented somewhat on its steadfast opposition to any regulation of foreign tuna fishing. The Councils may now, for the first time, require foreign longliners to adhere to the same restriction imposed on American fishermen in a fishery management plan. Since swordfish are hooked predominately at night, limiting all tuna longlining to daylight hours during the swordfish closures will reduce the incidental catch.

The State Department did not, however, yield to limits on the total

Backers of the international convention recognize that enforcing these regulations on recalcitrant nations is probably impossible, but nonetheless we firmly believe that this is a necessary first step in a global effort to solve this grave problem, and U.S. ratification will send a clear message to the rest of the world that we as a nation are prepared to do something about it.

#### "THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG"

The skipper of the longliner Seahawk was arrested on June 5 and charged with attempting to sell twenty-three sailfish. Reacting to an anonymous tip, Florida Marine Patrol officers found the sailfish carcasses, weighing about 600 pounds, at a fish house in Cortez, south of Tampa. The sailfish, according to a spokesperson, were buried under a pile of sharks and dolphin, victims of the same indiscriminate longline.

The sailfish were reportedly caught about 100 miles west of Cortez in the Gulf of Mexico, and had they been landed elsewhere in the Gulf, there would have been no law broken. Sailfish, however, are gamefish under Florida state law, although it is legal to sell marlin. The proposed Federal management plan for Atlantic billfishes, if approved, would prohibit the sale of either marlin or sailfish caught in the Atlantic FCZ. Though the concern has primarily been about an expanding commercial market for blue and white marlin, it is evident from this case, since the sailfish were taken far from shore, that sailfish are also in need of Federal protection.

#### "PACIFIC SALMON" NOW IN PRINT

"Recreational Uses, Production and Management of Anadromous Pacific Salmonids". Richard H. Stroud, Editor, National Coalition for Marine Conservation 1985. 213 pages. This volume is the tenth in the MARINE RECREATIONAL FISHERIES series, and is the complete proceedings of the tenth annual Marine Recreational Fisheries Symposium held in Seattle, Washington on April 26 and 27, 1985.

"The Pacific salmonids support one of the most valuable recreational fisheries in North America," notes Frank Carlton in his introduction to the volume. "The purpose (of this book) is to examine the needs of the salmonid resource and the issues relative to the use of these resources from a recreational perspective." Included in the volume are the complete texts of seventeen papers delivered at the symposium by some of the most knowledgeable and respected experts on salmon issues. The authors address a broad range of topics, such as the biology of important salmon species, the salmon fisheries, environmental needs, resource and habitat enhancement, and local, regional and international management policies.

The book is available in a limited, hardbound edition for only \$15.00 from the National Coalition for Marine Conservation, Post Office Box 23298, Savannah, Georgia 31403.

#### MACKEREL QUOTA CUT AGAIN

Commercial fishing for king mackerel in the Gulf of Mexico was halted on March 12 for the remainder of the current fishing season, which ended on June 30. During the emergency closure, the South Atlantic and Gulf Councils got together and decided what level of fishing to allow for the 1986-87 season. For the third time in less than a year, they recommended a sizeable reduction in catch.

number of swordfish caught incidentally by foreign longliners. This measure, along with the driftnet prohibition, is extremely critical, not just in terms of swordfish conservation but in setting important national precedent for fisheries management. A Council source told the MARINE BULLETIN that these two measures, along with the others rejected by NMFS (ban on imports during closures, mandatory observers), will be re-submitted "until they are approved".

As long as the Councils are unable to restrict the longline by-catch, foreign fishermen operating in U.S. waters will have license to employ indiscriminate and wasteful fishing gear and kill non-target fish - in this instance, swordfish, billfish, shark, etc. - either of direct value to U.S. fishermen or the object of a U.S. conservation effort. Accommodation to foreign fishing interests cannot be allowed to take precedence over the Councils' mandate to manage and conserve fishery resources off our shores.

Permitting the use of drift entanglement nets, in this case by domestic fishermen, impedes rational fisheries management in a different manner. Driftnets were allowed to enter the swordfish fishery for the first time in 1983, despite the fact that the fishery was already crowded with longline gear and the resource was being rapidly depleted. The kind of thinking that allows the introduction of new and highly-efficient methods of fishing into an overcrowded and overexploited fishery must be changed once and for all. One of the most important contributions the Councils could make would be to remove this gear from the swordfish fishery and establish precedent. The burden of proof should be placed squarely on the users of non-traditional gear to demonstrate that it will not harm the resource or displace other users, not on the managers to prove that it will.

#### MARPOL

The National Coalition for Marine Conservation has joined with other environmental and conservation groups in formally asking the United States to support international regulations to control the discharge of plastic and other synthetic materials, including fishing nets, at sea. In a June 16 letter to John Negroponte, Assistant Secretary for Oceans and International Environmental Affairs at the Department of State, signed by twenty organizations including the NCMC, the U.S. is urged to ratify Annex V of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, commonly known as MARPOL.

"We are particularly concerned about the presence of persistent plastics and other persistent synthetic materials (including fishing nets) in the marine environment," the letter states. "Entanglement in and ingestion of plastics and other marine debris contributes to the mortality of thousands of marine mammals, birds, and turtles and is the source of unintentional depletion of important...fisheries."

Annex V seeks to prohibit the disposal of plastics and other harmful marine debris at sea. As reported in the MARINE BULLETIN last year ("Plastic Pollution," April 1985), the amount of life-threatening garbage dumped at sea is staggering: the world's commercial fishing fleets are estimated to discharge over 52 million pounds of plastic packaging at sea and discard or lose 298 million pounds of plastic fishing gear, such as monofilament nets (figures: National Academy of Sciences). If this portion of MARPOL is ratified, shipping and fishing nations will be required to implement domestic regulations at least as stringent as those contained in Annex V.

The two councils, which jointly manage the Gulf and south Atlantic groups of mackerel, agreed on a total allowable catch (TAC) of 2.9 million pounds for the Gulf migratory stock. (No changes in the TAC for the south Atlantic stock will be made until the councils get new estimates on recent recreational catches.) The new quota will be allocated in the following way: 2 million pounds for recreational fishermen, using a 2 fish a day bag limit; and 900,000 pounds for the commercial fishery, including a 50,000 pound allocation for purse seiners.

A quick review of mackerel management: in the course of only ten months time, the TAC has plunged from 14.2 million pounds (Amendment One, September 1985) to 5.2 million (emergency amendment, March 1986) to 2.9 million pounds (July 1, 1986 if approved by NMFS). That's a whopping 80% reduction, and yet it is still higher than the maximum of 2.3 million recommended by the Councils' scientific advisors last August, when they warned the stock could collapse if measures weren't taken to drastically cut back on fishing pressure. But instead of being conservative, which is the thing to do when a fishery is collapsing as quickly as the mackerel fishery is, quotas have been consistently set too high to reverse the decline.

Council members are pointing accusatory fingers at NMFS for this failure to manage mackerel effectively, and NMFS in turn is blaming the Councils. Others say the fault is in the system itself. On May 3 the administrator of NOAA, Anthony J. Calio, announced that he was convening a special NOAA/Council task force to investigate the matter to make sure it doesn't happen again. That report should be completed by the end of the summer.

#### U.S. NETS RECORD CATCH IN 1985

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reports that United States fishermen caught 3.2 billion pounds of fish in the U.S. fishery conservation zone (FCZ) in 1985, more than in any previous year. This is an increase of 9 percent over 1984.

Still, American fishermen took only 59 percent of all the fish caught in U.S. waters last year, and much of the recent shift of effort from foreign to domestic fishermen can be attributed to joint ventures, where U.S. fishermen sell their catch to foreign processing ships. Joint venture catches of such species as pollock, cod and sole were up 37 percent last year, according to NOAA.

#### NCMC TESTIFIES AGAINST NATIONAL LICENSE

The NCMC expressed its opposition to the President's proposed Federal Ocean Sportfishing License, dismissing it as "ill-conceived and poorly designed." In a June 19 statement to the House committee holding hearings on the license, NCMC director Ken Hinman criticized the proposal, calling it "nothing more than a way to increase federal revenues...Clearly, little or no thought was given to what it would or would not contribute to the management of the nation's fisheries. As written, (it) would achieve nothing to benefit either the fish or the fishermen."

Noting that licensing anglers is best left to the states, Hinman stressed that for any program to be acceptable, license revenues must be earmarked exclusively for programs to enhance marine recreational fisheries, and that those revenues should supplement existing funding sources, not replace them.

## EDITORIAL: MANAGING IN THE DARK

When the Gulf Council completed a profile of the Gulf of Mexico redfish fishery in 1983, the Council concluded "there is no evidence of excessive harvest in federal waters, and therefore no management could be effectively employed in that area on the adult fish." So any Federal planning to protect the spawning stock of redfish that inhabits the Gulf FCZ was postponed, presumably until "excessive harvest" occurred. Now it's happening, and Congress, the Regional Councils and the National Marine Fisheries Service are falling all over each other in a frantic effort to save the redfish from possible disaster.

The issue that concerns us is not whether the Council and/or NMFS should have seen it coming, but whether or not they could have been better prepared. The Magnuson Act charges the Councils/NMFS with developing fishery management plans to "prevent overfishing," not to wait for overfishing to occur first and then react with a plan to manage the fishery. By then it is usually too late.

We believe those with Federal responsibility for protecting the redfish resource could have done more. For starters, they should have begun several years ago to fill the data gaps identified by the Gulf Council's redfish profile. Then we would at least have a better understanding of the fishery - the size of the offshore brood stock, how the intensive netting is impacting that stock as well as the inshore juvenile populations, and what effect additional netting will have.

Without this information, there is no acceptable alternative to shutting down the purse seine fishery for redfish immediately and indefinitely. The risks of managing in the dark are too great.

Ken Hinman

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THE NCMC

# MARINE BULLETIN

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## THE ROLE OF RESEARCH IN FISHERY MANAGEMENT

The critical link between quality fisheries research and effective fisheries management is unquestioned. The more we know about the fisheries, the better we can analyze population trends, assess the impact of fishing pressure and habitat alterations on the stocks, and predict the result of different management efforts. And yet our scientific understanding is never so complete as to provide unequivocal guidance to fishery managers. Moreover, the nature of the fisheries is constantly changing and the data base is always expanding.

The Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MFCMA) addresses this problem as best it can by requiring that the nation's fisheries be managed using the "best scientific information available." The National Marine Fisheries Service, in cooperation with other agencies, is responsible for providing the Regional Councils with the best possible information on the fisheries, and the councils are to promulgate management measures as necessary using the best information at hand.

Nevertheless, the relationship between science and management remains subject to opposing interpretations. On the one hand, there are those who are never satisfied with the science unless it confirms their own pre-conceived conclusions, usually politically or economically motivated. They will always argue that management should be postponed pending "more conclusive" evidence. The opposite view, and the one to which the NCMC subscribes, is that the rational reaction to uncertainty, scientific or otherwise, should be caution and conservative action, not inaction.

Either way, though, it is inarguably in the best interests of the resource, the resource users, and the decision-makers to do all that is reasonably possible to improve the fisheries information base. The National Coalition for Marine Conservation, in the interest of assuring fishery managers access to the best and most reliable information possible, cites four essential ingredients for enhancing fisheries research - applicability, efficiency, continuity and accountability:

**Applicability.** All research activities should be planned and conducted with a clear conception of how the information will directly support resource management needs and priorities. In addition, research programs should maintain sufficient flexibility to adapt to changing needs and priorities over time.

**Efficiency.** Federal, state and academic research efforts should be coordinated at both the planning and operational levels, with information shared freely to avoid duplication of effort and undue cost.

Continuity. Fisheries research should be guaranteed sufficient funding on a continuing basis to protect the integrity of the information base from changes in the fiscal and political climate.

Accountability. Research programs should undergo periodic peer review to assess progress toward meeting management requirements.

#### SENATE WILL CONSIDER REGULATING DRIFTNETS

"The(se) nets create a devastating curtain of death for all living marine resources," declared Senator Ted Stevens upon introducing legislation to control drift gillnetting in U.S. waters. The Alaskan senator, chairman of the Subcommittee on Merchant Marine, filed the bill out of concern for the effect of unregulated Japanese driftnetting on salmon, marine mammals and seabirds in the northeastern Pacific.

The bill, S.2611, defines driftnets as freefloating nets of plastic material one-and-a-half miles or more in length, the size used by Japanese salmon and squid fishermen. Under the proposed law, any nation wanting to fish large driftnets in U.S. waters would be required to permit close monitoring by American officials to assess their impact on marine life. Observers would be placed onboard all vessels and the Department of Commerce would be directed to report to Congress annually on the impact of the nets. The legislation would also require that all nets be registered and marked; a reward be offered to anyone retrieving a lost net; and that the Commerce Department develop biodegradable nets that will self-destruct when lost.

The NCMC, as a strong advocate of strictly regulating driftnets and other types of gillnets, applauds Senator Stevens for taking an important step toward stemming the wasteful destruction of our marine resources. However, the Stevens bill is designed not to effect driftnets used by American fishermen off southern California and New England, which are typically one-half to one mile long. The Senate is being encouraged to amend S.2611 to regulate the use of all driftnets off our coasts.

#### "CONSERVATION IS THE NAME OF THE FISHING GAME" AT SC TOURNAMENT

The NCMC has long advocated that fishing tournaments take an active part in supporting conservation efforts to protect the future of salt water angling, and we are pleased to note there is an encouraging trend in this direction. A growing number of established tournaments are adding a release event to provide conservation-minded participants with an alternative to the on-the-dock format; or they are dedicating a portion of their proceeds to marine conservation and research; or both.

The NCMC offers assistance to tournaments considering such a change in format, in addition to helping newly-organized tournaments incorporate the conservation ethic from the beginning. One example is the inaugural Mickey Spillane Fishing Festival and Tournament scheduled for September 2-7 in Murrells Inlet, South Carolina. The event is sponsored by the Southeastern Sportfishing Association (SSA), an organization devoted to promoting conservation efforts on the South Atlantic coast. Spillane, best known as the author of the "Mike Hammer" detective series, is a founding member of the SSA.

The SSA tournament could be the model for how organized fishing events can benefit conservation, says NCMC director Ken Hinman, a member of the

SSA's national advisory board. The sponsors have designed the event to provide participants with several days of fishing and fun while focusing public attention on problems such as overfishing, pollution and increased coastal development.

In keeping with its conservation role, according to SSA president Paul Vernon, the fishing tournament has been set up to de-emphasize competitiveness and the needless killing of fish. The three-day event will be a multi-species tournament with three divisions - billfish, king mackerel, and shark. According to tournament rules, each boat will be allowed to weigh-in only one fish per day. Fish that are not kept for weigh-in will be tagged and released to assist with on-going marine resource studies, and in some cases, photographs before they're released will become the basis for a special sportsmanship prize.

Although tournament organizers aren't emphasizing prizes, half of all entry fees and other non-cash prizes will be awarded to division winners. The other half will go directly to support conservation efforts through the SSA, the National Coalition for Marine Conservation, the Sport Fishing Institute, the International Game Fish Association and the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Department artificial reef program.

#### NETTING OF GULF REDFISH HALTED -- TEMPORARILY

On June 25 the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) imposed a 90-day "emergency" quota on the purse seine fishery for red drum in the Gulf of Mexico. The netters had already landed over five million pounds of the large spawning size redfish in the first five months of 1986 - equal to the total catch for 1985. The NMFS regulation allowed them to take another one million pounds, which they did in less than three weeks. Fishing for redfish in federal waters of the Gulf is now restricted to hook and line until September 23, when another 90-day rule will be implemented pending the development of a federal management plan. NMFS has announced its intent to extend the one-million-pound allocation for purse seines, but they must do so with the approval of the Gulf Fishery Management Council.

Conservationists had strongly urged NMFS to declare a netting moratorium to protect the offshore spawning stock of redfish from excessive harvest. The NCMC and others point out that little is known about the size of the spawning population, what effect the recent unprecedented catches may have already had on the stock, and what lasting damage might be caused by continued netting. To allow a substantial net harvest to continue, as NMFS has done, only serves to further enrich a relatively few fishermen while putting the future productivity of the resource in jeopardy.

Members of the Gulf Council endorsed this conservative position when they met in July. The council voted to recommend a zero quota for purse seines, with a limit of two fish over 30 inches for everyone. This approach is consistent with protective regulations enacted by virtually every Gulf coast state for managing redfish in the territorial seas. Presumably the council will take this stance into negotiations with NMFS on the extended emergency regulations.

Unfortunately, by virtue of the NMFS action in the absence of a council plan for redfish, the Gulf Council could be reduced to an advisory capacity in the debate with NMFS over how to manage the potentially-stressed fishery. The emergency regulations are only temporary and will expire before the end of the year. At that time, a plan drawn up by NMFS and approved by the Secretary of Commerce will become law. The fear is

that the NMFS plan will duplicate the emergency regulations, giving the netters four million pounds a year and making them a permanent fixture in the fishery.

In the meantime, a legal issue concerning states' rights and federal preemption will have to be resolved. The current emergency regulations, according to NMFS, "apply only to red drum caught in federal waters and will not supersede existing or future state landing or possession laws." The hitch is that landing redfish caught by purse seine is illegal in every Gulf coast state except for Louisiana and Alabama, and it is expected to be outlawed in those two states in the near future. If and when the offshore fishery is re-opened in late September, netters will be faced with a Catch-22; it will be perfectly legal to net redfish in the Gulf but illegal to bring them ashore. Two commercial fishing organizations have sued NMFS in federal court to permit federal law to preempt state landing laws, thus allowing netted redfish to be landed irregardless of state prohibitions.

The NCMC position is that in cases like this, when the management of a fishery is shared by state and federal authorities and state laws are more restrictive, state regulations must be respected. We have conveyed this position to the Secretary of Commerce, recommending that the proposed Secretarial plan to manage redfish in the Gulf of Mexico prohibit the use of purse seines in accordance with the expressed management objectives of the five states bordering the Gulf and the Gulf Fishery Management Council.

#### THE BILLFISH FOUNDATION

The world's seven species of billfish - sailfish, spearfish, swordfish, white marlin, striped marlin, blue marlin and black marlin - represent some of the sea's most unique creatures. They are among the largest of the oceanic fishes, range thousands of miles in their seasonal migrations, and are sought by fishermen the world over. By their very nature, billfish pose a formidable challenge to both anglers and conservationists alike.

Responding to this challenge, a new scientific organization has been formed solely for the purpose of studying billfish. The International Billfish Research and Conservation Foundation will be committed to protecting and conserving the world's billfish stocks through scientific research. The Foundation lists six major objectives:

- 1) To support, direct, and encourage the research and study of the world's billfish stocks;
- 2) To develop and maintain a world reference library on billfishes, including sportfishing for such species;
- 3) To compile and disseminate billfish information to all members, the public, and governmental or regulatory bodies for the furtherance of conservation of billfishes;
- 4) To develop and support angling programs designed to aid in the preservation and conservation of billfishes;
- 5) To aid scientific and educational institutions which specialize in the research of billfish;
- and 6) To work in full cooperation with affiliate organizations whose express purpose is the conservation of sportfish.

The Billfish Foundation is founded on the belief that scientific data and knowledge must be the basis for any planned management designed to prevent overexploitation, destruction, or neglect of the sea's billfish stocks. While remaining apolitical, the Foundation's research and findings will be shared with marine conservation groups working to conserve billfish stocks and protect the interests of billfishermen.

Continuity. Fisheries research should be guaranteed sufficient funding on a continuing basis to protect the integrity of the information base from changes in the fiscal and political climate.

Accountability. Research programs should undergo periodic peer review to assess progress toward meeting management requirements.

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The SSA tournament could be the model for how organized fishing events can benefit conservation, says NCMC director Ken Hinman, a member of the

Competition for the sea's limited resources is intensifying under the pressure of increasingly efficient harvesting technologies and more fishermen than ever before. As exploitation increases, so does the need for management based on solid, reliable, up-to-date information on the fisheries. To prevent overfishing and resource depletion, we need to further enhance our understanding of the fish and their environment, closely monitor fishing activities, and accurately gauge their impact on the stocks.

But the amount of public funding available for fisheries research and data collection is not keeping pace with management needs. Worse, given the present fiscal climate and the relatively low priority allotted to research within the administration (and the public at large), researchers will be lucky just to maintain their programs at present levels.

It is time, as we see it, for the American people to make a choice. Either we are willing to spend the money necessary to gain a better understanding of the marine resources the nation wants to utilize, or we have no alternative but to play it safe and deliberately underuse them. The predictable consequence - based on past experience - of trying to achieve maximum exploitation with minimum knowledge will be depleted fisheries and idle fishermen. We can pay now, or pay the piper later.

Ken Hinman

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## NOAA FISHERY MANAGEMENT STUDY

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) recently released the "NOAA Fishery Management Study," a 63-page document assessing fishery management under the 10-year-old Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MFCMA). The report contains several recommendations for radical changes in the federal fishery management structure. The NOAA administration in Washington is currently receiving public comment on the report and has indicated its intent to put together a legislative package based on these recommendations for introduction to Congress in 1987, when the MFCMA expires.

Before discussing the report and its recommendations, a little background is in order. The NOAA Study was conducted by a panel of eleven members hand-picked from the private sector by NOAA administrator Anthony J. Calio. Past NCMC chairman Henry Lyman, publisher emeritus of SALT WATER SPORTSMAN magazine, and NCMC board member Fitzgerald Bemiss were included on the panel. The Study was commissioned by Dr. Calio as part of the comprehensive re-examination of the federal management system he began upon taking office less than a year ago. A joint NOAA/Council task force is also conducting an internal evaluation of the MFCMA. A draft of their conclusions was distributed last December, suggesting that only administrative adjustments were required to achieve the objectives of the MFCMA.

Calio gave a brief preview of what turns out to be the cornerstone of the new Study in his keynote address at the May Marine Recreational Fisheries Symposium in Tampa (see MARINE BULLETIN, April/May). On that occasion, he announced that, in his view, the federal role in fisheries reduced to two components, conserving and allocating marine resources. He revealed that the Study group had come up with an innovative concept for doing this under the MFCMA; namely, to physically separate the two decisions in order to shield conservation from the necessarily political elements involved in allocation.

This idea elicited a generally favorable response from recreational fishing and conservation leaders, who were buoyed by the new NOAA leadership's apparent resolve to focus more attention on the need to conserve fish populations first, and satisfy the needs of users second. The NCMC, for one, was encouraged that one of its fundamental principles, that conservation should be founded on science, not politics, might finally be incorporated into national policy. The fishing and conservation communities, needless to say, anxiously awaited a chance to review the "NOAA Fishery Management Study" and test the new fishery administration's commitment to conservation.

## Conservation Is Top Priority

After assessing conservation of the nation's fish stocks under the present MFCMA system of management, the Study concludes that "overfishing remains a problem in some fisheries and a threat in others." The Study identifies the chief culprit as "the various interpretations of optimum yield [which] have in some cases permitted allocation considerations to override conservation responsibilities." The concept of optimum yield (OY) as defined in the MFCMA is the maximum sustainable yield from a fishery modified by relevant economic, social or ecological factors. In practice, this concept has proven incompatible with the MFCMA's explicit goal of preventing overfishing, as the long-term health of the resource is often given a lower priority than the short-term economic and social needs of certain resource users. As a result, catches are maintained at levels ultimately harmful to the resource.

To resolve this conflict, the Study proposes that "fishery management will be markedly improved by a clear separation between conservation and allocation decisions." "The goal of conservation," it notes, "is to maintain resource productivity for future generations. Allocation [on the other hand] relates to the needs and expectations of fishery users, and distributes the opportunity to participate in a fishery." "Separating conservation and allocation is done for the purpose of giving priority to maintaining the resource for future generations." (Emphasis added)

As presently written, the MFCMA empowers the Regional Councils to determine both the optimum yield for a particular fishery and how it is to be distributed among the various types of fishermen. These decisions are usually made concurrently as part of the same process. To separate these processes, the Study recommends that the Councils continue to allocate the fish, but that a designated group within the National Marine Fisheries Service, using the agency's scientific and information gathering resources as well as the expertise of the Councils, states and interstate institutions, make the conservation decisions. The concept of OY would be discarded in favor of what the Study terms the acceptable biological catch (ABC), based solely on currently available scientific information. The ABC, once determined for a specified period of time, could not be exceeded during the allocation process, although the Councils could allocate fewer fish if they wished.

## Controversial Recommendation

The Study group looked at various alternate ways of dividing the conservation and allocation responsibilities among existing institutions before deciding on NMFS scientists as the preferred alternative for determining the ABC for each fishery. This is bound to be the Study's most controversial recommendation. A review of the history of the performance of NMFS under the MFCMA strongly indicates that the agency is no more immune to political pressures than are the Councils. What, it can be asked, will guarantee that the NMFS decision-makers in Washington, though physically removed from the allocation debate, will be insulated from pressure groups with a selfish interest in influencing their decision?

The NCMC view is that the Study's basic concept of separating conservation and allocation decisions is sound, and if successful, could be the singlemost important achievement in the history of marine resource management. But if there is to be a significant reorganization of fishery management responsibilities to achieve this, we must be reasonably certain that it will mean a real benefit to conservation and not simply provide

change for the sake of change. For this reason, the NCMC has urged NOAA to keep this very constructive dialogue open, and to give more thorough consideration to other possible arrangements for assuring that conservation based on scientific principle is given top priority in the setting of acceptable catch levels. For instance, the Councils' own scientific advisory committees, which incorporate the expertise of the NMFS research centers, state and university biologists, and Council staff, could be formalized as the conservation decision-makers and their recommendations on acceptable biological catches made binding on the Councils.

### Streamlining Approval of Management Plans

Under the new system, fishery management plans would still have to go to the Secretary of Commerce for approval. The Study cites a major problem in this phase of federal review. Specifically, there is a perception that the Secretary (really NMFS/NOAA) not only checks management measures for consistency with the national standards of the MFCMA, as he is supposed to do, but also reviews the judgement of the Councils on matters of management policy. At the very least, this causes undue delays in getting management measures implemented, and at worst, unjustifiably substitutes the Secretary's judgement for that of the Councils, contrary to the intent of the MFCMA.

The Secretarial review, according to the Study, should be limited to 60 days and strictly confined to consistency with the national standards and other applicable federal law. The failure of the Secretary to act on any plan during this period would constitute automatic approval. The NCMC has enthusiastically endorsed this recommendation. We have also asked that NMFS act as a more aggressive advocate of management objectives during the review process. Comment is routinely sought from other federal agencies, such as the Office of Management and Budget, and objections from these agencies are too often accepted without question. NMFS should instead weigh them within the context of achieving the objectives of the plan; which is, after all, its primary concern.

### Emphasis on Research and Enforcement

Shortfalls in federal funding for fisheries, and the likelihood of further cuts to reduce the national debt, means NMFS/NOAA must re-evaluate its priorities in order to make the best use of its money and personnel. The Study urges that the highest priority be given to scientific research, long-term catch and effort data collection, and enforcement. Conversely, the government should get out of the business of assisting private industry in marketing, product development and capitalization.

"Research relating to fishery management is an investment which returns to the Nation annual dividends in sustained fishery yields and in improved management of publicly owned natural resources," the Study says. "Research, data gathering and processing capabilities cannot be turned on and off; they must be sustained through time." The Study calls for developing a more comprehensive data base on each species and each fishery over the long-term; using the best information currently available to set catch levels; mandatory reporting of catch statistics when required for management purposes; and improved coordination among research and information gathering agencies.

Tougher enforcement of fishing regulations is recommended to better achieve conservation and allocation goals. First off, the Study advises the Councils to take into account the cost and enforceability of proposed

regulations, choosing the most economical and effective measures where possible. Other recommendations include the use of the most cost-effective enforcement methods, permits for all fishermen, and harsher penalties for violators.

### Council Changes

The Study recommends revamping the system for nominating individuals for service on the Regional Councils. Frequently, it concludes, more attention is paid to the politics and/or user-orientation of nominees than their qualifications for making informed decisions. As proposed, the new process would allow any interested member of the public to submit nominations to a new national review board. The board would then select the three best qualified individuals for each vacancy, using only the criteria set out in the MFCMA, and submit them to the Secretary of Commerce for final approval. Also, all appointees would be required to undergo a short-course on the MFCMA and Council procedure before taking office.

The elimination of two Councils, the Western Pacific and the Caribbean, is suggested in the Study. The authors argue that since there are "very few interjurisdictional fisheries" for these Councils to manage, management could be left up to local authorities. This, however, would deprive these regions of the fair and equitable input into the national management process promised by the MFCMA. This is especially important in the management of oceanic pelagics, which both island regions are currently involved in.

### Interjurisdictional Management

Contrasting state management objectives and regulatory procedures make managing coastal migratory fish throughout their range difficult, the Study observes. For interjurisdictional fisheries that do not fall within the authority of the MFCMA, the Study recommends the federal government establish national guidelines for coordinating state programs. Washington would in return provide financial support for fisheries research and enforcement. If a state fails to participate in an interstate program, the federal government would have the authority to enforce that program until the state complies.

This approach is similar to the provisions of the Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act. Indeed, the experience with striped bass demonstrates quite clearly that without a coordinated plan for the entire range of the fish, and without the threat of federal preemption, an ineffective hodgepodge of state regulations will prevail.

### Include Tunas in the MFCMA

The Study endorses what is becoming conventional wisdom throughout the U.S. fishing community -- that all fishing activities within the U.S. 200-mile zone, including tuna fishing, should be subject to the jurisdiction of the Regional Councils. The exclusion of highly migratory tunas from MFCMA authority has had "unintended and severe resource management and political repercussions." Billfish and swordfish management efforts in particular have been continually inhibited because they impinge on foreign longline fishing for tunas. The Study recommends repealing the tuna exclusion of the MFCMA. However, continued U.S. participation in international fishery agreements, such as the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), is encouraged.

## Licenses for All Fishermen

The Study proposes a system of fees and licenses for all fishermen to provide additional sources of revenue to support fishery programs and to more readily identify users for the purpose of gathering fishery-dependent information. Licenses would be issued and administered by the coastal states, with monies shared evenly between the states and federal government. All revenues from licenses and user fees would be dedicated to fishery management activities.

The NCMC generally agrees with the objectives and purposes cited in the Study for establishing a licensing system. But to truly enhance fishery management, the new revenues must be used to supplement existing programs, not to supplant current funding sources or appropriations. And because the most recent proposals for national user fees and licenses have been poorly designed, we are reserving judgement on any national licensing initiative until a specific proposal is developed.

## Limited Entry

The licensing issue promises to provoke strong opposition from some quarters, as does the Study's recommendation to remove all legal barriers to using limited entry as a management tool. "Too many fishermen -- commercial and recreational -- are trying to catch too few fish," the Study warns. The result is intense pressure on the stocks, an overcrowded and unstable fishing industry, and increasing user and gear conflicts. The Study urges abandoning the dangerous notion that the ocean's resources are free to whoever wants to exploit them. Instead, arrangements for limiting entry should be considered, including directly controlling the number of fishermen, boats, and units of gear; catch quotas for individual fishermen or boats; fees and taxes; or lotteries. The system used and the need for it would be left up to the discretion of the Councils.

## Do More to Protect Fish Habitat

The Study stresses the "critical need to maintain the environmental quality of habitats essential to fish at all stages in their life cycles," and calls for an expanded role for the Councils and the federal government in protecting fish habitat. For example, NOAA and the Councils should monitor all activities that affect habitat areas, keep in close and regular communication with agencies at all levels of government as well as private groups concerning habitat issues, and identify actions that should be taken to prevent habitat destruction. Finally, the Study suggests Congressional action to ensure that fishery habitat concerns are given greater weight in federal decision-making.

These habitat protection recommendations are crucial. The direct dependence of fish productivity on the health of the environment has to date received more lip service than action. Meanwhile, valuable habitat areas are disappearing and the quality of coastal waters is deteriorating. NOAA and the Councils must become more aggressively involved in habitat conservation. Legislation will be necessary to compel other federal agencies to cooperate fully in the protection of fish habitat.

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Copies of the "NOAA Fishery Management Study" are available from Brian Gorman, NOAA/PAF, Washington, D.C. 20235. The National Coalition for Marine Conservation's comments on the Study are available upon request.

COMMENTARY: "NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR POSITIVE CHANGE"

"A tragedy of the commons occurs," write the authors of the "NOAA Fishery Management Study" reviewed in this issue of the MARINE BULLETIN, "when individual incentives to take more fish work to the detriment of the whole." Ten years after the enactment of the MFCMA, these selfish incentives are still calling the shots. Too many of our common property marine resources continue to be managed for the benefit of the few who would exploit them to their own advantage, with little regard for assuring a sustained use over time for the benefit of the majority.

The NOAA Study begins by acknowledging that conservation remains an ideal rather than a reality in fishery management, and goes on to propose that we seriously rethink the way we manage our marine fisheries "in the hope that new opportunities for positive change will follow."

As one would expect, some of the more sweeping changes the Study recommends have sparked controversy and opposition, as well as considerable support. But no matter how many of its recommendations are actually implemented, the Study has already made a positive contribution to the current national debate on fishery management. With its emphasis on conservation as the principal goal of resource management, and its insistence that conservation be based on sound scientific principle untainted by greed and special interest, the Study has provided a clear vision of what fishery management should be.

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THE NCMC

# MARINE BULLETIN

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## PRESIDENT SIGNS STRIPER CONSERVATION LAW

The Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act of 1984, requiring east coast states to cooperate in rebuilding endangered striper stocks, has been extended for another two years. The bill re-authorizing the federal statute, signed by President Reagan on October 1, will help protect the present generation of fish until they spawn, and continue to assess progress in the coastwide recovery effort.

The original law, which expired last April, successfully prompted cooperation among the twelve states managing striped bass spawning in or migrating through their territorial waters. Under the law, a federal moratorium on fishing for striped bass may be declared in those states which do not implement an Interstate Plan recommended by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). Also, federal funding is provided to conduct the Emergency Striped Bass Study to monitor the condition of the stocks and assess the role of fishing restrictions and habitat improvement in affecting a comeback.

Congress acknowledged the success of this approach by voting unanimously on September 16 to approve an extension of the Striped Bass Conservation Act until October 1988. Meanwhile, the U.S. Justice Department was recommending to the President that he veto the bill because of alleged constitutional problems with the Act's state/federal mix of responsibilities. This threat to the national effort to conserve striped bass came as a complete surprise, considering that no such questions were raised in 1984 when the Administration okayed the original legislation. Fortunately, a tremendous outpouring of support for the bill, from fishing and conservation groups, state governments, and the Administration's own National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration/National Marine Fisheries Service, convinced the President that the bill was essential to the resurgence of the striped bass and to the future of the traditional commercial and recreational bass fisheries along the Atlantic seaboard.

In a September 18 letter to President Reagan urging his signature, the National Coalition for Marine Conservation (NCMC) called the Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act "the glue that holds the entire Atlantic-wide striped bass conservation effort together." Coordinated action is necessary now more than ever. The number of fish being produced in Chesapeake Bay remains dangerously low. Spawning success in the bay's major tributaries this summer, as measured by the 1986 Maryland young-of-the-year survey, was well below average once again. The recovery continues to rest with the last relatively abundant population of fish produced in 1982. These fish are now maturing sexually and will reach full spawning capability by 1988.

The ASMFC's recovery plan has been amended to protect the 1982 year-class of striped bass through a rising scale of minimum size limits and other restrictive fishing measures designed to give 95 percent of the 1982 females and those of each subsequent year a chance to reproduce at least once. Under the federal Striped Bass Conservation Act, each state from North Carolina to Maine, as well as the Potomac River and District of Columbia management authorities, must adopt conservation measures to meet the objectives of the interstate plan. Following is a brief rundown of existing state regulations:

Maryland - An indefinite moratorium on catching and selling striped bass has been in effect since January 1985. Certain restrictions have been placed on gill netting to limit the by-catch of bass in other fisheries. Delaware - The state banned possession of striped bass coincidental to the Maryland moratorium. The ban will be lifted when Maryland re-opens its fishery. Connecticut - Catch and possession of bass caught in state waters is outlawed until April 1, 1989. Fish caught elsewhere and sold in Connecticut must be at least 33 inches total length (TL). New York - Fishing has been halted indefinitely due to PCB contamination.

Rhode Island - No sale, also because of high PCB levels. For recreationally-caught fish, there is a minimum size limit of 33 inches TL and a creel limit of 1 fish per day. Massachusetts - Minimum size limit of 30 inches TL will increase to 33 inches in 1987. Hook-and-line fishing only, one fish per day, and sale limited to June 1 to October 4. Virginia - Fish must be 24 inches TL in Chesapeake Bay, and 30 inches if caught in coastal waters. Five per day creel limit. The fishery is closed from December 1 to May 31. There are some netting restrictions, mostly in spawning rivers. Maine - Minimum size is 33 inches fork length, two fish a day by hook-and-line only. New Hampshire - No sale, hook-and-line only, maximum of 4 fish a day 28 inches TL, and no more than one a day over 34 inches.

New Jersey - Netting of striped bass is prohibited. Anglers are restricted to 5 fish 24 inches TL or longer per day. Pennsylvania - Hook-and-line fishing only. Minimum size of 26 inches TL will go to 31 inches on January 1. The creel limit is 2 fish a day. Potomac River - Fishing for and sale of striped bass is prohibited between December 1 and May 31. Length and mesh size restrictions on gill nets. Minimum size is 24 inches TL, with a legal limit of 5 per day. North Carolina - The ocean fishery was closed in 1984. In Albemarle Sound, the size limit is 14 inches TL, 16 inches in other inland waters. A creel limit of 3 fish applies everywhere. Hook-and-line-caught fish cannot be sold; others may be sold between November 1 and May 31 only.

#### FISHERIES AGENCY GETS NEW DIRECTOR

On September 22, William E. Evans of Escondido, California was named Assistant Administrator for Fisheries of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Evans will replace William Gordon as the Director of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), making him responsible for overseeing the conservation and management of fishery resources and marine animals in U.S. waters.

Evans has a strong background in both science and administration. He holds a Phd. in biology, and is noted for his research into the effects of acoustics on the behavior of whales, dolphin, sharks and tunas. Most recently, he has served as chairman of the federal Marine Mammal Commission, and as director of Hubbs Marine Research Institute in San

Diego. At a press conference shortly after his appointment, Evans emphasized the importance of conservation in resource management and the need for more research. "Conservation must come first," he said. "Conservation can't be accomplished without long term intensive and extensive research."

Gordon, the outgoing NMFS director who was widely regarded as a fair and even-handed administrator, will remain with the agency at least through the end of the year to assist on several current projects, including legislation to re-authorize the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act and the Administration's proposed federal license for ocean fishermen.

#### STATE COASTAL PROTECTION UPHELD

In the case of a major coal company and the U.S. government versus the State of Delaware's Coastal Zone Act (see MARINE BULLETIN, Nov. 85), a federal court has decided in favor of the state. The decision is a significant one that will be felt nationwide, because it upholds the rights of states to protect their coasts from unreasonable development.

The court ruled against the Norfolk Southern Corporation's petition to build a coal transfer facility in Delaware Bay despite a state coastal zone management law prohibiting offshore transfer operations. Delaware's Coastal Zone Act of 1971, approved and funded under the state/federal Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Program, declares the state's coastal resources to be critical to "the quality of life in the state." Delaware officials, conservationists, and fishermen argued the coal transfer facility would jeopardize the bay's fish and shellfish resources.

A sub-issue in the case was the Department of Commerce taking the side of Norfolk Southern, a move that shocked coastal planners everywhere. The Commerce Department, after all, administers the CZM program and houses the federal ocean and fisheries agencies, NOAA and NMFS. Nonetheless, Commerce determined that increasing coal exports was more important than coastal protection.

The NCMC believes the position taken by the Department of Commerce in this case underscores the deeper problem of forcing resource management and commerce to compete within the same federal agency. Promoting commerce often means giving preference to exploitation over conservation, particularly in the area of marine fisheries. This inherent conflict of interest must be eliminated, and the best way to do that, as we have suggested before, is to remove NOAA, NMFS and the other coastal resource agencies from the Department of Commerce.

#### SWORDFISH STALEMATE

A storm is raging over federal management of Atlantic swordfish, and the following winds may prove strong enough to blow away the clouds and reveal, once and for all, who is serious about conservation, and who is not.

Populations of swordfish in the Atlantic have been overfished and declining since at least 1980, and yet no substantive action has been taken to reverse this trend. The five Regional Fishery Management Councils developing the fishery management plan (FMP) for swordfish finally got the framework for a recovery plan approved in late 1985, but it is only that, a framework. Since then, they have been forced to wrestle with officials in

Washington over virtually every one of the conservation measures they have proposed, from seasonal closures to restrictions on foreign fishing to gear limitations.

The most recent setback, and the most debilitating yet, came when the National Marine Fisheries Service turned down the Councils' proposal for seasonal closures in the swordfish fishery. The closures, which were scheduled to take effect this fall, are intended to reduce the catch of young fish and increase recruitment to the spawning stock. Since the number of large, spawning-age fish is dwindling, and the longline catches are composed of smaller and smaller fish, the closures are considered the core of the management plan.

The current stalemate in swordfish management - the only "management" now in effect is the collection of catch data - places NMFS and the Councils in direct opposition; and not for the first time. NMFS, taking a surprisingly nonchalant attitude about the plight of swordfish, maintains that the recommendations of the Councils are unnecessary and in fact would do more harm than good to the swordfish industry. The Councils, on the other hand, contend that the refusal of NMFS to accept their judgement raises serious questions about the commitment of federal fisheries officials to the Regional Council system. But even more importantly, as far as many observers are concerned, it raises doubts about NMFS's commitment to fishery conservation itself; in this context, the agency's willingness to resist pressures to allow continued exploitation by domestic and foreign fishermen despite strong evidence of overfishing.

What follows is a brief re-cap of the events of consequence during the past year:

-- Last fall, NMFS/NOAA grudgingly approved an Atlantic swordfish plan employing the concept of Variable Season Closures, pending the submission of proposed closure dates for the five Council regions. Early this year, a prohibition on nighttime longlining during the closures was also approved.

-- The South Atlantic Council, on behalf of all five councils, submitted a schedule of closures, shutting down swordfishing for various lengths of time in the waters off New England, in the mid-Atlantic, south Atlantic, off the east coast of Florida, in the Caribbean and in the Gulf of Mexico.

-- In May, the Japan Tuna Association filed suit against NMFS/NOAA/Commerce officials, contesting the ban on all night longlining during the closures as illegal management of tuna fishing.

-- On July 29, the NMFS Southeast Fisheries Center (SEFC) circulated a letter to commercial longliners informing them that NMFS scientists do not agree with the Councils on the need for restrictions on longlining and asserting that the swordfish stocks will increase without management.

-- NOAA chief Anthony Calio, on September 2, announced his decision not to implement swordfish closures this year, based on "comments received" indicating they would result in no net benefit to the fishery while causing economic hardship in the industry.

The Council leadership is vigorously challenging the basis for Calio's conclusions and his subsequent decision to shelve their swordfish plan this year. They continue to stress the critical need for catch reductions, via the closures, immediately.

The extent to which decisions at the Washington level may have been influenced by considerations unrelated to the need for management is, at this point, purely conjecture. But consider the following:

-- Without closures, there will be no restrictions on nighttime longlining, and federal officials won't have to go to court to defend them.

-- The position of NMFS scientists as expressed in the aforementioned SEFC letter is by no means the definitive word on the condition of the swordfish stocks. There is strong scientific support for the Councils' position that a sizeable reduction in catch is needed. Furthermore, fishermen have been advising the Councils that effort has been greatly increased - more hooks, longer trips, etc. - in order to maintain catches. The Councils, in fact, think more stringent measures than those proposed will be warranted in 1987.

-- The letter, which the agency now says it regrets, has damaged the credibility of the Councils among the fishermen they propose to regulate. It also weakens any defense of the plan, in a court law or otherwise.

-- The Councils say the need for the closures was thoroughly documented in the FMP, and that the objections to the closures alluded to by Calio ("comments received") in his briefly-worded decision were considered during the public hearing process and are fully addressed in the FMP document. This would suggest that either NMFS/NOAA is arbitrarily second-guessing the Councils on how to manage swordfish, or there is another, unstated reason for rejecting the closures. Or both.

In light of all this disparity and uncertainty, the NCMC feels that there is sufficient cause for concern that the swordfish may be the victim of political expediency. We are therefore calling on NMFS to provide the Councils and the public with a complete and satisfactory justification of its decision not to implement the swordfish plan.

#### FEDS CONSIDER LIMITED TED REQUIREMENTS

Hundreds of endangered and threatened sea turtles, such as the Kemps ridley and loggerhead, are drowned in shrimp trawls in the south Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico every year. So are billions of juvenile finfish, among them many species important to recreational and commercial fishermen. To add to this carnage, the NCMC, as reported in a previous MARINE BULLETIN (Feb. 86), is urging that all shrimpers be required to install TEDs, trawling efficiency devices designed to keep turtles and unwanted fish out of their nets.

Recently, the federal government, under pressure from conservationists, has finally begun to move on this problem. The National Marine Fisheries Service, which is responsible for protecting sea turtles under the Endangered Species Act, has drafted TED requirements for selected areas based on the incidence of turtle mortality. The South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Councils are also drafting TED requirements for possible inclusion in their shrimp management plans. The Councils, too, are looking at mandatory TED use in selected areas to protect the turtles, especially the most threatened Kemps ridley.

The NCMC is encouraged by this response, but nonetheless will continue to press the case of fishing interests to guarantee that the unacceptable waste of fish in shrimp trawls, as well as the needless killing of turtles, is addressed in the federal action.

## COMMENTARY: THE REEL STORY

Invariably some commercial fishermen, when threatened with restrictions in a fishery they share with recreational fishermen, will depict their industry as a public service, as opposed to a frivolous sport. The professional fisherman, they say, is providing food for a hungry people, while his recreational counterpart is merely having fun.

But good rhetoric alone does not make a good argument. And this one fails because it is grounded on two assumptions, both of which are demonstrably false. These are that recreationally-caught fish make no significant contribution to the national diet, and that eating fish is a necessity, whereas recreation is an expendable luxury.

According to aquatic resources consultant Richard Stroud, Americans consumed 760 million pounds of recreationally-caught fish in 1980; that was 21.2 percent of the total fish consumption that year. When only fresh fish are considered, some estimates are that the angler puts up to two times as much fresh fish on the table as the commercial fisherman.

Whether one chooses fish, fowl, meat or vegetable is, at least in this country, a matter of dietary preference rather than necessity. Adequate amounts of protein are available from a variety of sources. The seafood industry itself acknowledges that consumer demand for fish has remained static over the past 20 years.

As for recreation being unnecessary; well, we suppose so, if you see no value in fresh air, exercise, companionship, relaxation in an uncrowded, natural setting, etc., etc....

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THE NCMC

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No. 21

## MIXED REVIEWS FOR GULF REDFISH PLAN

Purse seiners targeting redfish in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico will be allotted a "controlled harvest" of one million pounds next year, if a plan proposed by Secretary of Commerce Malcolm Baldrige is implemented. That's substantially lower than the estimated 7 to 10 million pounds the netters took in the first half of this year, before the Commerce Department closed the fishery on July 20.

The commercial fishery for large, spawning-sized redfish did not even exist five years ago. In 1982, fishermen using purse seines took 20,000 pounds, less than ten percent of the total catch beyond state waters. But within the brief span of four years, a dozen purse seine vessels were harvesting over 90 percent of an astronomically higher total redfish catch, and would probably have landed 20 million pounds of fish in 1986 if the fishery hadn't been closed by emergency action. Conservationists, needless to say, are relieved that the carnage has been stopped.

The purpose of the redfish plan, says the Secretary, is to prevent "long term damage" to the spawning stock from continued uncontrolled netting - if the damage hasn't already been done, as some fishermen fear - and to assess the size of the stock to determine safe levels of fishing. The nearshore fishery for small fish, one that involves thousands of fishermen from Florida to Texas, is considered overfished, and its recovery depends on a healthy spawning stock offshore.

If, however, protecting the adult spawners is indeed the purpose of the Secretarial Plan, why then are so many people so unhappy with it? The displeasure of the owners of the purse seine vessels is, of course, predictable. No longer can they reap exorbitant profits by harvesting unlimited numbers of big redfish to feed the latest fad in American restaurants, Cajun cooking.

But the states bordering the Gulf are also mad, because they see the proposed federal solution as a direct threat to their own efforts to conserve the traditional fishery in state waters. So is the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, which has primary responsibility for managing fisheries in federal waters of the Gulf and is currently at work on its own management plan to eventually replace the Secretary's interim plan. Council members are outspokenly miffed that their input into the management process has been disregarded by the Secretary.

Both the states and the Council share with thousands of recreational fishermen and nearshore commercial fishermen, who as the historic users of the resource have the most to gain from protective measures, a suspicion

that the ultimate aim of the Secretary's plan is to establish a permanent place for purse seines in the Gulf redfish fishery.

At the root of the dissatisfaction with the Secretarial Plan for redfish are two things that nearly everyone can agree on. First of all, populations of juvenile redfish are overfished; they are currently the object of stringent regulation, including gear restrictions and bag and size limits, by all five Gulf coast states. Secondly, very little is known about the adult spawning stock; except that the nearshore fishery depends entirely upon the offshore breeders to provide new recruits each year.

The two features of the proposed plan that have generated the strongest opposition are the decision to use purse seines to conduct the survey of the spawning stock, allotting them a "scientific quota" of one million pounds of adult redfish, and the intent that federal rules for the fishery in the FCZ will supersede state regulations, regardless of whether or not they are consistent with those regulations.

Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida prohibit the harvest of redfish by purse seine. Each state recognizes that purse seines capable of netting up to 150,000 pounds of breeding-size redfish in a single haul pose a clear threat to the future of the predominately hook-and-line fishery in state waters. The object of the various state conservation programs is to reduce the catch of young fish to permit more of them to escape offshore and grow to spawning size. Allowing any significant harvest of the adult fish would hinder the recovery. Further, permitting that harvest to be prosecuted by purse seines will make state laws designed to prevent seining virtually impossible to enforce.

The Gulf Council supports the states in their opposition to allowing purse seines to catch redfish. The Council also steadfastly opposes the pre-emption of state laws by federal action. The Council has recommended managing redfish in the FCZ consistent with state management, i.e., a minimum size limit and bag limit, while calling on the states to enact even stricter limits to achieve a goal of 20 percent escapement of juveniles from state waters to the offshore population.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), which will direct the stock assessment program as prescribed in the plan, says the use of the big nets is necessary to capture, tag and release, and re-capture enough fish to make a reliable population estimate, and that removing one million pounds next year will not harm the stock. The Gulf Council, on the other hand, questions whether that level is safe or necessary, and favors a fishery-independent study, e.g., using aerial surveys to estimate numbers of fish, which school near the surface.

The Secretarial plan also calls for the fish netted in the NMFS study to be sold, which fuels the suspicion that this particular assessment method was selected in order to keep the commercial market for large redfish open until a regular annual quota for the purse seines can be set. The plan, after all, clearly presumes that the nets will continue to have a prominent place in the fishery; despite state laws against their use, the Gulf Council's intent to outlaw them in its own fishery management plan, and the opinion of many biologists and conservationists in the region that the spawning fish should be left alone to reproduce for the much more valuable nearshore fishery.

The NCMC has gone on record in firm support of the management objectives of the Gulf states and the recommendations of the Gulf Council

on the best way to manage redfish in the Gulf. Specifically, we have urged that regulations for both commercial and recreational fishing in the FCZ be consistent with state regulations, respecting their ongoing efforts to conserve what has traditionally been a state fishery. We find the proposed assessment program inappropriate and the one million pound quota excessive, and recommend further investigation into the feasibility of a fishery-independent study.

In sum, we believe management in the FCZ should complement, not complicate, progressive state conservation laws, such as those now in place for redfish. Federal management should not, as would the proposed Secretarial Plan, create a management situation which undermines those efforts, merely in order to insert a small fleet of highly-efficient purse seine vessels into a fishery that very likely cannot accommodate them without risk.

### CLEANING UP THE "PLAGUE OF PLASTICS" AT SEA

Legislation to control the use of drift gillnets nearly made it through the Senate this year, and prospects are good for passage in the 1987 session, according to a spokesman for the bill's author, Alaskan Senator Ted Stevens. "The Driftnet Impact Monitoring, Assessment, and Control Act of 1986" (S.2611 in the Senate, H.R.5208 in the House) would closely regulate the use of pelagic driftnets by foreign fishermen in U.S. territorial waters, while assessing their impact on marine life. The bill would also direct the U.S. government to develop biodegradable nets to replace the commonly used plastic gillnets and initiate a "bounty" system to encourage retrieval of lost, or "ghost," nets, which can continue to kill for months and perhaps years.

The death toll of millions of non-target fish and other wildlife taken by driftnets, both in normal use or when lost or discarded at sea, has grabbed the attention of the world, as has the larger and more pervasive problem of plastic pollution, of which the nets are thought to be only a small part. Unconscionable numbers of marine mammals, seabirds and fish are dying every year, the result of ingesting or becoming entangled in plastic. The sources are many: the disposal of persistent plastic materials from ships (synthetic fishing gear, including nets and lines, and packing materials); discharges from the plastics industry into rivers and coastal waters; and the discarding of lethal litter, such as plastic bottles, bags, cups and six-pack yokes, by boaters and beachgoers everywhere.

Plastic debris in the ocean is a worldwide problem and demands an international solution. The NCMC is urging the U.S. to lead the way, by enacting legislation such as the driftnet bill mentioned above, which would be a solid first step. Other actions we advocate are:

-- Ratifying Annex V of MARPOL (the 1978 Protocol to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships), which would prohibit the disposal of all plastic materials at sea.

-- Expanding the London Dumping Convention definition of wastes to include ship-generated wastes, in addition to wastes loaded onboard from land-based sources for ocean disposal.

-- Prohibiting U.S. fishermen, under the authority of the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act, from dumping fishing gear at sea. (The U.S. already forbids foreign fishermen from dumping gear in U.S. waters.)

These actions, backed up with dockside enforcement and laws to encourage recycling and the use of more biodegradable materials, would go a long way toward reducing the amount of plastic fouling the marine environment and killing millions of marine animals. But public awareness of the threat from careless dumping of plastics is essential to the success of any efforts to resolve this problem. Media attention on this issue is intensifying, and the NCMC will be doing its part to make sure that the enthusiasm for this cause does not wane.

In the meantime, everyone of us has a responsibility to become part of the solution. All fishermen, boaters, and other recreational users of the ocean must take steps to clean up their own act. Don't leave monofilament fishing line, plastic bait containers and lure boxes on the beach, and don't throw them overboard. Likewise, plastic cups and sandwich bags. As one commercial fishing group now advises its members, paraphrasing the backpackers' motto: "If you pack it out, pack it in."

#### NCMC ASKS NOAA TO EXPLAIN DECISION ON SWORDFISH

The NCMC, in an October 23 letter urging NOAA administrator Anthony Calio to reconsider his decision not to implement swordfish closures in the Atlantic this year, expressed its "grave concern that the present poor condition of the swordfish stocks, caused by overfishing, demands immediate relief through the proposed closures, at the very least, and that more stringent measures may be necessary next year."

The Regional Fishery Management Councils recommended seasonal closures from New England to the Gulf of Mexico as part of the Atlantic Swordfish Fishery Management Plan. The closures in the fishery would decrease the catch of small swordfish, allowing more of them to recruit to the stock of adult fish, which has declined 40 percent since 1978.

In addition to asking Calio to reverse his decision, the NCMC requested that NOAA provide the Regional Councils and the public with a full and detailed legal justification for that decision.

#### REAGAN'S CLEAN WATER VETO "SHORT-SIGHTED"

The newly amended Clean Water Act, the product of four years of dedicated work by Congressmen and conservationists, had more support in Washington than any other single piece of environmental legislation this year. Not one member of Congress, Democrat or Republican, voted against it. The Environmental Protection Agency endorsed it. So did a majority of Americans, in poll and after poll. Nonetheless, the bill died on President Reagan's desk on November 6, the victim of a "pocket veto".

When the President failed to sign the legislation to renew the Clean Water Act, citing the bill's high price tag (\$18 billion), he vetoed several programs which would strengthen the nation's ability to clean up polluted waters and enhance public health and recreation. The law would have required, for the first time, controls on runoff from farms and urban areas, a major source of pollution in many lakes, rivers and coastal estuaries. Other amendments to the Act would initiate new efforts to clean up toxic wastes and protect important estuarine systems. The bill also extends grants to local communities for sewerage treatment through 1994.

Senator John Chafee (R-RI) called the President's veto "short-sighted in view of the environmental needs of the nation." He and other sponsors of the legislation say they will re-introduce it first thing when Congress

convenes in January. The President has, more than likely, only delayed passage of the new clean water law, because if he chooses to veto it a second time, Congress will, with strong public backing, override it.

### U.S. SEEKS INFO ON CARIBBEAN LONGLINING

A year and a half ago the NCMC alerted the U.S. government and the conservation community to the fact that longlining in the Caribbean was rapidly getting out of hand. American swordfishermen, having exhausted stocks off our shores, moved into the Caribbean en masse. Foreign (non-Caribbean) longline fleets have also been hitting the area hard, going after tuna primarily, but reportedly landing tons of swordfish, marlin, sharks and other species, too.

While domestic fishermen are subject to regulation under the Atlantic swordfish and billfish plans, foreign fishermen (in this case, Taiwanese and South Korean) operating outside U.S. waters are beyond U.S. jurisdiction. U.S. concerns are being raised in international forums, such as the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, or ICCAT, and the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute.

The U.S. is also directing its efforts at identifying the participants and establishing the true extent of the fishing going on, which, as we have discovered, is not easy. Recently the National Marine Fisheries Service, investigating longline activity in the Caribbean at the request of the NCMC, reported its preliminary findings. The Taiwanese, says NMFS, are the number one foreign (non-Caribbean) presence, with at least thirty longline vessels currently working the area. The boats are based on the islands of St. Maarten, Aruba and the Dominican Republic. So far, NMFS has been unable to obtain catch estimates from the vessels involved, and will make a formal request to the government of Taiwan to provide an accurate account of the catch from these vessels.

### CEDAR ISLAND

Sometimes a seemingly insignificant event carries weight far beyond its obvious, immediate impact. The proposed commercial development of Cedar Island, a "six-mile long sliver of sand...less than a mile wide" on the Virginia shore, is just such a case.

Cedar Island is an undeveloped barrier island, one of many fragile, dynamic islands that line the Atlantic coast and protect valuable and productive coastal resources, such as salt marshes, from the persistent forces of wind and tide. Cedar Island, like many of Virginia's islands and beaches, borders Chesapeake Bay, the country's largest and richest estuary. The development of Cedar Island could, if it proceeds, lead to the development of other islands and beaches that are supposed to be protected by state law.

At issue is the interpretation of Virginia's Coastal Primary Sand Dune Protection Act of 1980 and how it will serve to protect undeveloped barrier islands from future development. The Virginia Marine Resources Commission has seen fit to grant permits enabling eventual construction of up to 69 houses and support facilities on tiny Cedar Island. Conservationists argue that the heavy construction will damage the delicate but essential dune systems. They point out that because waves regularly wash over the island in numerous places and the island itself is steadily migrating toward the mainland, permanent structures will accelerate erosion. Most importantly, a decision to allow development on Cedar Island could set a dangerous

precedent for further development of the state's barrier islands.

The NCMC supports the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Environmental Defense Fund, and other conservation groups in their battle to deny permits for development of Cedar Island. The nation has, through a series of state and federal laws, acknowledged the paramount importance of protecting coastal barrier systems. We must continue to be vigilant in upholding these laws.

**Briefly Noted:**

NCMC executive director KEN HINMAN will serve on an AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY panel studying ways to consolidate federal fisheries conservation and management responsibilities into a single, resource-oriented agency....NEW JERSEY has proposed banning the sale of STRIPED BASS and raising the recreational size limit to 33 inches next year, in order to comply with the Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act....Fishing for REDFISH is now outlawed in FLORIDA state waters for the remainder of the current fishing season (until February 1987), according to that state's Marine Fisheries Commission....After years of stubbornly refusing to recognize eastern Pacific island nations' claims to tuna within their 200 mile limits, the U.S. State Department and the tuna industry have finally agreed to pay for the privilege of fishing in their waters in a five-year, \$120 million dollar deal. The negotiations which led to the TUNA TREATY with 16 countries in the south Pacific were initiated after the seizure of U.S. vessels by Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands several years ago, but national security considerations played an important role in hastening the agreement after the Soviets began making overtures for fishing rights in the region.

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THE NCMC

# MARINE BULLETIN

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## BILLFISH BREAKTHROUGH AT ICCAT

In a "major breakthrough" on the international fisheries scene, ICCAT has for the first time taken steps to conserve marlin and sailfish. The thirteen member nations of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, meeting in annual session November 12-18 in Madrid, Spain, voted to initiate a billfish research program aimed at improving the information base and minimizing the number of fish hooked by longline vessels.

In other action, ICCAT moved toward convening an annual swordfish working group beginning in 1987, and extended its bluefin tuna conservation program for a fifth year.

The billfish initiative is the direct result of U.S. efforts to bring billfish issues to the attention of the international community, and to utilize the resources of ICCAT nations in gathering biological data and information on billfish catch rates Atlantic-wide. The paucity of information on billfish stocks and fishing mortality is a real cause for concern, especially in light of the increased longline activity in areas such as the Caribbean Sea, where there is a high concentration of billfish and other pelagic species. Unilateral efforts to manage and conserve billfish stocks (such as the developing U.S. management plan) are extremely difficult without this information.

The 1986 ICCAT action is significant in that it represents the first time that concern for billfish conservation has been translated into a cooperative international effort. "In the fifteen-year history of ICCAT, although the treaty convention specifies responsibility for billfish science, the organization has never given more than passing recognition that billfish even existed," observes the NCMC's Frank Carlton, an advisor to the U.S. at ICCAT. "The convening of an annual billfish workshop at ICCAT and the new-research initiative constitute a major breakthrough in international billfish management, analagous to the first sub-four-minute mile in track and field." Many individuals contributed to this breakthrough, but just as one person broke the four-minute barrier in the mile, Carlton singles out Barbara Rothschild of the National Marine Fisheries Service for a big share of the credit in convincing ICCAT to allocate funds for the billfish program.

The organization is committing what might appear to be a modest amount of money, \$10,000 for 1987, contingent upon another \$25,000 being raised from private sources. But the Atlantic billfish fishery is, after all, primarily a U.S. recreational fishery, and it is therefore no mean accomplishment to enlist the active participation of other national

governments. By itself, recognition of the need for the international community to work together to obtain better data on billfish, and in particular to monitor the incidental catch by longlines, represents a substantial achievement.

The ICCAT billfish program identifies three priorities: improved data collection, an expanded tagging program, and age and growth studies. The most critical area for extensive catch-and-effort studies will be the Caribbean, where ICCAT-sanctioned observers will be placed aboard longline vessels fishing in international waters. The observer program is, without a doubt, the biggest coup for conservationists. Besides keeping tabs on the longline catch, the observers will also engage in tagging fish caught on the longlines, which necessitates buying the fish from the vessel owners. ICCAT funds will also be spent on expanding the angler-assisted tagging program and offering rewards for recaptures.

The prospect of setting up a permanent swordfish working group at ICCAT next year is also viewed as a major achievement. Swordfish have, like marlin and sailfish, been largely ignored at ICCAT. However, alarming declines experienced by fishermen and documented by scientists in both the eastern and western Atlantic have underscored the need for international cooperation.

The U.S. delegation entered into the record a formal statement expressing its grave concern for the condition of swordfish stocks and the need for ICCAT to gather "the most complete information possible" to assist domestic management efforts (already underway in the U.S.) and possible future action by the international body. "The crux of our concern is that we find ourselves with declining catches of large fish in certain areas at the same time that the catch of small fish is increasing," the U.S. statement read. "The long-term interpretation of these simultaneous events will be crucial to future management."

It is imperative that scientists from each ICCAT nation involved in the swordfish fishery, directly or indirectly (i.e., though by-catch), participate in the sharing of data. Perhaps the biggest plus for the U.S. will be gaining access to Japanese and Korean catch statistics. Both countries, but particularly the Japanese, have a long history of catching swordfish everywhere in the Atlantic. The catch, effort and size frequency data from these two fisheries is especially crucial to assessing stock size, mortality rates, stock production and yield.

For the Atlantic bluefin tuna fishery, the object of a major ICCAT conservation effort since 1982, the commissioners approved a one-year extension of the present restrictions. These include a quota of 2,660 metric tons for the western Atlantic stock, and a prohibition on fishing for bluefin in the Gulf of Mexico spawning grounds. The U.S. pushed once again for a multi-year extension, arguing that even gradually increasing the quota at any time during the next several years would slow the recovery to an unacceptable pace. The Japanese, on the other hand, believe the current assessment underestimates stock abundance and want to reconsider the catch levels at the 1987 meeting.

The NCMC supports the U.S. position of maintaining the current ICCAT conservation measures, at least through 1990, and longer if future stock assessments warrant it. Bluefin populations, depleted to such a dangerously low point by decades of overfishing, must be given a substantial period of relief before fishing pressure is permitted to increase.

Tournament fishing is everywhere on the rise. Rapid population growth and economic development along the coast has brought a corresponding increase in the number of salt water fishing tournaments. These tournaments target a wide variety of popular game fish, and many are using the lure of thousands of dollars in prize money to attract anglers.

The potential impact of this development on finite fish resources is cause for serious concern among conservation-minded fishermen. Despite an encouraging trend toward release tournaments for sailfish, marlin, tarpon and a few other species, most tournaments still score on the basis of dead weight put on the dock, thereby encouraging participants to kill fish they might otherwise release. Moreover, they direct effort to the most popular species among anglers, many of which are already overexploited (e.g., king mackerel and red drum).

Tournaments have a responsibility to do their part to conserve the resources from which they benefit. The organizers of salt water fishing tournaments must first make themselves aware of the condition of the stocks of fish they are exploiting, and of game fish stocks in general, and conduct their tournaments according to those realities.

The NCMC strongly encourages every fishing tournament, regardless of locale or species targeted, to take several fundamental steps to promote conservation. We recommend that each tournament (if it has not done so already):

1. Revise tournament rules to reduce the needless killing of fish. The type of tournament will determine what kind of conservative fishing practices are most appropriate, but they run the gamut from adopting an all-release format to some kind of modified release system. For example, threatened or non-food fish should be released alive. Awards should be given for released fish at least comparable to those awarded for boated fish. Minimum size limits may be imposed, with substantial penalties for undersize fish. And so on.

2. Use the tournament to assist in fisheries data collection and scientific research. Anglers should be encouraged to tag fish they release, with tagging kits made available to participants. State and/or federal fisheries agents should be provided access to tournament-caught fish for sampling purposes, and final catch-and-effort statistics supplied to the appropriate management authorities.

3. Raise funds for conservation and research activities. A portion of the proceeds from tournaments should be donated to private conservation groups working to protect the fish and their habitat, and to state agencies in support of fishery studies, artificial reef construction, and improved access.

4. Finally, publicize all tournament-related conservation activities. Press releases before and after the event should emphasize those things the tournament is doing (such as those recommended above) to conserve the fisheries and preserve the sport of fishing for the future.

#### SALMON CONFERENCE SLATED FOR FALL '87

Exploring ways to improve the management of Atlantic salmon, a species whose marathon migrations from freshwater rivers to the high seas and back

again are legend, will be the subject of an international conference to be held in Portland, Maine on October 27-29, 1987. The NCMC is joining with the Atlantic Salmon Federation, Trout Unlimited, the Sport Fishing Institute, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service and others in co-sponsoring this timely international event.

The Atlantic salmon is native to the rivers of northeastern United States, Canada and northern Europe. Once known as "king of the game fish," Salmo salar virtually disappeared from the rivers of New England due to overfishing and dam building. The salmon has declined precipitously everywhere in its range and is today the object of intensive national and international conservation efforts to restore the species to its former abundance.

At the three-day symposium, speakers from the U.S., Canada, and a number of European countries will evaluate current scientific knowledge relative to how well it meets specific salmon management needs; identify gaps in present knowledge and suggest what is required to fill those gaps; review conservation and management practices, with emphasis on salmon restoration; and critically assess various national and international management strategies. The ultimate objective of this international Atlantic salmon symposium will be to develop proposals to maximize conservation and management efforts on a cooperative, Atlantic-wide basis.

For more information on the salmon symposium, write: SALMON, c/o NCMC, P.O. Box 23298, Savannah, GA 31403.

#### NOAA STUDY REVISITED

The task force responsible for the NOAA Fishery Management Study, with its sweeping recommendations for re-structuring the federal fisheries management system (see MARINE BULLETIN, Aug. 1986), has released an addendum to the study in response to initial public reaction.

The supplementary report basically affirms the original study recommendations, with only minor changes. Among the latter, the 11-member panel withdrew their proposal that two Regional Councils, the Western Pacific and the Caribbean, be eliminated. The NCMC and other commenters had objected on the grounds that it would deny effective participation of island residents in federal decisions regarding fish resources off their shores.

The bulk of the study addendum is devoted to clarifying the intent of the authors in proposing a separation of conservation and allocation decisions, easily their most radical recommendation and the one drawing the most comment, favorable and unfavorable, from the public. The authors acknowledge that "separating conservation and allocation processes does not eliminate politics from fishery management," but reasserted their belief that "better decisions come from performing each separately" because "it helps assure the integrity of one process vis a vis the other."

The NCMC has endorsed the study's proposal to separate the two functions in the management process for precisely this reason, but questions the ability of NOAA (the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which houses the National Marine Fisheries Service), as the proposed conservation decision-maker, to resist the political pressures the study correctly finds so detrimental to conservation. In commenting on the addendum, the NCMC reiterated these concerns, citing NOAA's performance in

overseeing the management of king mackerel, redbfish and Atlantic swordfish. In recent actions, the NCMC noted, the federal agency has been guilty of inexplicable administrative delays in responding to Council requests for action, arrogant disregard for the advice of the Councils and state governments, and using the plan approval process to second-guess legitimate management decisions made by the Councils - all at the expense of conservation.

The NCMC, therefore, focused its comments on recommending changes that would create a more resource-oriented environment for NOAA, where conservation would be given the highest priority and user-oriented decisions would be minimized, and urged the study panel to include these recommendations in their final report. The changes the NCMC recommended are: 1) Reorganize the federal structure by removing NOAA from the Department of Commerce and combining it with the fisheries responsibilities of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in a separate "fisheries" agency; 2) More narrowly define the role of the National Marine Fisheries Service to concentrate on fishery research, data collection, enforcement and habitat protection; and 3) Give the Regional Councils greater leeway in developing allocation formulas and regulatory measures.

#### CARIBBEANS VOICE CONCERN OVER LONGLINES

The impact of longlining on pelagic resources in the Caribbean was a hot topic at the annual meeting of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute in November. Representatives from 22 countries in the Caribbean Basin met in Hamilton, Bermuda to discuss issues affecting the management of shared fishery resources, and expressed a tremendous amount of concern about increasing foreign-based longline activity in the area.

Previous issues of the MARINE BULLETIN have described this activity, as well as NCMC efforts to identify the longliners and the extent and composition of their catch. We do know that more than 100 American swordfish boats now operate in the region. At the GCFI meeting, there was widespread concern that U.S. longliners, having overfished swordfish closer to home, have now moved into the Caribbean to devastate the stocks there. Fisheries ministers from the eastern Caribbean complained that they were getting very little information from the U.S. In addition, the U.S. by-catch (dolphin, tuna, some marlin) is being sold in local markets, driving prices down and hurting native fishermen, who are unable to compete with the high-tech longlines.

Still, the Caribbeans are even more disturbed about the Asian-flag vessels, such as those from Taiwan and Korea, who are actively pursuing tuna and whatever other pelagic species - blue and white marlin, dolphin, wahoo, etc. - the longlines raise. (The Asians typically fish 24-hours a day for tunas and thus get a larger by-catch of day-time feeding billfish than the U.S. boats, which set their lines at night for swordfish.) Information on their activities is very sketchy. The chief concern is their impact on recreational fishing, which is a centerpiece of tourism and an important factor in developing island economies. This year the Caribbean Fishery Management Council has already heard reports of lower sportfishing catches and smaller fish from Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The GCFI, a non-governmental body with no enforcement powers, emphasizes the importance of an international approach to the regional issues, and plans to serve as a forum for coordinating further investigation of the longlining problem and possible solutions.

COMMENTARY - PREEMPTION: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE DIFFERENCE

From the standpoint of conservation, federal preemption of a state's right to manage fisheries in its territorial waters is not one of those things that is good or bad in all cases (as if there were any). Like the little girl in the nursery rhyme, when preemption is good, it can be very good, but when it is bad, it is horrid.

When the U.S. Congress stepped into the breach two years ago and enacted legislation to compel a dozen east coast states to adopt uniform fishing regulations for striped bass, conservationists gave a collective cheer. But when the National Marine Fisheries Service recently announced that the federal management plan for redfish in the Gulf of Mexico would preempt state redfish laws, the decision was greeted with a chorus of boos.

What's the difference? Plenty. First of all, the striped bass regulations that Congress enforced were not its own, but those voluntarily agreed upon by an interstate commission made up of officials from every Atlantic coast state. In effect, Congress was forcing the states to do what they wanted, but didn't have the nerve, to do.

The more important difference, though, is that the federal action with regard to striped bass came because the survival of the species was threatened by inaction on the part of certain states. All five Gulf states, on the other hand, had already implemented strict conservation measures to protect redfish, including bans on purse seines, when the feds entered the picture. So the NMFS action, by permitting commercial fishermen to use purse seines in federal waters, not only undermines state authority, it undermines the cause of conservation.

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THE NCMC

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## A CALL FOR STRONG LEADERSHIP

In many ways, 1986 was a year like any other, with notable successes and failures, progress in some areas and backsliding in others. But 1986 was also unique in that the key events of the year, more than any other in recent memory, placed in bold relief what is lacking most in federal fishery conservation and management: the will to make the tough choices and put the long-term health of the resource first.

Decisions this past year affecting several major U.S. fisheries (king mackerel, swordfish, redfish, billfish) demonstrated an almost institutionalized aversion to taking conservative action to protect these fish from overexploitation. And yet the capacity for conservative action certainly exists. After all, we have reached a point in the evolution of fishery management where the basic principles of resource conservation are widely accepted and indeed are incorporated into national law and policy. The institutions to implement these laws and policies (NMFS, the Councils) are by now well-established. Still, the system fails as often as it succeeds. Why?

A special blue-ribbon panel attempted to answer that question this year, and their report called for a major reordering of federal management responsibilities. The problem, they said, was the direct conflict within the decision-making process between the broader goal of conservation and the immediate (economic) interests of certain users. They hit the nail right on the head, and some structural changes in the system are absolutely necessary. However, it seems equally true that restructuring the system alone will not solve what is a deeper problem.

The real problem, as we see it, is that those ultimately responsible for fishery management, by and large, have not yet resolved to do the job Congress intended them to do in enacting the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act ten years ago. That job is to prevent harm to the resource before it occurs, not after. It requires that we replace hindsight with foresight, and think in the long-term rather than the short. It means taking the initiative, seizing opportunities, and making the hard choices that, inevitably, will demand sacrifice on the part of the present generation of fishermen.

Too many appointed officials, it seems to us, simply don't want to be held accountable for these kinds of decisions, which are bound to be unpopular in some well-connected circles. And the only way this attitude is going to change is if the leadership at the top - in Washington - wants it to. Fishery managers at every level have a mandate from the people to protect the resource for the many rather than the special interests of a few. If our leaders are not willing to make sure that mandate is carried out, then the public has a right to demand whatever changes are necessary to see that it is.

Billfish Conservation

**U.S. Plan.** After making heady progress in 1985 toward formulating a billfish plan that would protect marlin and sailfish from increased longlining and the threat of an expanding domestic commercial market, the Regional Councils ran into a brick wall in 1986. One of the five Atlantic Councils involved, representing New England, stymied the other four by refusing to accept the proposed plan's no sale/no commercial possession measures. That Council has taken the position of longliners in New England, where the catch of marlin is comparatively minor, who nevertheless object to being told they can't sell or keep the few fish they do catch. Devising separate rules for one region, though, would jeopardize the enforceability and probably the legality of the ban on the sale and commercial possession of billfish throughout the remainder of the species' range, where it is needed most. The no sale provision, along with a proposed cap on foreign longline by-catch, is central to the plan's objective of preventing a future decline in billfish stocks. In an effort to break this impasse, the Mid-Atlantic, South Atlantic, Gulf and Caribbean Councils have asked the Secretary of Commerce to remove New England from the plan development process, on the basis of that region's limited interest in billfish. The NCMC supports this request.

**International Efforts.** Surprisingly, billfish fared much better on the international scene. The NCMC was the first U.S. organization to voice concern over the threat of new longlining activities in international waters of the eastern Caribbean, an area where billfish and other migratory species concentrate and are especially vulnerable to intensive commercial fishing operations. We brought the issue to the attention of fishery and State Department officials in Washington, urging them to seek information on the participants in the fishery (primarily Asian-flag vessels) and the extent of their impact on fish stocks. During 1986, because of these and other U.S. initiatives, outstanding progress was made in getting the international community active in billfish conservation, with emphasis on the Caribbean region. Twenty-two nations bordering the Caribbean met in Bermuda in the fall to discuss a regional response to the situation, while on the other side of the Atlantic, the Madrid-based International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas approved a U.S. proposal for a long-term billfish research program. The precedent-setting ICCAT program (the first billfish action the commission has taken) will include monitoring Caribbean longline activity with onboard observers, tagging and port sampling studies.

**Marlin Trophy.** The NCMC announced it will, as part of its longstanding support for scientific tagging studies, award an annual trophy beginning in 1987 to the fishing captain who tags and releases the most blue marlin for the NMFS Cooperative Game Fish Research Program.

Redfish Reprieve

A disaster in the Gulf of Mexico was narrowly averted, but we aren't out of the woods yet. A small number of fishing vessels using purse seines caught anywhere from 7 to 20 million pounds of redfish in the Gulf in the first half of 1986. They could have taken much more, and doubtless would have, had it not been for the outcry of conservationists determined to protect the offshore brood stock from further decimation. The National Marine Fisheries Service enacted emergency regulations to limit the purse seine harvest, but allowed the netters to grab another one million pounds.

Inexplicably, the agency was ready and willing to allow netting to continue into 1987, albeit at a reduced level, without knowing what damage had already been done to the redfish spawning population or what effect more netting might have. The Gulf Council, the Gulf coast states and conservation groups banded together to insist on a zero quota for the netters while studies are undertaken to gauge the condition of the stock. By the time the Secretarial Plan for redfish took effect on December 23, it was a more conservative plan than originally proposed - no directed commercial fishery for redfish in federal waters and a bag limit of one fish per angler per trip - but the issue of whether purse seining will be allowed in federal waters in 1988, when it is outlawed by every Gulf state, has yet to be resolved.

### Marine Debris

The world sat up and took notice in 1986 of the astonishing amount of persistent plastic garbage being dumped into the ocean each year, and the terrible destruction of marine life it is causing. The NCMC, since the April 1985 MARINE BULLETIN featured a cover story on the threat of plastic pollution, has worked to educate public officials on the extent of the problem, and supported legislation and international action to combat it. Two bills introduced in Congress this year seek to regulate the discharge and/or disposal of non-biodegradable debris into rivers and coastal waters. On the global front, conservation groups, the NCMC among them, are urging the U.S. to ratify MARPOL, an international treaty to prohibit the dumping of plastics (including fishing gear) on the high seas.

### Dueling Over Swordfish

The Regional Councils have long accused the National Marine Fisheries Service of second-guessing their management recommendations during the Washington plan review process, and with swordfish in 1986 NMFS plainly did just that. When the five Atlantic Councils resubmitted their joint swordfish plan in June setting fall closure dates to reduce the harvest of young fish and hasten rebuilding of the adult population, NMFS turned them down, never mind that the agency had earlier okayed the plan's closure procedure. And because a previously approved ban on nighttime longlining would only take effect during the closures, the NMFS decision means that fishing for the overfished broadbill is still unregulated.

At the root of the conflict between the Councils and NMFS is their disagreement on the severity of the condition of the swordfish stocks. The NMFS analysis paints a much rosier picture than what the Council (and other independent) scientists see. NMFS scientists even went so far as to send a letter to swordfishermen telling them the stocks were not overfished and, by implication, that management is unwarranted. (NMFS later admitted sending the letter was a mistake, and issued a weak retraction several months later.) The Councils, on the other hand, point out that fishermen continue to catch smaller and smaller fish, that they must go farther afield for longer periods of time and use longer lines with more hooks in order to maintain catches. U.S. fishermen, in other words, have responded to serious concerns about the state of the fishery by applying more effort and greater efficiency. This, the Councils assert, makes management critical, and they are prepared to recommend even stricter measures in 1987.

These differences aside, the more fundamental issue is that it is not the role of NMFS to substitute its judgement for that of the five Councils. Swordfish conservation was evidently rejected for reasons other than those

justifiable under the Magnuson Act, i.e., compliance with National Standards and other applicable federal law. Suspecting this to be the case, the Councils made a formal request for a detailed explanation of the NMFS decision. Preliminary indications are that the NMFS decision was influenced by a pending lawsuit filed by the Japanese over the nighttime longlining ban, complaints about the ban from U.S. tuna longliners in the Gulf of Mexico, and the reluctance of NMFS to defend swordfish conservation in the face of these challenges.

### Multi-Jurisdictional Fisheries Management

The NCMC's 1986 Marine Recreational Fisheries Symposium was devoted to examining current problems and deficiencies in marine fisheries management which result from the migrations of oceanic fish across political (state, federal and international) boundaries, and thus involving multiple jurisdictions in management. The conference, entitled "Fish Know No Boundaries," attracted 140 leaders from the fisheries community to hear presentations on the legal and institutional realities managers must deal with, case studies of problem fisheries such as king mackerel, striped bass, and tuna and billfish, and to discuss ways to improve interstate, state/federal and national interactions on behalf of fishery conservation and management. The complete proceedings of the symposium will be published in the spring of 1987. Announcement will be made in the MARINE BULLETIN.

### Legislative Summary

**Striped Bass.** The 99th Congress extended for another two years a law requiring Atlantic coast states to protect future spawning populations of the endangered striped bass, or face a federally-imposed fishing moratorium. Another below-average year for striper reproduction in Chesapeake Bay underscored the continuing need for strict regulation of fishing throughout the coastal range of the fish, and the NCMC applauds Congress for renewing the national commitment to the long-term striped bass restoration effort.

**Clean Water.** Congress unanimously passed an improved Clean Water Act, backed by the NCMC, containing several new features important to marine water quality. Chief among these are first-time-ever controls of pollution from runoff; a comprehensive program to protect important estuaries; and expanded toxic waste clean up. Unfortunately, President Reagan vetoed the bill because of its cost. The 100th Congress, unwilling to put a price tag on the value of clean water, will approve the bill again early in 1987 and easily override another veto, if necessary.

**Magnuson Act.** A slew of amendments proposed for the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act in 1986 was whittled down to just a few, as Congress backed off making any substantive changes to the federal management system this year. Happily, one amendment that the NCMC has advocated since 1984 was adopted. Federal consideration of fish habitat is now a required part of all fisheries management plans developed and implemented by the Regional Councils and the National Marine Fisheries Service.

**Tuna Convention.** The Atlantic Tunas Convention Act was renewed, sanctioning the United States' continued participation in the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas. The NCMC supported the extension, but in its testimony emphasized the need for Congress to reaffirm and strengthen the 1980 amendment to the law requiring 100%

observer coverage of foreign tuna longliners fishing in U.S. waters. The U.S. has been quietly abandoning its observer fishing program, and the NCMC urged Congress to make foreign tuna fishing permits valid only when an authorized U.S. observer is aboard.

**Drift Gillnets.** A first step toward controlling the unregulated use of destructive drift gillnets was taken in the form of legislation introduced into both houses of Congress in 1986. The bill would place observers on foreign vessels using driftnets in U.S. waters (namely, Japanese salmon fishing vessels in the northeastern Pacific) in order to monitor the impact of the nets on non-target fish and other marine life. A bounty system for recovering lost or "ghost" nets would be established, as would a system for marking nets to identify owners. In addition, the bill would direct the U.S. government to develop a biodegradable alternative to the persistent monofilament nets. The NCMC, long at the forefront of the campaign to control gillnets, strongly endorsed this legislation.

**Coastal Protection.** The Coastal Zone Management Act, which sets national standards and gives assistance to voluntary state programs to protect valuable coastal resources, was reauthorized for five years in spite of Administration attempts to kill it. New CZMA provisions include an expanded estuarine research program and stronger incentives for states to make significant progress in coastal management.

**Fisheries Budget.** Once again, the Congress successfully resisted the President's attempts to make deep cuts in federal fishery programs. Conservation, management and research programs conducted by the National Marine Fisheries Service were maintained at current funding levels, as were enforcement and boating safety programs carried out by the Coast Guard.

### King Mackerel

1985 ended with the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Councils sending the Secretary of Commerce an urgent request for emergency action to head off a collapse in the Gulf king mackerel fishery. Washington did not act on that request until March of 1986, but by then the damage the Councils sought to prevent had already occurred; the commercial harvest of kings exceeded by at least two times the amount allotted under the reduced quota.

The NCMC joined with outraged Council members and other conservation interests in demanding a full disclosure of why the agency took three months to act on the emergency quota reduction. Under pressure, NOAA appointed a special task force to investigate. At the close of 1986, that report was still forthcoming, but reliable sources say the findings will show that the fisheries establishment in Washington went out of its way, using every bureaucratic device and legal technicality at its disposal, to avoid closing the mackerel fishery in mid-season.

### NOAA Management Study

A panel commissioned by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to study U.S. fishery management released its report in June, and set in motion a broad public debate on what, if any, administrative and legislative changes are necessary to improve the present system. The panel's most controversial recommendation involved restricting the Regional Councils to allocating available fish stocks among fishermen and gear types, while giving the responsibility for setting total allowable catch levels to the National Marine Fisheries Service. Though the NCMC

endorsed the concept of separating the allocation and conservation decisions in order to de-politicize fishery conservation, NMFS conduct during the course of the year amply demonstrated why that agency is no more (and may be less) immune to special interest pressures than the councils (see king mackerel, redfish and swordfish above). As 1986 came to an end, the administration was still pondering a package of legislative proposals based on the study recommendations for possible introduction to Congress.

### Salmon

**Atlantic.** The U.S. achieved a great success at NASCO, the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization, this year. The Canadians agreed to shorten their fall commercial fishing season in order to reduce the interception of salmon originating in U.S. rivers by 25 percent. This action should bolster ongoing U.S. efforts to restore salmon to the rivers of New England. The NCMC has been involved in the NASCO negotiations since the organization's inception three years ago, principally through the work of commissioner Frank Carlton, NCMC past-president.

**Pacific.** The NCMC published the proceedings of the 10th MRF Symposium, on Pacific Salmon, with financial support from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service. "Recreational Uses, Production and Management of Anadromous Pacific Salmonids" (hardcover, 213-pages, \$15.00) examines the needs of the salmon resources of the northwest and the issues relative to the use and enhancement of these resources from a recreational perspective. Copies are available from the NCMC.

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