



Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

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P. Weston Townsend, Chairman | Michael P. Luisi, Vice Chairman

Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director

July 31, 2024

Mr. Randy Blankinship
Chief, HMS Management Division
NOAA Fisheries
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Via email: randy.blankinship@noaa.gov

Dear Randy:

On behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, I am writing to express support of NOAA Fisheries' initiative to explore a proposed rule on gear considerations in Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fisheries.

The scoping document released for public comment is an important step in reassessing the current gear-specific management measures, which have been in place since 1999. While these measures have successfully contributed to fishery management and conservation goals, the evolving dynamics of species distributions, fishing gears, techniques, market conditions, and fishing interests necessitate a thorough reevaluation.

Engaging stakeholders through scoping meetings and soliciting public comments is a commendable approach to ensuring that the updated measures reflect the current realities and continue to meet conservation and management objectives effectively. We look forward to seeing future rulemaking on this topic and a potential presentation at a future Council meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Moore".

Dr. Christopher M. Moore
Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Cc: K. Brewster-Geisz, G. DuBeck, S. Durkee, B. Curtis