

Commerce, in consultation with the Secretary of State, shall appoint a "General Advisory Committee" to advise the U.S. delegation to the IATTC. The GAC shall be composed of no more than 25 individuals who shall be representative of the various groups concerned with the fisheries covered by the IATTC, including non-governmental conservation organizations, providing an equitable balance among such groups to the maximum extent practicable. Members of the GAC shall be invited to attend all non-executive meetings of the U.S. delegation to the IATTC and at such meetings shall be given the opportunity to examine and be heard on all proposed programs of investigation, reports, recommendations, and regulations of the Commission.

The Chair of the Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Pacific Council) Advisory Subpanel for Highly Migratory Fisheries and the Chair of the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Western Pacific Council) Advisory Committee shall be ex-officio members of the GAC by virtue of their positions advising those Councils. GAC members will be eligible to participate as members of the U.S. delegation to the Commission and its working groups to the extent that the Commission rules and space for delegations allow.

Meetings of the GAC, except when in executive session, shall be open to the public, and prior notice of meetings shall be made public in timely fashion. In accordance with Public Law 114-81, the GAC shall not be subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. app.).

Individuals appointed to serve as a member of the GAC shall serve without pay. While away from their homes or regular places of business to attend meetings of the GAC, they shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in the same manner as persons employed intermittently by the Federal Government are allowed expenses under 5 U.S.C. 5703. In addition, individuals appointed to serve as a member of the GAC shall not be considered Federal employees except for the purposes of injury compensation or tort.

Scientific Advisory Subcommittee

The TCA also provides that the Secretary of Commerce, in consultation with the Secretary of State, shall appoint persons to serve on the subcommittee of the GAC, referred to here as the "Scientific Advisory Subcommittee." The SAS shall be composed of no fewer than 5 and no more than 15 qualified scientists with

balanced representation from the public and private sectors, including non-governmental conservation organizations. In determining whether a person is a qualified scientist the Secretary may consider, among other things, advanced degrees and/or publications in fields such as fisheries or marine science.

National Scientific Advisory Committee

The SAS shall also function as the National Scientific Advisory Committee which is required to be established pursuant to Article XI of the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP). In this regard, the SAS shall perform the functions of the National Scientific Advisory Committee as specified in Annex VI of the AIDCP. These functions include, but are not limited to: (1) Receiving and reviewing relevant data, including data provided to NMFS by IATTC staff; (2) Advising and recommending measures and actions to the U.S. Government that should be undertaken to conserve and manage stocks of living marine resources in the eastern Pacific Ocean; (3) Making recommendations to the U.S. Government regarding research needs related to the eastern Pacific Ocean tuna purse seine fishery; (4) Promoting the regular and timely full exchange of data among the AIDCP Parties on a variety of matters related to the implementation of the AIDCP; and (5) Consulting with other experts, as necessary, in order to achieve the objectives of the AIDCP.

Members of the SAS/National Scientific Advisory Committee shall receive no compensation for their service.

General Provisions

Each member of the GAC shall be appointed for a term of 3 years, starting from the date of the appointment, and may be reappointed. The Secretary of Commerce and the Secretary of State shall provide the GAC with relevant information concerning fisheries and international fishery agreements. The Secretary of Commerce shall provide to the GAC such administrative and technical support services that are necessary for its effective functioning in a timely manner.

Procedures for Submitting Applications

Applications for the GAC and the SAS/National Scientific Advisory Committee should be submitted to NMFS West Coast Region (see **ADDRESSES**). This request for applications is for first time nominees, current members whose appointments will end in May 2025, and previous

members. Self-nomination applications are acceptable. Applications should include all of the following information: (1) Full name, address (home and business, if different), telephone, and email address of nominee;

(2) Specification about whether the application is for the GAC or the SAS/National Scientific Advisory Committee or both; (3) Nominee's organization(s) or professional affiliation(s) serving as the basis for the nomination; (4) Background statement describing the nominee's qualifications and experience, especially as related to fisheries for tuna and tuna-like species in the eastern Pacific Ocean or other factors relevant to the implementation of the Convention Establishing the IATTC or the AIDCP. Applications to the SAS should highlight advanced degrees and academic publications; and (5) A written statement from the nominee of intent to participate actively and in good faith in the meetings and activities of either the GAC or the SAS/National Scientific Advisory Committee, or both.

Applicants who submitted material in response to the **Federal Register** notice published by NMFS on October 30, 2018 (83 FR 54573), or prior, should resubmit their applications pursuant to this notice.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 951 *et seq.*

Dated: November 13, 2024.

Karen H. Abrams,
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XE476]

Western Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of public meetings.

SUMMARY: The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold its American Samoa Archipelago Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) Advisory Panel (AP), Non-Commercial Fisheries Advisory Committee (NCFAC), Mariana Archipelago FEP Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) AP, Fishing Industry Advisory Committee (FIAC), Hawaii Archipelago FEP AP, and the Mariana Archipelago FEP Guam

AP to discuss and make recommendations on fishery management issues in the Western Pacific Region.

DATES: The meetings will be held between December 3 and December 7, 2024. For specific times and agendas, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**.

ADDRESSES: The meetings will be held at different locations. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific locations. Instructions for connecting to the web conference and providing oral public comments will be posted on the Council website at www.wpcouncil.org. For assistance with the web conference connection, contact the Council office at (808) 522-8220.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Contact Kitty M. Simonds, Executive Director, Western Pacific Fishery Management Council; phone: (808) 522-8220.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Meeting Locations

The Council will hold its American Samoa Archipelago FEP AP, NCFAC, Mariana Archipelago FEP CNMI AP, FIAC, Hawaii Archipelago FEP AP, and the Mariana Archipelago FEP Guam AP meetings in a hybrid format with in-person and remote participation (Webex) options available for the members and the public. In-person attendance for the American Samoa Archipelago FEP AP members and public will be hosted at the Tedi of Samoa Suite 208B, P8C6+V2F, Fagotogo Village, AS 96799. In-person attendance for the NCFAC and public will be hosted at the Council office, 1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1400, Honolulu, HI 96813. In-person attendance for Mariana Archipelago FEP CNMI AP members and public will be hosted at BRI Building Suite 205, Kopa Di Oru St., Garapan, Saipan 96950. In person attendance for FIAC and Hawaii Archipelago FEP AP members and public will be hosted at the Council office, 1164 Bishop Street, Suite 1400, Honolulu, HI 96813. In-person attendance for Mariana Archipelago FEP Guam AP members and public will be hosted at Cliff Pointe, 304 W O'Brien Drive, Hagatña, GU 96910.

The American Samoa FEP AP will meet on Tuesday, December 3, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. (Samoa Standard Time); the NCFAC will meet on Wednesday, December 4, 2024 from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Hawaii Standard Time[HST]); the Mariana Archipelago FEP CNMI AP will meet on Thursday, December 5, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. (Chamorro Standard Time [ChST]); the FIAC will meet on Thursday, December 5, from 2 p.m. to

5 p.m. (HST); the Hawaii Archipelago FEP AP will meet on Friday, December 6, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. (HST); and the Mariana Archipelago Guam AP will meet on Saturday, December 7, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. (ChST).

Public Comment periods will be provided in the agendas. The order in which agenda items are addressed may change. The meetings will run as late as necessary to complete scheduled business.

Schedule and Agenda for the American Samoa Archipelago FEP AP Meeting

Tuesday, December 3, 2024, 5 p.m.–7 p.m. (Samoa Standard Time)

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Review of the Last Advisory Panel (AP) Recommendation and Meetings
3. Feedback from the Fleet
 - A. Fourth Quarter Fisher Observations
 - B. Fisheries Issues
4. Council Fisheries Issues
 - A. Options for Hawaii and American Samoa Longline Fisheries Crew Training Requirement
 - B. Longline Electronic Monitoring Implementation Feasibility
5. Updates from NOAA Fisheries' Social-Ecological and Economic Systems (SEES) Program
6. Review of 2023–2026 AP Action Plan
7. Updates on the Council Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Projects
8. Other Business
9. Public Comment
10. Discussion and Recommendations

Schedule and Agenda for the Non-Commercial Fisheries Advisory Committee

Wednesday, December 4, 2024, 1:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m.

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Review of the Last NCFAC Meeting
3. Feedback from the Fleet
4. National Initiatives
 - A. NOAA Re-envisioning Recreational Fishing Data Collection
 - B. Marine Recreational Information Program Pacific Islands Regional Implementation Plan
5. Updates on Regional Initiatives
 - A. Territorial Creel Survey and Annual Report Modules
 - B. Hawaii
 - i. Hawaii Marine Recreational Fishing Survey
 - ii. Main Hawaiian Islands (MHI) Uku Project
6. Updates on Council IRA Projects
7. Other Business
8. Public Comment
9. Discussion and Recommendations

Schedule and Agenda for the Mariana Archipelago FEP CNMI AP Meeting

Thursday, December 5, 2024, 6 p.m.–8 p.m. (Chamorro Standard Time)

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Review of the Last AP Recommendation and Meetings
3. Feedback from the Fleet
 - A. Fourth Quarter Fisher Observations
 - B. Fisheries Issues
4. Council Fisheries Issues
 - A. Status of Fisheries Development
5. Updates from NOAA Fisheries' SEES Program
6. Review of 2023–2026 AP Action Plan
7. Updates on the Council IRA Projects
8. Other Business
9. Public Comment
10. Discussion and Recommendations

Schedule and Agenda for the FIAC Meeting

Thursday, December 5, 2024, 2 p.m.–5 p.m. (Hawaii Standard Time)

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Status Review on Previous FIAC recommendations
3. Roundtable update on Fishing/Market Issues/Impacts
4. U.S. Catch Limits for North Pacific Striped Marlin
5. Options for Hawaii and American Samoa Longline Fisheries Crew Training Requirement
6. Development of an Electronic Monitoring Program for Western Pacific Fisheries
7. MHI Bottomfish Market Snapshot
8. Updates on US and Pacific Island Trade Issues
9. Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Updates
10. Other Business
11. Public Comment
12. Discussion and Recommendations

Schedule and Agenda for the Hawaii Archipelago FEP AP Meeting

Friday, December 6, 2024, 9 a.m.–3 p.m. (Hawaii Standard Time)

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Review of the Last AP Recommendation and Meetings
3. Feedback from the Fleet
 - A. Fourth Quarter Fisher Observations
 - B. Fisheries Issues
4. Council Fisheries Issues
 - A. Options for Hawaii and American Samoa Longline Fisheries Crew Training Requirement
 - B. Development of an Electronic Monitoring Program for Western Pacific Fisheries
5. Updates from NOAA Fisheries' SEES Program
6. MHI Bottomfish Independent Survey in Hawaii Strategic Shift

7. Review of 2023–2026 AP Action Plan
8. Updates on the Council IRA Projects
9. Other Business
10. Public Comment
11. Discussion and Recommendations

Schedule and Agenda for the Mariana Archipelago FEP Guam AP Meeting

Saturday, December 7, 2024, 11 a.m.–1 p.m. (Chamorro Standard Time)

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Review of the Last AP Recommendation and Meetings
3. Feedback from the Fleet
 - A. Fourth Quarter Fisher Observations
 - B. Fisheries Issues
4. Council Fisheries Issues
 - A. Modifying the Guam Bottomfish Rebuilding Plan
5. Guam Military Working Group Update
6. Updates from NOAA Fisheries' SEES Program
7. Review of 2023–2026 AP Action Plan
8. Updates on the Council IRA Projects
9. Other Business
10. Public Comment
11. Discussion and Recommendations

Special Accommodations

These meetings are accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Kitty M. Simonds, (808) 522–8220 (voice) or (808) 522–8226 (fax), at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: November 13, 2024.

Key Israel Marquez,

Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XE408]

Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Shrimp Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Request for an Exempted Fishing Permit

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of an application for an exempted fishing permit; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces the receipt of an application for an exempted fishing permit (EFP) from Texas Sea

Grant. If granted by NMFS, the EFP would authorize the continued testing of new designs for bycatch reduction devices (BRDs) for finfish, in the commercial shrimp fishery in Federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf). The Better BRDs for the Gulf Shrimp Fleet Project is a collaborative effort to restore finfish populations and reduce finfish bycatch mortality through the development and certification of new BRDs for use by the commercial shrimp industry throughout the Gulf. This notice gives the public an opportunity to provide comments to NMFS regarding the request for an EFP.

DATES: Written comments must be received no later than December 3, 2024.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on the application, identified by NOAA–NMFS–2024–0128 by either of the following methods:

- **Electronic Submission:** Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to <https://www.regulations.gov> and type NOAA–NMFS–2024–0128 in the Search box. Click the “Comment” icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

- **Mail:** Submit all written public comments to Frank Helies, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

Instructions: Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period may not be considered by NMFS. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on <https://www.regulations.gov> without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NMFS will accept anonymous comments—enter “N/A” in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous.

An electronic copy of the application may be obtained from the Southeast Regional Office website at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/southeast/commercial-fishing/better-bycatch-reduction-device-gulf-shrimp-fleet-project/>.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Frank Helies, phone: 727–824–5305, email: frank.helies@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The EFP is requested under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act; 16 U.S.C 1801 *et seq.*), and regulations at 50 CFR

600.745(b) concerning exempted fishing.

The EFP application submitted to NMFS involves the use of experimental fishing gear (BRDs) on shrimp trawls in Federal waters. Federal regulations require fishermen on shrimp vessels to use NMFS certified BRDs while trawling for shrimp in Gulf Federal waters [50 CFR 622.53(a)]. The applicant is seeking an EFP that would exempt these research activities from the regulations requiring the use of certified BRDs in Federal waters of the Gulf at 50 CFR 622.53(a), and would allow the applicant to replace an existing approved BRD with one of four experimental BRD configurations as determined by the applicant. The specific EFP request is further described below.

The Better BRDs for the Gulf Shrimp Fleet Project is a collaborative effort between Louisiana Sea Grant, Texas Sea Grant, NOAA Restoration Center, and NMFS to restore finfish populations injured by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill through the development and certification of new BRDs for the commercial shrimp industry throughout the Gulf. The project involves the phased testing of new BRD designs in the commercial shrimp fishery in Federal waters of the Gulf. The new BRD designs could demonstrate a greater reduction in bycatch of finfish, over the federally certified Fisheye BRD, which may also lead to an overall increase in shrimp catch.

The project would further identify and develop new bycatch-reducing technology to reduce finfish discard mortality in commercial shrimp trawls. Additionally, the project seeks to advance cost-effective solutions for the Gulf shrimp fleet that would maximize the adoption and use by fishermen of any improved designs for BRDs that could be certified for use in the fishery.

The project is separated into several phases. The first phase that began in 2022 included proof-of-concept testing of new BRD designs by NMFS Gear Research Branch partners. This proof-of-concept testing included both dive and vessel testing aboard the research vessel *Caretta*. The dive testing was conducted off Panama City, Florida, and the vessel testing was conducted off Pascagoula, Mississippi. New BRD designs that showed the potential to be effective during proof-of-concept testing were accepted for further evaluation during the project's next phase, which involved stakeholder testing. A final phase planned for the future would be pre-certification and certification testing of the selected BRDs, consistent with the requirements in 50 CFR 622.53(a)(2) and