UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
PROGRAM PLANNING AND INTEGRATION
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

MAR 20 2014

To All Interested Government Agencies and Public Groups:

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an environmental review has been performed on the following action.

TITLE: Environmental Assessment (EA) for Framework Adjustment 8 (Framework 8) to the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fishery Management Plan

LOCATION: Atlantic Exclusive Economic Zone

SUMMARY: Framework 8 implements several changes to facilitate operation of the butterfish discard cap on the longfin squid fishery. The measures in Framework 8 would allocate the butterfish discard cap among the Trimesters in the same percentages used for the trimester allocations for longfin squid: 43 percent to Trimester I (January to April), 17 percent to Trimester II (May to August), and 40 percent to Trimester III (September to December). Each trimester would close when it is estimated that 95 percent of the butterfish discard cap has been taken. In addition, Framework 8 would allow the National Marine Fisheries Service to transfer, in either direction, a certain amount of unused quota between the butterfish landing allocation and the discard cap on the longfin squid fishery. This would occur near the end of the year in order to optimally utilize the butterfish that is available for fishing each year.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL: John K. Bullard
Regional Administrator
National Marine Fisheries Service
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA, 01930
(978) 281-9315

The environmental review process led us to conclude that this action will not have a significant impact on the environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement was not prepared. A copy of the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), including the supporting environmental assessment, is enclosed for your information.

Although NOAA is not soliciting comments on this completed EA/FONSI, we will consider any comments submitted that would assist us in preparing future NEPA documents. Please submit any written comments to the Responsible Official named above.

Sincerely,

for Patricia A. Montanio
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure

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