



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701

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NOAA Fisheries Asks for Public Input in Preparation for Developing a Comprehensive Fishery Management Plan for Federal Waters of Puerto Rico.

Moving from Species Based to Island Based Management

Comment Period for the Notice of Intent Ends July 8, 2013

NOAA Fisheries, along with the Caribbean Fishery Management Council, intends to prepare a draft environmental impact statement to outline a range of management alternatives to be considered for a comprehensive management plan for the federal waters of Puerto Rico.

The agency is hosting a series of scoping meetings to give people the opportunity to provide comments on the actions addressed in the environmental impact statement. Prior to these meetings the public can submit written comments on developing an island-based approach to fishery management from now through **July 8, 2013**.

This comprehensive plan will incorporate and modify, as needed, federal fisheries management measures included in each of the existing species-based management plans (Spiny Lobster, Reef Fish, Coral, and Queen Conch).

The goal is to create a management plan tailored to the specific fishery management needs of Puerto Rico. If approved, this new management plan for Puerto Rico in conjunction with similar plans being developed for St. Croix and St. Thomas/St. John, will replace the current species-based plans presently governing commercial and recreational harvest in the U.S. Caribbean federal waters.

Dates and Locations of Scoping Meetings:

1. July 8, 2013 at 7 p.m. - at the Centro de Usos Múltiples de Vieques, Calle Antonio G. Mellado, Vieques, Puerto Rico.
2. July 9, 2013 at 7 p.m. - at the DoubleTree by Hilton San Juan, De Diego Avenue, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

3. July 9, 2013 at 7 p.m. - at the Buccaneer Hotel, Estate Shoys, Christiansted, St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands.
4. July 10, 2013 at 7 p.m. - at the Holiday Inn (Windward Passage Hotel) Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands.
5. July 10, 2013 at 2 p.m. - at the Holiday Inn Ponce & Tropical Casino, 3315 Ponce By Pass, Ponce, Puerto Rico.
6. July 10, 2013 at 7 p.m. - at the Holiday Inn, 2701 Hostos Avenue, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico.
7. July 11, 2013 at 7 p.m. - at the Asociación de Pescadores Unidos de Playa Hucares in Naguabo, Puerto Rico.
8. July 12, 2013 at 6 p.m. - at the Club Náutico de Arecibo, Carr. 681 Km. 1.4, Barrio Islote, Sector Vigía, Arecibo, Puerto Rico.

Request for Comments

Written comments on the scope of issues to be addressed in the draft environmental impact statement must be received by NOAA Fisheries by **July 8, 2013**.

Addresses

Electronic copies of the scoping document may be obtained from the Southeast Regional Office Web site at

http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/caribbean/island_based/index.html.

Electronic copies of the NOI can be obtained at

<http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2013-0093>.

You may submit comments by the following methods:

Electronic Submission: Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal.

- Go to: www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2013-0093.
- Click the “Comment Now!” icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.
- **Mail:** Submit written comments to Miguel Lugo, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701, or to the Caribbean Fishery Management Council, 270 Muñoz Rivera Avenue, Suite 401, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00918.

All comments will be part of the public record, and generally posted for public viewing to www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (for example, name, address, etc.) voluntarily submitted by the commenter, may be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information or otherwise sensitive or protected information. Anonymous comments will be accepted.

To receive fishery bulletins via email, please sign up through Constant Contact at <http://bit.ly/HQDUEU>. You may also sign up for Constant Contact by visiting our Web site <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov> (sign-up option is located on the left side of the page).