



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
CARIBBEAN FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
270 MUÑOZ RIVERA AVE. STE 401
SAN JUAN PR 00918-1903



February 10, 2026

Mr. Jean Pierre Oriol
Commissioner
Department of Planning and Natural Resources
4611 Tutu Park Mall
Suite 300, 2nd Floor
St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands 00802

Dear Commissioner Oriol:

The Caribbean Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries (SERO) developed Amendment 3 to the Puerto Rico, St. Croix and St. Thomas/St. John, U.S.V.I. Fishery Management Plans. Management measures for dolphinfish and wahoo, Amendment 3, would establish minimum size limits and recreational bag limits for dolphinfish and wahoo in federal waters around Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The Final Rule, implementing the following regulations for the Federal Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), became effective on July 25 2025 (***Federal Register Name/Number***: 90 FR 26934, published on June 25, 2025).

The size limits (commercial and recreational) apply to all U.S. Caribbean federal waters. In Puerto Rico's waters beyond 9 nm, and in the U.S. Virgin Islands (St. Thomas/St John and St. Croix) waters beyond the 3 nm.

The final rule established:

- a 24-inch fork length minimum size limit for dolphinfish for all fishing (commercial and recreational) in U.S. Caribbean federal waters;
- a 32-inch fork length minimum size limit for wahoo for all fishing (commercial and recreational) in U.S. Caribbean federal waters;

The final rule established for the federal waters off the U.S. Virgin Islands:

- a recreational bag limit of 10 dolphinfish per person per day, not to exceed 32 dolphinfish per vessel per day, whichever is less, in federal waters around St. Croix and St. Thomas/ St. John, U.S.V.I.; and,
- a recreational bag limit of 2 wahoo per person per day, not to exceed 10 wahoo per vessel per day, whichever is less, in federal waters around St. Croix and St. Thomas/St. John, U.S.V.I.

A copy of the amendment and the final rule are included for your perusal. The original FMPs and amendments can be found, as updated, in the CFMC's webpage:

https://caribbeanfmc.com/images/pdf/carib_fmp_st_croix.pdf;

https://caribbeanfmc.com/images/pdf/carib_fmp_st_thomasst_john.pdf

The Caribbean Fishery Management Council would like to request compatible regulations from the Territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands for its state waters.

Please let us know if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Farchette', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Carlos Farchette
CFMC Chair

C: M. A. Rolón, A. Strelcheck, K. Zamboni, M. López-Mercer, N. Angeli, S. Habtes, G. García-Moliner



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February 10, 2026

Eng. Waldemar Quiles Pérez
Secretary
Department of Natural and
Environmental Resources
San José Industrial Park
1375 Ponce de León Avenue
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00926

Dear Secretary Quiles Pérez:

The Caribbean Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries (SERO) developed Amendment 3 to the Puerto Rico, St. Croix and St. Thomas/St. John, U.S.V.I. Fishery Management Plans. Management measures for dolphinfish and wahoo, Amendment 3, established minimum size limits and recreational bag limits for dolphinfish and wahoo in federal waters around Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The Final Rule, implementing the following regulations for the Federal Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), became effective on July 25 2025 (***Federal Register Name/Number***: 90 FR 26934, published June 25, 2025).

The size limits (commercial and recreational) apply to all U.S. Caribbean federal waters. In Puerto Rico's waters beyond the 9 nm, and in the U.S. Virgin Islands (St. Thomas/St John, St. Croix) waters beyond the 3 nm.

The final rule established:

- a 24-inch fork length minimum size limit for dolphinfish for all fishing (commercial and recreational) in U.S. Caribbean federal waters;
- a 32-inch fork length minimum size limit for wahoo for all fishing (commercial and recreational) in U.S. Caribbean federal waters.

The final rule established for the federal waters off Puerto Rico:

- a recreational bag limit of 5 dolphinfish per person per day, not to exceed 15 dolphinfish per vessel per day, whichever is less, in federal waters around Puerto Rico;
- a recreational bag limit of 5 wahoo per person per day, not to exceed 10 wahoo per vessel per day, whichever is less, in federal waters around Puerto Rico.

A copy of the Amendment and the final rule are included for your perusal. The original FMPs and amendments can be found, as updated, in the CFMC's webpage:

[Puerto Rico Island-Based Fishery Management Plan](#)

The CFMC would like to request compatible regulations from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico for its State waters.

Please let us know if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Farchette'.

Carlos Farchette
CFMC
Chair

C: M. A. Rolón, A. Strelcheck, K. Zamboni, M. López-Mercer, R. López, D. Matos, G. García-Moliner

Fw: Response Regarding Regulatory Compatibility for Dolphinfish and Wahoo

From: Miguel Rolon (miguel_rolon_cfmc@yahoo.com)

To: graciela_cfmc@yahoo.com; liajayrivera_cfmc@yahoo.com

Date: Friday, August 7, 2026 at 08:06 AM AST

FYI
Best,
Miguel

Begin forwarded message:

On Thursday, August 6, 2026, 10:46 PM, Ricardo Lopez Ortiz <rlopez@drna.pr.gov> wrote:

Dear Chairman Farchette,

I hope this message finds you well. Please find attached the Department of Natural and Environmental Resources' formal response regarding the Council's request for regulatory compatibility between federal and Commonwealth waters for management measures applicable to dolphinfish (*Coryphaena hippurus*) and wahoo (*Acanthocybium solandri*), as established under Amendment 3 to the Island-Based Fishery Management Plans.

We apologize for the delay in providing this response. Over the past weeks, our team has been reviewing the relevant information in detail and ensuring that the analysis and recommendations appropriately reflect the Department's management priorities and the best available data. We appreciate your patience during this process.

As outlined in the letter, technical staff have completed their evaluation of the request, and the Department is considering mechanisms to advance compatible regulations within Puerto Rico's jurisdictional waters.

We value the ongoing collaboration between the Council and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in the responsible management of our shared fisheries, and we remain committed to maintaining open communication as this process moves forward.

Please let me know if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,

Ricardo



Ricardo López Ortiz

Div. Investigación y Manejo Pesquero Comercial | Director
Secretaría Auxiliar de Conservación e Investigaciones

 rlopez@drna.pr.gov

 787-999-2200, ext. 3221

 www.drna.pr.gov

De: Iralda M Abarca Alomia <iralda.abarca@drna.pr.gov>

Enviado: Jueves, 06 de Agosto de 2026 5:19 PM

Para: Ricardo Lopez Ortiz <rlopez@drna.pr.gov>

CC: Marisel Martinez Feliciano <mmartinez@drna.pr.gov>; Farel S Velazquez Cancel <fvelazquez@drna.pr.gov>

Asunto: RE: Borrador de carta como respuesta del Secretario a la gestión de compatibilidad (Peto y Dorado) con el CFMC

Saludos Dr. López

Comparto comunicación para el Consejo de Administración.
Excelente día!!!



Iralda M. Abarca Alomía

Oficial Gerencial
CEACC -Comité Expertos Asesores de Cambio Climático

 iralda.abarca@drna.pr.gov

 787-999-2200 Ext. 2723

 www.drna.pr.gov



CONSEJO PESQUERO CARTA.jpg

108.3 kB



APR 17 2026

Mr. Carlos Farchette
Chair
Caribbean Fishery Management Council

Dear Mr. Farchette,

The Department of Natural and Environmental Resources of Puerto Rico acknowledges receipt of your communication regarding the request for regulatory compatibility between federal and Commonwealth waters for management measures applicable to dolphinfish (*Coryphæna hippurus*) and wahoo (*Acanthocybium solandri*), as established under Amendment 3 to the Island-Based Fishery Management Plans for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Technical staff from the Department's fisheries divisions have reviewed the request and evaluated the available information, including commercial fisheries statistics and management considerations. While recent landing trends do not indicate evidence of overfishing for these species within Puerto Rico's territorial waters, the minimum size limits established through Amendment 3 are considered biologically prudent measures that could contribute to the long-term sustainability of these fisheries.

The Department also recognizes that differences between federal and Commonwealth regulations may create confusion among fishers and complicated enforcement efforts. For this reason, the Department is evaluating the adoption of compatible management measures within Puerto Rico's jurisdictional waters.

As part of this process, the Department is considering mechanisms to advance regulatory compatibility, including the possibility of implementing interim measures through administrative action while broader revisions to the Puerto Rico Fisheries Regulation (Regulation No. 7949) are being completed.

We appreciate the continued collaboration between the Council and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in the sustainable management of shared fishery resources.

Sincerely,

Waldemar Quiles Pérez
Secretary

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
CARIBBEAN FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
270 MUÑOZ RIVERA AVE. STE 401
SAN JUAN PR 00918-1903



July 16, 2026

Hon. Waldemar Quiles Pérez
Secretary
Department of Natural and
Environmental Resources
San José Industrial Park
1375 Ponce de León Avenue
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00926

Dear Secretary Quiles Pérez:

The Caribbean Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries (SERO) developed Amendment 2 to the Puerto Rico, St. Croix, and St. Thomas and St. John Fishery Management Plans: Trawl, Net Gear, and Descending Devices.

The Caribbean Fishery Management Council would like to request compatible regulations from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico for its State waters.

The Final Rule implementing the following regulations for the Federal Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) became effective on November 3, 2025 (Federal Register 90 (190) 47982-47989 published on October 3 2025), except for the revisions for §§ 622.437(a)(4), 622.477(a)(4), and 622.512(a)(4), requirement of descending devices, which are effective April 1, 2026.

This final rule (1) prohibits the use of trawls, trammel nets, and purse seines in all fisheries located in Federal waters around Puerto Rico, St. Croix, and St. Thomas and St. John, (2) prohibits the use of gillnets in federally-managed fisheries in Federal waters around Puerto Rico, St. Croix, and St. Thomas and St. John and restricts the use of gillnets in non-managed fisheries to a gillnet that meets specified requirements, and (3) requires a descending device to be available and ready for use on each fishing vessel when fishing in federally-managed reef fish fisheries located in Federal waters around Puerto Rico, St. Croix, and St. Thomas and St. John.

The rule establishes that a descending device be on board a commercial or recreational vessel and readily available for use while fishing for or possessing species in the reef fish component of any of the FMPs.

The management measures and regulations (commercial and recreational) apply to all U.S. Caribbean federal waters (in Puerto Rico's waters beyond 9 nm; in the U.S. Virgin Islands (St. Thomas/St John; St. Croix waters beyond the 3 nm)).

A copy of the Amendment and the final rule are included for your perusal and appropriate action.

The original FMPs and other amendments can be found, as updated in the CFMC's webpage ([Puerto Rico Island-Based Fishery Management Plan](#)).

Please let us know if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,

Carlos Farchette
Chair

C: Miguel A. Rolón, A. Strelcheck, K. Zamboni, G. García-Moliner.

RE: CFMC - Letter requesting compatible regulations for Amendment 2 to the Fishery Management Plans for Puerto Rico, St. Croix, and St. Thomas and St. John: Trawl, Net Gear, and Descending Devices.

From: Ricardo Lopez Ortiz (rlopez@drna.pr.gov)

To: kmatias_cfmc@yahoo.com; waldemar.quiles@drna.pr.gov

Cc: miguel_rolon_cfmc@yahoo.com; graciela_cfmc@yahoo.com; liajayrivera_cfmc@yahoo.com; vicenteyassoc@gmail.com; diana_martino_cfmc@yahoo.com; nicole.angeli@dpr.vi.gov; maggie.rios@dpr.vi.gov; dmato@drna.pr.gov; maria.lopez@noaa.gov; fvelazquez@drna.pr.gov; mmartinez@drna.pr.gov; sarah.stephenson@noaa.gov; raquel.ayala@drna.pr.gov; katharine.zamboni@noaa.gov; heather.blough@noaa.gov; James.M.Butler@uscg.mil; andy.strelcheck@noaa.gov; jp.oriol@dpr.vi.gov; rsabater54cfmc@yahoo.com; lablanchard1st@gmail.com; vramirez.cfmc@gmail.com; carlos.farchette.cfmc@gmail.com; sennai.habtes@dpr.vi.gov; edwin_muniz@fws.gov; mairizarry_cfmc@yahoo.com

Date: Saturday, July 18, 2026 at 11:54 AM AST

Estimada Kiara Matias,

Thank you for sharing the letter and the documentation related to Amendment 2.

We will follow up on this request. Our team is currently reviewing the scientific and socioeconomic components of the proposal, and we will provide the Secretary with our technical opinion as soon as possible.

Due to several official trips and a significant workload, I cannot guarantee an exact delivery date. However, we will do our best to have a response prepared before the Council's next meeting.

We appreciate the Council's collaboration and will remain in close communication.

Kind regards,

Ricardo

(CFMC Voting Members; PR)



Ricardo López Ortiz

Div. Investigación y Manejo Pesquero Comercial | Director
Secretaría Auxiliar de Conservación e Investigaciones

 rlopez@drna.pr.gov

 787-999-2200, ext. 3221

 www.drna.pr.gov

De: Kiara Matias <kmatias_cfmc@yahoo.com>

Enviado: jueves, 16 de julio de 2026 3:56 p. m.

Para: Waldemar Quiles Perez <waldemar.quiles@drna.pr.gov>

Cc: miguel_rolon_cfmc <miguel_rolon_cfmc@yahoo.com>; Graciela Garcia <graciela_cfmc@yahoo.com>; Liajay Rivera <liajayrivera_cfmc@yahoo.com>; VANCE PETER VICENTE CERNUDA <vicenteyassoc@gmail.com>; Diana Martino <diana_martino_cfmc@yahoo.com>; USVI DIVISION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE DPNR <nicole.angeli@dpnr.vi.gov>; Maggie Rios <maggie.rios@dpnr.vi.gov>; Ricardo Lopez Ortiz <rlopez@drna.pr.gov>; Daniel Matos Caraballo <dmatos@drna.pr.gov>; Maria Lopez - SERO Caribbean Branch Liaison <maria.lopez@noaa.gov>; Sarah Stephenson - SERO Caribbean Branch Fishery Biologist <sarah.stephenson@noaa.gov>; Katharine Zamboni <katharine.zamboni@noaa.gov>; Heather Blough - NOAA Federal <heather.blough@noaa.gov>; U.S. Coast Guard I <James.M.Butler@uscg.mil>; Andy Strelcheck - SERO Regional Administrator <andy.strelcheck@noaa.gov>; Jean-Pierre Oriol <jp.oriol@dpnr.vi.gov>; Roberto Sabater <rsabater54cfmc@yahoo.com>; lablanchard1st@gmail.com <lablanchard1st@gmail.com>; vramirez.cfmc@gmail.com <vramirez.cfmc@gmail.com>; carlos.farchette.cfmc@gmail.com <carlos.farchette.cfmc@gmail.com>; sennai.habtes@dpnr.vi.gov <sennai.habtes@dpnr.vi.gov>; edwin_muniz@fws.gov <edwin_muniz@fws.gov>; Maria De Los Angeles Irrizary <mairizarry_cfmc@yahoo.com>

Asunto: CFMC - Letter requesting compatible regulations for Amendment 2 to the Fishery Management Plans for Puerto Rico, St. Croix, and St. Thomas and St. John: Trawl, Net Gear, and Descending Devices.

Dear Hon. Secretary Quiles,

Hope this email finds you well.

Please find attached our letter requesting compatible regulations from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico for its State waters.

A digital copy of Amendment 2 and Final Rule is also attached.

We want to thank you and your excellent staff for all their hard work and great collaboration as always.

Regards,



Kiara M. Matías Rojas
Administrative Assistant
Caribbean Fishery Management Council
270 Muñoz Rivera Avenue, Suite 401
San Juan, PR 00918-1903
787-766-5926
www.caribbeanfmc.com





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Commissioner
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Suite 300, 2nd Floor
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Please let us know if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,

Carlos Farchette
Chair

C: Miguel A. Rolón, A. Strelcheck, K. Zamboni, G. García-Moliner.