



North Pacific Fishery Management Council

Simon Kinneen, Chair | David Witherell, Executive Director
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February 15, 2019

Mr. Chris Oliver
Assistant Administrator, NOAA Fisheries
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Mr. William Gibbons-Fly
Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and Fisheries
Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear sirs:

Thank you for providing the opportunity for the North Pacific Fishery Management Council to receive an update on the status of the Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean. The presentations from Jean-Pierre Ple and Candace Nachman were informative and greatly appreciated by the Council and interested members of the public.

The Council sees this Agreement as an important companion to the US Arctic Fishery Management Plan, and we are fully supportive of the United States taking speedy action to accede to the Agreement. It will enhance and complement the Council's conservation and management programs set out in the US Arctic FMP.

The Council recognizes that there will be several tasks to implement the Agreement once it comes into force. Of particular interest to the Council will be the establishment of the Joint Program of Scientific Research, which can also provide important scientific information to our domestic conservation and management programs in the US Arctic.

In addition, the Agreement also calls for the Parties to develop terms and conditions regarding trial fishing within three years of the Agreement coming into force. We recognize that this task awaits the Agreement coming into force, but want to assure you the Council stands ready to assist in development of such rules when the time comes to do so. It would be our goal to ensure that any future trial fishing in international waters does not undermine conservation measures in the US Arctic.

Again, thank you for the update on this Agreement. The Council looks forward to periodic updates on progress with the Agreement, and stands ready to work with NOAA and the Department of State on implementation issues as they develop.

Sincerely,

Simon Kinneen
Chair, NPFMC

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Enclosure(s)

cc: Senator Lisa Murkowski
Senator Dan Sullivan
Representative Don Young

Mr. Paul Doremus, NOAA Fisheries
Mr. Jean-Pierre Ple, NOAA Fisheries
Ms. Candace Nachman, NOAA Fisheries