



NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Angel Drobnica, Chair | David Witherell, Executive Director
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January 2, 2025

Ms. Emily Menashes
Deputy Assistant Administrator for Operations
NOAA Fisheries
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Via email

Dear Ms. Menashes:

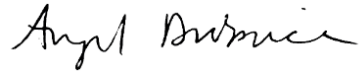
On behalf of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council), I would like to express our appreciation to NOAA Fisheries for developing the National Seafood Strategy and its Implementation Plan, and to thank Dr. Michael Rubino for his recent presentation to the Council on the steps the agency has taken to implement the Strategy and Plan. Council members were very interested to hear of the work to date and they offered numerous ideas and comments.

The Council greatly appreciates the work by NOAA Fisheries to quickly develop the [Alaska seafood snapshot report](#), identified as one of the pilot projects of the strategy, which summarizes the status of the economic and social conditions within the Alaska seafood industry. The economic impacts of the estimated \$1.8 billion loss to the Alaska seafood industry due to poor global markets, higher costs, and reduced revenues continue to affect our fisheries and communities. The snapshot report helps many audiences, including decision-makers at the state and federal levels and a wide range of stakeholders in the Council process, understand these socio-economic impacts and resulting changes in fishing and processing businesses across Alaska, which is important to responsive and resilient fisheries management actions.

We look forward to seeing progress on the implementation plan. As the strategy illustrates, the success of the Nation's seafood economy goes beyond sustainable fish stocks and responsible management and includes access to domestic and global markets, fair trade, modernizing infrastructure, and workforce development. Thus, the Council appreciates the work NOAA is doing, for example, to provide technical assistance to USDA for seafood purchase programs, and certifications facilitating exports of seafood products from our region. Having NOAA take the lead in a whole-of-government approach to improve the long-term viability of the Nation's seafood sector is key to the success of the strategy.

Looking ahead, Council members suggested that NOAA Fisheries initiate programs to encourage development of measures to reduce regulatory discards, where practicable, to increase production of US wild caught fish without increasing fishing mortality. Additionally, the Council expressed interest in receiving annual updates on Implementation Plan progress, with the first opportunity at the end of 2025. Open discussion of these activities through the Council process will generate additional ideas to meet the goals of the strategy and future pilot projects.

In sum, the Council appreciates the development of the National Seafood Strategy and the Implementation Plan, and requests that NOAA Fisheries provide annual updates to the Council on these efforts. Thanks again for the development of the Plan and for Dr. Rubino's presentation to the Council.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Angel Drobnica". The script is cursive and fluid.

Angel Drobnica
Chair, NPFMC

Cc:
Dr.. Michael Rubino