



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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FB13-016

NOAA Fisheries Seeks Comments on a Proposed Rule to Modify Management of Seagrasses in Federal Waters of the U.S. Caribbean

Comment Period Ends April 5, 2013

NOAA Fisheries is seeking public comment on a proposed rule to implement Amendment 4 to the Fishery Management Plan for Corals and Reef Associated Plants and Invertebrates of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands (Amendment 4). The proposed rule for Amendment 4 published in the *Federal Register* on **March 6, 2013** (78 FR 14503). The comment period ends on **April 5, 2013**.

The proposed rule would remove seagrass species from the fishery management plan. The Caribbean Fishery Management Council (Council) determined that federal management of these species is unnecessary because there is no known harvest of seagrass species and these species occur predominately in state waters. In addition, seagrasses are designated as essential fish habitat and habitat areas of particular concern in all of the Council fishery management plans, and would continue to be protected by these designations.

This bulletin provides only a summary of the information regarding the existing regulations. Any discrepancies between this bulletin and the regulations as published in the *Federal Register* will be resolved in favor of the *Federal Register*.

Request for Comments

NOAA Fisheries must receive comments on this proposed rule no later than April 5, 2013. Comments received by NOAA Fisheries will be addressed in the final rule. Electronic copies of the amendment may be obtained from the NOAA Fisheries Web site:

<http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/CoralandCoralReefs.htm>,

the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal at

www.regulations.gov, or the Council's Web site at

www.caribbeanfmc.com.

How to Submit Comments

You may submit comments by either of the following methods. Comments received through other means may not be considered.

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

- Go to:
www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2013-0021
- Click on "Comment Now!". Complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.
- Attachments to electronic comments (up to 10 MB) will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

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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.