



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
PROGRAM PLANNING AND INTEGRATION
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

AF 15 2005

To All Interested Government Agencies and Public Groups:

TITLE Environmental Assessment For Regulations to Implement Vessel Assessment Resolutions of the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program and Capacity Resolutions of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission

LOCATION Eastern Tropical Pacific Ocean

SUMMARY: This document contains an Environmental Assessment (EA), Regulatory Impact Review (RIR), and Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (FRFA) that analyze the potential impacts of final regulations. The final regulations: (1) establish a register of U.S. vessels with a history of fishing in the ETP prior to June 28, 2002, and require that only vessels the Vessel Register be authorized to purse seine for tuna in the ETP; (2) limit the aggregate active capacity of U.S. purse seine vessels in the ETP to 8,969 metric tons (mt) carrying capacity per year; (3) revise the requirements for maintaining and submitting tuna tracking and verification records; (4) ensure owners of U.S. vessels on the Vessel Register pay annual assessments; (5) prohibit commerce in tuna or tuna products bearing a label or mark referring to dolphins, porpoises, or marine mammals if the label or mark does not comply with the labeling and marking requirements of 16 U.S.C. 1385(d); and (6) prohibit interference with enforcement and inspection activities, submission of false information, and other activities that would undermine the effectiveness of the Marine Mammal Protection Act, International Dolphin Conservation Program Act, and Dolphin Protection Consumer Information Act.

RESPONSIBLE

OFFICIAL: Rodney R. McInnis
National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
Regional Administrator, Southwest Regional Office
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Long Beach, CA 90802
(562) 980-4020

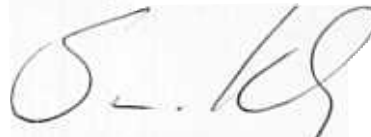
The environmental review process led us to conclude that this action will not have a significant impact on the environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement



was not prepared. A copy of the finding of no significant impact, including the environmental assessment, is enclosed for your information.

Please submit and written comments to the responsible official named above. Also, please send one copy of your comments to me at the NOAA Strategic Planning Office (PPI/SP), Room 15603, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Kennedy", written over a light gray rectangular background.

Susan A. Kennedy
Acting NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure