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### **Commerce Department Re-Appoints Benigno Sablan to Fishery Management Council**

The Commerce Department has announced the re-appointment of Benigno M. Sablan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, to the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council.

The Western Pacific Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional bodies established by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act that prepare fishery management plans for marine fish stocks in their respective geographic areas of responsibility. NOAA's Fisheries Service submits the management plans to the Secretary of Commerce for review and approval.

Sablan, who has a degree in fisheries science, served for three consecutive terms as a member of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands House of Representatives, was former secretary for the CNMI Department of Lands and Natural Resources, and was an elementary school teacher. Under this appointment, he will serve on the council until Aug. 10, 2011.

Council members represent diverse fisheries' interests, including commercial and recreational fisheries. They bring environmental, academic, and other perspectives from each geographic area to the councils. The Secretary of Commerce appoints council members from nominations submitted by governors from the areas served by each council.

NOAA understands and predicts changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and conserves and manages our coastal and marine resources. Visit <http://www.noaa.gov>

On the Web:

NOAA's Fisheries Service: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov>

2007 Report to Congress on Apportionment of Membership on the Regional Fishery

Management Councils: [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/reg\\_svcs/councils.htm](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/reg_svcs/councils.htm)