



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
NORTHEAST REGION
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

September 10, 2008

SMALL ENTITY COMPLIANCE GUIDE

Monkfish Framework Adjustment 6 Final Measure Effective October 10, 2008

Dear Monkfish Permit Holder:

This letter announces the implementation of Framework Adjustment 6, effective October 10, 2008, to the Monkfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Framework 6 removes the “backstop provision” implemented through Framework Adjustment 4. Under the backstop provision, if the target total allowable catch (TTAC) was exceeded by more than 30 percent in fishing year (FY) 2007, the directed monkfish fishery would have been closed in FY 2009. The 2007 TTAC was exceeded by 41% in the Southern Fishery Management Area (SFMA).

Given the most recent information on the status of the monkfish stocks, including the revised reference points established through Framework Adjustment 5 in May 2008, and the expected minimal biological impact of a 30-percent TTAC overage on stock status, the backstop provision is no longer necessary. As a result, it has been removed from the regulations, preventing a closure of the directed fishery in the SFMA in FY 2009.

This letter only summarizes regulations implementing Framework 6 final measure for the monkfish fishery. It is the responsibility of each vessel owner and operator to understand the relevant regulations associated with vessels fishing for monkfish. Information on monkfish regulations (50 CFR part 648 subpart F) can be found on NOAA’s National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) website at www.nero.noaa.gov/sfd/sfdmonk.html. Violations of these regulations could result in the imposition of civil penalties, permit sanctions, or catch forfeitures.

Further information on fishery regulations can be found through a link to the Office of the Federal Register at NMFS’s Northeast Regional Office website: <http://www.nero.nmfs.gov>.

This small entity compliance guide complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996.

Sincerely,

Patricia A. Kurkul
Regional Administrator

