

ATLANTIC SCIENTIFIC REVIEW GROUP

A Regional Advisory Group to the National Marine Fisheries Service

Donald M. Baltz
Coastal Fisheries Institute
Louisiana State University
Baton Rouge, LA 70803-7503
PH: (225)578-6512
FAX: (225)578-6513
Email: dbaltz@LSU.edu

Solange Brault
University of Massachusetts-
Boston

Joseph T. DeAlteris
University of Rhode Island

James R. Gilbert
University of Maine

Robert D. Kenney
University of Rhode Island

William Lang
National Science Foundation

James G. Mead
National Museum of Natural
History, Smithsonian Institution

Douglas P. Nowacek
Florida State University

Daniel K. Odell
Hubbs-SeaWorld Research
Institute

Richard Seagraves
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management
Council

Randall Wells
Chicago Zoological Society /
Mote Marine Laboratory

Sharon B. Young
Humane Society of the United
States

Dr. William T. Hogarth
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910

July 15, 2007

Dear Dr. Hogarth:

The following are recommendations of the Atlantic Scientific Review Group (ASRG) to the National Marine Service resulting from our 7-9 January 2007 meeting at USFWS facilities in Jacksonville, Florida. The group very much appreciated the efforts of Gordon Waring and his staff (especially Barbara Newell) in arranging for this meeting, as well as the hospitality and assistance provided to all by the USFWS staff in Jacksonville. The minutes of the 2007 meeting were previously distributed following review by ASRG members and other attendees. The SRG has two recommendations that arose from our most recent meeting.

The ASRG **strongly recommends** that NMFS consider reconvening the Harbor Porpoise Take Reduction Team to address increase in takes in the gillnet fisheries that interact with this stock. Takes now exceed PBR, clearly demonstrating that the provisions of the existing Take Reduction Plan are not working and/or are not being enforced.

The ASRG also **recommends** that NMFS supports the activities of other TRTs as necessary to meet the goals of those teams. The ASRG recognizes that the current budget situation constrains the ability of the agency to respond to all its legislative responsibilities, and therefore the ASRG recommends that the agency prioritize the needs of the TRTs addressing stocks with the most pressing conservation needs.

We appreciate your attention to these matters.

Respectfully submitted,



Donald M. Baltz
Chair, Atlantic SRG

c: distribution list