



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee

July 1, 2020

The Honorable Wilbur Ross
Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On behalf of the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC), this memo transmits a comprehensive evaluation report and implementing recommendations for the reestablishment of an industry-led National Seafood Council with administrative oversight from NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). MAFAC is confident that this new National Seafood Council can improve consumer confidence in, and subsequently increase the consumption of, U.S. seafood in our country. This will support and increase the value of our sustainably managed U.S. fisheries, will directly improve the health of the American people, and support U.S. jobs. Facilitating this is in the best interest of the U.S. seafood industry, both wild caught and aquaculture, and is a service to the public. These recommendations are also aligned with the goals of the recent Executive Order on Promoting American Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth.

MAFAC's recommendations are a result of an 18-month investigation to determine the best role for the federal government to help improve consumer confidence and consumption of U.S. seafood. MAFAC spoke to industry experts, held focused panel discussions, and interviewed over 50 representatives from small to large U.S. seafood companies and trade seafood organizations. MAFAC reviewed the authority provided in the Fish and Seafood Promotion Act of 1986 that established a similar National Seafood Council for five years. New amendments to this Act could aid in the reestablishment of a National Seafood Council that would achieve the goals identified.

If NMFS, NOAA, and the Department of Commerce agree with MAFAC's assessment and recommendations, MAFAC encourages swift implementation and continued communication on this topic with industry and other stakeholders. The timing is appropriate, and industry, through MAFAC's findings, appear supportive and ready to launch an industry-led National Seafood Council. Any delay in implementation of these recommendations could stall and lessen the positive momentum and synergistic opportunities that currently exist.

MAFAC looks forward to your response to continue the discussion on increasing consumption of U.S. seafood.

Respectfully,


Chair

Attachment