

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****50 CFR Part 648**

[I.D. 103196B]

**Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Amendment 6 to the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fisheries**

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability; request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS announces that the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) has submitted Amendment 6 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fisheries for Secretarial review and is requesting comments from the public. Amendment 6 is intended to implement management measures to prevent overfishing of the Atlantic squids and

butterfish and to allow for seasonal restrictions in the *Illex* squid fishery to improve yield per recruit.

**DATES:** Comments on Amendment 6 must be received on or before January 14, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** Send comments to Dr. Andrew A. Rosenberg, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Northeast Regional Office, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930-3799. Mark the outside of the envelope "Comments on SMB 6".

Copies of Amendment 6, the environmental assessment, and the regulatory impact review are available from David R. Keifer, Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Room 2115 Federal Building, 300 S. New Street, Dover, DE 19904-6790.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Myles Raizin, Fishery Policy Analyst, 508-281-9104.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*) (Magnuson-Stevens Act) requires that each regional fishery management council submit any fishery

management plan or plan amendment it prepares to NMFS, on behalf of the Secretary of Commerce, for review. The Magnuson-Stevens Act also requires that NMFS, upon receiving the plan or amendment for review, immediately publish a document that the plan or plan amendment is available for public review and comment. NMFS will consider the public comments received during the comment period in determining whether to approve the plan or amendment.

Amendment 6 would revise overfishing definitions for *Loligo* and *Illex* squid, and butterfish, adjust the fishery closure trigger for these species from 80 percent to 95 percent of domestic annual harvest, revise limits on bycatch of these species when a fishery is closed, and establish a mechanism for seasonal closures in the *Illex* squid fishery.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: November 8, 1996.

Bruce Morehead,  
*Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*  
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