

June 5, 2018

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**South Atlantic**  
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**Western Pacific**  
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Executive Director  
Edwin Ebisui  
Chair

Mr. Chris Oliver  
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
1315 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
Via email: CHRIS.OLIVER@NOAA.GOV

Dear Mr. Oliver,

At its recent meeting, the Council Coordination Committee (CCC) made several requests regarding the use of research priorities developed by the councils pursuant to the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA). Under MSA Section 302 (h), each Council shall develop, in conjunction with the scientific and statistical committee, multi-year research priorities for fisheries, fishery interactions, habitats, and other areas of research that are necessary for management purposes that shall – establish priorities for 5-year periods; be updated as necessary; and be submitted to the Secretary and the regional science centers of the National Marine Fisheries Service for their consideration in developing research priorities and budgets for the region of the Council.

The CCC recommends that Council research priorities be fully-integrated into research planning by NOAA Fisheries. In regions where this does not occur, Regional Offices, Science Centers, and Councils should improve this coordination.

The CCC also recommends that the review of applications to national-level grant programs administered by NOAA Fisheries should consider whether the proposal addresses a specific Council research priority. RFPs should encourage applicants to review Council's R&D needs documents for relevant topics and objectives for research proposals.

The CCC further requests that NOAA Fisheries clarify how the Council's five-year research priority reports are used. NOAA Fisheries is asked to provide an update on these recommendations at the next CCC meeting.

Thank you, and I look forward to continued communication on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Dan Hull  
NPFMC Chairman, on behalf of the Council Coordination Committee

cc: Regional Fishery Management Councils