



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 2
290 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

APR 29 2005

Dr. Roy Crabtree
Regional Administrator
United States Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Program Planning and Integration
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Rating: LO

Dear Dr. Crabtree:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) for the Fishery Management Plans (FMP) of the U.S. Caribbean to Address Required Provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA). This review was conducted in accordance with Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 7609, PL 91-604 12(a), 84 Stat. 1709), and the National Environmental Policy Act.

The DSEIS examines the impacts of amending the FMPs of the Caribbean Fishery Management Council to comply with provisions of the MSFCMA. The alternatives evaluated in the DSEIS address four MSFCMA provisions: (1) Assess and specify the present and probable future condition of, and the maximum sustainable yield and optimum yield from, fisheries; (2) Specify objective and measurable criteria for identifying when a fishery is overfished; (3) End overfishing and rebuild overfished stocks, and prevent overfishing in fisheries that are identified as approaching an overfished condition; and (4) Establish a standardized reporting methodology to assess the amount and type of bycatch occurring in the fishery and implement conservation and management measures that minimize bycatch and bycatch mortality to the extent practicable.

EPA believes that the implementation of any of the proposed project alternatives will not result in significant adverse environmental impacts. Therefore, in accordance with EPA policy, we have rated this project as LO, indicating that we do not object to its implementation. However, to ensure that future environmental review documents are more available for public review and comment, we recommend that they be posted electronically on the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Agency and the Caribbean Fisheries Management Council websites.

Any questions on this matter can be directed to Lingard Knutson, Environmental Scientist, at (212) 637 - 3747.

Sincerely yours,

John Filippelli, Chief
Strategic Planning and Multi-Media Programs Branch

cc: Susan A. Kennedy (email to nepa.comments@noaa.org)