

OCT 28 2013



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
1315 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

THE DIRECTOR

Ms. Dorothy Lowman  
Chair, Council Coordination Committee  
c/o Pacific Fishery Management Council  
7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101  
Portland, OR 97220-1384

Dear Ms. Lowman:

Thank you for your continued partnership and efforts in sustainably managing our Nation's fishery resources. I greatly value our collaborative approach to addressing emerging and often controversial issues.

One such issue is fishery allocation decisions. I have spoken to the CCC about fisheries allocation at five meetings<sup>1</sup> over the past three years, and I believe that we have built a path forward on how to address this difficult issue. We all agreed to obtain scientific input to inform this guidance, and you requested NOAA Fisheries present a proposal at the February 2014 CCC meeting that would task the formulation of guidance to the CCC's National Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC). NOAA Fisheries agreed to do this and is preparing such a proposal. To the extent that the SSC can provide any such guidance, we would take appropriate action to incorporate this into future revised National Standard guidelines.

However, in the meantime, I also want to make certain that the Councils do not wait to review and proceed with making appropriate adjustments to allocations. As we have discussed in the past, we need to make sure our fisheries management plans are current. The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requires, among other things, that conservation and management measures under fishery management plans achieve, on a continuing basis, optimum yield from each fishery. Reviewing allocations among fishery sectors facilitates achievement of this core goal of the Act. The idea of regular review is reinforced in NOAA's Catch Share Policy, in which NOAA recommends allocation decisions be revisited periodically regardless of whether catch shares are the chosen management tool.

I look forward to continuing to work with you all on this challenging issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Samuel D. Rauch III".

Samuel D. Rauch III  
Deputy Assistant Administrator  
for Regulatory Programs,  
performing the functions and duties of the  
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

cc: Council Chairs and Executive Directors  
Regional Administrators

<sup>1</sup> January 12, 2011, Washington, DC; May 3, 2011, Charleston, SC; January 25, 2012, Silver Spring, MD; February 20, 2013, Silver Spring, MD; and May 10, 2013, Washington, DC.

