

CORRESPONDENCE



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
GREATER ATLANTIC REGIONAL FISHERIES OFFICE
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

December 15, 2021

Tom Nies, Executive Director
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dear Tom:

We completed our review of the draft supplemental impact report (SIR) for the 2022-2023 Northeast Skate Specifications that you submitted to us on October 27, 2021. The following is a list of issues identified during our review of the SIR that must be resolved to ensure that the document is accurate and consistent with applicable law. We will provide a draft of the SIR document to Council staff with suggested revisions to address these listed issues.

- In Section 4.0, at the top of page 9, the description of the barndoor skate reference point should read: $B_{MSYproxy} = B_{target}$ = the average of the first four years of its survey biomass index.
- Reference to Amendment 5 in Section 5.0 should be updated to reflect the transition to Framework Adjustment 9 and corresponding materials.
- Remove Section 8.13. There are no implementing regulations in this action, and thus there is no Regulatory Impact Review (RIR) required under E.O. 12866.

In addition to the list of issues above, we will provide general comments and suggestions in the draft document to be incorporated at the discretion of Council staff. These minor changes could improve the readability of the document, but are not required. Please contact Cynthia Ferrio, Cynthia.Ferrio@noaa.gov, if you have any concerns or questions.

Sincerely,

Michael Pentony
Regional Administrator





New England Fishery Management Council

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Eric Reid, *Chair* | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

December 22, 2021

Mr. Michael Pentony
Regional Administrator
National Marine Fisheries Service
Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

Dear Mike:

Today, my staff electronically submitted the Fishing Year 2022-2023 Specifications for the Northeast Skate Complex Fishery Management Plan to your staff in the Sustainable Fisheries Division at the Greater Atlantic Regional Fishery Office. My staff has updated the document to address and resolve the issues identified in your letter dated December 15, 2021, and those issues noted by your staff. We have updated the document accordingly. Please contact me if you have questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Thomas A. Nies". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Thomas A. Nies
Executive Director