



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910
THE DIRECTOR

JUN 29 2018

Mr. Dan Hull
Chairman
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
Council Coordination Committee
1007 W 3rd Avenue, Suite 100
Anchorage, AK 99501

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Dear Mr. ~~Hull~~: *Dan*

Thank you for your letter regarding council research priorities and integration of those priorities in the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) science planning.

As discussed during the most recent Council Coordination Committee (CCC) meeting, NMFS does recognize council research priorities, and they are integrated into and affect our planning processes in a variety of ways. In all regions, staff serve on council committees, such as the Scientific and Statistical Committees. In this capacity, staff discuss and review council priorities, which increases awareness of these research priorities in NMFS. Then, as part of our priority-based science planning process, one of the criteria we use to prioritize certain activities and investments is whether the activity/investment is a priority to the councils. In addition, despite these regional connections to council priorities, there may be opportunity for more explicit consolidation, synthesis, and use of council research priorities at the national level, to inform planning and funding decisions, including decisions regarding requests for proposals.

We will review this issue, both nationally and regionally, through discussion with the six science center directors, with an aim that these priorities can be more formally included in annual and long-term science planning for the centers, and also inform priorities in grant funding decisions. The discussion will also touch on the best methods for the science centers to respond to the documents after the councils submit them. The regional fishery management councils are important partners, and we recognize that producing science that is responsive to management needs is critical.

I appreciate your interest in this issue and look forward to further discussion at the next CCC meeting.

Sincerely,

Chris Oliver



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FOR FISHERIES

