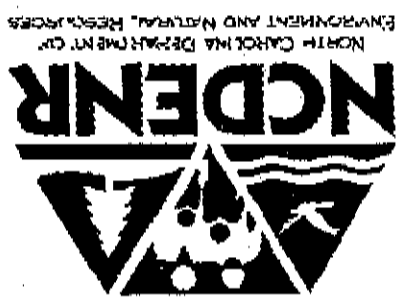


TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES TO FOLLOW: _____

RE: Copy of the NCDMF letter
to USFWS regarding BFT CTIES
listings.

DMF FAX NUMBER: _____
 DATE: _____
 FROM: _____
 FAX NUMBER: _____
 TO: _____

Division of Marine Fisheries
Fisheries Management
Post Office Box 769
3441 Arendell Street
Morehead City, NC 28557
Telephone: (252) 726-7021 or 1-800-682-2632



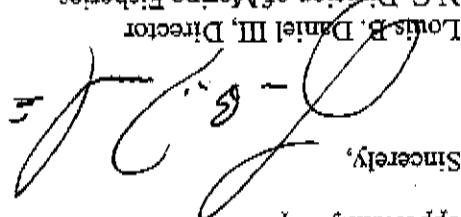
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LBD/rg/cb

cc: N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission
Charley Pereira, Winter Bluefin Association

N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries
Louis B. Daniel III, Director

Sincerely,


A CITES listing at this time may affect North Carolina and other East Coast fishermen that participate in the winter bluefin fishery that occurs off our coast. Most of the bluefin tuna landed during North Carolina's winter fishery are high in quality and exported. North Carolina fishermen have been following the scientific advice and fishing under the regulations established by the NMFS. We recommend the U.S. follow the rebuilding plan established at ICCAT 2009 and carefully consider any actions that may be taken on bluefin tuna at CITES. NCDMF appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on this issue and would be willing to clarify or discuss any of our concerns.

The N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries (NCDMF) would like to provide comments on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Appendix I listing proposal for northern bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) that will be discussed during the Fifteenth Conference of Parties (CoP15). We support the findings of the new International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) report "Extension of the 2009 SCRS Meeting to Consider the Status of Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Populations with Respect to CITES Biological Listing Criteria" (Doc. No. PA2-604/2009 - October 30, 2009). During the 2009 ICCAT meeting in Recife Brazil, a rebuilding plan was established to recover the Atlantic bluefin stocks. The new eastern quota of 13,500 mt was consistent with the SCRS advice. ICCAT extended the purse seine spawning closure to 11 months covering the peak spawning season. The new plan also requires implementation of an eastern rebuilding plan beginning in 2011 that has a 60 percent probability of achieving Maximum Sustainable Yield by 2023. The western quota was reduced to 1,800 mt beginning in 2010 which will end overfishing of the western stock. We feel that the management actions instituted by ICCAT and those implemented by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on our domestic fisheries will end overfishing and recover the Atlantic bluefin stocks.

Dear Mr. Gabel,

Re: CoP15 & Northern Atlantic Bluefin Tuna

Mr. Robert R. Gabel, Chief
Division of Management Authority
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 212
Arlington, VA 22203

February 1, 2010

Beverly Eaves Ferdue
Governor

Dr. Louis B. Daniel III
Director
Division of Marine Fisheries

Dee Freeman
Secretary

North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources



COPY