

Good afternoon Bob,

Many thanks for passing along the attached resolution; we have a packed schedule for next week's Council meeting, but I have asked staff to forward this to all council members and we will do our best to fit this in among our other agenda items. My sense is that this is likely to be a conversation that will need to be continued at the March council meeting in order to give the topic full consideration.

As always, I am happy to discuss this and any other issues of interest further.

Best regards,  
michelle

**Michelle Duval, Ph.D.**

Executive Assistant for Councils  
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**From:** Bob Jones [<mailto:bobfish@aol.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 3, 2015 9:51 AM  
**To:** Duval, Michelle <[michelle.duval@ncdenr.gov](mailto:michelle.duval@ncdenr.gov)>  
**Cc:** [jolleyjw@yahoo.com](mailto:jolleyjw@yahoo.com); [beaumads@comcast.net](mailto:beaumads@comcast.net); [wcbllaw@aol.com](mailto:wcbllaw@aol.com); [robert.mahood@safmc.net](mailto:robert.mahood@safmc.net); [mackattackben@att.net](mailto:mackattackben@att.net); [Rnewberry56@yahoo.com](mailto:Rnewberry56@yahoo.com); [paul.n.doremus@noaa.gov](mailto:paul.n.doremus@noaa.gov)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Seafood fraud plans

Good Morning Dr. Duval,

Captain Ray Rosher's support for solving a severe illegal fish-sale problem was received this morning. Besides curtailing most backdoor sales, our joint proposal provides needed income to the hard-working crews of charter boats. This solution, supported by the co-chairs of this charter-for-hire working group, deserves approval by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. Bag-limit fish should be legal to sell under conditions set forth in the enclosed Resolution.

What valid reason prevents this attainable solution? Is it because the publisher emeritus of a sport fishing magazine feels no animal taken recreationally should ever be sold? Why waste a perfectly safe, sustainable fish because of someone's philosophy?

It's okay for a sport fishing magazine to make money off ads and boat manufacturers to make money off their products, **but the bag-limit fish caught legally cannot be sold legally.** Tons of fish are being sold under the cover of darkness. This proposal could curtail this illegal activity.

The world famous West Palm Beach Fishing Club hosted a meeting of commercial fishermen, charter boat fishermen and others. Two South Atlantic Council members attended as individual fishermen and added their voices to the discussion.

The meeting at the Club's headquarters was cordial and enlightening. You can tell by our Resolution, which was passed unanimously by our board after the meeting in West Palm Beach that Southeastern Fisheries Association wants to solve the problem, not be the problem.

There is overwhelming support for this in Florida. If other states do not want to allow bag-limit fish to be sold in their state, don't penalize us just because the other states can out vote Florida on any issue. It is the Florida seafood industry that has been hurt the most by the NOAA regulations established for the South Atlantic.

We hope you will discuss this in depth and approve it at your Council meeting.

Sincerely yours,

Bob

Bob Jones, Executive Director  
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-----Original Message-----

From: Ray Rosher <[ray@missbritt.com](mailto:ray@missbritt.com)>

To: Bob Jones <[bobfish@aol.com](mailto:bobfish@aol.com)>

Sent: Thu, Dec 3, 2015 8:51 am

Subject: RE: Seafood fraud plans

Bob, many thanks and i agree with your comments. Thank you for keeping me in the loop.

Ray

Sent from my Verizon Wireless 4G LTE smartphone

----- Original message -----

From: Bob Jones <[bobfish@aol.com](mailto:bobfish@aol.com)>

Date: 12/2/2015 10:51 AM (GMT-05:00)

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Subject: Fwd: Seafood fraud plans

December 2, 2015

Dr. Paul Doremus

NOAA Deputy Assistant Administrator for Operations

1315 East-West Highway Silver Spring, MD 20910

Good Morning Paul,

Thanks again for meeting with us to discuss the issues we struggle with dally here in the southeast.

We have been studying the NOAA law enforcement protocols. We need your help to understand where we are on illegal seafood sales now that the President's seafood fraud policies are being implemented under the IUU Act passed by Congress.

In past years, charter boat fishermen on Florida's east coast legally sold bag limit caught mackerel, mahi-mahi and reef fish to appropriately licensed wholesale seafood dealers. This sale of charter boat caught bag-limit fish is a much needed income stream for the crew members. NOAA does not allow this sale anymore because the South Atlantic Council voted to stop it.

A great deal of charter boat caught fish still end up being sold through the back-doors of retail businesses or sold/bartered to friends. When seafood is sold under the cover of darkness, no harvest records are kept, no sanitation records created and no taxes paid on this cash crop. This is where we are today.

Anyone who spends time on the water or around busy docks can discern which boats are breaking the law, but nobody wants to get involved. One Texas fishermen wrote on Facebook, "Snitches get stitches." I know that threat does not bother a sworn officer, but someone who fishes out of the same port or same dock is concerned his boat might be burned by a mysterious fire. Many times being a good citizen has harsh consequences.

Our organization passed the enclosed Resolution on charter boat bag limit sales which I attach. We think this plan would solve 98% of the backdoor sales problem. We need clarification on how NOAA is going to enforce the seafood fraud aspect of the new law. We firmly believe if the Council would allow the bag limit sale of these fish under the strict regulations we propose, especially HACCP, everybody wins.

SFA's questions are,

1. "Under the new seafood fraud law and NOAA regulations, will catching fish illegally in federal waters and selling them in Florida, or any other state, result in a federal investigation and federal fine?"
2. "If the fish fraud law is not going to be fairly/strictly enforced, why have it?"

Sincerely yours,

Bob

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