



Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

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Michael P. Luisi, Chairman | G. Warren Elliott, Vice Chairman
Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director

March 2, 2018

Gregg Waugh
Executive Director
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201
North Charleston, SC 29405

Dear Gregg,

I am writing to request that the South Atlantic Council consider the possibility of managing frigate mackerel (*Auxis thazard*) and bullet mackerel (*Auxis rochei*) as ecosystem components in the Dolphin/Wahoo Fishery Management Plan.

The Mid-Atlantic Council sought to manage these species as ecosystem components with a commercial possession limit through the Unmanaged Forage Omnibus Amendment in recognition of their role in the ecosystem as prey for a variety of predators. However, NMFS disapproved inclusion of these two species in the amendment, citing an insufficient connection to the Mid-Atlantic Council's FMPs.

Frigate and bullet mackerel are important prey for blue marlin, yellowfin tuna, blackfin tuna, and wahoo. Commercial harvest of these species in the northeast has been low, averaging 1,502 pounds annually during 2012-2017.

Please contact me or Julia Beaty of my staff if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Christopher M. Moore, PhD.
Executive Director, MAFMC

CC: Luisi, Elliott, DiLernia, Hemilright, O'Reilly, Beaty