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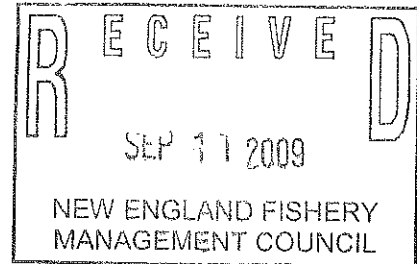
**ASSOCIATED FISHERIES OF MAINE**

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September 11, 2009

Mr. John Pappalardo, Chair  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 Water Street  
Newburyport, MA 01950



Dear John:

I am writing on behalf of Associated Fisheries of Maine (AFM) with regards to the Council's upcoming deliberations (September 22) on Monkfish Amendment 5.

Since 2007, AFM has been urging the Council to amend the monkfish plan to account for the 2007 assessment, which describes the monkfish resource as above the biomass target and below the fishing mortality target. We are pleased that this issue will finally be addressed in Amendment 5.

As you know, AFM submitted a proposal to convert the monkfish fishery to catch shares and preferably individual transferable quotas (ITQ). AFM's catch share proposal, as endorsed and amended by the committee and advisory panel, was subsequently included in Amendment 5.

We are now troubled to learn, that due to resource issues, the committee has decided to split off, to a subsequent action, the consideration of catch shares for the monkfish fishery.

AFM strongly urges the Council to make development of an ITQ proposal for monkfish a high priority. We hope that you will initiate a regulatory action, on September 22, with the goal of speedy implementation of ITQs for the monkfish fishery.

Sincerely,

*M. Raymond*

Maggie Raymond