

JUSTIFICATION FOR CHANGE
U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
Greater Atlantic Region Initial Vessel Permit Application
OMB Control No. 0648-0202

RIN 0648-BJ16

NOAA'S National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is proposing a change to information collection request 0648-0202 as a result of a proposed rule, RIN 0648-BJ16, to implement measures under Amendment 21 to the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP). This action includes measures required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to formally integrate Atlantic chub mackerel as a stock in the fishery under the FMP. It would require any vessel that catches Atlantic chub mackerel in Federal waters to be issued any Federal permit for Atlantic mackerel, *Illex* squid, longfin squid, or butterfish (i.e., any of the existing permits for species managed by the FMP). It would also require vessel operators to be issued a valid operator permit and dealers who purchase Atlantic chub mackerel to be issued a dealer permit for any species managed by the FMP.

Sections 303(a)(5) and (b)(1) of the MSA specifically identify the kinds of data to be collected for FMPs and allow the Secretary of Commerce to require vessel, operator, and dealer permits, respectively. All vessels fishing for and landing Atlantic mackerel, squid, butterfish, and other species from Federal waters must have been issued and have in their possession a Federal vessel permit to possess such species. The owner and operator of a vessel fishing for these species, and a dealer purchasing them must submit certain information regarding their operations and vessel to NMFS obtain a Federal vessel, operator, or dealer permit, respectively. Such data are necessary to the successful long-term management of each fishery in that permit issuance helps control the number of vessels that may fish for these species and track who owns, operates, and buys fish from these vessels. The associated permit data are also used to evaluate socioeconomic impacts to individuals and fishing communities.

The proposed change request would not revise any information collection, the number of entities affected, or the time or cost burden associated with applying for a vessel, operator, or dealer permit. Instead, it would update existing permit forms and associated instructions to reflect that Atlantic chub mackerel is now part of the FMP and no longer labeled a forage species (see attached revisions). Specifically, this change would update the FMP title and descriptions of existing FMP permits to indicate vessels, operators, and dealers must be issued a permit under the FMP to fish for and possess Atlantic chub mackerel.

Historically, vessels landing Atlantic chub mackerel previously participated in the Atlantic mackerel or *Illex* squid fisheries and were already issued one or more of the permits under the FMP. Therefore, it is unlikely that any vessels would need to apply for a new permit under this action. Because this action relies upon existing permits and associated forms, there is no need to collect new information or for vessels to submit additional information beyond what is already collected for existing permits.

A change request was authorized by the Office of Management and Budget for this collection.