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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 635

[Docket No. 180212159-8159-01]

RIN 0648-BH75

**Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Shortfin Mako Shark Management Measures;
Proposed Amendment 11; Comment Period Extension**

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Proposed rule; extension of comment period.

SUMMARY: NMFS previously published, on July 27, 2018, a proposed rule to amend the 2006 Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP) based on the results of the 2017 stock assessment and a subsequent binding recommendation by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) for North Atlantic shortfin mako sharks. The comment period on the proposed rule ends on October 1, 2018. In this extension of comment period, NMFS is extending the comment period to October 8, 2018, to provide an opportunity for the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) to be briefed, and to provide additional opportunities for the Council and other interested parties to comment on the proposed rule.

DATES: The deadline for receipt of comments on the proposed rule published on July 27, 2018 (83 FR 35637) is extended from October 1, 2018 to October 8, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on the referenced proposed rule published on July

27, 2018 (83 FR 35637), identified by NOAA-NMFS-2018-0011, by any one of the following methods:

- *Electronic Submission:* Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2018-0011, click the “Comment Now” icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.
- *Mail:* Submit written comments to Guý DuBeck, NMFS/SF1, 1315 East-West Highway, National Marine Fisheries Service, SSMC3, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

Instructions: Please include the identifier NOAA-NMFS-2018-0011 when submitting comments. Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the close of the comment period, may not be considered by NMFS. All comments received are a part of the public record and generally will be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (*e.g.*, name, address), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter "N/A" in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Guý DuBeck or Karyl Brewster-Geisz at (301) 427-8503.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The North Atlantic shortfin mako stock is managed primarily under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and also under the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act (ATCA). The 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP and its amendments are implemented by regulations at 50 CFR part 635.

On July 27, 2018 (83 FR 35637), NMFS published a proposed rule that announced NMFS' intent to amend the 2006 Consolidated Atlantic HMS FMP based on the results of the 2017 stock assessment and a subsequent binding recommendation by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) for North Atlantic shortfin mako sharks. The North Atlantic shortfin mako shark stock is overfished and is experiencing overfishing. Consistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) and the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act (ATCA), NMFS is proposing management measures that would reduce fishing mortality on shortfin mako sharks and establish a foundation for rebuilding the shortfin mako shark population consistent with legal requirements. In the proposed rule, the end of the comment period was announced as October 1, 2018. However, due to Hurricane Florence, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council postponed its previously scheduled meeting by several weeks. Without an extension of the comment period, the Council would be unable to receive the same briefing provided to other Councils prior to providing comments on Amendment 11. As such, NMFS is extending the comment period to provide an opportunity to be briefed and an additional opportunity for the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council and other interested parties to comment on the proposed rule. Therefore, the comment period for the proposed rule is extended to October 8, 2018.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 971 *et seq.*; 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: September 17, 2018.

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National Marine Fisheries Service.

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