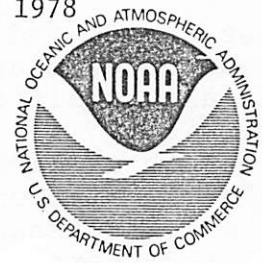


AGENDA # 8
FEBRUARY 1978

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE
NEWS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20230



NOAA 78 - 22

RELEASE: Immediate

Interim Policy Proposed on
200-Mile Joint Ventures

Foreign vessels within the 200-mile Fishery Conservation and Management Zone may be permitted to buy or receive fish caught by U.S. fishermen, under an interim policy proposed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Vessel owners wishing to participate in such so-called "joint ventures" with U.S. fishermen would be required to obtain permits issued under Preliminary Management Plans.

The permits would be issued by the Secretary of Commerce after it was determined that the fish to be sold or delivered by domestic fishermen exceeded amounts U.S. processors were capable of, and intend to, process. In addition, the amounts of fish caught by American fishermen could not exceed the limits established to insure a continued growth of the stocks. The foreign vessel applying for the permit also must have demonstrated the capability to process the American catch.

Several other factors would also be considered in issuing a permit; the potential for gear conflicts between U.S. vessels, the impact on U.S. consumers, prices at all levels, and the impact on employment in the fishing industry and on the income of domestic fishermen, processors, and industry workers.

Under the proposed interim policy, foreign countries would have to inform the State Department of the amounts of each species of fish they would obtain from U.S. fishermen, in addition to information normally furnished for a permit to fish within the 200-mile conservation zone.

The relevant Regional Fishery Management Council would obtain public comment on the applications, and would recommend to the Secretary of Commerce approval or disapproval, indicating any terms and conditions that should be contained in the permit. This recommendation would be reviewed with the Secretary of State and the

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Coast Guard, and approval or disapproval would follow. If the application were approved, it would be issued to the foreign country with any conditions and restrictions the Secretary deemed necessary.

Each application would be considered individually, and a permit would be valid only for the calendar year in which it was issued. Any permits issued would not set a precedent for permits requested in later years.

The proposed interim policy appeared in the Federal Register on February 8. Comments should be sent to the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, NOAA, Washington, D.C. 20235, by February 23. They will be used to develop an interim policy applying to permits that may be issued under Preliminary Management Plans in effect on January 1, 1978.

A final policy is expected to be developed late this year. Prior to adoption it will be published and the public given an opportunity to comment on it.

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February 10, 1978