



## **NEWS: Secretary of Commerce Appoints One New Committee Member to NOAA's Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee**

**(April 21, 2016)** Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker has announced the appointment of **Raimundo Espinoza of San Juan, Puerto Rico** as a new advisor to NOAA's Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee. The Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee, or MAFAC, advises the Secretary of Commerce on all living marine resource matters that are the responsibility of the Department of Commerce.

MAFAC members draw on their expertise to evaluate and recommend priorities and needed changes in national programs and policies, including the periodic reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, Endangered Species Act and Marine Mammal Protection Act. The members represent a wide spectrum of fishing, aquaculture, protected resources, environmental, academic, tribal, state, consumer, and other related national interests from across the U.S., and ensure the nation's living marine resource policies and programs meet the needs of these stakeholders.

Mr. Espinoza is currently an Environmental Consultant in Puerto Rico, Cuba and the wider Caribbean. He was the Nature Conservancy's founding Cuba program Director and facilitated the historic first government to government action between the US and Cuba, led by the Everglades National Park Superintendent. Mr. Espinoza has extensive experience in coral reef conservation and management and was also responsible for successfully establishing the Nature Conservancy's operation in Puerto Rico. He's served as an advising delegate of the Puerto Rican government at the Caribbean Challenge Initiative and has closely collaborated with commercial fishers, local NGOs, and Governments across the Caribbean and Latin America in creating unique opportunities to further conservation actions on the ground and sea. He also served on the Caribbean Fisheries Management Council's Outreach and Education Advisory Panel and the Puerto Rico District Advisory Panel.

Mr. Espinoza holds a Master of Science in Sustainable Development and Conservation Biology from the University of Maryland-CP, and B.A. in Environmental Studies from Pace University. He speaks fluent English and Spanish and is conversational in Portuguese.

MAFAC, is the only federal advisory panel charged with making recommendations to NOAA and the Secretary of Commerce on the department's living marine resource responsibilities. In recent years, MAFAC has provided advice on the NOAA Fisheries Climate Science Strategy, coordination of consultation processes under the Endangered Species Act, aquaculture policy and research, recreational fishing policies, Magnuson-Stevens Act reauthorization topics, sustainable seafood certification, ocean policy, and catch shares. Member terms are three years, and members may serve two consecutive terms.