



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

## NMFS is Considering Adding Gulf of Mexico Blacktip Sharks to Amendment 5 to the 2006 Consolidated Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan

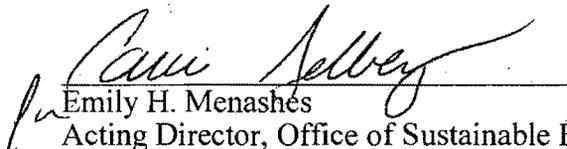
The National Marine Fisheries Service is considering including Gulf of Mexico blacktip sharks in Amendment 5 to the 2006 Consolidated Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan, which is currently under development. This amendment process began in October 2011 to address the results of recent stock assessments for scalloped hammerhead, dusky, sandbar, and blacknose sharks. A new stock assessment is ongoing for Gulf of Mexico blacktip sharks. According to the schedule of events for the assessment, the assessment should be completed in August 2012, and we are expecting the final assessment results in early Fall 2012, which is before the amendment process will be completed.

We believe that the addition of Gulf of Mexico blacktip sharks to the amendment would facilitate administrative efficiency by optimizing our resources, and would allow us to address new scientific information in the most timely manner. This addition would also provide better clarity to and understanding by the public regarding any possible impacts of the rulemaking on shark fisheries by combining potential management measures resulting from recent shark stock assessments into one rulemaking.

We request comments regarding the addition of Gulf of Mexico blacktip sharks to the amendment by June 21, 2012. These comments will help determine if we should move forward with adding Gulf of Mexico blacktip sharks to the amendment. To submit comments through the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal go to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), click the "submit a comment" icon, then enter NOAA-NMFS-2011-0229 in the keyword search. Locate the document you wish to comment on from the resulting list and click on the "Submit a Comment" icon on the right of that line.

You can also submit comments to Peter Cooper by fax at 301-713-1917 or by mail at 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Please indicate that comments are specifically on including Gulf of Mexico blacktip sharks in Amendment 5 to the Consolidated HMS FMP.

This notice is a courtesy to help keep you informed about the Atlantic shark fishery. For additional information, call (301)-427-8503 or go online to:  
<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/breakingnews/index.htm>

  
Emily H. Menashes  
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries

MAY 29 2012

Date

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