

**From:** John Whiteside <[john@jwhiteside.com](mailto:john@jwhiteside.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 24, 2022 2:36 PM  
**To:** Moore, Christopher <[cmoore@mafmc.org](mailto:cmoore@mafmc.org)>  
**Subject:** MSC issue with spiny dogfish - time sensitive  
**Importance:** High

Hi Chris

I apologize for bringing this to your attention with short notice.

You may recall that I represent the US Atlantic spiny dogfish client group who holds Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification of the fishery.

MSC has proposed changing their standards in a way that would eliminate spiny dogfish from having MSC certification.

Nearly 100% of dogfish are sold in the EU to buyers who demand all species be MSC certified. We're told that they will not buy dogfish if it loses its certification.

Comments on the draft standard are due before 7:00AM **LONDON time**, Monday April 4<sup>th</sup>. This essentially means it has to be sent by close of business Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Would the Council submit a brief comment if I sent you something?

My draft to you would be 100% objectively true on its face:

- U.S. Atlantic spiny dogfish are not endangered, threatened or protected.
- Based on the most recent scientific information available, NOAA Fisheries considers the US Atlantic spiny dogfish fishery to be sustainably managed in accordance with applicable laws and regulations for sustainable harvest.
- The stock is currently at a level that supports sustainable fishing and no overfishing is occurring.
- The U.S. Atlantic Spiny Dogfish fishery is a prime example of a successful wild-caught fishery whose sustainability is due in large part to compliance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA).
- The U.S. Atlantic Spiny Dogfish fishery is harvested under a science-based fishery management plan designed around the 10 National Standards of the MSA that include sustainable harvest rates and ecosystem-based conservation requirements to minimize bycatch and habitat impacts and address social and economic impacts.
- This science-based management process has been evolving since 1976 when the MSA was enacted and the eight regional Fishery Management Councils were established to manage fisheries based on peer-reviewed science of the agency.

The next points are from me and are based on my knowledge of the dogfish market.

- Nearly 100% of US Atlantic spiny dogfish are sold in the European Union.
- The buyers in the EU require the species of fish they buy come from MSC certified fisheries.
- If MSC adopts the proposed standard in its current form, US Atlantic spiny dogfish will no longer be eligible to be certified as a sustainable fishery under MSC.
- Removing the MSC certification from the U.S. Atlantic spiny dogfish fishery will cause a complete collapse of the commercial market leaving it without any customers.
- The fishermen who currently fish for U.S. Atlantic spiny dogfish will have no outlet to sell to and will be forced to switch to other species.

- By eliminating commercial fishing, the U.S. Atlantic spiny dogfish stock will increase unchecked and expose recovering stocks like Atlantic cod to never-before seen levels of predation.

Please let me know if this is something you can and are willing to do.

Regards,  
John

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