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6/11/56



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release JUNE 12, 1956

PROPOSE REVISED REGULATIONS FOR NEW ENGLAND HADDOCK FISHERY

Assistant Secretary of the Interior Wesley A. D'Ewart called attention to a notice of proposed rule making which appears in the Federal Register today wherein the Department of the Interior has published the text of new regulatory provisions to provide for the registration of vessels to be used in the taking of haddock within Subarea 5 of the Northwest Atlantic Ocean.

Subarea 5 is an area of the high seas lying off the coast of New England and is one of five separately described areas of the high seas covered by the International Convention for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries, signed at Washington, February 8, 1949. Vessels registered for use in the haddock fishery will be required to use trawl nets having a minimum mesh size of four and one-half inches.

In publishing the notice of proposed rule making, Mr. D'Ewart explained that the new regulations are to be adopted in the interest of more effective enforcement of a minimum mesh size restriction which has been in effect since 1953. The mesh size restriction was adopted in that year following a proposal by the ten-nation International Commission for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries. Experience gained during three years of operations has indicated the desirability of effecting these changes which will be helpful in obtaining industry-wide compliance with the requirements of the regulations.

For many years, prior to the adoption of the regulations, haddock fishermen using nets having an inside measurement as small as two and seven-eighths inches caught haddock which were too small to be marketed. These small haddock were discarded at sea. The present regulations, based upon knowledge obtained through extensive research into the rates of growth and mortality of haddock, specifies a minimum mesh size of four and one-half inches inside measure which has the effect of permitting immature haddock to escape unharmed from the nets. Since adoption of the new fishing practices in 1953, biologists of the Fish and Wildlife Service estimate that several million pounds of young fish have been left in the sea each year for capture at a future time when they will have grown to a more desirable size.

The notice of proposed rule making provides that persons desiring to comment on the proposed regulations may do so by writing to Director John L. Farley, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington 25, D. C., within the period of 30 days from the date of publication of the notice in the Federal Register. Copies of the notice containing the complete text of the proposed regulations may be obtained by writing to Director Farley or to Mr. David R. Gascoyne, Regional Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, 59 Temple Place, Boston 11, Massachusetts.

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