

inserted between the extension and the codend of the net and would be the same diameter as the net. This project is proposed to occur in the Western GOM. The project would take place over 22 days from July 2005, to August 12, 2005, in two areas in the GOM waters, excluding the Western GOM Closure Area, as follows: (1) The area from 43°10' N. lat. to the Maine shoreline, and from 69°30' W. long. to the Maine shoreline; and (2) the area from 42°00' N. lat. to 42°30' N. lat., and from 70°00' W. long. to the Massachusetts shoreline (approximately 70°40' W. long.). Researchers have requested an exemption from the regulations establishing the minimum mesh size requirements because the net that they are proposing to use contains a panel of nonconforming mesh (neither diamond nor square in shape). Given that the overall area of the elongate mesh is larger than that of the square and diamond mesh, it is not anticipated that the panel would lead to the capture of a large number of undersized fish.

Researchers would film the interior and exterior of the net to verify proper construction and to document species' reactions to the net. Once the proper construction of the net has been verified, researchers would use the remainder of the trials to test the potential for bycatch reduction of the experimental panel by conducting alternating tows using the net with the experimental panel and a conventional codend, following an A-B-B-A pattern, comparing the catches between the two codends. No more than 110 tows total for the three vessels combined would be performed during at-sea trials. Under the previously issued EFP, researchers were authorized to conduct similar research over 30 days of sea trials; however, they were able to conduct only 8 days of sea trials.

The researchers anticipate that a total of 4,917 lb (2,230.3 kg) of fish, including 1,320 lb (598.7 kg) of cod, 550 lb (249.5 kg) of yellowtail flounder, 550 lb (249.5 kg) of winter flounder, and 550 lb (249.5 kg) of American plaice would be harvested throughout the course of the study. Other species that are anticipated to be caught are species of skates, smooth and spiny dogfish, sculpins, sea ravens, and sea robins. All legal-sized fish, within the possession limits, would be sold, with the proceeds going toward defraying the cost of vessel chartering fees. There would be no retention of undersized fish aboard the vessels and there is no anticipated impact on marine mammals or endangered species.

The applicant may request minor modifications and extensions to the EFP

throughout the year. EFP modifications and extensions may be granted without further notice if they are deemed essential to facilitate completion of the proposed research, and minimal enough so as not to change the scope or impact of the initially approved EFP request.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: July 5, 2005.

Alan D. Risenhoover

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. E5-3602 Filed 7-7-05; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 070505C]

Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions; General Provisions for Domestic Fisheries; Application for Exempted Fishing Permit

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Administrator, Northeast Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator) has made a preliminary determination that the subject Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) application contains all the required information and warrants further consideration. The Regional Administrator has also made a preliminary determination that the activities authorized under the EFP would be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Management Plan (FMP). However, further review and consultation may be necessary before a final determination is made to issue the EFP. Therefore, NMFS announces that the Regional Administrator proposes to issue an EFP that would allow one or more vessels to conduct fishing operations that are otherwise restricted by the regulations governing the fisheries of the Northeastern United States. The EFP would allow for exemptions from the Atlantic sea scallop possession and landings restrictions specified at 50 CFR 648.53(a). The experiment proposes to conduct underwater videotaping of sea turtle interactions with scallop dredge gear. The EFP would allow these exemptions for one or more commercial vessels for a total of 20 days of fishing. All experimental work would be

monitored by Coonamessett Farm, Inc., (CFI) personnel.

Regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act require publication of this notification to provide interested parties the opportunity to comment on applications for proposed EFPs.

DATES: Comments on this document must be received on or before July 25, 2005.

ADDRESSES: Comments should be submitted by any of the following methods:

- Mail: Patricia A. Kurkul, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Northeast Regional Office, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope, "Comments on CFI EFP Proposal for Sea Turtle/Scallop Dredge Interaction Study."

- Fax: (978) 281-9135.

- E-mail: DA5.89@noaa.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Don Frei, Fishery Management Specialist, phone: 978-281-9221, fax: 978-281-9135.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A request for an EFP was submitted by CFI on May 9, 2005, to conduct research work that is being funded through the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) for a study to collect underwater video to gather additional information about sea turtle behavior in and around scallop dredge gear equipped with a chain mat. The project would investigate sea turtle behavior around scallop dredges and in areas where scalloping has recently occurred. Researchers would try to attract sea turtles using viscera and fishing activity to observe turtle behavior relative to the scallop dredge.

The commercial vessel involved in the project would fish one 13-ft (4 m) scallop dredge outfitted with self-contained video cameras; one camera would be mounted in a forward-looking position, while the other is mounted on the towing warp to look back at the dredge. Tows would be concentrated in one area doing short turnaround tows. The video cameras would also be lowered to examine the scallop dredge path along the bottom as well as the scallop viscera dumping location. The vessel would fish off the coast of New Jersey and the Delmarva Peninsula, where sea turtle interactions are likely. The researcher initially proposed to conduct this research during the period June 15 - October 31, 2005. The study would involve a maximum of 20 days of fishing, with at least six tows conducted each day. The total anticipated scallop catch would be 8,000 lb (3,629 kg), which would be landed and sold. It is

anticipated that the catch would be taken in 120–150 tows.

Previous research in this area has shown bycatch to be limited. It is expected that fish bycatch may consist of 5,000 lb (2,268 kg) of little skate, less than 50 lb (23 kg) of monkfish and approximately 300 lb (136 kg) of flatfish. All incidental catch would be returned to the sea. If there are interactions with sea turtles, the sea turtles would be handled in accordance with sea turtle resuscitation regulations at 50 CFR 223.206(d)(1). If any injured sea turtles are encountered, the researchers would arrange for transfer to authorized rehabilitation facilities. Observers from CFI would collect data on each trip.

The possession and landing restrictions for commercial vessels fishing under the General Category scallop vessel permit allow such vessels to harvest and land up to 400 lb (181 kg) of scallops on each trip, with up to one landing per calendar day. In order to improve the success of the research project, CFI has requested an EFP to authorize the commercial vessels involved to land 400 lb (181 kg) for each day that they fish, without requiring the vessel to return to port every day to offload the scallop catch. This would enable the vessel to stay in the vicinity of sea turtles that are encountered.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: July 5, 2005.

Alan D. Risenhoover

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
[FR Doc. E5–3611 Filed 7–7–05; 8:45 am]

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COMMITTEE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEXTILE AGREEMENTS

Determination Under the African Growth and Opportunity Act

June 30, 2005.

AGENCY: Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements (CITA)

ACTION: Directive to the Commissioner of Customs and Border Protection

SUMMARY: The Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements (CITA) has determined that certain textile and apparel goods from Ethiopia shall be treated as “handloomed, handmade, or folklore articles” and qualify for preferential treatment under the African Growth and Opportunity Act. Imports of eligible products from Ethiopia with an appropriate visa will qualify for duty-free treatment.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 18, 2005.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Anna Flaaten, International Trade Specialist, Office of Textiles and Apparel, U.S. Department of Commerce, (202) 482-3400.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The African Growth and Opportunity Act (Title I of the Trade and Development Act of 2000, Pub. L. No. 106-200) (AGOA) provides preferential tariff treatment for imports of certain textile and apparel products of beneficiary sub-Saharan African countries, including hand-loomed, handmade, or folklore articles of a beneficiary country that are certified as such by the competent authority in the beneficiary country. In Executive Order 13191, the President authorized CITA to consult with beneficiary sub-Saharan African countries and to determine which, if any, particular textile and apparel goods shall be treated as being hand-loomed, handmade, or folklore articles. (66 FR 7272)

In a letter to the Commissioner of Customs dated January 18, 2001, the United States Trade Representative directed Customs to require that importers provide an appropriate export visa from a beneficiary sub-Saharan African country to obtain preferential treatment under section 112(a) of the AGOA (66 FR 7837). The first digit of the visa number corresponds to one of nine groupings of textile and apparel products that are eligible for preferential tariff treatment. Grouping “9” is reserved for handmade, hand-loomed, or folklore articles.

CITA has consulted with Ethiopian authorities and has determined that hand-loomed fabrics, hand-loomed articles (e.g., hand-loomed rugs, scarves, place mats, and tablecloths), handmade articles made from hand-loomed fabrics, and the folklore articles described in the annex to this notice, if produced in and exported from Ethiopia, are eligible for preferential tariff treatment under section 112(a) of the AGOA. In the letter published below, CITA directs the Commissioner of Customs and Border Protection to allow duty-free entry of such products under U.S. Harmonized Tariff Schedule subheading 9819.11.27 if accompanied by an appropriate AGOA visa in grouping “9”.

James C. Leonard III,
Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements.

Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements

June 30, 2005.

Commissioner,
Bureau of Customs and Border Protection,

Washington, DC 20229.

Dear Commissioner: The Committee for the Implementation of Textiles Agreements (CITA), pursuant to Sections 112(a) of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (Title I of Pub. L. No. 106-200) (AGOA) and Executive Order 13191 of January 17, 2001, has determined, effective on July 18, 2005, that the following articles shall be treated as “handloomed, handmade, and folklore articles” under the AGOA: (a) handloomed fabrics, handloomed articles (e.g., handloomed rugs, scarves, placemats, and tablecloths), and hand-made articles made from handloomed fabrics, if made in Ethiopia from fabric handloomed in Ethiopia; and (b) the folklore articles described in the attached annex if made in Ethiopia. Such articles are eligible for duty-free treatment only if entered under subheading 9819.11.27 and accompanied by a properly completed visa for product grouping “9”, in accordance with the provisions of the Visa Arrangement between the Government of Ethiopia and the Government of the United States Concerning Textile and Apparel Articles Claiming Preferential Tariff Treatment under Section 112 of the Trade and Development Act of 2000. After additional consultations with Ethiopian authorities, CITA may determine that additional textile and apparel goods shall be treated as folklore articles.

Sincerely,
James C. Leonard III,
Chairman, Committee for the Implementation of Textile Agreements.

ANNEX

CITA has determined that the following textile and apparel goods shall be treated as folklore articles for purposes of the AGOA if made in Ethiopia. Articles must be ornamented in characteristic Ethiopian or regional folk style. An article may not include modern features such as zippers, elastic, elasticized fabrics, or hook-and-pile fasteners (such as velcro or similar holding fabric). An article may not incorporate patterns that are not traditional or historical to Ethiopia, such as airplanes, buses, cowboys, or cartoon characters and may not incorporate designs referencing holidays or festivals not common to traditional Ethiopian culture, such as Halloween and Thanksgiving. Typical Ethiopian designs may use, but are not limited to, geometric shapes and diamond-shaped or modified diamond-shaped crosses.

Eligible folklore articles:

(a) Shema Borsa (Hand-woven bag/pouch)
Shema Borsas are made of relatively thick cotton hand-woven fabric on the exterior with or without an inside lining that is generally machine-woven fabric, and may be hand- or machine-stitched together. The Shema Borsas are typically 10 - 14 inches wide and 10 - 14 inches tall decorated with features including typical small geometrical diamond-shaped patterns, which can be woven into the fabric itself or ornamented with strips of woven silk in geometric shapes, braided silk appliqués, small shells, nuts, silver jewelry, beads, or fringe. The Shema Borsa may or may not have a fold over