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Dated: April 15, 2008.

Jeffrey Anspacher,

Director, Export Trading Company Affairs.

[FR Doc. E8-8520 Filed 4-17-08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration

Manufacturing & Services' Sustainable Manufacturing Initiative; Update

ACTION: Notice of updates and e-mail list sign-up.

SUMMARY: The International Trade Administration's Manufacturing & Services Unit held a Sustainable Manufacturing Initiative event on September 27, 2007. Manufacturing & Services is notifying the public of outcomes of the September 2007 event and of this initiative's dynamic Web presence and e-mail list sign-up.

DATES: N/A.

ADDRESSES: N/A.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Matthew Howard in Manufacturing & Services' Office of Trade Policy Analysis, 202-482-3703.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Sustainable manufacturing practices in the United States have become increasingly popular in recent years as companies look for new ways to make more efficient use of resources, ensure compliance with domestic and international regulations related to environment and health, and enhance the marketability of their products and services. As the trend towards sustainable manufacturing practices grows, so do its implications for U.S. global competitiveness and firm profitability.

At the Department of Commerce, one of our main goals is to foster domestic and international conditions for doing business that allow U.S. firms to successfully compete internationally. Evidence has shown that firms incorporating both environmentally and economically sustainable manufacturing processes can gain competitive advantages by achieving inherent cost savings (i.e., improving their energy efficiency, minimizing raw materials usage, etc.) while at the same time reaping societal benefits for being good stewards of the environment. Many U.S. firms have demonstrated that being

environmentally sustainable can also mean being profitable.

In order to provide effective and continued support to U.S. companies in their sustainable manufacturing efforts, Commerce's Manufacturing & Services (MAS) unit has launched a Sustainable Manufacturing Initiative and Public-Private Dialogue that aims to (a) identify U.S. industry's most pressing sustainable manufacturing challenges and (b) coordinate public and private sector efforts to address these challenges.

MAS received a great deal of constructive individual feedback from U.S. industry at its September 27, 2007 “Enhancing U.S. Competitiveness Through Sustainable Manufacturing: A Public-Private Dialogue” event. Participants from both the public and private sectors agreed that sustainable manufacturing is an area where the United States must continue to increase its global competitive advantage, both in its ability to develop and utilize cleaner, more energy-efficient technologies and in its ability to implement manufacturing practices that are cost-effective and environmentally sound.

MAS has developed a dynamic Web presence to help keep the public informed of news on the Sustainable Manufacturing Initiative. Information on this initiative can be found at: <http://trade.gov/competitiveness/sustainablemanufacturing/index.asp>.

This Web site features an e-mail list sign-up function where interested companies and individuals may sign-up for news and other updates on Manufacturing & Services' Sustainable Manufacturing Initiative.

To help maintain and enhance forward momentum on this initiative and continue the follow-up to the September 2007 event, MAS plans to take on four specific efforts in response to U.S. industry requests for USG action on the topic of sustainable manufacturing:

1. *Establishment of an Interagency Task Force on Sustainable Manufacturing.* To help maximize the value of complementary sustainable manufacturing efforts by various federal agencies as well as ensure the continuity of the MAS Sustainable Manufacturing Initiative, MAS is proposing to establish and chair an interagency task force on sustainable manufacturing. Comprised of representatives of interested federal agencies, this task force will be responsible for carrying out projects identified through the public-private dialogue as U.S. industry priorities.

2. *Creation of a Central Online Clearinghouse of USG Programs and*

Resources That Support Sustainable Business. There are numerous U.S. government (USG) programs currently available to support sustainable business practices in the United States; however, there is currently no single portal yet available to the public that catalogs these many programs. To begin consolidating this information, Commerce will begin working with other federal agencies via the interagency task force to launch an online clearinghouse that U.S. companies can use to identify the USG programs and resources that are right for them. MAS has already begun developing the clearinghouse, which can be found at the following Web address (please note this is not the final product, but merely a starting point and it is not intended to be a comprehensive listing of all relevant USG resources in support of U.S. industry's sustainable manufacturing efforts): http://trade.gov/competitiveness/sustainablemanufacturing/USG_PRG_Sustainable_Business.asp.

3. *Leading Domestic Trade Missions to Promote Sustainable Manufacturing.* Numerous U.S. companies have voiced concerns over the lack of visibility sustainable manufacturing receives nationwide and the lack of information U.S. manufacturers possess in this field. In order to continue spreading awareness of sustainable manufacturing's benefits, both to U.S. global competitiveness and the environment, MAS proposes and is currently exploring the feasibility of a domestic trade mission in the United States, leading small and medium-size business owners on a site tour of some of the leading sustainable manufacturers in the country.

4. *Creation of Metrics for Sustainable Manufacturing.* Efforts in response to U.S. industry requests for metrics that can be used to measure the economic, environmental and social impacts of sustainable manufacturing have been underway between the U.S. Department of Commerce and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) since 2005. Commerce has submitted a proposal to the OECD for a study that would propose a series of metrics to help businesses measure sustainable manufacturing's cost-effectiveness as well as its benefits to the environment and society as a whole. This proposal has been accepted by the OECD and work on this study is expected to commence in the spring of 2008. The Department of Commerce is also seeking U.S. industry representation on a newly created OECD Sustainable Manufacturing Experts Group that will

help to oversee and guide the aforementioned study. Interested companies should contact the Manufacturing & Services' Office of Trade Policy Analysis at the number listed above.

Dated: April 9, 2008.

Matthew Howard,

Office of Trade Policy Analysis.

[FR Doc. E8-8359 Filed 4-17-08; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XG93

Fisheries in the Western Pacific; Marine Conservation Plan for Pacific Insular Areas; Western Pacific Sustainable Fisheries Fund

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

ACTION: Notice of agency decision.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces the approval of a three-year marine conservation plan (MCP) for Pacific Insular Areas other than American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

DATES: This agency decision is effective April 11, 2008.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the marine conservation plan are available from the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council), 1164 Bishop St., Suite 1400, Honolulu, HI 96813, tel. 808-522-8220, fax 808-522-8226.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Alvin Katekaru, NMFS Pacific Islands Regional Office, 808-944-2207.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under section 204(e) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), the Secretary of State, with the concurrence of the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) and in consultation with the Council, may negotiate and enter into a Pacific Insular Area fishery agreement (PIAFA) to allow foreign fishing within the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) adjacent to any Pacific Insular Area other than American Samoa, Guam, or the Northern Mariana Islands, which, by definition, does not include the State of Hawaii. Prior to entering into a PIAFA, the Council shall develop a three-year Marine Conservation Plan (MCP) providing details on uses for funds to be collected by the Secretary under the PIAFA. The Magnuson-Stevens Act

authorizes that any payment received under a PIAFA in support of conservation and management objectives in an MCP developed by the Council and, in the case of violations by foreign vessels occurring within the EEZ off any Pacific Insular Area (other than American Samoa, Guam, or the Northern Mariana Islands), any amounts received by the Secretary attributable to fines and penalties imposed under the Magnuson-Stevens Act, shall be deposited into the Western Pacific Sustainable Fisheries Fund for use by the Council.

The MCP to be approved by the Secretary must be consistent with the Council's fishery management plans, must identify conservation and management objectives (including criteria for determining when such objectives have been met), and must prioritize planned marine conservation projects. Although no foreign fishing is being contemplated at this time, the Council has developed an MCP for the Pacific Insular Areas here defined as the EEZ around Johnston and Palmyra Atolls, Kingman Reef, and Jarvis, Howland, Baker, and Wake Islands. These areas are sometimes known as the "Pacific remote island areas" or "U.S. island possessions in the Central Pacific Ocean."

At its 139th meeting held in October 2007, the Council approved its "Western Pacific Sustainable Fisheries Fund Marine Conservation Plan," dated August 29, 2007. The MCP contains seven objectives:

1. Support quality research and obtain the most complete scientific information available to assess and manage fisheries;
2. Promote an ecosystem approach in fisheries management, including reducing waste in fisheries and minimizing impacts on marine habitats and impacts on protected species;
3. Conduct education and outreach to foster good stewardship principles and broad and direct public participation in the Council's decision-making process;
4. Recognize the importance of island cultures and traditional fishing practices in managing fishery resources, and foster opportunities for participation;
5. Promote environmentally-responsible fishing and the utilization of sustainable fisheries that provide long-term economic growth and stability;
6. Promote regional cooperation to manage domestic and international fisheries; and
7. Encourage development of technologies and methods to achieve the most effective level of monitoring, control, and surveillance, and to ensure safety at sea.

The MCP also identifies major task areas that include data collection and monitoring, management, biological research and assessment, social economic research and assessment, policy development, protected species, public outreach, etc., within which projects are ranked in order of priority.

On November 6, 2007, the Council transmitted its MCP to NMFS (designee of the Secretary) for approval. This notice announces that NMFS has determined that the Council's MCP satisfies the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and that NMFS has approved the MCP for the three-year period from April 11, 2008, through April 10, 2011.

Dated: April 14, 2008.

Alan D. Risenhoover,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XA34

Marine Mammal Stock Assessment Reports

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

ACTION: Notice; response to comments.

SUMMARY: As required by the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), NMFS has incorporated public comments into revisions of marine mammal stock assessment reports (SARs). These reports for 2007 are now final and available to the public.

ADDRESSES: Electronic copies of SARs are available on the Internet as regional compilations and individual reports at the following address: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/sars/>. You also may send requests for copies of reports to: Chief, Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3226, Attn: Stock Assessments.

Copies of the Alaska Regional SARs may be requested from Robyn Angliss, Alaska Fisheries Science Center, 7600 Sand Point Way, BIN 15700, Seattle, WA 98115.

Copies of the Atlantic Regional SARs may be requested from Gordon Waring, Northeast Fisheries Science Center, 166 Water Street, Woods Hole, MA 02543.