



# WEST PALM BEACH FISHING CLUB

~ Established 1934 ~



May 7, 2019

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council  
4055 Faber Place Drive, #201  
North Charleston, SC 29405

Re: Protections for Bullet and Frigate Mackerel

Dear SAFMC Members,

On behalf of the nearly 1,400 members of the West Palm Beach Fishing Club (WPBFC), I am writing to let the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) know that we support efforts to designate bullet mackerel (*Auxis rochei*) and frigate mackerel (*Auxis thazard*) as ecosystem component species in the SAFMC's Dolphin and Wahoo Fishery Management Plan (FMP).

Dolphin and wahoo are among the most sought after pelagic species in southeast Florida. Both species are extremely valuable to the recreational and commercial fishery, and help support a robust marine industry that is a significant economic driver in our region. Since bullet and frigate mackerel are primary forage for dolphin and wahoo, as well as other pelagic species like blue marlin, maintaining healthy forage fish populations is critical. The WPBFC is a strong advocate of ecosystem based management, which includes conservation measures for forage fish.

Too often fishery management approaches have been reactionary instead of precautionary. Implementing common-sense protections will help safeguard these valuable forage fish species from over-exploitation and will make management of our marine ecosystem more inclusive and sustainable.

The WPBFC encourages the SAFMC to designate bullet and frigate mackerel as ecosystem component species in the Dolphin and Wahoo FMP. This forward thinking approach represents good stewardship and is one of the best ways to ensure populations of pelagic species remain healthy.

Sincerely,

Tom Twyford  
President