ATLANTIC SCIENTIFIC REVIEW GROUP
A Regional Advisory Group to the National Marine Fisheries Service

Dr. William T. Hogarth                                  July 15, 2007
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Dr. Hogarth:

The following are recommendations of the Atlantic Scientific Review Group (ASRG) to the National Marine Service resulting from our 7-9 January 2007 meeting at USFWS facilities in Jacksonville, Florida. The group very much appreciated the efforts of Gordon Waring and his staff (especially Barbara Newell) in arranging for this meeting, as well as the hospitality and assistance provided to all by the USFWS staff in Jacksonville. The minutes of the 2007 meeting were previously distributed following review by ASRG members and other attendees. The SRG has two recommendations that arose from our most recent meeting.

The ASRG **strongly recommends** that NMFS consider reconvening the Harbor Porpoise Take Reduction Team to address increase in takes in the gillnet fisheries that interact with this stock. Takes now exceed PBR, clearly demonstrating that the provisions of the existing Take Reduction Plan are not working and/or are not being enforced.

The ASRG also **recommends** that NMFS supports the activities of other TRTs as necessary to meet the goals of those teams. The ASRG recognizes that the current budget situation constrains the ability of the agency to respond to all its legislative responsibilities, and therefore the ASRG recommends that the agency prioritize the needs of the TRTs addressing stocks with the most pressing conservation needs.

We appreciate your attention to these matters.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald M. Baltz
Chair, Atlantic SRG

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