



**Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council**  
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Michael P. Luisi, Chairman | P. Weston Townsend, Vice Chairman  
Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director

## MEMORANDUM

**Date:** July 28, 2022  
**To:** Chris Moore, Executive Director  
**From:** Kiley Dancy, Staff  
**Subject:** Ecosystem and Ocean Planning Committee Report: Proposed Designation of Hudson Canyon National Marine Sanctuary

On Thursday, July 21, 2022, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Ecosystems and Ocean Planning (EOP) Committee and Advisory Panel met jointly to provide input to the Council to inform scoping comments on the proposed designation of Hudson Canyon National Marine Sanctuary. The materials for this meeting are available at: <https://www.mafmc.org/council-events/2022/ecosystem-and-ocean-planning-eop-committee-and-advisory-panel-meeting>.

Based on the input received during this meeting, a scoping comment letter is being drafted and distributed to the Council for review prior to the August 8 comment deadline. Once submitted, the Council's scoping comment letter will be posted to the materials for the August meeting at <https://www.mafmc.org/briefing/august-2022>.

Some relevant next steps for the designation process for the Council to be aware of include:

- **Potential formation of a pre-designation Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC):** As noted in the briefing materials for the EOP meeting, NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) may choose to form a pre-designation Sanctuary Advisory Council which would provide input into the designation process. If this occurs, a Federal Register notice would be published seeking comments on the seats that should be represented on the SAC.
- **Council consultation on fishing regulations within the potential sanctuary:** Separate from the public scoping process, the National Marine Sanctuaries Act requires that NOAA consult with the relevant Regional Fishery Management Councils during the designation process for a sanctuary. The Councils are to be provided with the opportunity to prepare draft regulations for fishing within the Exclusive Economic Zone, if the Council deems necessary, to implement the proposed designation. Alternatively, the Council can explain why no additional fishing regulations associated with the sanctuary are necessary. The

Council has been requested to share their recommendations for fishing regulations by **December 31, 2022**.

- **Development of sanctuary designation documents:** Sanctuary designation is a highly participatory process that typically takes 3-5 years. Following conclusion of the scoping process, ONMS will begin development of draft sanctuary designation documents, including a draft EIS with a range of alternatives, proposed regulations and proposed boundaries. These documents will eventually go through a public review and input process.