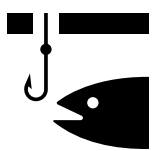


AMERICAN FISHERIES

August 2017

THE SITUATION



Thanks to reforms passed by Congress with overwhelming bipartisan support in 1996 and 2006, **U.S. fisheries have become a model of sustainability and responsible, science-based management.** While some fish stocks and the fishermen who historically target them continue to suffer from the impacts of chronic overfishing, the evidence shows that on the whole, fishing is becoming a more stable and profitable enterprise in America.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

The **Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA)** - designed to kick foreign fishing fleets out of U.S. waters - **expired in 2013.** Although Congress continues to fund programs under the Act, it has not made important updates to improve fisheries science, conservation, and management.

Under House GOP leadership, fisheries policy has shifted from a bipartisan issue with regional divisions to a hyper-partisan one tied to an extreme anti-conservation agenda.

WHY SHOULD AMERICANS CARE?

The **MSA ensures that American fisheries will be sustainable in the long term,** giving consumers a growing supply of domestic seafood to choose over foreign product that can be mislabeled, contaminated, unsustainable, or harvested using slave labor.

WHAT'S THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT?

By **removing too many fish, ocean ecosystems can be thrown out of balance,** damaging sensitive and productive habitats like coral reefs and harming the economy.

THE FACTS

U.S. commercial fisheries sales have **topped 4,200M for three straight years,** and recreational fishing jobs have **increased to nearly 440K** (NOAA)

41 stocks have been rebuilt from an overfished condition under MSA since 1996, according to NOAA

WHAT'S CONGRESS DOING?

Committee Republicans continue to push a partisan MSA reauthorization bill that would undermine fisheries conservation and weaken bedrock environmental laws. The Senate has not taken up that bill or moved a bill of its own.



Democrats have proposed legislation that would reauthorize MSA while keeping core conservation provisions intact, providing more opportunities to partner with fishermen on research, and taking advantage of new technologies for data collection and monitoring.



The **GOP bill, widely referred to as the Empty Oceans Act, would take us back to the dark ages of fisheries management,** when overfishing and economic depression were the norm. House Republicans have turned MSA reauthorization into an effort to advance their anti-conservation priorities by proposing language that takes the science out of fisheries management and guts conservation measures.



A number of fishing and conservation groups, including **Cape Cod Commercial Fisherman's Alliance, Gulf of Mexico Shareholders Alliance** and **Pew Charitable Trusts,** oppose the GOP "Empty Oceans Act."

MSA REAUTHORIZATION IS IN LIMBO.

The **House Republican proposal is harmful,** and has died in the Senate two Congresses in a row.