

Protecting America's Coastal Communities

Coastal communities are critical to the future of our nation. In large part, the vitality of these communities depends on the health of ocean fish populations. U.S. fisheries support over 1.5 million American jobs – but in order to protect and strengthen coastal economies, we must also sustainably manage the resources on which they rely. The seafood industry sells \$68.4 billion of fish and fish products to American consumers each year. Combined U.S. commercial and recreational fishing adds \$185 billion annually to the U.S. economy. For these reasons, America's ocean fish are some of our most valuable natural resources.

Unfortunately, many U.S. fish populations are severely depleted. Part of America's road to economic recovery lies in reinvigorating our coastal communities and businesses, and that means getting our fisheries back on track. Recent economic research supports this conclusion. One economic study found the value of rebuilding four Mid-Atlantic fish populations would be \$570 million annually. Another estimated that the economic value of rebuilding New England's depleted groundfish populations would be up to \$500 million per year. For both coastal communities and the nation, the economic benefits of investing in U.S. fish populations are substantial. The cost of further delay will be significant.

Americans across the country have called on Congress to reject legislative efforts that would hurt U.S. coastal economies by allowing federal fisheries managers to make poor decisions about our precious ocean resources, and have asked their representatives to sign the following pledge. By doing so, you will help ensure the continued benefits of healthy fish populations and protect the coastal communities that rely so critically on America's fishing economy.

Coastal Community Protection Pledge

To support America's coastal communities and ocean environment, I pledge to:

- 1. Do all that I can to ensure the end of overfishing in the U.S. by 2011**
- 2. Support rebuilding depleted fish populations as soon as possible, and oppose efforts to delay rebuilding**
- 3. Ensure fishery management decisions follow sound independent science**
- 4. Invest in the long-term ecological and economic needs of our coasts**

Signed,

To record your Coastal Community Protection Pledge or for questions, please contact Joseph Gordon at the Pew Environment Group at jgordon@pewtrusts.org or 202-887-1347.