



Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary

SANCTUARY ADVISORY
COUNCIL

**Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council
Resolution on Drift Gillnet Fishery's Leatherback
Conservation Area**

September 26, 2006

Whereas, the National Marine Fisheries Service adapted a Leatherback Conservation Zone (time/area closure) in 2001 to protect the critically endangered Pacific leatherback sea turtle from injury and mortality from the drift gillnet fishery; and

Whereas, the Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary is included within the Leatherback Conservation Zone; and

Whereas, the Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary is a known feeding area for the leatherback during the Leatherback Conservation Zone time/area closure; and

Whereas, the Leatherback Conservation Zone has successfully reduced observed leatherback interactions with the drift gillnet fishery to zero since its establishment in 2001; and

Whereas, over 1,000 scientists from 100 nations, and 1,280 NGOs have called for a moratorium on gillnet fishing in the Pacific until such activities can be conducted without harm to leatherbacks; and

Whereas, 230 scientists from 43 nations, and 45 NGOs have signed a letter urging the National Marine Fisheries Service to maintain the current Leatherback Conservation Zone time/area closure; and

Whereas, the leatherback sea turtle is listed as Endangered under the US Endangered Species Act and listed as Critically Endangered by the IUCN World Conservation Union Red List of Threatened Species; and

Whereas, the Pacific leatherback remains critically endangered and scientists estimate its extinction within ten to thirty years if current threats remain unaddressed;

Therefore be it resolved, the Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council strongly encourages the National Marine Fisheries Service to maintain the current Leatherback Conservation Zone (i.e., the "No Action Alternative" of the Pacific Fishery Management Council Environmental Assessment, Regulatory Impact Review & Regulatory Flexibility Analysis of the MANAGEMENT OF THE DRIFT GILLNET FISHERY EXEMPTED FISHING PERMIT AND/OR REGULATORY MANAGEMENT DRAFT).

MEMBERS:

Carol Keiper
Research

Lance Morgan
Conservation

Chuck Wise
Maritime Activity

Tom Lambert
Community-at-Large Sonoma

Joe Smith
Community-at-Large Marin

Doreen Moser
Education

Steve Edmondson
National Marine Fisheries Service

Captain David Swatland
U.S. Coast Guard

Daniel Cohen
Research Alternate

Todd Steiner
Conservation Alternate

Josh Churchman
Maritime Activity Alternate

Michael Mery
Community-at-Large Marin Alternate

Duffy Ross
Education Alternate