

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4679

To require the Comptroller General of the United States to submit to Congress a report examining efforts by the Regional Fishery Management Councils, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, and the National Marine Fisheries Service to prepare and adapt United States fishery management for the impacts of climate change, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 15, 2019

Mr. CUNNINGHAM (for himself, Mr. MAST, Mr. ROONEY of Florida, and Mr. HUFFMAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To require the Comptroller General of the United States to submit to Congress a report examining efforts by the Regional Fishery Management Councils, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, and the National Marine Fisheries Service to prepare and adapt United States fishery management for the impacts of climate change, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Climate-Ready Fish-
3 eries Act of 2019”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 Congress finds the following:

6 (1) According to the Fourth National Climate
7 Assessment, climate change, which results in ocean
8 warming, acidification, and oxygen loss, is rapidly al-
9 tering the abundance, productivity, and distribution
10 of fish stocks.

11 (2) United States commercial and recreational
12 fisheries generate approximately \$210 billion in sales
13 impacts each year and are a critical economic driver
14 for thousands of coastal communities.

15 (3) Changing water temperatures have already
16 affected many commercially and recreationally tar-
17 geted fish stocks.

18 (4) Changing conditions and effects on fish
19 stocks are impacting subsistence fishing, which is
20 critical to food security and culture for Alaska Na-
21 tive and American Indian tribes, and fishing commu-
22 nities throughout the Nation, according to the
23 Fourth National Climate Assessment.

24 (5) The impacts of climate change on fish are
25 resulting in a cascade of management and sustain-

1 ability challenges, which negatively affect marine
2 ecosystems, fishermen, and fishing communities.

3 (6) A better understanding of current efforts
4 underway by the Regional Fishery Management
5 Councils, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Com-
6 mission, and the National Marine Fisheries Service
7 to address the impact of climate change on fishery
8 management is needed to ensure our fisheries and
9 their marine ecosystems are well prepared for chang-
10 ing ocean conditions.

11 **SEC. 3. REPORT ON EFFORTS TO PREPARE AND ADAPT**
12 **UNITED STATES FISHERY MANAGEMENT FOR**
13 **THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE.**

14 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
15 date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General
16 of the United States shall submit a report to Congress
17 examining efforts by the Regional Fishery Management
18 Councils, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commis-
19 sion, and the National Marine Fisheries Service to prepare
20 and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

21 (b) CONTENTS OF STUDY.—The report required
22 under subsection (a) shall include—

23 (1) an examination of current or previous ef-
24 forts, and whether those efforts have resulted in
25 changes to management, by the Regional Fishery

1 Management Councils, the Atlantic States Marine
2 Fisheries Commission, and the National Marine
3 Fisheries Service to prepare and adapt Federal and
4 jointly managed fisheries for the impacts of climate
5 change;

6 (2) an examination of any guidance issued to
7 the Regional Fishery Management Councils by the
8 National Marine Fisheries Service to prepare and
9 adapt Federal fishery management for the impacts
10 of climate change and whether and how that guid-
11 ance has been utilized;

12 (3) identification of and recommendations for
13 how best to address the most significant economic,
14 social, ecological, or other knowledge gaps, as well as
15 key funding gaps, that would increase the ability of
16 the Regional Fishery Management Councils, the At-
17 lantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, or the
18 National Marine Fisheries Service to prepare and
19 adapt fishery management for the impacts of climate
20 change;

21 (4) recommendations for how the Regional
22 Fishery Management Councils, the Atlantic States
23 Marine Fisheries Commission, and the National Ma-
24 rine Fisheries Service can better adapt fishery man-
25 agement and prepare associated fishing industries

1 and dependent communities for the impacts of cli-
2 mate change; and

3 (5) recommendations for how to enhance the
4 capacity of the National Marine Fisheries Service to
5 monitor climate-related changes to fisheries and ma-
6 rine ecosystems, to understand the mechanisms of
7 change, to evaluate risks and priorities, to provide
8 forecasts and projections of future conditions, to
9 communicate scientific advice, and to better manage
10 fisheries under changing conditions due to climate
11 change.

○