

WHEREAS, The fish and shellfish resources of the State of Maryland contribute, directly and indirectly, hundreds of millions of dollars annually to the economy of the State; and

WHEREAS, The abundance of many of these resources has declined dramatically over the past thirty years; and

WHEREAS, The signatories to the 1987 Chesapeake Bay agreement, including the State of Maryland, have pledged to develop Bay-wide fisheries management plans for all commercially and recreationally important species of fish and shellfish; and

WHEREAS, Past attempts to manage fisheries in a piecemeal fashion have not proven to be effective; and

WHEREAS, White Paper Committees convened by the Department of Natural Resources, and involving all other interested parties, have proven extremely effective in developing comprehensive and long-range management plans for the striped bass and oyster; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article - Natural Resources

[4-2A-05.2] 4-214.

(A) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING TERMS HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED:

(1) "CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES" MEANS 1 OR MORE TECHNIQUES THROUGH WHICH THE OBJECTIVES OF A FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN ARE ACHIEVED;

(2) "FISHERY" OR "FISHERY RESOURCE" MEANS:

(I) ONE OR MORE STOCKS OF FISH WHICH CAN BE TREATED AS A UNIT FOR PURPOSES OF CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT AND WHICH ARE IDENTIFIED ON THE BASIS OF GEOGRAPHIC, SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL, RECREATIONAL, AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS; OR

(II) THE GROUP OR INDUSTRY HARVESTING THOSE STOCKS;

(3) "FISHERY MANAGEMENT" MEANS THE SYSTEM USED TO CONSERVE AND ALLOCATE THE FISHERY RESOURCE, INCLUDING RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION, DETERMINATION OF OBJECTIVES AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES, AND ESTABLISHMENT, ENFORCEMENT, AND PERIODIC EVALUATION OF REGULATIONS; AND

(4) "FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN" MEANS A DOCUMENT OR REPORT THAT CONTAINS A SYSTEMATIC DESCRIPTION OF A GIVEN