

**Language on Protection of and Research on Deep Sea Corals in S. 2012, as
Approved by the Senate Commerce Committee on December 15, 2005**

SEC. 105. FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN DISCRETIONARY PROVISIONS.

Section 303(b) (16 U.S.C. 1853(b)) is amended—

(1) by inserting “(A)” after “(2)” in paragraph (2);

(2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(B) designate such zones in areas where deep sea corals are identified under section 408, to protect deep sea corals from physical damage from fishing gear or to prevent loss or damage to such fishing gear from interactions with deep sea corals, after considering long-term sustainable uses of fishery resources in such areas; and...”

SEC. 211. DEEP SEA CORAL RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM.

Title IV (16 U.S.C. 1881 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“SEC. 408. DEEP SEA CORAL RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM.

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, in consultation with appropriate regional fishery management councils and in coordination with other federal agencies and educational institutions, shall establish a program—

“(1) to identify existing research on, and known locations of, deep sea corals and submit such information to the appropriate Councils;

“(2) to locate and map locations of deep sea corals and submit such information to the Councils;

“(3) to monitor activity in locations where deep sea corals are known or likely to occur, based on best scientific information available, including through underwater or remote sensing technologies and submit such information to the appropriate Councils;

“(4) to conduct research, including cooperative research with fishing industry participants, on deep sea corals and related species, and on survey methods;

“(5) to develop technologies or methods designed to assist fishing industry participants in reducing interactions between fishing gear and deep sea corals; and

“(6) to prioritize program activities in areas where deep sea corals are known to occur, and in areas where scientific modeling or other methods predict deep sea corals are likely to be present.

“(b) REPORTING.—Beginning 1 year after the date of enactment of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2005, the Secretary, in consultation with the Councils, shall submit biennial reports to Congress and the public on steps taken by the Secretary to identify and monitor, and the Councils to protect, deep sea coral areas, including summaries of the results of mapping, research, and data collection performed under the program.”