



**NOAA
FISHERIES**

Office of Protected
Resources

SUBMIT COMMENTS

Online:

<https://www.regulations.gov/commenton/NOAA-NMFS-2017-0029-0027>

Mail:

John Rippe, Endangered Species Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway (SSMC3), Silver Spring, MD 20910, Attn: Giant Clams Proposed Listing Rule

**FOR MORE INFO,
PLEASE VISIT**

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/proposed-rule-10-species-giant-clams-under-endangered-species-act>

Proposed Rule to List Ten Species of Giant Clams under the Endangered Species Act

BACKGROUND

In 2016, NOAA Fisheries received a petition to list 10 species of giant clams as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. In 2017, NOAA Fisheries announced the initiation of a status review for 7 of the 10 species. The status review evaluates information on the species' biology, distribution, and abundance; identifies threats affecting the species' survival; and assesses the species' current and future extinction risk. The most critical threats to all 7 species are past and present overutilization and the inadequacy of existing regulations to address overutilization. These threats have driven the species to low abundance across much of their range, which severely limits their ability to reproduce and recover.

PROPOSAL TO LIST 6 SPECIES OF GIANT CLAMS DUE TO EXTINCTION RISK

Based on the status review for 7 species of giant clams, NOAA Fisheries is proposing to list 5 species as endangered (*Hippopus porcellanus*, *Tridacna derasa*, *T. gigas*, *T. mbalavuana*, and *T. squamosina*) and 1 species as threatened (*H. hippopus*) due to their extinction risk. For these 6 species, the following are examples of activities that would be unlawful if this proposed rule were finalized:

- Harvest, collection, killing, or injury of individuals in the wild;
- Import or export of individuals or products;
- Possession, sale, or transport of any individuals or products that were illegally collected;
- Release of captive specimens into the wild; and
- Altering the species' habitat in a way that results in injury or death of the species.

PROPOSAL TO LIST 4 SPECIES OF GIANT CLAMS DUE TO "SIMILARITY OF APPEARANCE"

Because certain parts and products of giant clams can not be easily identified to the species level (*e.g.*, meat, shell carvings, jewelry), NOAA Fisheries is also proposing to list 4 additional species of giant clams as threatened (*T. crocea*, *T. maxima*, *T. noae*, and *T. squamosa*) based on this "similarity of appearance" concern. For these 4 species, NOAA Fisheries is proposing to prohibit ONLY the import and export of derivative parts and products, which includes any tissue part that has been removed from the shell, any worked shell product (*e.g.*, shell carvings and jewelry), and pearls. All other activities would continue to be lawful for these 4 species (subject to local regulations), including harvest of wild specimens, local sale of parts and products, mariculture, and import, export, and trade of live or intact specimens.

Comments
due by:
October 23,
2024