



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

*Working towards healthy, self-sustaining populations of all Atlantic coast fish species, or successful restoration
well in progress by the year 2015*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ASMFC American Lobster Board Adopts 10% Reduction in Exploitation for the Southern New England Stock as First Phase of Rebuilding Program

Boston, MA – The Commission’s American Lobster Management Board has adopted a 10% reduction in exploitation by all fishing sectors and all gear types starting January 1, 2013 as the first phase in the Board’s efforts to rebuild the Southern New England stock. The 10% reduction would come from changes in the minimum size limit, maximum size limit, and/or closed seasons.

State agencies will convene meetings of the Lobster Conservation Management Teams (LCMT) for Areas 2 through 6 to develop exploitation reduction plans consistent with the suite of approved options contained in Draft Addendum XVII. States are required to submit plans by December 24, 2011 for Technical Committee review. The Board will consider final approval of the plans through adoption of Draft Addendum XVIII at the Commission’s 2012 Winter Meeting.

The Board also moved forward on the development of Draft Addenda XVIII and XIX to initiate the second phase of its rebuilding efforts. Both addenda will propose area-specific measures to scale the scope of the Southern New England fishery to the size of the resource. Draft Addendum XVIII will propose effort control programs for Lobster Conservation Management Areas 2 and 3. Draft Addendum XIX will include options based on recommendations from LCMTs for Areas 4 through 6, the American Lobster Technical Committee and the Plan Development Team. These options would include, but are not limited to, a minimum reduction in traps fished by 25%.

The Board’s actions are taken in response to status of the Southern New England lobster stock which is at low levels of abundance and experiencing persistent low recruitment caused by a combination of environmental factors and continued fishing mortality. It is this low recruitment that is preventing the Southern New England stock from rebuilding. Under the assumptions of poor recruitment and high natural mortality, the Technical Committee is not certain the stock would recover to the target level under a total fishery moratorium.

For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, Senior FMP Coordinator, at 703.842.0740 or tkerns@asmfc.org.

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The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and anadromous species.

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