



# ***Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission***

## **NEWS RELEASE**

*Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
November 5, 2015

PRESS CONTACT: Tina Berger  
703.842.0740

### **ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Board Revises 2016 Black Sea Bass Specifications & Initiates Draft Addendum for Regional Management of 2016 Summer Flounder and Black Sea Bass Recreational Fisheries**

St. Augustine, FL – The Commission’s Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board approved increases to the 2016 black sea bass commercial quota and recreational harvest limit (RHL), with the commercial quota now being set at 2.71 million pounds and the RHL at 2.88 million pounds. These increases are consistent with actions taken by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council in October. The increased quota for black sea bass was based on updated catch and survey information. A black sea bass benchmark stock assessment is underway for completion in December 2016.

The Board initiated development of Draft Addendum XXVII to the Summer Flounder and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plans (FMP) to consider extending use of regional management approaches for the 2016 recreational summer flounder fishery, including an option that would allow for a Delaware Bay specific region. The Draft Addendum also will propose extending use of ad-hoc regional management approaches for black sea bass recreational fisheries in 2016 and 2017. In the event the options in Draft Addendum XXVII are not approved for management, the Board extended the current summer flounder regional management approach for use in 2016.

In 2014, the Board approved Addendum XXV to shift away from traditional use of state-by-state harvest targets under conservation equivalency to use of an alternative regional strategy for managing summer flounder recreational fisheries. Based on its success in keeping recreational harvest within the RHL and providing greater regulatory consistency among neighboring states, this strategy was extended for use in 2015. State-by-state harvest targets previously utilized under conservation equivalency created difficulties for some states as overages occurred due largely to state shares and limits not reflecting local summer flounder abundance and its availability to recreational fishermen. In 2014 and 2015 management regions were the following: Massachusetts; Rhode Island; Connecticut-New Jersey; Delaware-Virginia; and North Carolina.

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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.

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201  
703.842.0740 (phone) 703.842.0741 (fax) [www.asmfmc.org](http://www.asmfmc.org)

The Draft Addendum also will propose the continued use of regional management for the 2016 black sea bass recreational fishery with a northern (Massachusetts – New Jersey) and southern region (Delaware – North Carolina). The regional management approach has been used since 2011 and offers advantages over coastwide regulations by addressing geographic differences in the stock (size, abundance and seasonality) while maintaining the consistent application of management measures by neighboring states.

Draft Addendum XXVII will be presented to the Board for its consideration and approval for public comment at its joint meeting with the Council in December. At the December meeting, the Board and Council also will consider black sea bass and scup federal management measures for 2016. For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [krootes-murdy@asmfc.org](mailto:krootes-murdy@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

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