



NEWS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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MAFMC and ASMFC to Hold Scoping Hearings for Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Commercial/Recreational Allocation Amendment

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) have scheduled a series of scoping hearings to gather public input on the range of issues and information to be considered in the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Commercial/Recreational Allocation Amendment. Hearings will be held February 13 – March 3. Written comments will be accepted through **March 17, 2020**. All comments provided at public hearings or in writing will be presented to the Council and Commission.

This amendment will consider potential modifications to the allocations of catch or landings between the commercial and recreational sectors for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass. The commercial and recreational allocations for all three species were set in the mid-1990s based on historical proportions of landings (for summer flounder and black sea bass) or catch (for scup) from each sector. In July 2018, the Marine Recreational Information Program released revisions to its time series of catch (harvest and discards) estimates. These revisions resulted in much higher recreational catch estimates compared to previous estimates, affecting the entire time series of data going back to 1981. Some changes have also been made to commercial catch data since the allocations were established. The current commercial and recreational allocation percentages for all three species do not reflect the current understanding of the recent and historic proportions of catch and landings from the two sectors. This amendment will consider whether changes to these allocations are warranted.

Scoping is the first and best opportunity to raise concerns related to the scope of issues that will be considered. You are encouraged to submit comments on which options may or may not be useful or practical for meeting the goal of this action and any other relevant issues the Council and Commission should consider.

Learn More

The Scoping and Public Information Document contains background information on summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass management and on issues that may be addressed in the amendment, as well as a description of the amendment process and timeline. This document, along with additional information and updates on development of this amendment, is available on the Council's website at <http://www.mafmc.org/actions/sfsbsb-allocation-amendment>.

Contacts

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Dustin Colson Leaning, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, dleaning@asmfc.org, 703-842-0740

Given summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass's presence in, and movement between, state waters (0-3 miles from shore) and federal waters (3-200 miles from shore), the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council jointly manage these species.

Hearing Schedule

Date and Time	Location	Contact
Thursday, Feb. 13 6:00-7:30 PM	Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Admiral's Hall 101 Academy Drive, Buzzards Bay, MA 02532	Nichola Meserve 617-626-1531
Wednesday, Feb. 19 6:00-7:00 PM	Delaware Dept. of Natural Resources & Environmental Control DNREC Auditorium, Richards & Robbins Building 89 Kings Highway, Dover, DE 19901	John Clark 302-739-9914
Monday, Feb. 24 6:00-8:00 PM	Belmar Municipal Court Room 601 Main Street, Belmar, NJ 07719	Joe Cimino 609-748-2020
Tuesday, Feb. 25 3:30-4:45 PM	Berlin Library 13 Harrison Avenue, Berlin, MD 21811	Steve Doctor 410-213-1531
Tuesday, Feb. 25 6:00-8:00 PM	Galloway Township Branch Library 306 East Jimmie Leeds Road, Galloway, NJ 08205	Joe Cimino 609-748-2020
Tuesday, Feb. 25 6:00-8:00 PM	North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries, Pamlico District Office 943 Washington Square Mall, US Highway 17, Washington, NC 27889	Chris Batsavage 252-808-8009
Wednesday, Feb. 26 6:00-7:30 PM	University of Rhode Island Bay Campus, Corless Auditorium South Ferry Road, Narragansett, RI 02882	Jason McNamee 401-423-1943
Wednesday, Feb. 26 7:00-8:00 PM	Connecticut Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection Marine Headquarters Boating Education Center (Rear Building) 333 Ferry Road, Old Lyme, CT 06371	Justin Davis 860-447-4322
Thursday, Feb. 27 6:00-7:30 PM	Stony Brook University, School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences Room 120 Endeavor Hall, Stony Brook, NY 11794-5000	Maureen Davidson 631-444-0483
Monday, Mar. 2 5:00-6:00 PM	Virginia Marine Resources Commission 380 Fenwick Road, Building 96, Fort Monroe, VA 23651	Patrick Geer 757-247-2078
Tuesday, Mar. 3 6:00-7:30 PM	Internet Webinar http://mafmc.adobeconnect.com/sfsbsb_com_rec_allocation_scoping/ <i>Audio: 1-800-832-0736 and entering room number 5068871.</i>	Julia Beaty 302-526-5250

Please note that some hearings will be held in conjunction with (immediately before or after) supplemental scoping hearings for an ongoing Bluefish Allocation Amendment. A schedule for the bluefish hearings will be posted at: <http://www.mafmc.org/actions/bluefish-allocation-amendment>.

Written Comments

In addition to providing comments at any of the scheduled public hearings, you may submit written comments by 11:59 pm EST on **Tuesday, March 17, 2020**. Written comments may be sent by any of the following methods:

1. **ONLINE:** <http://www.mafmc.org/comments/sfsbsb-allocation-amendment>
2. **EMAIL:** jbeaty@mafmc.org
3. **MAIL or FAX:** Dr. Christopher Moore, Executive Director
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
800 North State Street, Suite 201
Dover, DE 19901
FAX: 302.674.5399

Please include "Fluke/Scup/Sea Bass Allocation Amendment" in the subject line if using email or fax, or on the outside of the envelope if submitting written comments. All comments, regardless of submission method, will be compiled into a single document for review and consideration by both the Council and Commission. **Please do not send separate comments to the Council and Commission.**