ASMFC Begins Preparations for American Lobster
Benchmark Stock Assessment

Arlington, VA – The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission has initiated a benchmark stock assessment for American lobster (Homarus americanus) to be completed in the summer of 2025. The goals of the assessment are to evaluate the health of stocks along the US Atlantic coast and inform management of this species. The Commission’s stock assessment process and meetings are open to the public, with the exception of discussions of confidential data*, when any meetings will be closed to the public.

The Commission welcomes the submission of data sets that will contribute to the goals of the assessment. This includes, but is not limited to, data on abundance (young of year, recruits, adults), biological samples (sex, maturity, weight, carapace length), life history information (growth, natural mortality, shell disease, tagging data), catch (harvest, discards, fishing effort) and information regarding the environmental influence on lobster population dynamics. For data sets to be considered, the data must be sent in the required format, with accompanying description of methods, to the Commission by January 8, 2024.

The Data Workshop will be conducted in February 2024 (dates and location to be determined). This workshop will review available data sources for American lobster and identify data sets to be incorporated in the stock assessment. For those interested in submitting data, please contact Jeff Kipp, Senior Stock Assessment Scientist, at jkipp@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

* Each state and federal agency is responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of its data and deciding who has access to its confidential data. In the case of our stock assessments and peer reviews, all analysts and, if necessary, reviewers, have been granted permission by the appropriate agency to use and view confidential data. When the assessment team needs to show and discuss these data, observers to our stock assessment process are asked to leave the room to preserve confidentiality.