

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Coastal Sharks Technical Committee

Review of Fin: Carcass Ratio for Smooth Dogfish

January 24, 2013

Present: Greg Skomal (MA DMF, Chair), Angel Willey (MD DNR), Brent Winner (FL FWC), Eric Schneider (RI DFW), Holly White (NC DMF), Jack Musick (VIMS), Matt Gates (CT DEP), Karyl Brewster-Geisz (NMFS HMS), Russ Babb (NJ DEP) and Marin Hawk (ASMFC).

The Coastal Sharks Technical Committee had a conference call to review New Jersey data regarding smooth dogfish fin: carcass ratios and make a recommendation of which fin: carcass ratio to include in Draft Addendum II. The meeting began with an overview of the issue, followed by a review of the data from New Jersey. The TC discussed the data before moving on to the issue of the status of North Carolina's data. Following these discussions, the TC discussed the repercussions of having different federal and state ratios. The TC's discussions and recommendations are as follows.

Review of New Jersey Data

- The fish encountered were smaller than market size, and so may suggest a higher ratio than market-sized fish
- Data indicates a fin: carcass ratio range of 7-12%
 - The cut used in the study may be more exact than those used by the fishermen
 - The fins kept vary by state and impact the ratio
 - If an area does not keep caudal fins, setting the fin: carcass ratio at 12% would allow a 5% gap between what the research reflects (7%) and the maximum fin: carcass ratio
- The purpose of the research is to ensure that the ratio is not large enough to allow finning to occur – a few percentage points either way would not violate this purpose

Status of North Carolina's Data

- North Carolina has not encountered sufficient smooth dogfish to complete the study
- North Carolina has market-sized fish, so research from them would be helpful to the study
- North Carolina is not comfortable making a recommendation of a fin: carcass ratio less than 12% before they have completed the study

Shark Conservation Act Ratio

- The Shark Conservation Act of 2010 is implementing a 12% fin: carcass ratio for smooth dogfish
- The savings clause of this Act contains some other caveats that NOAA Fisheries is trying to work through
- If fin: carcass ratio in state waters is more restrictive than federal waters, anyone who has a federal permit has to abide by the more restrictive regulations
- Enforcement might be difficult if states and federal waters have different ratios
- The FMP encourages consistent regulations between federal and state waters

ASMFC Management Recommendations

The TC agrees that maintaining consistency between federal management and state management is necessary to uphold the objectives of the FMP. The fin: carcass ratio presented in the Shark Conservation Act (12%) cannot be changed. Therefore, the TC recommends that a 12% fin: carcass ratio, consistent with the Shark Conservation Act of 2010, is included as the preferred option in Draft Addendum II.