



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ASMFC & Mid-Atlantic Council Adopt 2011 Recreational Measures

Virginia Beach, VA – The Commission and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) initiated the recreational fisheries specification process for the 2011 summer flounder, scup, black sea bass seasons. The Council and Board adopted the use of conservation equivalency (state-by-state measures) to achieve the 2011 recreational harvest limit for summer flounder. The harvest limit (11.58 million pounds), approved in August by the Council and Board, represents a 33% increase relative to 2010. Conservation equivalency allows states to develop and implement state-specific management measures (i.e., possession limits, size limits, and seasons) to achieve the harvest limit for their state. The Board will review state-specific measures in late January or early February, with states finalizing their 2011 measures in the spring.

After considerable discussion on the status of the scup stock and the current overall harvest target, the Council and Board voted to increase the overall (recreational and commercial) 2011 total allowable landing level (TAL) for scup to about 26 million pounds, an increase of 92% relative to the 2010 level. Although the Council and Board had agreed to a smaller increase in August, the revised recreational TAL recommendation of 5.74 million pounds will preserve 2010 size, season, and bag limits into 2011, while also staying within the maximum sustainable yield for the stock. The 2010 state-specific measures can be found on the ASMFC website scup page (<http://www.asmfc.org/scup.htm>).

Based on the black sea bass TAL that was set in August (1.78 million pounds) and projected 2010 landings of 3.1 million pounds, the Council and Board adopted more restrictive coastwide management measures for the 2011 recreational black sea bass fishery: a 13-inch TL minimum fish size, a 25 fish possession limit, and an open season from July 1 to October 1 and November 1 to December 31. The measures will remain in effect until the ASMFC approves an addendum to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Plan that implements regional specifications for black sea bass that would achieve the necessary reduction in fishing mortality for 2011. The Council and the Board voted to recommend to NOAA that management measures in federal waters revert to the same measures in place for 2010 once the addendum is in place. The 2010 measures included a 12.5-inch TL minimum fish size, 25 fish possession limit, and an open season from May 22 to October 11 and November 1 to December 31. The Board is expected to consider initiating an addendum to implement regional allocation at its next meeting in March 2011.

For more information about summer flounder, scup, or black sea bass, please contact Toni Kerns, 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.