



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Board Approves Addendum XIX

Alexandria, VA – The Commission’s Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board approved Addendum XIX to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan (FMP). The Addendum extends the current state-by-state black sea bass commercial management strategy indefinitely and maintains the current summer flounder recreational allocation strategy. It also redefines the stock status determination criteria for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass.

Black Sea Bass Commercial Management Strategy

Since 2003, the black sea bass commercial fishery has been managed through a state-by-state allocation system, with each state allocated a percentage of the coastwide quota. Under this system, states are provided the flexibility to manage their quota for the greatest benefits of their commercial fishing industries. This management strategy was set to expire by December 31, 2007. Under Addendum XIX, the state-specific shares remain as follows: Maine and New Hampshire (0.05% each), Connecticut (1%), Delaware (5%), New York (7%), Rhode Island, North Carolina and Maryland (11% each), Massachusetts (13%), and New Jersey, and Virginia (20% each).

Summer Flounder Recreational Allocation Strategy

Currently, summer flounder state recreational allocations are based on the proportion of state landings to coastwide landings reported in 1998. This provides states the flexibility to develop state-specific conservation equivalent management measures to achieve the coastwide recreational harvest limit. Addendum XIX maintains the present summer flounder recreational state allocation strategy.

Stock Status Determination Criteria

Addendum XIX allows the Board to adjust biological reference points, based on peer reviewed recommendations, through Board action in lieu of the more protracted addendum/amendment process currently required.

Summer Flounder Reference Points

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.

Following the recommendations of the Summer Flounder Assessment and Biological Reference Point Update for 2006, the Board adopted new biological reference points for determining whether summer flounder is overfished or experiencing overfishing. Spawning stock biomass (SSB) will now be used in place of biomass, with the SSB threshold and target limits set at 98.5 million pounds and 197 million pounds, respectively. The Board also approved a fishing mortality rate threshold of 0.28.

In other action, the 2007 black sea bass quota and the 2007 Scup Winter II quota and trip limit were revised based on the reinstatement of 18,142 pounds of unused research set-aside quota for the black sea bass fishery and the rollover of 644,155 pounds of scup quota from the Winter I period to the Winter II period, respectively. The new Scup Winter II trip limit is 3,500 pounds per trip.

The actions under Addendum XIX are effective immediately. Copies of Addendum XIX will be available by mid-September and can be obtained via the Commission's website at www.asafc.org under Breaking News or by contacting the Commission at (202) 289-6400. For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, Senior Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator for Management, at (202) 289-6400 or tkerns@asmfc.org.

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