



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 Spiny Dogfish Board Approves 4 Million Pound Quota for the 2006/2007 Fishing Year

Galloway, NJ – The Commission's Spiny Dogfish and Coastal Shark Management Board approved specifications for the 2006/2007 fishing year, setting a four million pound annual quota with trip limits of 600 pounds in quota periods one (May 1 to October 31) and two (November 1 to April 30). The specifications are limited to one fishing year to allow for the incorporation of the results from the upcoming 2006 benchmark assessment.

The Spiny Dogfish Technical Committee recommended a two million pound bycatch cap for fishing years 2006/2007, 2007/2008 and 2008/2009. As a result of their deliberations, the Board decided to maintain the four million pound quota to allow for the utilization of dogfish caught incidental to other fisheries.

The federal specifications for the spiny dogfish fishery are still to be determined. The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council has recommended a two million pound bycatch cap with trip limits of 600 pounds in quota periods one (May 1 to October 31) and two (November 1 to April 30) for the fishing years 2006/2007, 2007/2008 and 2008/2009. The National Marine Fisheries Service will set the federal specifications prior to the start of the fishing year on May 1, 2005.

The Board also approved Addendum I to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Spiny Dogfish. Addendum I provides the Board with the authority, but not the requirement, to establish spiny dogfish specifications for up to five years. The Mid-Atlantic and New England Fishery Management Councils have already taken similar action under Framework 1, recommending the adoption of multi-year management measures without the requirement of annual review to NOAA Fisheries for final approval.

The coastwide spiny dogfish population is considered overfished, but overfishing is not occurring. The 2004 Northeast Fisheries Science Center's trawl survey data shows the seven years of low pup biomass has led to a truncated size range (i.e., low pup and reproductive female biomass) and shows no significant progress towards rebuilding the female spawning stock biomass. The 2004 biomass estimate for spiny dogfish is approximately half of the target biomass. For more information, please contact Ruth Christiansen, Spiny Dogfish Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at (202)289-6400 or <rchristiansen@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.

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