



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

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ASMFC Spiny Dogfish Board Revises Quotas for 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 Fishing Seasons & Approves Coastal Sharks Addendum III

St. Simons Island, Georgia – The Commission’s Spiny Dogfish and Coastal Sharks Management Board increased its spiny dogfish quotas for the 2014/15 and 2015/16 fishing seasons (May 1 – April 30) in response to increases in spawning stock biomass. The 2014/2015 quota is now set at 49,370,000 pounds (previously 41,784,000 pounds) and the 2015/1016 quota is set at 50,612,000 pounds (previously 41,578,000 pounds), with a maximum possession limit of 4,000 pounds per day for the northern region states (Maine through Connecticut). Quotas for the northern region and southern states (New York through North Carolina) are provided in the table below. Any overages from the previous fishing seasons will be paid back by the region or state in the following season, as has been done in the past. The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) forwarded the same recommendation to the National Marine Fisheries Service Northeast Regional Administrator for final action. The New England Fishery Management Council has not specified when it will consider the new quotas.

ASMFC Regional/state quotas and possession limits for the 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 fishing seasons (in pounds). Quotas will be adjusted for any over/under harvests in the previous fishing season.

	Northern Region (ME - CT)	NY	NJ	DE	MD	VA	NC
Possession Limit	4,000	To be specified by individual southern region states					
% Allocation	58.00%	2.71%	7.64%	0.90%	5.92%	10.80%	14.04%
2014/2015	28,634,600	1,336,446	3,773,843	442,355	2,922,704	5,329,492	6,929,573
2015/2016	29,354,960	1,370,067	3,868,781	453,484	2,996,230	5,463,565	7,103,900

The Board’s action responds to the findings of the 2013 Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) Update on the Status of Spiny Dogfish, which estimates spiny dogfish are not overfished and not experiencing overfishing. Spawning stock biomass (SSB) was estimated at 465.99 million pounds in 2013 and has exceeded the target (351.23 million pounds) for the past six years. Fishing mortality was estimated to be 0.15 in 2012, well below the plan’s threshold (0.2439). The recommendation from the MAFMC Science and Statistical Committee (SSC) took into account the projected record low recruitment from 1997 to 2003; the recommended quotas are not expected to cause SSB to decline below the biomass threshold.

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.

Discards have remained relatively stable around 11 million pounds over the past decade and are expected to remain near that level in the future fishing seasons. Canadian and foreign landings have also decreased significantly in recent years. It is anticipated the Canadian dogfish harvest will not increase in the near future given the lack of demand for the product and the subsequent closure of Canadian spiny dogfish processors.

Additionally, based on the recommendation of its Coastal Sharks Technical Committee, the Board approved a 36 fish possession limit for sharks in the large coastal sharks (LCS) species group (silky, tiger, blacktip, spinner, bull, lemon, nurse, scalloped hammerhead, great hammerhead, and smooth hammerhead sharks) for 2014. The Board's action complements the proposed federal shark specifications.

Finally, the Board approved Addendum III to the Coastal Sharks Interstate Fishery Management Plan, which changes the plan's coastal shark species groupings for hammerhead and blacknose sharks and establishes a new commercial quota and recreational size limit for hammerhead sharks. These modifications were made to ensure consistency across the state and federal plans.

Addendum III will be available on the Commission website (www.asmfc.org) or by contacting the Commission at 703.842.0740. For more information, please contact Marin Hawk, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mhawk@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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