



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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MEMORANDUM

January 27, 2015

To: ISFMP Policy Board
From: Toni Kerns, ISFMP Director ^{TK}
RE: Annual Performance of the Stock Definitions

Each August the Commission releases the Annual Performance of the Stocks Overview. The overview provides a gauge on how well stocks are performing in comparison to their reference points and the actions boards have taken in the past few years. Commission species are divided into 5 categories: Rebuilt/Sustainable, Rebuilding/Recovering, Concern, Depleted, and Unknown. The Policy Board tasked staff to refine and define these categories and some additional terms used throughout the document. Staff suggests the following definitions based on the Policy Board discussion at the August 2014 meeting week.

5 Stock Categories:

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| Rebuilt/Sustainable | Stock biomass is equal to or above the biomass level established by the FMP to ensure population sustainability. When between benchmark assessmentmens a stock can still considered rebuilt/sustainable if it drops below the target but remains above the threshold. |
| Recovering/Rebuilding | Stocks exhibit stable or increasing trends. Stock biomass is between the threshold and the target level established by the FMP. |
| Unknown | There is no accepted stock assessment to estimate the stock status. |
| Depleted | Reflects low levels of abundance though it is unclear whether fishing mortality is the primary cause for reduced stock size |
| Concern* | Those stocks developing emerging issues, e.g. increased effort, declining landings, or impacts due to environmental conditions. |

* The color (green, yellow, red) associated with a species in the concerned category would be stock specific.

Terms used in Commission Documents:

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| Overfished | Occurs when stock biomass falls below the threshold established by the FMP, significantly reducing the stock's reproductive capacity to replace fish removed through harvest. |
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| Overfishing | Occurs when fish are removed from a population at a rate that exceeds the threshold established in the FMP. A stock that is experiencing overfishing is having fish removed at a rate faster than the population can sustain in the long run, which will lead to declines in the population. |
| Stable/ Unchanged | Stock biomass has been consistent in recent years. |
| Stock assessment update | Incorporates data from the most recent years into a peer-reviewed assessment model to determine current stock status (abundance and overfishing levels) |