



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 Sets Spiny Dogfish 2010/2011 Fishing Year Quota at 15 Million Pounds

Alexandria, VA – The Commission's Spiny Dogfish and Coastal Sharks Management Board (Board) approved a 15 million pound quota with a maximum possession limit of 3,000 pounds for the 2010/2011 fishing year (May 1 – April 30). Under Addendum II, the quota will be allocated with 58% to states from Maine through Connecticut, 26% to New York through Virginia, and 16% to North Carolina.

The 2009 Northeast Fisheries Science Center assessment update indicates that the spiny dogfish are not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. The 2009 spawning stock biomass is estimated to be 360 million pounds, which is 2.7% below the target biomass of 370 million pounds and well above the threshold of 184 million pounds. Total removals in 2008 were approximately 23.9 million pounds corresponding to an F estimate of 0.117, well below the overfishing threshold of $F = 0.39$ and essentially equivalent to $F_{rebuild} = 0.11$. Among the sources of removals, U.S. commercial landings comprised 9.1 million pounds, Canadian commercial landings were 3.5 million pounds, and total (US and Canadian) dead discards were 10.9 million pounds, of which recreational dead discards were 228,000 pounds.

While the stock is considered rebuilt, the assessment update contains a number of caveats. These caveats include a size frequency of the female population that is concentrated between 75 and 95 cm with very few fish above 100 cm or below 70 cm; low numbers of juvenile male and female dogfish that imply that the population will fluctuate over time decreasing around 2017; a continued skewed sex ratio; and the use of assumptions about pup survivorship and selectivity of gear. After reviewing the assessment update, the Technical Committee recommended that the Board take a precautionary approach and set a quota based on $F_{rebuild} = 0.11 = 10.7$ million pounds.

The Technical Committee recommended status quo possession limits at a maximum of 3,000 pounds, noting that under the 3,000 pound possession limit, target fishing mortality target rates have not been exceeded and fishermen have been able to harvest the entire quota. The Technical Committee urged that possession limits should be set at a level that minimizes discards. Discards are associated with both high and low possession limits.

The Board also approved a 33 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 2010. The Coastal Sharks Technical Committee recommended continuing with a 33 fish LCS possession limit in 2010 to maintain consistency between state and federal limits. For more information, please contact Christopher Vonderweidt, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at (202)289-6400 or <cvonderweidt@asmfc.org>.

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.