



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 & Coastal Sharks Board Approves Coastal Sharks Draft Addendum III for Public Comment

Alexandria, VA – The Commission’s Spiny Dogfish and Coastal Sharks Management Board approved Draft Addendum III to the Atlantic Coastal Sharks Fishery Management Plan for public comment. The Draft Addendum proposes changes to the coastal shark species groupings for hammerhead and blacknose sharks and the establishment of a new commercial quota and recreational size limit for hammerhead sharks.

Draft Addendum III was initiated to ensure consistency between the state and federal coastal shark plans. The federal Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan was amended to address recent findings that scalloped hammerhead, blacknose, and sandbar sharks are overfished and/or experiencing overfishing. Specifically, Amendment 5a changed the coastal shark species groupings for hammerhead and blacknose sharks and established a new commercial quota and recreational size limit for hammerhead sharks.

Draft Addendum III proposes to remove all hammerheads (i.e., great, scalloped, and smooth) from the “Non-Sandbar Large Coastal Sharks” group and move them under the “Hammerheads” group due to the difficulty in differentiating between various hammerhead species particularly when dressed. The Draft Addendum also proposes removing blacknose sharks from the “Small Coastal Sharks” group and placing them under the “Blacknose Shark” group. Finetooth, bonnethead and Atlantic sharpnose would remain in the “Non-Blacknose Small Coastal Sharks” species group.

Further, the Draft Addendum considers a new recreational size limit of 78 inches fork length (FL) for all hammerhead sharks based on research which found female scalloped hammerhead sharks reach maturity at 78 inches. The proposed measure is intended to limit the retention of immature female hammerheads.

It is anticipated that several states will be conducting public hearings on the Draft Addendum; information on those hearings will be released when it is finalized. Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on the Draft Addendum either by attending state public hearings or providing written comment. The Draft Addendum is available on the Commission website (www.asmf.org) under *Breaking News*. Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM (EST) on September 25, 2013 and should be forwarded to Marin Hawk, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (FAX) or comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Coastal Sharks Draft Addendum III). PR13-41

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.