



---

# Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

# PRESS RELEASE

---

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 15, 2008

PRESS CONTACT: Daniel T. Furlong  
(302) 674-2331 x19

## **Tilefish Amendment 1 Adopted**

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) met in Annapolis, Maryland last week and approved two items for Secretarial consideration and action. The first item concerned Framework 6 to the Joint Monkfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP), and the second item dealt with Amendment 1 to the Tilefish FMP.

During a full day of discussions, the Council reviewed 19 tilefish management issues addressed in Amendment 1 to the Tilefish FMP. Preferred alternatives were selected for each of the following issues: implementing an Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) program; establishing an IFQ transfer of ownership mechanism among any interested party; establishing an IFQ leasing mechanism; establishing an IFQ share accumulation limit; establishing a fee system for cost recovery; establishing flexibility to revise/adjust the IFQ program; establishing IFQ reporting requirements; modifying the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) reporting requirements; implementing a recreational permit and reporting system requirement; implementing a recreational bag-size limit; improved monitoring of tilefish commercial landings; expanding the list of management measures that can be adjusted via the framework adjustment process; modifying the current Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) designation; modifying the current Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC) designation; and, implementing measures to reduce gear impacts on EFH. Complete descriptions of the Council's preferences are available at the Council's office. It is anticipated that the complete submission package for Amendment 1 will be forwarded to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) by the end of May.

The Council also passed Framework 6 to the Joint Monkfish FMP. This framework, if also adopted by the New England Council, will eliminate the "backstop" provision adopted in Framework 4. That provision could adjust, and potentially close, the directed monkfish fishery in 2009 if the landings in the current fishing year exceed the target total allowable catch (TTAC). The backstop provision is no longer considered necessary since a 2007 assessment of the monkfish stock indicates that the stock is rebuilt and is above its biomass target.

The Council recognized one of its former Chairmen when it presented the Ricks E Savage Award to Dr. James H. Gilford. This award is designed to recognize a person who has added value to the Mid-Atlantic Council's processes and management goals through significant scientific, legislative, enforcement or management activities. Dr. Gilford was recognized for, among other things, his leadership, service, and dedication to the Council while serving as its Chairman. After his tenure as a Council member, Jim continued to serve the Council as a member of its Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and during the past three years he has served as Chairman of this Committee. Dr. Gilford was one of the founding members of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (ASMFC) Atlantic Striped Bass Advisory Panel (AP), first established 1994, and has been a member ever since. He has twice served as Chair of the Advisory Panel. His tireless devotion to our Council has not been without notice.



Dr Jim Gilford receiving his Award. Left to right: Gene Kray, Jim Gilford, Ricks Savage, Pete Jensen, Dan Furlong

This Council meeting served as a forum for nine Committee meetings. The SSC met for a full day to review and discuss: the roles of the Council, SSC, Monitoring Committees, NMFS, and Council staff; current specification setting procedures, related timing issues, possible alternative specification procedures, and Terms of Reference (TOR) regarding annual specification setting; Annual Catch Limits (ACL) and Accountability Measures (AM) requirements; and SSC membership composition and appointment protocol including related quality control measures for SSC appointments. It was decided that an Ad Hoc Working Group would meet before the next Council meeting to examine and clarify the relationship between and among the SSC, NMFS, the Council and its staff.

The Ad Hoc Excessive Shares Committee met to develop ideas regarding the concept of excessive shares and its application to existing and future FMPs.

The Research Set Aside (RSA) Committee met and discussed the development of a procedures policy regarding the review, evaluation, and incorporation of RSA research results into the Council's management process. The Committee also addressed potential mechanisms to help reduce delays in the issuance of experimental fisheries permits (EFP) needed by RSA award recipients to effectively use their award.

The Protected Resources Committee received reports on NMFS Harbor Porpoise Take Reduction Team activities and NMFS Protected Resources outreach program in the Mid-Atlantic area.

The Surfclam/Ocean Quahog Committee received an update on Amendment 14.

The Bycatch/LAPP Committee reviewed measures to reduce bycatch mortality in recreational catch and release fisheries. An initiative was approved to develop a draft pamphlet on these issues for review at the next Council meeting.

The Demersal Committee met to address Amendment 15 to the Summer Flounder FMP. It recommended and the Council endorsed keeping the following issues as part of this Amendment: SF Commercial allocation; scup commercial allocation; management of the SF party/charter boat industry; management of the scup party/charter boat industry; management of the BSB party/charter boat industry; management of the SF recreational fishery; management of the scup recreational fishery; and, limitation on vessel replacement upgrades. The Demersal Committee will meet again at the Council's June meeting to form a clearer vision for this Amendment.

The Council also received a report from Chad Demarest on the status of the New England Council's initiative on Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC).