
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 22, 2009

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NMFS Solicits Proposals for MAFMC 2010 Research Set-Aside Program

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) announced that it is accepting proposals under the Mid-Atlantic Council's Research Set-Aside (RSA) Program for research activities to be conducted in 2010. Applications must be received by NMFS on or before **5 p.m. EST on March 3, 2009**.

The Council, in coordination with NMFS and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, may set aside up to 3 percent of the total allowable landings (TAL) in certain Mid-Atlantic fisheries to be used for research endeavors. The RSA program provides a mechanism to fund research and compensate vessel owners through the sale of fish harvested under the research quota. Vessels participating in an approved research project may be authorized by the NMFS Northeast Regional Administrator to harvest and land species in excess of any imposed trip limit or during fishery closures. Landings from such trips are sold to generate funds that help defray the costs associated with the approved research projects. No Federal funds are provided for research under this notification.

NMFS is soliciting proposals for research activities concerning the summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, *Loligo* squid, *Illex* squid, Atlantic mackerel, butterfish, bluefish, and tilefish fisheries. NMFS and the Council will give priority to funding proposals addressing the research needs as follows:

2010 Research Priority List

Spanning Multiple Species

- Fishery independent surveys for all Mid-Atlantic species, especially in the near shore zone.

Loligo Squid and Butterfish Interactions

- Evaluate potential improvements to observer sampling procedures on large catches of squid/butterfish.
- Mesh selectivity studies involving *Loligo* squid retention and butterfish escapement (both summer and winter).
- Test gear modifications (in addition to mesh size) in the *Loligo* squid fishery to reduce bycatch of butterfish and other species. One example would be the use of 'Fishing Circle Mesh.'
- Study mortality rates of *Loligo* squid that pass through trawl mesh.

Summer Flounder

- Evaluate the size distribution of discarded fish in the summer flounder recreational fishery by sex.

Bluefish

- Develop bluefish index surveys (proof of concept).

Black Sea Bass

- Develop indices for black sea bass recruitment (proof of concept).
- Verify age structure of black sea bass.
- Study changes in sex ratio as a function of age and size; evaluate the sizes of territories in relation to mating or reproduction.

Scup

- Develop indices for scup recruitment (proof of concept).
- Estimate the components of scup total annual mortality (natural, commercial landings, recreational landings, commercial discards, & recreational discards).

Illex squid

- Determine size and age-at-maturity and growth parameters for *Illex* squid.

Complete Details and to Apply

For complete details and information on how to apply, please visit the Grants.gov web site (<http://www.grants.gov>). Click on the 'Grant Search' Quick Link on the upper right-hand corner of the page and then search for Funding Opportunity Number:

NMFS-NEFSC-2010-2001654

After clicking on the '2010 Mid-Atlantic Research Set-Aside (RSA)' link, click on the 'Full Announcement' link to display links to the Federal Register notice, full text of the Announcement, and a ZIP file which contains both documents in PDF format.