
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

PRESS RELEASE



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Council to Hold "Catch Shares" Workshop March 16-18 in Williamsburg, VA

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) will host an educational workshop March 16-18, 2010 on "catch shares." The workshop will be conducted in cooperation with the Fisheries Leadership and Sustainability Forum, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC), and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Participants will include MAFMC members, MAFMC staff, MAFMC Advisory Panel representatives, ASMFC representatives, MAFMC Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) representatives, as well as leadership from the New England Fishery Management Council, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and NMFS. As with all MAFMC meetings, the workshop will be open to the public and there will be several opportunities for public comment.

The term "catch share" encompasses a broad spectrum of fishery management systems that share a common approach: allocating a portion of a scientifically determined catch limit to a discrete set of users (i.e. individuals, groups, or communities). The MAFMC adopted the first catch share programs in the United States when it implemented an ITQ (individual transferable quota) program for the surfclam and ocean quahog fisheries in 1990. The MAFMC also recently (2009) implemented a catch share system for tilefish (IFQ - individual fishing quota).

Given the high levels of interest regarding catch share programs, the MAFMC concluded that an educational workshop dedicated to catch share issues would be beneficial for its members and partners. As the workshop is educational in nature, no management decisions will be made at the workshop to initiate catch shares in any particular fishery managed by the MAFMC.

As more information becomes available, including agenda details and background briefing documents, the Council will post these materials on its website: www.mafmc.org. Please contact the Council at 302-674-2331 or by e-mail to info@mafmc.org to clarify any details or to address any questions.

Location details: Kingsmill Conference Center, 1010 Kingsmill Road, Williamsburg, VA 23185; 800-832-5665. Kingsmill is 20 minutes from the Newport News/Williamsburg Airport (PHF) and 45 minutes from either the Norfolk, VA or Richmond, VA airports.