

---

# Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

# PRESS RELEASE

---



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
June 21, 2011

PRESS CONTACT: Kathy Collins  
(302) 526-5253

## **Council Recommends Lower 2012 Quota for Atlantic Mackerel; Higher for Butterfish**

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council met last week in Port Jefferson, NY to recommend 2012 management specifications for several species including Atlantic mackerel and butterfish. Based on regulations recently published in a proposed rule and detailed in the Council's Omnibus Amendment, this was the first time the Council voted to require binding quotas (annual catch limits) that if exceeded in 2012, will result in quota deductions in 2013. The Council also adopted targets (annual catch targets) that are lower than the catch limits to account for management uncertainties.

After considerable discussion, the Council adopted a mackerel annual catch limit and an annual catch target which would effectively limit commercial landings to 33,821 mt (74.6 million pounds) in 2012. If approved by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), this equates to a 28% reduction compared to the 2011 quota.

The Council also adopted a butterfish annual catch limit and an annual catch target which would effectively limit landings to 1,087 mt (2.4 million pounds) in 2012, with 2,173 mt (4.8 million pounds) set-aside for potential discards. If approved by NMFS, this harvest level would be a 117% increase from the 2011 quota. Butterfish discards can close the directed fishery for *Loligo* squid. The increase in catch would also allow the butterfish mortality cap on the *Loligo* fishery to increase by 70% in 2012 from the 2011 level.