

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Press Release Archive

Council Agrees on Multi-Year Specifications for Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass; Initiates Amendment 1 to the Spiny Dogfish Fishery Management Plan

March 22, 2004

During its March 2004 meeting in Wrightsville Beach, NC the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council agreed to move forward with Framework Adjustment 5 to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan. This action is designed to streamline the administrative and regulatory processes related to specifying Total Allowable Landings (TAL) for the summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass fisheries. If adopted by the Council at its next meeting, and subsequently approved and implemented by the National Marine Fisheries Service, this action would allow for specifications for total allowable landings to be set in one year for the following one, two, or three years. The current practice is that specifications for the next fishing year are set on an annual basis.

The Council also reviewed issues developed by the Joint Spiny Dogfish Committee for inclusion in Amendment 1 to the Spiny Dogfish Fishery Management Plan. The issues adopted by the Council for inclusion in Amendment 1 include: 1) establishing a biomass rebuilding target that is consistent with National Standard 1 Guidelines; 2) developing a stock rebuilding schedule consistent with National Standard 1 Guidelines based on the new biomass target; 3) addressing the seasonal/geographic allocation of quota including a mechanism to address quota overages, and; 4) developing a multi-year quota setting specification mechanism. Although the zero quota option in the EEZ was not adopted by the Joint Dogfish Committee, the consensus view of the Council was that this alternative should be addressed when developing the stock rebuilding schedule.

In addition to these two fishery management plan actions, the Council will request that the Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics Survey (MRFSS) and Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) investigate existing and new survey sample frames to enhance the perception of the credibility of the data collection outputs from these programs for management purposes.

The Research Set-Aside Committee met and discussed current program status and potential improvements for the future. The 2005 Research Set-Aside Request for Proposals is now available at: <http://www.ofa.noaa.gov/~amd/SOLINDEX.HTML>. Proposals must be received no later than April 8, 2004.

The Council also recommended that Amendment 1 to the Tilefish Fishery Management Plan be considered for initiation in October 2004 or as soon as possible.

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