



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

2014 Winter Meeting Summary

Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

2014 Winter Meeting
Alexandria, VA
February 4-6, 2014

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Meeting Summaries, Press Releases and Motions

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ATLANTIC HERRING SECTION (FEBRUARY 4, 2014)

Press Release

ASMFC Atlantic Herring Section Initiates Plan Amendment

Alexandria, VA – The Commission’s Atlantic Herring Section initiated a new amendment with the primary purpose of more fully protecting spawning herring in Area 1A (inshore Gulf of Maine). The draft amendment will review and consider changes to the Area 1A spawning area regulations as well as consider (1) removing the fixed-gear set-aside rollover provision, (2) requiring the declaration of intended fishing gear types prior to the quota periods, and (3) requiring vessel fish holds to be emptied of fish before leaving the dock on a fishing trip.

The draft amendment is initiated to correct inconsistencies in the application of current spawning area regulations. In preparation for the amendment, the Section has tasked the Technical Committee to review the current default closure dates, area delineations, and time periods. The draft amendment will also propose removing the rollover provision for the fixed gear set-aside in order to allow for increased opportunities for small scale fixed gear fishermen when Atlantic herring are present after the overall Area 1A quota has been harvested by the limited access fishery.

Further, the draft amendment will propose that vessel owners declare in advance their intended fishing gear type for each quota period in order to provide managers with an estimate of effort for each quota period and better inform the Section’s decisions regarding harvest control measures (e.g., days out). Additionally, in order to address concerns about the discards and full reporting, the draft amendment will propose vessel holds be emptied of fish before leaving the dock on a fishing trip.

A Public Information Document (PID) will be developed in consultation with the New England Fishery Management Council to ensure consistent regulations with the federal fishery management plan. The PID will be available for Section consideration in the Commission’s Spring Meeting. For more information, please contact, Melissa Yuen, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at myuen@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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PR14-01

Motions

Move to initiate Atlantic Herring Draft Addendum VII, with the purpose to: review the efficacy of spawning areas in Area 1A, consider changes to the spawning areas in Area 1A, and remove the rollover provision for the fixed gear quota set aside.

Motion made by Mr. Train and seconded by Mr. Grout. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to initiate an Amendment that will require vessel owners to declare in advance their intended fishing gear type for quota periods and require vessel fish holds to be empty before leaving the dock on a fishing trip.

Motion made by Mr. Stockwell and seconded by Mr. Grout. Motion carries.

Move that the items in the previously passed motion be included in the Amendment.

Motion made by Mr. Grout and seconded by Dr. Pierce. Motion carries.

Move that the Board approve the 2013 - 2015 Area 1B specifications: Season May 1 – December 31.

Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Grout. Motion carries.

WINTER FLOUNDER MANAGEMENT BOARD (FEBRUARY 4, 2014)

Press Release

ASMFC Winter Flounder Board Sets 2014 Recreational Measures for Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Stock

Alexandria, VA – The Commission’s Winter Flounder Management Board set specifications for the 2014 recreational fishing season for the Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic (SNE/MA) stock. The season will extend from March 1 to December 31 with a two fish creel limit. This change is an expansion of the 60-day recreational open season. The action is intended to increase fishing opportunities in the southern range where other species’ availability may be limited later in the year. All other commercial and recreational management measures for the Gulf of Maine (GOM) and SNE/MA stocks will be maintained (see Table 1).

Table 1. Minimum commercial and recreational management measures for the Inshore Winter Flounder FMP. No changes were specified for FY2013.

Stock	Sector	Trip Limit/ Possession Limit	Size Limit	Season	Gear
GOM	Commercial	500 lbs/trip/ day	12”	Maintain Closures	Minimum 6.5” square or diamond mesh in cod-end
	Recreational	8 fish	12”	NA	
SNE/MA	Commercial	50 lbs 38 fish/trip/day	12”	Maintain Closures	Minimum 6.5” square or diamond mesh in cod-end 100-lb mesh trigger
	Recreational	2 fish	12”	March 1 – December 31	

The Board reaffirmed its commitment to work cooperatively with the New England Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries Northeast Regional Office to effectively rebuild winter flounder stocks throughout their range. For more information, please contact, Melissa Yuen, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at myuen@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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PR14-02

Motions

Move that the Board approve the 2012 state compliance reports and FMP Review for Winter Flounder and approve *de minimis* request for Delaware.

Motion by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Fote. Motion passes.

Move to allow a winter flounder recreational open season from March 1 to December 31 at a 2 fish limit in Southern New England.

Motion made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Mr. Gibson. Motion passes (6 in favor, 2 opposed, 2 abstentions).

Move to increase the 2014 winter flounder commercial possession limit from 50 to 100 lbs in Southern New England.

Motion made by Mr. Gibson and seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion fails (2 in favor, 8 opposed).

Move to task the Technical Committee to determine the impact of a moratorium on landings and possessions in state waters, on mortality, and the ability of winter flounder stocks to rebuild.

Motion made by Mr. Grout and seconded Mr. Augustine. Motion fails (2 in favor, 7 opposed, 1 abstentions).

ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS MANAGEMENT BOARD (FEBRUARY 4, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board met to consider Draft Addendum IV for public comment and review state compliance with the Fishery Management Plan for the 2012 fishing year.

Draft Addendum IV proposes changes to the fishing mortality reference points for Atlantic striped bass including stock specific reference points for the Chesapeake Bay and Albemarle Sound/Roanoke River. Considering the Technical Committee (TC) is still developing the stock-specific reference points, the Board decided to combine Draft Addendum IV (that addresses reference points) with Draft Addendum V that will consider potential management options to achieve the new reference points. The intent of combining these addenda are to provide a management context to the change in reference points (e.g., associated seasons, bag and size limits, and commercial quotas). The Board will consider the combined draft addendum for public comment at its May meeting.

The Board tasked the TC, Law Enforcement Committee, and Advisory Panel to evaluate a potential recommendation to the National Marine Fisheries Service to consider opening the exclusive economic zone to catch and release fishing. The Plan Review Team will report back to the Board in May regarding the outcome of those discussions.

The Board reviewed and accepted the 2013 Fishery Management Plan Review for the 2012 fishing year. Massachusetts and Delaware had commercial quota overages in 2012 resulting in reduced quotas for the 2013 fishing year. The Plan Review Team found all states in compliance for the 2012 fishing year.

For more information, please contact Mike Waine, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mwaine@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Move to accept the 2013 FMP Review.

Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Dr. Duval. Motion carries.

SUMMER FLOUNDER, SCUP AND BLACK SEA BASS MANAGEMENT BOARD
(FEBRUARY 4, 2014)

Press Release

ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Board Approves Regional Management for 2014 Recreational Summer Flounder and Black Sea Bass Fisheries

Alexandria, VA –The Commission’s Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board approved Addendum XXV to the Summer Flounder and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan, establishing regional recreational management for both species for the 2014 fishing year. For summer flounder, the Addendum creates management measures by region with the intent of providing more equity in recreational harvest opportunities along the coast, especially between New York and New Jersey. The approved summer flounder regions are Massachusetts and Rhode Island; Connecticut through New Jersey; Delaware through Virginia; and North Carolina. For black sea bass, the Board also approved the continuation of management measures by northern (Massachusetts – New Jersey) and southern regions (Delaware – North Carolina).

Addendum XXV was initiated to address a growing concern that current summer flounder management measures are not providing recreational fishermen along the coast with equitable harvest opportunities to the resource. Its adaptive regional management approach is designed to allow the management program to adjust to past, current, and future changes to the resource and the fishery. Under this approach, all states within a region will be required to have the same possession limit, size limit, and season length. The Technical Committee will work with the states to develop, for Board consideration and approval, measures for each region that will collectively achieve, but not exceed, the recreational harvest limit. The adaptive regional management approach has been approved for the 2014 fishing year only.

For black sea bass, the Board approved the continuation of ad hoc regional management measures by northern (Massachusetts – New Jersey) and southern regions (Delaware – North Carolina). This approach has been used since 2011 and offers some advantages over coastwide regulations, which can disproportionately impact states within the management unit. Specifically, regional measures address geographic differences in the stock (size, abundance and seasonality) while maintaining the consistent application of management measures by neighboring states. States in the northern region will reduce their catch based on the region’s performance in 2013. The Technical Committee will work with the states to develop regional management measures for Board consideration and approval. States in the southern region will implement measures consistent with federal regulations (current recommended federal measures are a 12.5 inch TL minimum fish size, 15 fish possession limit, and open season from May 19 – September 18 and October 18 – December 31). The regulations of the two regions combined will achieve the required coastwide harvest reduction in order to not exceed the 2014 recreational harvest limit. The Board approved the ad hoc regional measures approach for the 2014 fishing year, with the option of extending it through 2015 by Board action.

Addendum XXV will be available on the Commission website by the end of February. For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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PR14-03

Meeting Summary

The Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board met to consider final approval on Draft Addendum XXV, consider approval of state scup recreational proposals, and elect a Vice Chair. At the December 2013 joint Commission/Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council meeting the Board approved the use of adaptive management approaches to set state scup recreational measures for 2014. All states indicated that they would maintain status quo management measures for the scup recreational fishery in 2014. Mike Luisi from Maryland was elected as Vice Chair.

For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Main Motion

Move to adopt Adaptive Regional Management Option 3a under Addendum XXV Summer Flounder for the 2014 fishery for one year.

Motion made by Mr. Gilmore and seconded by Mr. Miller.

Motion to Substitute

Move to substitute Option 1 Conservation Equivalency and Option 2 for Option 3a under Addendum XXV for Summer Flounder.

Motion made by Mr. Fote and seconded by Mr. Bellavance.

Move to call the question (for substitute motion).

Motion made by Mr. Adler and seconded by Mr. Gilmore. Motion carries.

Motion to Substitute

Move to substitute Option 1 Conservation Equivalency and Option 2 for Option 3a under Addendum XXV for Summer Flounder.

Motion made by Mr. Fote and seconded by Mr. Bellavance. Motion fails (4 in favor, 7 opposed).

Motion to Amend

Move to amend the motion to make RI its own region, so the Northern Region would consist of CT, NY and NJ.

Motion made by Mr. Simpson and seconded by Mr. Bellavance. Motion fails.

Motion to Substitute

Move to substitute to adopt Adaptive Regional Management Option 3b for Option 3a.

Motion made by Mr. Ballou and seconded by Mr. Bullard. Motion carries.

Main Motion as Substituted

Move to adopt Adaptive Regional Management Option 3b under Addendum XXV Summer Flounder for the 2014 fishery for one year.

Motion carries.

Move to adopt Option 2 Ad Hoc Regional Measures under Black Sea Bass section of Addendum XXV.

Motion made by Mr. Adler and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion carries.

Move to accept Option 2 (one-year extension) on the timeline for black sea bass.

Motion made by Mr. Adler and seconded by Mr. Bellavance. Motion carries.

Move to approve Addendum XXV as amended today.

Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Miller. Motion carries (Roll call vote: In favor – MA, RI, CT, NY, DE, MD, NC, USFWS, NMFS; Opposed – NJ, VA; Abstentions – PRFC).

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (FEBRUARY 5, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Executive Committee discussed the process for developing an ASMFC position on Magnuson-Stevens reauthorization. The Committee agreed to hold a workshop at the Spring Meeting to review the status and timing of reauthorization efforts and develop an ASMFC position on priority issues. The Committee discussed the status of state administration of the Marine Recreational Information Program intercept surveys. A workshop will be held at the Spring Meeting to brief the states on the timeline of the effort and provide time for states to discuss lessons learned by states that are currently conducting the intercept survey. The Committee continued work on the Commission's Conflict of Interest Policy. An updated draft of the policy will be provided to the Legislators and Governor's Appointee (LGA) Commissioners for discussion at the Spring Meeting. The full Commission will review the input from the LGA Commissioners and consider final approval of the policy at the Spring Meeting. For more information, please contact Laura Leach, Director of Finance and Administration, at lleach@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

No motions made.

NORTHEAST AREA MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT PROGRAM BOARD (FEBRUARY 5, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The NEAMAP Board met to receive reports from each survey and the NEAMAP technical committees as well as to discuss emerging issues. The Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Nearshore Trawl Survey, the Maine-New Hampshire Inshore Trawl Survey, and the Massachusetts DMF Bottom Trawl Survey provided updates on their 2013 activities and summarized the increasing use of survey data in stock assessments. The Board then listened in to a portion the MAFMC Research-Set Aside (RSA) auction. The Board reviewed how the auction operates and the implications for RSA funding support to the Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Nearshore Trawl Survey. The Board also discussed other potential funding sources for NEAMAP surveys. Board members ended their session with reviewing draft criteria for the inclusion of other surveys interested in joining the Program. The Board will create a document outlining the benefits to adding surveys to both the surveys themselves and NEAMAP as a whole. The group also recommended that the NEAMAP technical committees meet more frequently to encourage even more collaboration among surveys toward standardizing sampling and data management methodologies. For more information, please contact Shanna Madsen, Fisheries Science Coordinator, at (703) 842-0740 or smadsen@asmfc.org.

ATLANTIC MENHADEN MANAGEMENT BOARD (FEBRUARY 5, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Atlantic Menhaden Management Board met to evaluate a conservation equivalency request from the State of Florida and review progress on the upcoming benchmark stock assessment.

Florida requested the state be exempt from its quota (FL quota =66,995 pounds) based on two reasons (1) its longstanding history of menhaden conservation given its 1995 net ban and (2) concern about unreported landings from its cast net fishery, which resulted in a small quota share of the resource under Amendment 2. The Board noted that Florida is not the only state with issues of unreported landings from small scale bait fisheries, resulting in an inaccurate quota allocation for cast net fisheries coastwide. To more accurately estimate the magnitude of cast net bait harvest and encourage reporting from this sector, the Board passed a motion that enabled cast net fisheries to harvest under the bycatch allowance provision in Amendment 2 for the 2014 and 2015 fishing seasons. An added provision of this allowance is that states with cast net fisheries are responsible to significantly enhance and improve reporting in those fisheries. Further, the Board committed to evaluating landings that occurred under the bycatch allowance provision during the 2013 fishing year and will look to refine a definition of bycatch fisheries for Atlantic menhaden, with the potential to revise the bycatch allowance landing limit through adaptive management.

The Technical Committee (TC) continues to make progress on the 2014 benchmark stock assessment and recently held a Data Workshop to review state and regional datasets, preliminary analyses of life history characteristics, fishery dependent CPUE indices, and juvenile/adult abundance indices. The TC also reviewed a preliminary analysis of the historical tagging data used to estimate natural mortality and movement rates and formulated a plan to incorporate these estimates into new assessment models. The next step will be the Assessment Workshop in June 2014, with the peer review scheduled for December 2014.

For more information, please contact Mike Waine, FMP Coordinator at mwaine@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Main Motion

Move to manage cast net fisheries for menhaden under the bycatch allowance, with the state bearing responsibility for reporting.

Motion made by Mr. Fote and seconded by Mr. Gilmore. Motion amended.

Motion to Substitute

Move to substitute to develop an addendum that would allow cast net fisheries for menhaden, subject to trip limits and exempt from state quotas, with states bearing the responsibility for reporting cast net fishery catch.

Motion made by Dr. Pierce and seconded by Rep. Kumiega. Motion fails (5 in favor,12 opposed).

Motion to Amend

Motion to amend to add in for 2014 and 2015.

Motion made by Mr. Borden and seconded by Mr. Allen. Motion carries without objection.

Motion to Amend

Move to amend to add “for the state of Florida” after “menhaden”.
Motion made by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion fails.

Main Motion as Amended

Move to manage cast net fisheries for menhaden under the bycatch allowance for 2014 and 2015, with the states bearing responsibility for reporting.
Motion carries (11 in favor, 6 opposed).

WEAKFISH MANAGEMENT BOARD (FEBRUARY 5, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Weakfish Management Board met to review the 2013 stock status indicators and discuss Delaware’s conservation equivalency proposal. The weakfish stock has not recovered and is still at low levels according to relative fishing mortality, juvenile abundance indices, and other indicators. The next benchmark stock assessment is scheduled to be completed in 2015, with the Data Workshop to be held in 2014. The Commission will issue a press release soliciting fishery-dependent and -independent data in advance of the Data Workshop.

The Board approved Delaware’s conservation equivalency proposal to change from net closure days to a closed season. The collapse in the weakfish fishery in Delaware has caused gill netters to switch to other species such as menhaden and black drum. The net closure days severely impacted these fisheries, as 45% of the days in May and June (the peak season) were closed to gill netters. The new closed season allows gill netters to participate in the menhaden and black drum fisheries while continuing to meet the 32% reduction in fishing mortality that was required in Amendment 3. The Board also elected Rob O’Reilly as the new Vice Chair of the Weakfish Board. For more information, please contact Marin Hawk, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mhawk@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Move to approve Delaware’s request for conservation equivalency.
Motion made by Dr. Daniel and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion passes unanimously.

BUSINESS SESSION (FEBRUARY 5, 2014)

Press Release

ASMFC Approves 2014 – 2018 Strategic Plan

Alexandria, VA – The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission unanimously approved its 2014 – 2018 Strategic Plan at its 2014 Winter Meeting. The Plan revises the Commission’s long-term vision to “Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries” and establishes seven major goals and related strategies to pursue this vision. The Strategic Plan will guide the Commission’s activities over the next five years and will be implemented through annual action plans.

“This Strategic Plan is the culmination of extensive and thoughtful strategic planning by my fellow Commissioners,” states Commission Chair Dr. Louis B. Daniel, III of North Carolina. “The document revises the Commission’s long-term vision, values, driving forces, and goals to better respond to new challenges and opportunities in Atlantic coast fisheries management. The Commissioners’ goal, through

the review process, was to strengthen the Strategic Plan to make it more effective, concise, and accessible to the public. We are deeply grateful for the thoughtful input we received from our stakeholders, with more than 4,500 comments submitted during the public comment period. Commissioners were pleased to learn that an overwhelming majority of the public's comments supported the direction of the Commission and we are committed to addressing the other issues raised through our annual action plans.”

The Plan's seven goals are:

1. Rebuild, maintain, fairly allocate, and promote Atlantic coastal fisheries
2. Provide the scientific foundation for and conduct stock assessments to support informed management actions
3. Promote compliance with fishery management plans to ensure sustainable use of Atlantic coast fisheries
4. Protect and enhance fish habitat and ecosystem health through partnerships and education
5. Strengthen stakeholder and public support for the Commission
6. Advance Commission and member states' priorities through a proactive legislative policy agenda
7. Ensure the fiscal stability & efficient administration of the Commission

The 2014 – 2018 Strategic Plan is available on the Commission website at http://www.asmfc.org/files/pub/2014-2018StrategicPlan_Final.pdf.

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PR14-04

Motions

Main Motion

Move to approve the 2014 – 2018 Strategic Plan and to include the summary of public comment and a notation that the ASMFC considers this Strategic Plan a living document.

Motion made by Mr. Cole and seconded by Mr. Fote.

Motion to Substitute

Motion to substitute to approve the 2014 – 2018 Strategic Plan. We will consider the comments offered in our next version and Annual Action Plan.

Motion made by Mr. Abbott and seconded by Mr. Adler. Motion carries.

Main Motion as Substituted

Move to approve the 2014 – 2018 Strategic Plan. We will consider the comments offered in our next version and Annual Action Plan.

Motion carries unanimously.

INTERSTATE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM POLICY BOARD (FEBRUARY 5, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The ISFMP Policy Board met with Eileen Sobeck, the new Assistant Administrator for NOAA Fisheries. Ms. Sobeck talked about her commitment to strong state/federal partnerships. Commissioners warmly greeted her and committed to continuing to work cooperatively with NOAA Fisheries on shared fishery management issues.

Nancy Wallace, the Division Chief of the NOAA Marine Debris Program, presented an overview of the program and recent research/projects along the Atlantic coast. NOAA Marine Debris Program undertakes efforts to reduce adverse impacts of lost and discarded fishing gear on living marine resources and navigation safety. This includes research; the development of alternatives to gear that pose threats; the development of methods for marking gear to enhance tracking, recovery, and identification; and the development non-regulatory measures and incentives to reduce the volume of lost and discarded gear and aid in its recovery. Ms. Wallace also presented an overview of the upcoming impact assessment for the entire Chesapeake Bay Region to begin in 2014.

NOAA Fisheries presented information on an upcoming proposed rule to implement special management zones (SMZs) for five artificial reefs in federal waters off the coast of Delaware. The rulemaking is in response to the recommendations of the Delaware Fish and Wildlife Department (DFW) and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) that the SMZs be established. The DFW requested that the Council designate five artificial reef sites, currently permitted by the U.S. Corps of Engineers in the exclusive economic zone, as SMZs under the regulations implementing the Council's Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan. The Council has recommended, and NOAA Fisheries is considering, that all five artificial reefs be established as SMZs through a regulatory amendment. The action would allow only hook-and-line and spear fishing, including the taking by hand, in the artificial reef designated areas (all year round), and these measures would be implemented with a 500-yard buffer around each artificial reef site.

Staff presented the results of the 2014 Commissioner Survey. The survey measures the Commissioners' opinions regarding the progress and actions of the Commission in the previous year. There was an overall positive trend that the Commission was working towards its mission and vision.

Staff presented the Policy Board with definitions of the categories used in the Annual Performance of the Stocks. Each August the Commission updates the performance of all managed species in order to provide a gauge of how well stocks are performing in comparison to their reference points and the actions boards have taken in the past few years. Commission species are divided into 5 categories: Rebuilt, Rebuilding, Concern, Depleted, and Unknown. The Policy Board discussed adding an additional category, viable. Staff will revise the definitions based on Policy Board feedback.

The Policy Board tasked Commission leadership to work with the New England Management Council, through the Northeast Regional Coordinating Council, on cooperative management in the winter flounder fishery. The NEFMC manages winter flounder in federal waters. For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, ISFMP Director, at tkerns@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

No motions made.

AMERICAN EEL MANAGEMENT BOARD (FEBRUARY 6, 2014)

Press Release

Maine Implements First Ever Quota for Glass Eel Fishery

Alexandria, VA – The Commission's American Eel Management Board approved a conservation equivalency proposal from the State of Maine to allow quota management of its glass eel fishery. A quota of 11,749 pounds will be in place for Maine's 2014 glass eel fishing season, which begins on

March 22nd. This quota, developed with input from Maine's fishing industry and Tribal Nations, represents a 35% reduction from the 2013 Maine's glass eel harvest. In addition to quota management, Maine will also be implementing a harvester swipe card system with daily dealer reporting in order to increase accuracy and timeliness of landings data and reduce opportunities for illegal harvest.

Prior to this fishing year, the Maine glass eel fishery was regulated by the 1998 Fishery Management Plan (FMP) which requires all states to maintain as conservative or more conservative management measures at the time the FMP was approved. Under the FMP, Maine's glass eel fishery was regulated by gear restrictions and a license cap. The change from input controls (gear restrictions and license cap) to output controls (quota management) should allow for increased management flexibility and conservation of the resource.

The Board continues to work on the elements of Draft Addendum IV, which will propose coastwide conservation measures for American eel fisheries. The Board will consider approval of the Draft Addendum for public comment at its next meeting in May 2014.

For more information, please contact Kate Taylor at ktaylor@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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PR14-05

Meeting Summary

The American Eel Board met to review a conservation equivalency proposal from the State of Maine and an aquaculture request from the American Eel Farm (NC), as well as receive an update on the development of Draft Addendum IV and the completion of tasks assigned to the Technical Committee. At the Annual Meeting in October the state of Maine proposed to develop, with industry, a plan to reduce glass eel harvest by 25-40%. The proposed plan developed by the state, through conservation equivalency, implements a glass eel quota of 11,794 pounds for the 2014 fishing season, combined with increased monitoring and enforcement efforts. The Board unanimously approved the conservation equivalency proposal.

The American Eel Farm submitted a request for harvest of 750 pounds of glass eels in North Carolina under a NC Division of Marine Fisheries Scientific and Educational Collection Permit. The Board did not approve the request. However, the Board tasked the Plan Development Team to review state scientific permitting requirements and develop recommendations, if any, for allowances of commercial harvest under a scientific permit for inclusion in Draft Addendum IV.

The Technical Committee provided a progress report on the development of Draft Addendum IV. The addendum was initiated at the Annual Meeting and will potentially include proposed measures on glass and yellow eel quota management, the New York silver eel fishery, fisheries independent monitoring, law enforcement penalties, and harvest allowances under scientific permits.

For more information please contact, Kate Taylor, Senior FMP Coordinator at ktaylor@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Move to allow the State of Maine to suspend the use of input controls currently used (license and gear caps) to manage the glass eel harvest and move to the use of an output control with buffer and payback provisions as presented today as a 2014 conservation equivalency request.

Motion made by Commissioner Keliher and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion passes unanimously.

Move the acceptance of the 35% reduction from 2013 harvest of 18,076 pounds to 11,749 pounds for the 2014 season in Maine. Any overages would be paid back the following year with a reduction in the 2015 season.

Motion made by Commissioner Keliher and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion carries (19 in favor).

Main Motion (Tabled)

Move to include the following in draft addendum IV: define the criteria to issue a state scientific permit for all life stages; define the maximum amount of eels that could be harvested and sold under a scientific permit without board approval; define the minimum amount of eel that could be harvested and sold under a scientific permit with Board approval.

Motion made by Mr. R. White and seconded by Mr. Borden. Motion tabled.

Move to table this motion until a decision is made on the aquaculture proposal from North Carolina.

Motion made by Mr. Diodati and seconded by Mr. O'Reilly. Motion carries (19 in favor).

Move to accept the American eel farm request and that all of the provisions requested by the TC be included in the permit requirements for the 2014 season.

Motion made by Dr. Daniel and seconded by Mr. Lustig. Motion fails (1 in favor, 17 opposed, 1 null).

Motion to Remove from Table

Motion to remove the previous motion from the table.

Motion made by Mr. Abbott and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion carries without objection.

Main Motion

Move to include the following in Draft Addendum IV: define the criteria to issue a state scientific permit for all life stages; define the maximum amount of eels that could be harvested and sold under a scientific permit without board approval; define the minimum amount of eel that could be harvested and sold under a scientific permit with Board approval.

Motion made by Mr. R. White and seconded by Mr. Borden. Motion carries unanimously.

SHAD & RIVER HERRING MANAGEMENT BOARD (FEBRUARY 6, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Shad and River Herring Management Board met to review the FMP Review, state compliance and Shad Habitat Plans. The Board approved the FMP Review and *de minimis* requests for ME, NH and MA for shad, and NH and MA for river herring. The Board approved all Shad Habitat Plans submitted in accordance with Amendment 3. The Board noted the Hudson River, Merrimack River and Florida plans are missing, although no date was set as a final submission date. Finalized Shad Habitat Plans indicate that barriers to migration are the largest threat to shad. The Plans also highlighted the need for more data on the impacts of climate change on shad stocks.

Amendments 2 and 3 require recreational data from the states but few states have surveys to collect this data and have been relying on the Marine Recreational Information Program to fulfill that requirement. The Board tasked the Technical Committee to evaluate the accuracy and usefulness of this data for management with an exploration of additional recreational data sources. Further, the Technical Committee will explore methods to ensure all required data are submitted in a timely manner.

The Board received an update on Mid-Atlantic and New England Fishery Management Council actions in relation to river herring and shad. The most notable action was catch caps in the Atlantic mackerel and herring fisheries for shad and river herring. The Board agreed that this is a good step for management in federal waters to ensure protection of the species throughout their range. The Board elected Bill Goldsborough as Board Vice-Chair. For more information, please contact Marin Hawk, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mhawk@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Move to accept the 2013 FMP Review and recommendations of the PRT for de minimis status for ME, NH, and MA for shad, and NH and MA for river herring. Task the TC with the PRT recommendations.

Motion made by Mr. Adler and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion carries unanimously. (19 in favor).

Move to approve shad habitat plans that have been received to date.

Motion made by Dr. Duval and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion carries unanimously (19 in favor).

STURGEON MANAGEMENT BOARD (FEBRUARY 6, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Sturgeon Management Board accepted the benchmark stock assessment terms of reference which will guide the stock assessment committee in the development of the assessment for Atlantic sturgeon. The Plan Review Team (PRT) recommended that the states work to incorporate to the extent possible ongoing research to aid in the understanding of stock structure and status through the benchmark assessment process.

The Board accepted the 2013 Fishery Management Plan Review for the 2012 fishing year. The PRT found all states in compliance for the 2012 fishing year. The PRT suggested that the states coordinate with the Commission regarding the progress of Section 10 incidental take permits. For more information, please contact Mike Waine, FMP Coordinator at mwaine@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Move to approve terms of reference for benchmark stock assessment.

Motion made by Dr. Daniel and seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to approve the FMP Review and state compliance as presented today.

Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Lustig. Motion passes unanimously.

Move to approve John Pedrick (PA) and Kelly Place (VA) to the Advisory Panel for Sturgeon.

Motion made by Mr. O'Reilly and seconded by Mr. Feigenbaum. Motion carries unanimously.

SPINY DOGFISH & COASTAL SHARKS MANAGEMENT BOARD (FEBRUARY 6, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Spiny Dogfish and Coastal Sharks Management Board met to review the Coastal Sharks FMP Review, state proposals for Addendum III, and a white paper concerning shark seasons and possession limits. Both the Coastal Sharks FMP Review and the state proposals for Addendum III were approved. The Board also approved *de minimis* requests from Maine and New Hampshire under Addendum III.

The Board reviewed the white paper on coastal sharks season and possession limits in order to streamline the specifications process each year. The Board will submit a letter to NOAA Fisheries requesting a postponement of the Large Coastal Sharks season until July 1st for the 2015 fishing season. This will enable states the greatest access to the resource. Depending on how this opening date works in 2015, the Board will consider requesting the same opening date for subsequent years. For more information, please contact Marin Hawk, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mhawk@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Move to approve the Coastal Sharks FMP review as presented today.

Motion by Mr. Augustine, second by Mr. Bellavance. Motion carries without objection.

Move to approve the state implementation plans for Addendum III and grant *de minimis* status to ME and NH.

Motion by Mr. Augustine, second by Mr. Adler. Motion approves by unanimous consent.

HORSESHOE CRAB MANAGEMENT BOARD (FEBRUARY 6, 2014)

Meeting Summary

The Horseshoe Crab Management Board met to review a North Carolina transfer request, receive an update on the New England and New York stock status trends, and discuss confidentiality and mortality issues in the biomedical sector. North Carolina exceeded their quota of 24,036 crabs by approximately 2,247 crabs. The state requested a transfer of 3,000 crabs from Georgia. This request was approved based on the small number of crabs.

The Board received an update on the stock trends in New England and New York. Relative fishing mortality for the New England bait and biomedical sectors had similar increasing trends since 2011. Relative fishing mortality in the New York region has increased steadily since 2000. The Board also requested an update from the Law Enforcement Committee on horseshoe crab enforcement concerns (e.g., poaching).

The Board discussed increases in biomedical mortality and the inability to use the data in stock assessments due to confidentiality issues. The Board will continue to work closely with the biomedical industry and the Stock Assessment Subcommittee to incorporate biomedical mortality information in future stock status analyses or assessments without compromising data confidentiality. For more information, please contact Marin Hawk, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mhawk@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Move to approve the transfer request from Georgia to North Carolina.

Motion made by Dr. Daniel and seconded by Mr. Estes. Motion carries unanimously.

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATE/FEDERAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT BOARD (FEBRUARY 6, 2014)

Press Release

ASMFC South Atlantic Board Initiates Draft Addendum to Address Management of Atlantic Croaker and Spot

Alexandria, VA –The Commission’s South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board has initiated the development of a Draft Addendum to the Fishery Management Plans for Spot and Atlantic Croaker. The Draft Addendum will propose replacing the current trigger analysis with the use of a traffic light approach in determining management measures for both species along the coast. The Draft Addendum will also include options that will allow for conservation equivalency measures to achieve reductions in catch and harvest when needed.

The Board initiated the Draft Addendum in response to concerns over trends in the spot and Atlantic croaker fisheries. The current management of Atlantic croaker and spot compares annual changes in various trigger indices (recent landings and survey information) for each non-assessment year to review trends in the fisheries. The results of the most recent trigger analysis found declines in the commercial and recreational landings for both Atlantic croaker and spot fisheries but did not trip the triggers. The Technical Committee was concerned that the current triggers do not illustrate long-term trends in the stocks and lack specific and timely management responses.

The traffic light approach has been used as a precautionary framework for fisheries with limited data to allow for a reasonable level of resource management. The name comes from assigning a color (red, yellow, or green) to categorize relative levels of indicators on the condition of the fish population or fishery. The approach provides a clear illustration of the trends in the fishery and the need for management action. This method has been developed for use in the blue crab fisheries of North Carolina and Georgia.

The proposed traffic light approach is expected to be an interim approach until the completion of the next stock assessment for both species. The Draft Addendum will be presented to the Board for consideration and approval in May 2014. For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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PR14-06

Meeting Summary

The South Atlantic State/Federal Management Board met to review a number of items including the updated traffic light method analysis report for spot and Atlantic croaker; state compliance reports and Fishery Management Plan Reviews for Spot, Spotted Seatrout, and Spanish Mackerel; and an alternative management proposal for Virginia’s commercial red drum fishery.

The Board reviewed and accepted the Fishery Management Plan Reviews for Spot, Spotted Seatrout, and Spanish Mackerel. The Board approved the *de minimis* requests from New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Georgia for Spanish Mackerel; South Carolina and Georgia for Spot; and New Jersey for Spotted Seatrout.

The Board approved the proposed changes to Virginia's commercial red management measures, reducing their maximum size limit from 26 to 25 inches and increasing their possession limit from 3 to 5 fish. The Board elected Jim Estes from Florida as Vice-Chair. For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Move that the Board task the staff and TC to develop a draft addendum, with an appropriate suite of options that will adopt and employ the traffic light approach to manage spot and croaker. This will be an interim approach until the next stock assessment.

Motion made by Dr. Laney and seconded by Mr. Grist. Motion carries unanimously.

Move that the South Atlantic Board request the Assessment Science Committee consider developing a spot benchmark stock assessment.

Motion made by Dr. Daniel and seconded by Mr. Allen. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to approve state compliance reports and 2013 FMP Reviews for Spot, Spotted Seatrout, and Spanish Mackerel for the 2012 fishing year.

Motion made by Mr. Woodward and seconded by Dr. Daniel. Motion carries.

Move to approve *de minimis* status for the states of New York (Spanish Mackerel), New Jersey (Spanish Mackerel, Spotted Seatrout), Delaware (Spanish Mackerel), South Carolina (Spot), and Georgia (Spot, Spanish Mackerel).

Motion made by Mr. Woodward and seconded by Dr. Daniel. Motion carries.

Move to accept VA's proposal to lower its commercial maximum size limit from 26" to 25" and increase the VA commercial possession limit from 3 to 5 fish.

Motion made by Mr. Grist and seconded by Mr. Gary. Motion carries unanimously.