



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ASMFC Releases for Public Comment the Public Information/Scoping Document for Recreational Sector Separation and Data Collection Amendment

Arlington, VA – The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission releases for public comment the Public Information/Scoping Document for the Recreational Sector Separation and Data Collection Amendment for Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass and Bluefish. The document is a joint effort of the Commission and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council given the species are managed cooperatively by the Commission in state waters (0-3 miles) and by the Council and NOAA Fisheries in federal waters (3-200 miles).

As the first step in the amendment process, the document solicits public input on the potential development of an amendment to consider modifications to the recreational management of summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, and bluefish. Specifically, the amendment may consider options for managing for-hire recreational fisheries separately from other recreational fishing modes (referred to as sector separation), as well as options related to the collection and use of recreational data, such as private angler reporting and enhanced for-hire vessel trip reporting requirements.

Scoping is the first and best opportunity to provide input on the range of issues to be addressed through this action. There will be additional opportunities to provide comments. However, comments early in the development of this action will help the Commission and Council identify issues of concern and determine which types of management options should be further developed. Following the initial phase of information gathering and public comment, the Commission and Council will evaluate potential management options and develop a draft amendment for public review. After the next round of public comment, the Commission and Council will identify the management measures to be included in the Recreational Sector Separation and Data Collection Amendment. A tentative schedule for the completion of the amendment is included in the scoping document.

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and diadromous species.

Submitting Comments

The Public Information/Scoping Document is available at https://asmfc.org/files/PublicInput/SFSBSB_BF_RecAmendment_PublicInfo-Scoping_Jan2025.pdf. All those interested in the management of summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, and bluefish are encouraged to provide input by **11:59 PM (EST) on March 20, 2025** by participating in public hearings (details to be released in a subsequent press release) or by providing written comment. Written comment may be submitted through any of the following methods: online via <https://mafmc.knack.com/public-comments#rec-sector-separation-data-collection/>; mailed to Dr. Christopher Moore, Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, at 800 North State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901; or emailed to Kiley Dancy at kdancy@mafmc.org (Subject line: Recreational Sector Separation and Data Collection).

For more information, please contact Tracey Bauer, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at tbauer@asmfc.org.