



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Board

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Board
March 2, 2023

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Meeting Summaries, Press Releases and Motions

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SUMMER FLOUNDER, SCUP AND BLACK SEA BASS MANAGEMENT BOARD (March 2, 2023)

Meeting Summary

The Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Board (Board) met via webinar to consider black sea bass and scup recreational regulations for the 2023 fishery.

Background

In December 2022, the Board and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) met jointly to set recreational measures for 2023. The Percent Change Approach, as implemented under Addendum XXXIV to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan (FMP), was used in conjunction with the Recreational Demand Model (RDM) to determine that both scup and black sea bass require a 10% reduction in recreational harvest in 2023.

For black sea bass, the Board and Council decided to proceed with the regional conservation equivalency process as outlined in Addendum XXXII, which requires each region (MA-NY, NJ, DE-NC) to implement black sea bass regulations that will achieve a cumulative 10% harvest reduction by weight. For scup, the Board and Council recommended reducing the federal possession limit to 40 fish and shortening the season to May 1 – December 31. Given these measures would not achieve the full 10% reduction, the Board and Council agreed that states would further modify their measures through the Commission process to achieve the full 10% coastwide harvest reduction.

In January and February 2023, the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Technical Committee used the RDM to recommend options for 2023 recreational measures for black sea bass and scup which achieve a 10% reduction for both species.

2023 Black Sea Bass and Scup Recreational Measures

At its webinar meeting on March 2, the Board reviewed and approved the presented range of state/regional options for 2023 scup and black sea bass measures as developed by the RDM, which can be found [here](#). Following this meeting, the states will need to select and inform the Commission of their final 2023 state waters measures for both scup and black sea bass, which will be included in a letter to NOAA Fisheries. 2023 summer flounder recreational measures will be the same as the 2022 measures.

In response to submitted public comment and concerns raised by a few Board members, the Board discussed the merits of whether the scup recreational fishery should remain open in federal waters from January 1-April 30, 2024. Given the selected state measures will achieve the required reduction, the Board will recommend to NOAA Fisheries that it reconsider the scup federal waters closure as described above.

For more information on black sea bass, please contact Tracey Bauer, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at tbauer@asmfc.org, and for more information on scup and summer flounder, contact Chelsea Tuohy, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at ctuohy@asmfc.org.

Motions

Move to approve the range of state/regional options for 2023 black sea bass recreational measures developed using the Recreational Demand Model as presented today.

Motion made by Ms. Meserve and seconded by Dr. McNamee. Motion approved with one abstention from NOAA Fisheries.

Main Motion

Move to approve the use of the Recreational Demand Model to establish 2023 scup recreational measures to achieve a 10% reduction of the RDM's estimated 2023 harvest under 2022 measures, and recommend NOAA Fisheries reconsider the federal waters closure based on the reduction achieved by the state regulations.

Motion made by Mr. Cimino and seconded by Mr. Borden. Main motion divided.

Motion to divide the question.

Motion made by Mr. Nowalsky and seconded by Mr. Batsavage. Motion passes by consent with two abstentions.

Divided Main Motion #1

Move to approve the use of the Recreational Demand Model to establish 2023 scup recreational measures to achieve a 10% reduction of the RDM's estimated 2023 harvest under 2022 measures.

Motion substituted.

Motion to Substitute

Move to approve the range of state/regional options for 2023 scup recreational measures developed using the Recreational Demand Model as presented today.

Motion made by Ms. Meserve and seconded by Dr. McNamee. Motion passes (8 in favor, 1 opposed, 2 abstentions).

Divided Main Motion #1 as Substituted

Move to approve the range of state/regional options for 2023 scup recreational measures developed using the Recreational Demand Model as presented today.

Motion passes. Roll Call: In Favor - MA, RI, CT, NY, DE, MD, VA, NC; Opposed - NJ; Abstentions - NH, NOAA.

Divided Main Motion #2

Move to recommend NOAA Fisheries reconsider the federal waters closure based on the reduction achieved by the state regulations.

Motion passes (6 in favor, 3 opposed, 2 abstentions).