






























## Quick Guide to ASMFC Species Stock Status


(Current as of October 2023)

SPECIES		OVERFISHED	OVERFISHING	ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW
	<a href="#">American Eel</a>	Depleted	Unknown	Stock status based on 2023 benchmark stock assessment. Measures implemented in 2013/2014 to reduce fishing mortality and prevent expansion of the fishery. Addendum initiated to consider reducing yellow eel harvest.
	Gulf of Maine/ Georges Bank (GOM/GBK)	N	N	Stock status based on 2020 benchmark assessment; abundance and recruitment near record highs. Addendum XXVII approved in 2023 with the goal of increasing protection of spawning stock.
	Southern New England	Depleted	N	Stock status based on 2020 benchmark assessment; abundance and recruitment lowest on record.
	<a href="#">American Shad</a>	Depleted	Unknown	Stock status based on 2020 benchmark assessment. Species depleted on coastwide basis, with recovery limited by restricted access to spawning habitat. Amendment 3 established 2013 moratorium unless river-specific sustainability can be documented.
	<a href="#">Atlantic Croaker</a>	Unknown	Unknown	2020 TLA triggered management action for the Mid-Atlantic and South Atlantic; changes to recreational and commercial fishery regulations initiated. Benchmark assessment scheduled for 2024.
	<a href="#">Atlantic Herring</a>	Y	N	Stock status based on 2022 assessment update; SSB at 21% SSB target; 2023-2025 specifications to be set in early 2023.
	<a href="#">Atlantic Menhaden</a>	N	N	Stock status based on 2022 assessment update; use of ERPs approved by Board in 2020. Single-species assessment update and ERP benchmark assessment and peer review scheduled for 2025.

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	<a href="#">Atlantic Striped Bass</a>	Y	N Stock status based on 2022 assessment update. Measures implemented in 2020 to achieve 18% reduction in total removals and end overfishing. In May 2023, in response to a near doubling of recreational harvest from 2021 to 2022, emergency action was taken to change the recreational size limit, effective immediately for 180 days from May 2 <sup>nd</sup> – October 28 <sup>th</sup> . In August, the Board will consider extending the emergency action, while it works on an addendum to implement 2024 management measures designed to reduce fishing mortality to the target.
	<a href="#">Atlantic Sturgeon</a>	Depleted	N Stock status based on 2017 benchmark assessment; slow recovery occurring since 1998 and total mortality is sustainable. 40+ year moratorium implemented in 1998; listed in 2012 under the ESA.
	<a href="#">Black Drum</a>	N	N Stock status based on 2023 benchmark assessment; spawning biomass has been increasing; exploitation has remained at a higher, stable level since the early 2000s.
	<a href="#">Black Sea Bass</a>	N	N Stock status based on 2021 management track stock assessment; SSB estimated to be 2.2 times the biomass target. Research track assessment scheduled to be completed in late 2023.
	<a href="#">Bluefish</a>	N	N Stock status based on 2023 management track stock assessment. Amendment 2 (2021) established a 7-year rebuilding program. Stock will remain in the rebuilding plan until biomass reaches target. Management track assessment to be completed in June 2025.
	<a href="#">Coastal Sharks</a>	Varies by species & species complex	

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	<a href="#">Cobia</a>	N	N	Stock status based on 2020 benchmark stock; pattern of rapid biomass increases in strong recruitment years followed by years of decline.
	<a href="#">Horseshoe Crab</a>	Unknown	Unknown	Stock status based on 2019 benchmark assessment; NE region and DE Bay stocks stable; NY region stock poor; and SE region stock good. Coastwide abundance has fluctuated, with many surveys decreasing after 1998 but increasing in recent years. ARM Framework used since 2013 to set harvest levels for DE Bay-origin horseshoe crabs. ARM Framework Revision adopted via Addendum VIII in 2022.
	<a href="#">Jonah Crab</a>	Unknown	Unknown	First range-wide assessment scheduled for 2023; measures implemented to prevent the harvest of immature crabs and cap fishery to limit expansion.
	<a href="#">Northern Shrimp</a>	Depleted	N	Stock status based on 2021 stock assessment update; abundance, biomass, SSB, and recruitment are at near time-series lows. Environmental conditions continue to be unfavorable to rebuilding. Moratorium in place since 2014 to protect remaining spawning population.
	Northern Region	Unknown	No	Stock status based on 2018 benchmark assessment; sSPR above target and threshold SPRs. Benchmark assessment scheduled for 2024.
	Southern Region	Unknown	No	
	<a href="#">River Herring</a>	Depleted	Unknown	Stock status based on 2017 assessment update. Amendment 2 established 2012 moratorium unless river-specific sustainability can be documented. Benchmark assessment and peer review scheduled for 2024.
	<a href="#">Scup</a>	N	N	Stock status based on 2023 assessment; SSB estimated to be over two times its target. Management track assessment scheduled for 2025.

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	<a href="#">Spanish Mackerel</a>	N	N	Stock status based on 2022 stock assessment, which found stock status unchanged.	
	<a href="#">Spiny Dogfish</a>	N	N	Stock status based on 2018 assessment update; management track assessment scheduled for late 2023.	
	<a href="#">Spot</a>	Unknown	Unknown	2020 TLA triggered management action for Mid-Atlantic and South Atlantic regions; changes to recreational/commercial fishery regulations initiated. Benchmark assessment scheduled for 2024.	
	<a href="#">Spotted Seatrout</a>	Unknown	Unknown	No range-wide assessment. Omnibus Amendment includes measures to protect spawning stock & established 12" minimum size limit.	
	<a href="#">Summer Flounder</a>	N	Y	Stock status based on 2023 assessment. Assessment detected patterns of declining maturity and mean length/weights at age. Management track assessment scheduled for 2025.	
	Massachusetts – Rhode Island	N	N	Stock status based on 2021 assessment update, which found improvements in all regions.	
	Long Island Sound	N	N		
	New Jersey – New York Bight	Y	N		
	Delaware/Maryland /Virginia	N	N		
	<a href="#">Weakfish</a>	Depleted	No	Stock status based on 2019 assessment update. Species depleted since 2003; population experiencing high levels of natural mortality, preventing stock recovery. Harvest limited to 1 fish bag limit and a 100 pound commercial bycatch limit.	
	<a href="#">Winter Flounder</a>	Gulf of Maine	Unknown	N	Stock status based on 2022 management track assessment; abundance indices relatively flat over time series with an increase in 2021/2022. Management track assessment scheduled for both stocks in 2024.

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<a href="#">Winter Flounder</a> 	South New England/ Mid-Atlantic	N	N	Stock status based on 2022 management track assessment; SSB at record lows despite sustained low levels of fishing mortality. Recruitment has declined sharply since 1980s and remains near time series low. Change in overfished status due to a change in the recruitment time series used to estimate BRPs, rather than an improvement in the stock.

For more information about the Commission’s fisheries management program or any of the above species go to <http://www.asmfc.org/fisheries-management/program-overview> or click on the species name within the table.

### What Does a Status Mean?

**Unknown** - There is no accepted stock assessment to estimate stock status.

**Depleted** - Reflects low levels of abundance though it is unclear whether fishing mortality is the primary cause for reduced stock size

**Overfished** - Occurs when stock biomass falls below the threshold established by the FMP, impacting the stock’s reproductive capacity to replace fish removed through harvest, and that decline is driven primarily by fishing mortality.

**Overfishing** - Removing fish from a population at a rate that exceeds the threshold established in the FMP, impacting the stock’s reproductive capacity to replace fish removed through harvest.

**Benchmark stock assessment** - A full analysis and review of stock condition, focusing on the consideration of new data sources and newer or improved assessment models. This assessment is generally conducted every 3-5 years and undergoes a formal peer review by a panel of independent scientists who evaluate whether the data and the methods used to produce the assessment are scientifically sound and appropriate for management use.

**Stock assessment update** - Incorporates data from the most recent years into a peer-reviewed assessment model to determine current stock status (abundance and overfishing levels)

**Management track or operational assessments** – Part of the Northeast Fisheries Science Center’s (NEFSC) stock assessment process (management track) and the Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review’s (SEDAR) stock assessment process (operational). Provide routine, scheduled, and updated advice to directly inform management actions. Management track and operational assessments ensure that stock status is updated on a regular and predictable basis.

**Research track assessments** – Part of the NEFSC’s and SEDAR’s stock assessment process and are complex scientific efforts that are designed to be carried out over several years. They can (1) focus on research topics for on one or more individual stocks, (2) evaluate an issue or new model/tool that could apply to many stocks and/or (3) consider extensive changes in data, model, or stock structure. Research assessments can provide the basis for future management assessments.

### List of Acronyms

ARM – Adaptive Resource Management  
 BRPs – biological reference points  
 ERPs – ecological reference points  
 ESA – Endangered Species Act  
 MARI – Massachusetts-Rhode Island

MSY – maximum sustainable yield  
 SPRs – spawning potential ratio  
 SSB – spawning stock biomass  
 TLA – Traffic Light Analysis