



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

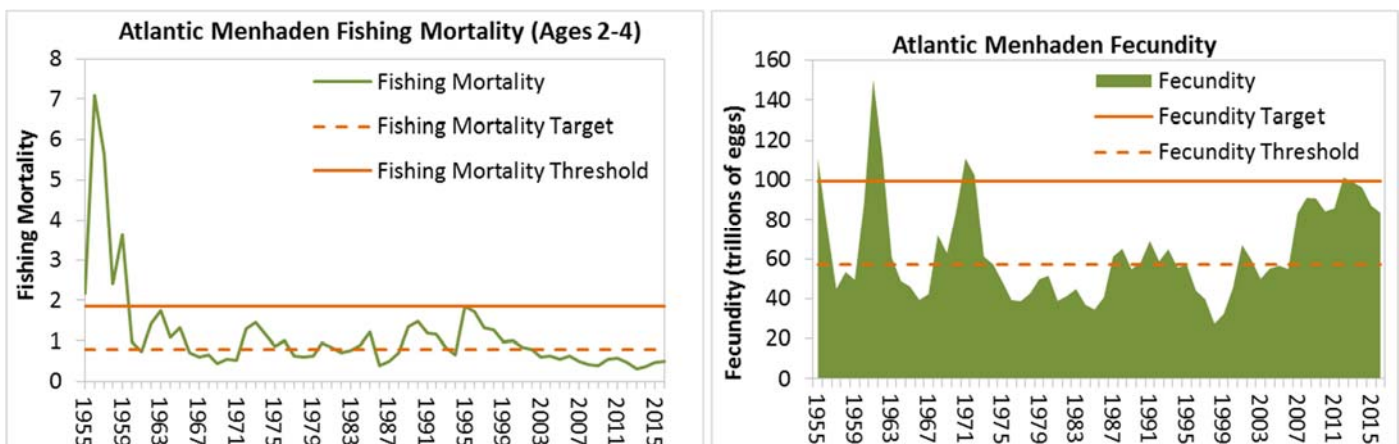
Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

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Atlantic Menhaden Stock Assessment Update Finds Resource Not Overfished and Overfishing Not Occurring

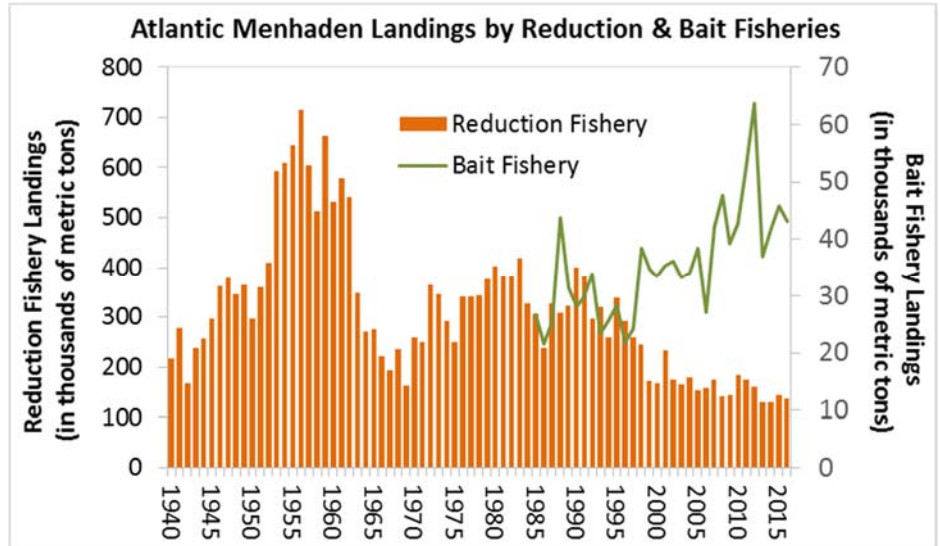
Alexandria, VA – The Commission’s Atlantic Menhaden Management Board reviewed the results of the 2017 Atlantic Menhaden Stock Assessment Update, which indicates the resource remains healthy; it is not overfished nor experiencing overfishing relative to the current biological reference points. In 2016, population fecundity, a measure of reproductive capacity, is estimated to be 83,486 billion eggs which is well above the threshold (57,295 billion eggs) but below the target (99,467 billion eggs). Additionally, total fishing mortality is estimated to be 0.51, below both the fishing mortality threshold (1.85) and target (0.80). The stock assessment update uses the same modeling approach as the 2015 Atlantic Menhaden Benchmark Stock Assessment but added additional years of data from 2014-2016.



While the stock status was assessed in the same way as the 2015 benchmark report, the reference point values have changed. Adding additional years of data to the model resulted in generally higher fishing mortality values throughout the times series which changed the scale of the reference points. While the scale is different and the trend differs in some years, the stock status for both fishing mortality rate and fecundity has been similar over the past decade.

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 anadromous species.

Atlantic menhaden is harvested by both commercial reduction and bait fisheries. In 2013, Amendment 2 to the Fishery Management Plan implemented a total allowable catch (TAC) of 170,800 metric tons (mt). The coastwide TAC was increased by 10% to 187,880 mt for the 2015-2016 fishing years and by another 6.45% to 200,000 mt for the 2017 fishing year. In 2016, reduction landings were 137,400 mt and accounted for approximately 76% of coastwide landings and bait landings were 43,100 mt and comprised 24% of coastwide landings.



For a more detailed description of the stock assessment results, go here –

http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/59822ab4MenhadenAssessmentOverview_Aug2017.pdf. To obtain the Stock Assessment Update go here –

http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/59832ee0MenhadenStockAssessmentUpdate_Aug2017.pdf. For more information, please contact Megan Ware, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at 703.842.0740 or mware@asmfc.org.

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