



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Working towards healthy, self-sustaining populations of all Atlantic coast fish species or successful restoration well in progress by the year 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ASMFC & MAFMC Approve 2007 TALs for Scup & Black Sea Bass

Philadelphia, PA – The Commission and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) met this week to finalize the total allowable landings (TAL) limits for scup and black sea bass, and establish 2007 commercial management measures for the respective fisheries. The TALs are provided below in millions of pounds.

Species	2005 TAL	2006 TAL	2007 TAL
Black Sea Bass	8.2	8.0	6.5
Scup	16.5	16.27	16.0

The 2007 black sea bass quota was set at 6.5 million pounds, divided into a 3.2 million pound commercial quota and a 3.3 recreational limit. While the approved TAL exceeds the 5 million pound limit recommended by the Monitoring Committee, it does represent a 1.5 million pound decrease from last year and responds to the stock's decreased biomass and overfished condition. No changes were made to minimum sizes, vent sizes, or mesh restrictions. However, as set in 2006, all traps and pots will be required to have at least two vents in the parlor portion of the trap to help increase escapement of sub-legal fish. All circular vents must be 2.5". These measures must be implemented by January 1, 2007.

For scup, the Commission and Council approved a total allowable catch of 17.97 million pounds, which includes both a TAL and discard allowance. The TAL is divided into a 12.3 million pound TAL for the commercial fishery and a 3.7 million pound TAL for the recreational fishery. Due to uncertainty in the stock status and the species' overfished status, the Monitoring Committee recommended a TAL of 12 million pounds. In making its decision for the higher TAL, the Board and Council took into consideration shifts in effort due to decreases in TALs for other important demersal species.

The Commission deferred taking action on the 2007 summer flounder TAL and management measures until its Annual Meeting in mid-October. The Commission's actions with regards to black sea bass and scup are final and apply in state waters. The Council will be forwarding its recommendations to NOAA's Northeast Regional Administrator for final approval. For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, FMP Coordinator, at (202) 289-6400 or <tkerns@asmfc.org>.

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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.

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