



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
May 23, 2013

PRESS CONTACT: Tina Berger
703.842.0740

ASMFC Spiny Dogfish & Coastal Sharks Board Approves Smoothhound Shark Addendum II & Initiates Draft Addendum III

Alexandria, VA – The Commission’s Spiny Dogfish and Coastal Sharks Management Board has approved Addendum II to the Atlantic Coastal Sharks Fishery Management Plan. The Addendum allocates state shares of smoothhound sharks (also known as smooth dogfish) and changes the maximum fin-to-carcass ratio for smoothhound shark processing-at-sea.

The Addendum was developed in anticipation of NOAA Fisheries upcoming federal smoothhound shark quota, establishing state shares to prevent one region from harvesting the quota and excluding other regions (Table 1). The shares were established based on historical landings from 1998-2010. The Addendum also addresses changes to the maximum fin-to-carcass ratio for smoothhound sharks which were approved by Congress in the Shark Conservation Act of 2010.

Currently, there are no harvest restrictions for smoothhound sharks. Addendum I allows for the removal of all fins for processing-at-sea from March through June as long as the total wet weight of the fins found on board the vessel does not exceed 5% of the total dressed weight of smoothhound carcasses which are found on board the vessel. Addendum II was developed and approved to ensure consistency between the state and federal smoothhound shark plans.

The Atlantic Coastal Shark Plan and its two addenda continue to prohibit the finning of sharks. Finning is defined as the removal of the fins of a shark while discarding the carcass at sea. Fin-to-carcass ratios are used in high volume fisheries to allow fishermen to process the catch at sea, so long as the weight of the fins corresponds to the correct ratio of carcasses on board the vessel. Processing at sea is used to prevent the meat from being contaminated with ammonia and spoiling while still at sea.

**Table 1: Final State Share
Percentages as Approved in
Addendum II**

	State-Share Percentages
ME	0.021%
MA	0.433%
RI	1.363%
CT	0.234%
NY	7.953%
NJ	18.828%
DE	0.339%
MD	6.703%
VA	34.803%
NC	28.583%
SC	0.742%

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.

Draft Addendum III was also initiated to ensure consistency between the state and federal plans. NOAA Fisheries' Amendment 5a to the Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan changes coastal shark species groupings and the recreational size limit for hammerhead sharks. Draft Addendum III proposes changing the species groupings and recreational size limit in state waters accordingly. The Board will review the Draft Addendum and consider its approval for public comment at the Commission's 2013 Summer Meeting.

Addendum II will be available on the Commission website (www.asmfc.org) under *Breaking News* or by contacting the Commission at 703.842.0740. For more information, please contact Marin Hawk, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mhawk@asmfc.org.

###