



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 Sets Spiny Dogfish 2011/2012 Fishing Year Quota at 20 Million Pounds

Charleston, SC – The Commission's Spiny Dogfish and Coastal Sharks Management Board (Board) approved a 20 million pound quota with a maximum possession limit of 3,000 pounds for the 2011/2012 fishing season (May 1 – April 30). As specified under Addendum II, the quota will be allocated with 58% to states from Maine through Connecticut, 26% to New York through Virginia, and 16% to North Carolina.

Prior to setting the spiny dogfish quota, the Board approved new reference points based on information from the latest stock assessment. They include a target biomass of 351.23 million pounds (159,288 mt), a threshold biomass of 175.62 million pounds (79,644 mt), and a fishing mortality target and threshold of 0.207 and 0.325 respectively.

The 20 million pound quota was set to achieve a level of fishing mortality (F) equal to 75% of the target F and is consistent with recommendations of the Spiny Dogfish Technical Committee. The Technical Committee recommended reducing the target F by 25% to minimize any future drop in biomass. The quota is also consistent with the level recommended by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council for federal waters at its October meeting.

The latest stock assessment information indicates that spiny dogfish are not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. The biomass in 2010 is estimated to be 361.77 million pounds, which is slightly above the target biomass of 351.23 million pounds and is the second year in a row that biomass has exceeded the target. In addition, F was estimated to be $F = 0.113$ in 2009 which is well below the target (0.207) and threshold (0.325) rates and achieved the F rate as designed. While spiny dogfish have rebuilt, the stock is expected to decrease below the target biomass around 2014 because of record low recruitment from 1997 – 2003. The magnitude of this drop increases with fishing mortality and is projected to occur even if fishing mortality is zero.

The Board also initiated the development of an addendum to explore state-by-state allocation options for the southern management region (NY – NC). With the start of the season scheduled for May 1, the Board will consider approval of the draft addendum for public comment via email correspondence/conference call, with the intent to release it for public comment and state hearings in the winter and final approval at the

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.

Commission's March meeting. A press release will announce the availability of the Draft Addendum for public comment and the state hearing schedule once the hearing details have been finalized.

The Board also approved a 33 fish possession limit for sharks in the large coastal sharks (LCS) species group (silky, tiger, blacktip, spinner, bull, lemon, nurse, scalloped hammerhead, great hammerhead, and smooth hammerhead sharks) for 2011. The Coastal Sharks Technical Committee recommended continuing the 33 fish LCS possession limit in 2011 since it worked reasonably well in distributing the quota in 2010 and is consistent with proposed federal shark specifications.

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