SPINY DOGFISH
(06/02 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

**Stock status** — *Overfished.* Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) Stock Assessment estimates the mature female spawning stock biomass at 56,700 metric tons (mt), well below the rebuilding target of 167,464 mt. Other spiny dogfish fisheries (Eastern Atlantic) are overfished and depressed.

**Average Commercial Landings 1995-2001 and Value** — 5,745,793 lb., $863,175

**2001 Commercial Landings and Value** — 375 lb., $41 (fishery was closed for most of the year)


**2001 Recreational Landings** — No landings reported

**Status of Fisheries Management Plan** — Currently managed under the joint Northeast Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) and Mid Atlantic Fishery Management Plan (MAFMC) Fishery Management Plan for Spiny Dogfish, effective May 1, 2000. It establishes a 4,000,000 lb. quota for the May 2002–April 2003 that is divided into two six month seasons (May -- October: 2,316,000 lb.; November--April: 1,684,000 lb.). A 600 lb. trip limit is in effect from May 1 – October 31, 2002 and a 300 lb. trip limit is in effect from November 1, 2002 – April 30, 2003. Amendment 1 to the federal FMP is scheduled for 2003. An ASMFC Fishery Management Plan for state waters will be in place in 2003. Until the Plan is developed, ASMFC has an Emergency Action that closes state waters to the commercial harvest, landing and possession of spiny dogfish when there is a closure in federal waters.

**Research and Data Needs** — Commercial fishery sampling, aging, identify pupping areas, discard mortality, identification of separate stocks in Northwest Atlantic

**Current Size Limit** — No size restrictions

**Harvest Season** — Year round, the North Carolina commercial fishery occurs in the winter (November – April).

**Size and Age at Maturity** — Median size and age at maturity is 23 inches and 8 years for males and 31 inches and 12 years or females. Age at maturity estimates vary due to different aging techniques.

**Historical and Current Maximum Age** — 35 years old for males and 40 years old for females. Some estimates from length/age studies for fish from the Pacific Ocean suggest a maximum age of 95 years. Historical ages variable due to different aging techniques used. Annual formation of rings on the second dorsal spine not directly validated for Northwest Atlantic fish.

**Juvenile Abundance Indices Average 1992-2001** — Unknown

**Habits and Habitats** — Spiny dogfish are distributed on both sides of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans in temperate and subarctic latitudes. In the Northwest Atlantic, they range from Labrador to Florida, but are most abundant from Nova Scotia to Cape Hatteras. They migrate seasonally, moving into North Carolina waters in the winter and north in the spring. The preferred water temperature is 45°F to 55°F F. The spiny dogfish is a relatively long-lived, slow growing animal reaching a maximum size of approximately four feet. The spiny dogfish gives birth to live pups. The gestation period last from 18-22 months with 2 to 15 pups produced (average 6). Fecundity increases with fish length.

Spiny dogfish landings were grouped together with smooth dogfish landings prior to 1995.

For more information, see [DMF Species Leads page](#)