SUMMER FLOUNDER
(06/01 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

Stock Status—Recovering. The estimated percentage of age four and older fish has increased significantly since the early 1990's. The estimated spawning stock biomass in 1999 was the highest in the 18-year time series. The fishing mortality in 1999 was estimated at 0.32 compared to 1.31 in 1994. The stock appears to be near a viable status.*

Average Commercial Landings and Value 1992-2001 $3,145,775 lb, $5,169,628

2001 Commercial Landings and Value B3,386,578 lb (quota managed), $5,991,402

Average Recreational Landings 1992-2001 – 381,729 lb. 2001 – 405,605 lb\textsuperscript{u}

Status of Fisheries Management Plan-- Currently managed under Amendment 12 to the joint ASMFC/MAFMC Fishery Management Plan for Summer Flounder. Management measures include commercial quotas, minimum mesh sizes for trawls, minimum fish size limits, recreational bag limits, and a moratorium on new entrants into the fishery.

Research and Data Needs-- bycatch mortality estimates, age comparisons of northern and southern fish using scales and otoliths

Current minimum size limit--non-ocean-13 inches, ocean-15 and 1/2 inches recreational, 14 inches commercial


Size at maturity, age at maturity--10.9 inches, 1.5 years old

Historical maximum age, current maximum age-- 15 years old, 10 years old

Average juvenile index 1992-2001 11.2, 2001 22.0 (number of individuals per unit of effort)

Habits/Habitats--Summer flounder are estuarine dependent members of the left-eyed flounder family that also include southern flounder and gulf flounder. Summer flounder migrate offshore and north during winter and early spring and inshore and south during summer and fall. Summer flounder spawn from November through March when water temperatures are between 53 and 67 degrees. Larval summer flounder enter inlets and settle on sandy bottoms in higher-salinity areas of estuaries. After or towards the end of their first year, summer flounder move into ocean waters to spawn and join coastal migratory groups.

status subject to change soon after June 2002 stock assessment.

\textsuperscript{u} Updated landings from MRFSS, 5/20/2002.

For more information, see DMF Species Leads page