

## Stock status of important coastal fisheries in North Carolina, 2008

Species and Stock	Status					Comments
	Viable	Recovering	Concern	Depleted	Unknown	
<b>Bass, Black Sea</b>						
<b>N. of Hatteras</b>						Not overfished north of Hatteras based on the NEFSC survey. However, the biological reference points used in the black sea bass assessment were called to question and resulted in the rejection of a 2006 Stock Assessment.
<b>S. of Hatteras</b>						Overfished south of Hatteras, based on SAFMC assessment.
<b>Bass, Striped</b>						
<b>Albemarle-Roanoke</b>						The North Carolina Estuarine Striped Bass FMP was approved in May 2004 to manage a recovered stock. The FMP will start the revision process in July 2008.
<b>Atlantic Ocean Migratory Stock</b>						ASMFC is currently managing under Addendum I to Amendment 6 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. Addendum I addresses the issue of striped bass discard mortality in all sectors of the striped bass fishery. For more information about the status of the Atlantic Coastal Migratory stocks visit the ASMFC website at <a href="http://www.asafc.org">www.asafc.org</a> .
<b>Central/Southern</b>						Stocks are much lower than historical levels. Despite stocking efforts, there are few mature fish on the spawning grounds. Analysis of data collected on the spawning grounds indicates that the stock is being overfished. A management plan was approved in May 2004. The two unresolved issues remaining from the 2004 FMP, large mesh gill net discards and recreational creel limits, have been addressed through proclamation and regulation. The N.C. Estuarine Striped Bass FMP will undergo revision starting in July 2008.
<b>Bluefish</b>						The Atlantic stock of bluefish is not overfished and is not experiencing overfishing. The Bluefish Technical Monitoring Committee continues to work on improving and refining the bluefish stock assessment.
<b>Catfishes (A)</b>						Independent and dependent sampling began March 2004 to fulfill data/research needs for upcoming FMP.
<b>Croaker, Atlantic</b>						The population in the mid-Atlantic region is currently not overfished and overfishing is not occurring on the spawning stock biomass based on the ASMFC assessment.
<b>Dolphin</b>						SAFMC plan approved in 2004.
<b>Drum, Red</b>						The updated stock assessment indicates that overfishing is no longer occurring and management action taken as a result of the 2001 N. C. Red Drum FMP appears to have been effective. The plan is currently being reviewed to determine if revisions are needed to the current management program.
<b>Eel, American</b>						The ASMFC benchmark stock assessment was reviewed in February 2006. The management board accepted the stock assessment as complete but did not approve this document for management purposes. The status of the stock is still unknown.
<b>Flounder, Southern</b>						The stock is overfished and overfishing is occurring based on the 2004 stock assessment. A North Carolina FMP was approved and management measures implemented in 2005. A new stock assessment is scheduled for completion in 2008.
<b>Flounder, Summer</b>						Improvements in age class structure, spawning stock biomass, and fishing mortality have occurred since the early 1990s. However, overfishing is occurring.
<b>Grouper, Gag</b>						According to the latest stock assessment (2006) from SAFMC, gag is experiencing overfishing, but is not overfished.

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<b>Herring, River (A)</b>						
Albemarle Sound						The MFC through Amendment 1 of the 2007 NC River Herring FMP, implemented a no harvest (commercial or recreational) provision for the joint and coastal waters of the state, beginning with the 2007 season. Current research is being conducted by DMF to re-evaluate spawning habitat and assess potential blockages to historical spawning areas. DMF continues to monitor the adult spawning stock utilizing a pound net survey and has expanded juvenile sampling in the Albemarle Sound area.
Other Areas						No current sampling program.
<b>Kingfishes (A)</b>						The recently completed FMP indicated a healthy age structure in the stock along with increasing trends in fishery independent and dependent abundance indices.
<b>Mackerel, King</b>						Based on the 2003 stock assessment update the south Atlantic king mackerel stock is considered healthy and not overfished. Concern over estimates of Atlantic and Gulf stock mixing rates in south Florida and addition of up to date aging data has delayed approval of the most recent stock assessment. A new stock assessment should be completed in 2008.
<b>Mackerel, Spanish</b>						Based on the most recent stock assessment the spawning stock biomass is above target and fishing mortality is below target. The South Atlantic Spanish mackerel stock is considered healthy and not overfished. A new stock assessment should be completed in 2008.
<b>Menhaden, Atlantic</b>						The stock is not overfished, nor is overfishing occurring. Commercial landings have decreased because there is no longer a reduction fishery in North Carolina.
<b>Monkfish</b>						NMFS considers the stock overfished and implemented interim management measures for the 2007 fishing year so that the 10-year rebuilding program can be met in 2009.
<b>Mullet, Striped</b>						The stock is not overfished. Landings for 2007 were within management threshold limits. Historically, the commercial fishery has had sustained landings similar to current levels.
<b>Perch, White</b>						Independent and dependent sampling began March 2004 to fulfill data/research needs for up coming FMP.
<b>Perch, Yellow</b>						Significant increase in effort and landings since 1991. Fish are targeted during the winter and early spring during spawning within specific river systems.
<b>Reef Fish (B)</b>						Of the 73 species (including black sea bass) in the SAFMC unit, 17 are considered overfished.
<b>Scup</b>						The NEFSC 3-year Spring Spawning Biomass index values for 2004-2006 were below the minimum biomass threshold indicating the stock is overfished. Stock status with respect to overfishing cannot currently be evaluated and is pending an updated stock assessment.
<b>Shad, American</b>						Commercial landings increased significantly in 2007, and were well above the latest 10-year average. The 2007 ASMFC coastwide stock assessment concluded that Albemarle Sound area stocks were stable, but well below historical levels. The assessment also indicated that the majority of the stocks along the east coast are at all-time lows and continue to decline, despite current management efforts. Amendments to the ASMFC FMP are being developed.
<b>Shad, Hickory</b>						Although commercial landings increased in 2007, they remained well below the 10-year average. The juvenile abundance index for hickory shad remained at 0.02, with only 1 hickory shad being captured in the 2007 alosine juvenile abundance seine survey. The DMF has not conducted any directed sampling since 1993.

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Sharks						The ASMFC is developing a Coastal Shark FMP. Recent assessment results indicate great uncertainty about the various shark species, but the status is concern because of the overfished status of sandbar shark, the target species.
Spiny Dogfish						MANEFMC plan for federal waters and ASMFC plan for state waters. The 2006 benchmark assessment indicates that the stock is not overfished, and overfishing is not occurring. Continued decrease in female abundance, imbalance in sex ratio, and low estimates of recent recruitment are highlighted concerns for the current stock status.
Spot						Although recreational landings increased in 2007, the commercial catch was a historical low. The decreased commercial landings may be attributed to environmental factors, decreased fishing effort or a combination of both.
Spotted Seatrout						ASMFC FMP was developed in 1984 and reviewed annually. A N.C. FMP was initiated in July 2007. The N.C. stock assessment has been completed and is under review, and the FMP is under development and projected for completion by 2009.
Sturgeon, Atlantic						ASMFC is responsible for managing this species and considers the stocks to be depleted along the Atlantic coast. Coastwide prohibition on possession.
Weakfish						The weakfish stock along the Atlantic coast is currently at a level of low abundance. Coastwide landings are at their lowest levels on record. The most recent assessment indicates that the cause is likely due to factors other than fishing mortality. ASMFC has set landings limits in response to the decline in an effort to aid in stock recovery.
<b>Shellfish and Crustaceans</b>						
Clam, Hard						Data are currently insufficient to evaluate status. An update of the 2001 FMP is in development and will near completion later in 2008.
Oyster, Eastern						Concern status due to long - term decline caused by over harvesting and habitat disturbances. Sampling data shows DERMO has declined in recent years and commercial landings have shown some improvement. Recreational landings are unknown.
Scallop, Bay						Environmental disturbances, fishing effort, and predation may have limited the spawning stocks to maintain the population.
Crab, Blue						Blue crabs continue to support North Carolina's most valuable commercial fishery; topping the list for overall pounds harvested. However, the 2007 fishery yielded the lowest landings and the third lowest value during the 10-year period 1998-2007. Significantly reduced landings of hard blue crabs for 2000-2002 and 2004-2007, following the historically record high landings observed during 1996-1999, has caused increased industry concern for the health of the resource and fishery.
Shrimp(C)						Annual Stock. Abundances may be greatly affected by environmental conditions
<b>Totals</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	

(A) Catfishes includes 5 species, Kingfishes (Sea Mullet) includes 3 species, and there are two species of river herring. (B)The reef fish group includes about 75 species, while there are more than 40 species of sharks. Within these groups, individual species range from Viable to Overfished. The status indicated is for the group as a whole. (C)Shrimp consists of 3 species - brown, pink, and white.