

## **DOLPHIN**

(06/99 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

**Stock Status**-----Viable. The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) is currently developing a fishery management plan (FMP) for dolphin (the FMP also includes wahoo). The goal of the FMP is to maintain the current level of harvest and prevent effort shifts or new fisheries from compromising the allocation of dolphin between recreational and commercial user groups. The allocation being considered in the FMP is 87% recreational and 13% commercial. In 1999, the recreational fishery accounted for 95% of all dolphin landed in North Carolina. The SAFMC held public hearings in North Carolina in May 2000 and will be finalizing the FMP at the Council meeting in Beaufort, North Carolina in December 2000

**Average Commercial Landings and Value 1989-1999**-----162,808 lbs./\$258,864

**1999 Commercial Landings and Value**-----209,653 lbs./\$333,348

**Average Recreational Landings 1989-1999**-----2,696,328 lbs.

**1999 Recreational Landings**----- 4,427,445 lbs.

**Average Citations 1989-1999 and Current Number (Weight = 35lbs.)**----254/249

**Status of Fisheries Management Plan**----- New plan being developed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. Currently no Federal restrictions.

**Data/Research Needs**-----Stock identification studies, age and growth, reproduction, migration, diet.

**Current minimum size limit**-----None.

**Harvest Season**-----Open year round, however, landings are seasonal.

**Size and Age at maturity**-----24 inches TL/ 4-6 months old.

**Historical and Current Maximum Age**-----4 years old/ 4 years old (needs validation).

**Average and Current Juvenile Abundance Index (1987-1997)**-----Unknown.

**Habits/Habitats**-----Coastal/Oceanic migratory pelagic species. Current hypothesis suggests that dolphin migrate from the central Caribbean northward through the mid-Atlantic to Bermuda and back to the central Caribbean. Fast growing, early maturing species that spawns over a protracted time period.

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