

SCUP

Stock Status – *Viable* - The assessment model for scup changed in 2008 from a simple index-based model to a statistical catch at age model. The most recent assessment update in 2009 used the same model configuration with fishery and survey catch information through 2008. The scup stock continued to be not overfished and overfishing was not occurring relative to the biological reference points recommended by the 2008 Northeast Data Poor Stocks Working Group Peer Review Panel. With greatly improved recruitment and low fishing mortality rates since 1998, the rebuilding target has been exceeded since 2005, and the stock is considered rebuilt. Given the success of the ASAP modeling approach, the stock is no longer considered a data poor stock.

Average Commercial Landings and Value - 2000-2009 – 169,691 lbs/\$97,829

2009 Commercial Landings and Value – 244,337 lbs./\$100,956 (quota managed)

Average Recreational Landings - 2000-2009 – 4,442 lbs., **2009** – 1,062 lbs.

Status of Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) - Scup are currently included in the Interjurisdictional FMP, which defers to Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC)/Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council (MAFMC) FMP compliance requirements. The board adopted Amendment 14 (May 2007) that set a rebuilding plan for scup from an overfished condition to a level associated with maximum sustainable yield. The 2008 Data Poor Stocks Panel and the 2009 Demersal Working Group both advised that a gradual increase in the TAC/TAL toward the MSY level would facilitate an evaluation of the performance of the new assessment model and BRP's in monitoring stock status, while reducing the risk to the stock due to rapidly increased catch.

A coastwide quota regulates the winter period (November-April), while state-by-state quotas regulate the summer period (May-October). Specific management measures for the commercial fishery include minimum size limits, minimum mesh requirements for trawls, and closed season. Recreational fishery management measures are developed annually and include a combination of minimum size limits, bag limits and fishing seasons.

Research and Data Needs – There is a need to continue monitoring catches and increase sampling of strata that have substantial landings of scup. Reliable estimates of scup discard mortality by different commercial gear types are needed.

Current Regulations – Commercial: 9 inches total inches (TL); Recreational: 8 inches TL/50 per day year-round.

Harvest Season - Federal possession limit in Winter I is 30,000 lbs. per trip, with states implementing a two week landing limit of 30,000 pounds. When 80% of the TAC is reached, the possession limit will drop to 1,000 pounds per day. Winter II landing limit is 1,500 lbs. per day. North Carolina commercial and recreational seasons close by proclamation.

Size and Age at Maturity – 50% maturity: 6.1 inches TL/2 years, both sexes

Historical and Current Maximum Age - 20 years/10 years

Juvenile Abundance Index - Not available

Habits and Habitats - Scup are a schooling continental shelf species found in depths from 40 fathoms to 100 fathoms, distributed primarily between Cape Cod, Mass. and Cape Hatteras, N.C., and assumed to constitute a single unit stock. Scup migrate south and offshore in autumn as the water temperature decreases, arriving in offshore wintering areas by December, but generally not commercially landed in North Carolina until the coldest winter months (January-April). Spawning occurs from May through August and peaks in June. Scup have been characterized as slow-growing, relatively long-lived fish.

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