

# Stock Status Report 2014

Species and Stock	Status					Comments
	Viabile	Recovering	Concern	Depleted	Unknown	
<b>Bass, Black Sea</b>						
North of Hatteras						The 2011 benchmark stock assessment by the National Marine Fisheries Service's Northeast Fisheries Science Center was not accepted by reviewers for use in determining stock status or management . A 2012 stock assessment update used a different model technique and is being used, along with a constant catch approach for determining management. Research is currently underway to resolve uncertainty identified in previous stock assessments in preparation for a new assessment in 2016. However, there are no clear signs that the stock is overfished and it is considered to be recovering.
South of Hatteras						The stock is recovered after going through a federally managed rebuilding plan, which went into place in 2006. An updated stock assessment indicated the stock is not overfished and has met the rebuilding plan's target.
<b>Bass, Striped</b>						
Albemarle Sound and Roanoke River						The 2010 Albemarle/Roanoke striped bass stock assessment (data through 2008) indicates the resource is not experiencing overfishing and is producing a sustainable harvest. Although the stock is not overfished, landings in all sectors have steadily declined from the peak harvest in 2004. Striped bass experienced a period of unusually strong recruitment (number of age-1 fish entering the population) from 1994-2001, followed by a period of lower recruitment from 2002-2013, thus causing the recent decline in landings. A draft 2014 Albemarle/Roanoke striped bass stock assessment that incorporates data through 2012 is scheduled to be approved in August 2014. Reductions in harvest limits will likely be necessary based on this stock assessment.
Atlantic Ocean Migratory Stock						The 2013 Atlantic striped bass benchmark assessment indicates the resource is not overfished or experiencing overfishing relative to the proposed new reference points. Although the stock is not overfished, female spawning stock biomass has continued to decline since 2004, and total fishing mortality has risen. A draft addendum to the Atlantic Migratory fishery management plan is expected in August for public comment on potential harvest reductions.
Central/Southern						The lack of adequate data causes the Central Southern Management Area stocks to be quantitatively assessed as unknown and to be listed as "concern." The need for continued conservation management efforts are supported by the truncated size and age distributions, low overall abundance, and the absence of older fish in the spawning ground surveys. Amendment I to the N.C. Estuarine Striped Bass Fishery Management Plan was approved by the Marine Fisheries Commission in February 2013.

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Bluefish						The Atlantic stock of bluefish is not overfished and is not experiencing overfishing. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Bluefish Technical Committee continues to work on improving and refining bluefish age data and the bluefish stock assessment. A benchmark stock assessment is scheduled for 2014.
Croaker, Atlantic						Atlantic croaker is not experiencing overfishing. Estimates of spawning stock biomass were too uncertain to precisely determine overfished stock status. However, given that biomass has been increasing and the age structure of the population has been expanding since the late 1980s, it is unlikely the stock is in trouble.
Dolphin						The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Dolphin Wahoo Fishery Management Plan was approved in 2004. The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council has approved Amendment 5 to the plan. The Amendment will revise acceptable biological catches, annual catch limits, sector allocations, accountability measures, and annual catch targets implemented through the Comprehensive Annual Catch Limit Amendment. A new stock assessment is scheduled for 2016.
Drum, Black						Concern for the stock has been expressed because fishing effort has increased on the stock since the 1980s and a majority of black drum harvested is young, potentially juvenile fish. It is unknown if the stock is overfished. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission has developed an Interstate Fishery management Plan and a coastwide stock assessment is to be completed in 2014.
Drum, Red						Overfishing is not occurring. A stock assessment completed in 2009 by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission indicates that the population is above the overfishing threshold and likely above or very near the management target.
Eel, American						The stock was declared depleted by the 2012 Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission benchmark stock assessment. Stock status is poorly understood due to non-standard sampling protocols across the species' range. Reliable indexes of abundance of this species are scarce. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission is currently considering management options for Addendum IV to the American Eel Interjurisdictional Fishery Management Plan.
Flounder, Southern						Based on the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries 2009 stock assessment, the southern flounder stock is overfished and overfishing is occurring. The Southern Flounder Fishery Management Plan Amendment 1 was approved in February 2013 and a new stock assessment is scheduled to be completed February 2015.
Flounder, Summer						The 2013 National Marine Fisheries Service's Northeast Fisheries Science Center stock assessment indicated the stock was not overfished and overfishing did not occur in 2012. The stock was rebuilt in 2010 and is considered to be viable.
Grouper, Gag						The stock is not overfished but overfishing is occurring, according to a 2014 stock assessment. A federal management plan is restricting harvest to end overfishing.

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<b>Herring, River (A)</b>						
Albemarle Sound						The N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission implemented a no harvest provision for commercial and recreational fisheries in joint and coastal waters of the state, beginning with the 2007 season. Current research is being conducted by the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries in the Albemarle Sound area to re-evaluate spawning habitat, expand juvenile sampling, and monitor the Chowan River adult spawning stock. Development of Amendment 2 to the N.C. River Herring Fishery Management Plan has begun, and changes are predicted to take effect in 2015.
Other Areas						No current sampling program.
<b>Kingfishes (A)</b>						A state fishery management plan completed in 2007 indicated a healthy age structure in the stock along with increasing trends in juvenile abundance, but commercial landings dropped in 2013.
<b>Mackerel, King</b>						Based on the 2008 South Atlantic Fishery Management Council stock assessment, the South Atlantic king mackerel stock is not overfished. It is uncertain whether overfishing is occurring. A new assessment is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2014.
<b>Mackerel, Spanish</b>						Based on the 2012 South Atlantic Fishery Management Council stock assessment, the Spanish mackerel stock in the South Atlantic is not overfished and is not undergoing overfishing.
<b>Menhaden, Atlantic</b>						Based on the 2010 benchmark stock assessment, Atlantic menhaden are experiencing overfishing. It is unknown whether the stock is overfished. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Atlantic Menhaden Board approved Amendment 2 to the fishery management plan in December 2012. A new Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission benchmark stock assessment is under development.
<b>Monkfish</b>						The Northeast Fisheries Science Center conducted a monkfish operational stock assessment in 2013 to update the 2010 assessment with additional data from 2010 and 2011. Results from the operational stock assessment indicate that the North and South monkfish stocks are not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. A review panel has recommended a new benchmark assessment not proceed until new information on age, growth, longevity and natural mortality is obtained.
<b>Mullet, Striped</b>						The stock is not overfished. Landings for 2013 were within management threshold limits established in the 2006 fishery management plan. Historically, the commercial fishery has had sustained landings similar to current levels.
<b>Reef Fish (A)</b>						Of the 60 species in the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council unit, some stocks are sustainable but several stocks are considered overfished. The overfished stocks include snowy grouper, speckled hind, red porgy, red snapper, red grouper and Warsaw grouper.
<b>Seatrout, Spotted</b>						The 2009 N.C. Spotted Seatrout Stock Assessment indicated that the stock in North Carolina and Virginia has been overfished and overfishing has been occurring throughout the entire 18-year time series. A new stock assessment is underway and should be peer reviewed by the beginning of 2015.

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Scup						The 2012 stock assessment update completed by the National Marine Fisheries Service's Northeast Fisheries Science Center indicated the stock was not overfished and overfishing was not occurring in 2011. Recruitment was poor in 2009 and 2010 but the 2011 year class was above average.
Shad, American						Commercial landings increased in 2013, and were above the 10-year average. The 2007 Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission coastwide stock assessment concluded that the Albemarle Sound area stocks were stable, but well below historical levels and the stock status of the other systems in North Carolina were unknown. The assessment also indicated that the majority of stocks along the East Coast are at all-time lows and continue to decline despite current management efforts. In 2013, North Carolina adopted an American Shad Sustainable Fishery Plan to meet Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission requirements.
Shad, Hickory						Commercial landings increased in 2013 and the price per pound is above the 10-year average. Two Amendments to the Shad and River Herring Fishery Management Plan recently approved by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission do not directly address hickory shad. The N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries has not conducted any directed sampling since 1993.
Sharks						In North Carolina coastal fishing waters, sharks are included in the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Coastal Sharks implemented in August 2008. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission plan was implemented to compliment the National Marine Fisheries Service Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan that includes sharks in federal waters. Recent assessment results indicate great uncertainty about the various shark species. The current status is concern because of the overfished status of sandbar, dusky, blacknose, and porbeagle sharks.
Sheepshead						The division gained proclamation authority to manage sheepshead in 2013. The recreational and commercial landings were above their 10-year averages in 2013.
Spiny Dogfish						Spiny dogfish are currently managed under a joint Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council and New England Fishery Management Council fishery management plan in federal waters and under the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Spiny Dogfish Interstate Fishery Management Plan in state waters. The 2013 stock assessment update, conducted by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center, estimates spiny dogfish are not overfished and not experiencing overfishing. Spawning stock biomass has exceeded the target for the past six years and fishing mortality is below the plan's threshold.
Spot						Recreational and commercial landings increased in 2013 from historical lows in 2012. The juvenile abundance index increased in 2013. In 2011, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission approved the Omnibus Amendment for spot. Coupled with adaptive management measures, the Omnibus Amendment provides options to efficiently implement management measures should they be needed in the future.

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Sturgeon, Atlantic						The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission is responsible for managing this species and considers the stocks to be depleted along the Atlantic Coast. There is a coastwide prohibition on possession. On April 5, 2012, the National Marine Fisheries Commission listed the Carolina Distinct Population Segment of Atlantic sturgeon as a federally endangered species. A new stock assessment is underway with plans to have peer reviews completed during 2015.
Weakfish (Gray Trout)						The weakfish stock along the Atlantic coast is at a level of low abundance. Coast-wide landings are near the lowest levels on record. The most recent assessment indicates that the cause is likely due to factors other than fishing mortality. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission has set strict harvest limits in response to the decline in an effort to aid in stock recovery.
<b>Shellfish and Crustaceans</b>						
Clam, Hard						Based on the best available indicators, harvest levels in most areas appeared relatively constant in recent years. Amendment 1 of the fishery management plan was completed in 2008. Data limitations prevent conducting a hard clam stock assessment and calculating sustainable harvest. Amendment 2 of the fishery management plan is under development.
Crab, Blue						The stock status is "concern" due to continued decreases in landings. 2013 landings were more than 5,000 pounds lower than the 10-year average of 22,000 pounds; however, value for blue crab – hard, soft and peelers – increased. The Traffic Light Assessment for 2012 suggests that the N.C. blue crab stock is not overfished. This assessment will be updated in 2014.
Oyster, Eastern						Based on the best available indicators, harvest levels in most areas appeared relatively constant in recent years. Amendment 1 of the FMP was completed in 2008. Data limitations prevent DMF from conducting a hard clam stock assessment and calculating sustainable harvest.
Scallop, Bay						High natural mortality from environmental change and predation cause annual variability in abundance. Sampling showed low abundance in all areas except Bogue Sound in 2013. The main harvest season (late January to March) was not opened in 2014 in any region due to abundance levels not meeting the threshold to allow harvest.
Shrimp(B)						Annual shrimp stock status is determined mainly by environmental and recruitment conditions. Natural mortality far outweighs fishing mortality. Final approval of the Shrimp Fishery Management Plan Amendment 1 is scheduled for February 2015.
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	



(A) The reef fish group includes about 60 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.

(B) Shrimp consists of 3 species — brown, pink, and white.

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