Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

2012 Summer Meeting Summary

Working towards healthy, self-sustaining populations of all Atlantic coast fish species or successful restoration well in progress by the year 2015

2012 Summer Meeting
Alexandria, VA
August 7-9, 2012

For more information, please contact
the identified individual,
Toni Kerns, ISFMP, or
Tina Berger, Public Affairs

703.842.0740

Meeting Summaries, Press Releases and Motions

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ATLANTIC HERRING SECTION (August 7, 2012)

Meeting Summary

The Atlantic Herring Section approved Addendum V to Amendment 2 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Herring, which addresses spawning regulations. Specifically, the Section approved a change in the regulation that specifies when closures are triggered based on the % of stage III – V spawn herring that are greater than or equal to 23 cm and increased the number of samples states are required collect from 50 to 100 (states are currently sampling at this level). The Addendum will replace all spawning regulations in previous management documents to provide a single, clear document for states to use when complying with ASMFC spawning regulations.

The Section also received the results of the latest benchmark assessment for Atlantic herring, conducted by the Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop, which determined the stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. Spawning stock biomass in 2011 is estimated at 518,000 mt, well above the SSB threshold and target of 78,500 mt and 157,000 mt, respectively. Current fishing mortality is estimated at 0.14, below the fishing mortality threshold of 0.27. The latest assessment represents a significant departure from previous assessments in that it examines predator consumption on Atlantic herring biomass and productivity to address herring ecosystem functions. The Section will meet jointly with the New England Fishery Management Council on September 20 to set specifications for the 2013-2016 fishing seasons.

For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, Acting ISFMP Director, at tkerns@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Move to adopt Option A for 3.1.2 Spawning area boundaries, Option C for 3.2.2 Size bins that trigger a spawning closure start, Option B for 3.3.2 number of fish per sample.
Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Himchak. Motion passes unanimously.

Move to approve Addendum V to the ISFMP for Atlantic Herring with options selected.
Motion made by Mr. Adler and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion approved without objection.

AMERICAN LOBSTER MANAGEMENT BOARD (August 7, 2012)

Press Release

ASMFC American Lobster Board Approves Addendum XVIII Trap Reductions for LCMA 2 and 3

Alexandria, VA – The Commission's American Lobster Board has approved Addendum XVIII to Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster. The Addendum establishes a consolidation program for lobster conservation management areas (LCMAs) 2 and 3 (Southern New England and offshore waters, respectively) to address latent effort by reducing the overall number of traps allocated. It is estimated that latent effort is 40% and 30% in LCMAs 2 and 3, respectively. Implementation of the Addendum's measures is contingent upon NOAA Fisheries' implementation of transferability and trap reduction rules for federal waters.

LCMA 2 trap allocation will be reduced by 25% in year one and then by 5% for the following five years, ultimately reducing total traps allocated by 50%. Trap allocation reductions will be from the initial (2007)

permit allocation for state-only permit holders and, for federal permit holders, from the final allocations established by NOAA Fisheries. LCMA 3 trap allocations will be reduced each year by 5% each year for five years, totaling 25%. Trap allocation will be reduced from the current (2012) permit trap allocation. LCMA 3 had previously undergone approximately a 30% reduction in traps allocated since 2003. In addition, any other allocation obtained by the permit holder subsequent to the initial allocation would also be cut for both areas.

The Addendum responds to the depleted condition of the Southern New England (SNE) lobster resource and the Board's intent to scale the capacity of the SNE fishery to the size the SNE resource, with an initial goal of reducing qualified trap allocation by at least 25% over a five to ten year period. For trap limits to be effective in reducing harvest and rebuilding the stock, latent effort must first be addressed to prevent this effort from coming back into the fishery as the stock grows and catch rates increase. Since the scope of the SNE resource encompasses all or part of six of the seven LCMAs established by Amendment 3, additional addenda will be developed to address effort reductions in the remaining LCMAs.

The Board deferred action on three options that were presented in Draft Addendum for public comment – trap banking, controlled growth, and trap caps for participants in the fishery. The Board will continue to work with industry and NOAA Fisheries to develop a viable transferability program to address industry's needs for flexibility. The Addendum will be available on the Commission website (wwww.asmfc.org) under Breaking News or by contacting the Commission at 703.842.0740 by the end of August. For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, Acting ISFMP Director at tkerns@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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PR12-36

Motions

For Area 2, move to approve Option 2 for Sec. 3.1.1a, initial trap reduction schedule; for Sec. 3.1.1b, ongoing reductions, Option 2, both of which will not go into effect until NMFS implements transferability and trap reduction rules. For Sec. 3.1.3, trap allocation transfers, a and b; 3.1.5, trap allocation banking; 3.1.6, ownership cap; 3.1.7, controlled growth; and 3.1.8, transfer tax, be postponed until the Annual meeting.
Motion made by Mr. McElroy and seconded by Mr. Adler.

Move to call the question.
Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Fote. Motion carries (6 in favor, 4 opposed).

For Area 2, move to approve Option 2 for Sec. 3.1.1a, initial trap reduction schedule; for Sec. 3.1.1b, ongoing reductions, Option 2, both of which will not go into effect until NMFS implements transferability and trap reduction rules. For Sec. 3.1.3, trap allocation transfers, a and b; 3.1.5, trap allocation banking; 3.1.6, ownership cap; 3.1.7, controlled growth; and 3.1.8, transfer tax, be postponed until the Annual meeting.
Motion made by Mr. McElroy and seconded by Mr. Adler. Motion fails (4 in favor, 5 opposed, 1 null).

Move to reconsider the previous vote.
Motion made by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. McElroy. Motion carries (7 in favor, 2 oposed, 1 abstention).

For Area 2, Move to approve Option 2 for Sec. 3.1.1a, initial trap reduction schedule; for Sec. 3.1.1b, ongoing reductions, Option 2, both of which will not go into effect until NMFS implements transferability and trap reduction rules. For Sec. 3.1.3, trap allocation transfers, a and b; 3.1.5, trap

allocation banking; 3.1.6, ownership cap; 3.1.7, controlled growth; and 3.1.8, transfer tax, be postponed until the Annual meeting.
Motion made by Mr. McElroy and seconded by Mr. Adler.

Move to call the question.
Motion made by Rep. Peake and seconded by Mr. McElroy. Motion carries (7 in favor, 2 opposed, 1 abstention).

For Area 2, Move to approve Option 2 for Sec. 3.1.1a, initial trap reduction schedule; for Sec. 3.1.1b, ongoing reductions, Option 2, both of which will not go into effect until NMFS implements transferability and trap reduction rules. For Sec. 3.1.3, trap allocation transfers, a and b; 3.1.5, trap allocation banking; 3.1.6, ownership cap; 3.1.7, controlled growth; and 3.1.8, transfer tax, be postponed until the Annual meeting.
Motion made by Mr. McElroy and seconded by Mr. Adler. Motion carries (7 in favor, 2 opposed, 1 abstention).

Move to postpone further action on Draft Addendum XVIII until the Annual Meeting.
Motion made by Mr. Nowalsky and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion fails (4 in favor, 5 opposed, 1 abstention).

Move to adopt Area 3 trap cuts in Sec. 3.2.1, Option 3, 5% reduction of trap allocation per year for 5 years, which will not go into effect until NMFS implements transferability and trap reduction rules.
Motion made by Mr. McKiernan and seconded by Mr. Ballou. Motion passes unanimously.

Move to approve Addendum XVIII as modified.
Motion made by Mr. McElroy and seconded by Rep. Watters. Motions carries (9 in favor, 1 opposed).

ATLANTIC STRIPED BASS MANAGEMENT BOARD (August 7, 2012)

Press Release

ASMFC Atlantic Striped Bass Board Approves Mandatory Commercial Tagging Program through Addendum III

Alexandria, VA – The Commission's Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board has approved Addendum III to Amendment 6 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. The Addendum establishes a mandatory commercial tagging program for all states and jurisdictions with commercial striped bass fisheries and recommends increasing penalties for illegally harvested fish. The tagging program includes requirements for timely catch reporting, increased accounting of unused tags, improved standardization of tag type, and the use of biological metrics for determining state/jurisdiction tag quantity. These measures are intended to prevent commercial striped bass quota overages and the illegal harvest of striped bass. Both undermine the sustainability of striped bass populations, as well as reduce the economic opportunities of commercial and recreational fishermen who legally participate in the fishery.

The Addendum responds to recommendations of the Interstate Watershed Task Force (IWTF). The IWTF conducted a multi-year, multi-jurisdictional investigation on illegal commercial striped bass harvest within Chesapeake Bay, resulting in over $1.6 million dollars in fines against 19 individuals and three

corporations for more than one million pounds of striped bass harvested illegally. The investigation revealed some current control measures for regulating the harvest of striped bass were ineffective or inadequately designed to maximize compliance. The investigation also found that greater accountability of wholesalers was necessary. All public comment received on the Addendum was in favor of the mandatory tagging program and, in addition, the program was supported by NOAA Fisheries and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

All states and jurisdictions, with the exception of Massachusetts and North Carolina, are required to implement Addendum III's measures by the opening of their respective 2013 commercial fishing seasons. North Carolina was granted an extension due to the timing of its season (North Carolina's fishery opens December 1st), while Massachusetts lacks an established commercial tagging program and needs additional time to develop its program. Both states will be required to implement their programs by January 1, 2014.

The Addendum will be available on the Commission website (wwww.asmfc.org) under Breaking News or by contacting the Commission at 703.842.0740 by the end of August. For more information, please contact Kate Taylor, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at ktaylor@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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PR12-35

Motions

Move to approve Option 2 for Section 3.1 (Commercial tagging program implementation).
Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Fote. Motion carries unanimously.

Motion to approve Option 1 under Category A.
Motion made by Mr. Carpenter and seconded by Mr. Bellavance. Motion passes unanimously.

Main Motion
Move to approve Option 2, Sub-option A for Category B.
Motion made by Mr. R. White and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion substituted.

Motion to Substitute
Move to substitute to approve Option 1 for Category B.
Motion made by Mr. Diodati and seconded by Mr. Bellavance. Motion passes (8 in favor, 7 opposed, 1 abstention).

Main Motion as Substituted
Move to approve Option 1 for Category B.
Motion carries (8 in favor, 6 opposed, 1 abstention).

Move to approve Option 2 under Category C.
Motion made by Mr. Carpenter and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion carries (15 in favor, 1 abstention).

Move to approve Option 2 under Category D.
Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Miller. Motion carries.

Move to adopt Option 2 under Category E.
Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. O'Reilly. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to approve Option 2 under Category F.
Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Allen. Motion carries (12 in favor, 2 opposed, 2 abstentions).

Move to accept Option 2 under Category G.
Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Allen. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to include Section 3.2 penalty recommendations to the state.
Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Lustig. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to implement measures adopted in Addendum III by the opening of the commercial fishing season in each state in 2013, with the exception that MA and NC must implement by January 1, 2014.
Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Carpenter. Motion carries (15 in favor, 1 abstention).

Move to accept Addendum III to the ISFMP for Striped Bass.
Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Adler. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to extend the beginning of the VA commercial striped bass season from February 1 to January 16.
Motion made by Mr. Gilmore and seconded by Mr. Cole. Motion carries (15 in favor, 1 abstention).

Move to approve Mike Celestino to the Striped Bass Stock Assessment Subcommittee.
Motion made by Mr. Allen and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion carries.

SHAD & RIVER HERRING MANAGEMENT BOARD (August 7, 2012)

Meeting Summary
The Shad and River Herring Board met to review the recent federal council actions taken to monitor and reduce alosine bycatch, the recent petition to list river herring on the Endangered Species List, and discuss a potential river herring bycatch fishery proposal by Rhode Island.

In June, the New England Fishery Management Council selected its preferred alternatives in Amendment 5 to the Atlantic Herring FMP. The Council voted to recommend approval of a bycatch avoidance program being developed by the Sustainable Fisheries Coalition, the School of Marine Science and Technology, and the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries. Additionally, the Council recommended approval of 100% observer coverage on Category A and B federally permitted Atlantic herring vessels. The Amendment will be submitted to NOAA Fisheries for final approval in September.

Also in June, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council selected its preferred alternatives in Amendment 14 to the Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish (MSB) FMP. The Council recommended 100% observer coverage on mid-water trawl vessels, a catch cap for shad and river herring beginning in 2014, and increased vessel and dealer reporting requirements. The Amendment will be submitted to NOAA Fisheries for final approval in September. The Council also initiated the development of Amendment 15 to the MSB FMP, which will include an option to add shad and river herring as a stock in the fishery.

The Board briefly discussed the August 2011 petition to list river herring on the Endangered Species List. The 12-month finding (proposed rule) from NOAA Fisheries is pending.

Rhode Island also briefed the Board of its intent to submit a Sustainable Fisheries Management Plan, as required under Amendment 2, for a river herring bycatch fishery in state waters. For more information, please contact Kate Taylor, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at ktaylor@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions
No motions made.

WINTER FLOUNDER MANAGEMENT BOARD (August 7, 2012)

Press Release

ASMFC Winter Flounder Board Initiates Addendum
Addendum Considers Increases to Commercial Trip Limit & Expansion of Recreational Season for Gulf of Maine State Waters Fisheries

Alexandria, VA – The Commission's Winter Flounder Management Board has initiated the development of Draft Addendum II to Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for the Inshore Stocks of Winter Flounder. The Draft Addendum will propose changes to the commercial and recreational management requirements for the Gulf of Maine (GOM) stock in response to updated stock status information and recent federal action to significantly increase the GOM winter flounder state waters annual catch limit (ACL) subcomponent.

A peer reviewed stock assessment (SAW/SARC 52) of GOM winter flounder was completed in 2011, which changed the stock's status to not experiencing overfishing, although the overfished status could not be determined. NOAA Fisheries responded to this finding by more than doubling the ACL for the remainder of 2011 fishing year. The ACL was nearly doubled again for the 2012 fishing year. The state waters ACL-subcomponent for 2012 fishing year has increased to 272 mt, a 450% increase from 60 mt in 2010.

The Commission manages winter flounder under Addendum I. Approved in May 2009, the Addendum required an 11% reduction in fishing mortality for the recreational sector and a 250 pound possession limit for non-federally permitted commercial fishermen (estimated 31% reduction in harvest). Recreational reductions were achieved through a combination of possession limits, seasons, or other measures. These actions were taken in response to the results of the 2008 benchmark assessment which determined the GOM stock was likely to be overfished with overfishing likely to be occurring. The Addendum's provisions were also intended to complement federal management measures on groundfish stocks, including winter flounder, in offshore waters (3 – 200 miles).

Given the significant increase in state waters ACL-subcomponent for the 2012 fishing year, the Draft Addendum will consider modifying Addendum I's GOM winter flounder requirements by increasing the commercial trip limit from 250 pounds to 500 pounds limit and expanding the recreational season to a year-round fishery. The Draft Addendum will include an annual specifications process to allow the Board to respond to changes in stock condition. The Board tasked the Technical Committee with evaluating the impacts of relaxing the recreational and commercial measures on state water landings. The Board will review the Technical Committee Report prior to action to approve the Draft Addendum for Public

Comment in the next few weeks. For more information, please contact Toni Kern, Acting ISFMP Director, at tkerns@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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PR12-39

Motions

Move the Technical Committee review Massachusetts proposal and develop a fast-tracked addendum to move this proposal forward.

Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Dr. Geiger. Motion passes (10 in favor).

ATLANTIC MENHADEN MANAGEMENT BOARD (August 8, 2012)

Press Release

ASMFC Atlantic Menhaden Board Selects Options for Inclusion in Draft Amendment for Public Comment

Alexandria, VA – The Commission's Atlantic Menhaden Management Board has selected the options to be included in Draft Amendment 2 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Menhaden. Among the series of options approved for public comment are a range of harvest reduction options from 0-50% for 2013. Given that substantive changes were made to the document at the meeting, the Board approved the Draft Amendment for Public Comment contingent upon an additional round of review by Board members and final review and approval by a subcommittee of the Board. Release of the document for public comment is slated for early September, followed by an extensive public comment period and state hearings. The Board's intent is to take final action on the Amendment this year for implementation in 2013.

The Board was also presented the findings of the 2012 stock assessment update, which included the addition of data for 2009 – 2011 to the peer review approved assessment model. The update results contained considerable uncertainty because the model fit the data poorly; however, similar issues were observed in the 2010 benchmark stock assessment that passed peer review. Despite the uncertainty in the update results, the Technical Committee believes the stock is experiencing overfishing, but is not overfished based on the current reference points used to assess the stock. The Technical Committee plans to address the issues with the stock assessment at the next scheduled benchmark assessment.

The final Amendment had been scheduled for approval at the Commission's Annual Meeting in October. Given the Commission's public comment procedures, which requires the Draft Amendment be released 30 days prior to the first public hearing and must be extended two weeks after the final hearing is conducted, the Board will meet sometime after the Annual Meeting to take final action on the Amendment for 2013 implementation. A subsequent press release will announce the availability of the Draft Amendment for public comment, the state hearing schedule, as well as the timeline for the Amendment's final approval. For more information, please contact Mike Waine, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mwaine@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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PR12-37

Meeting Summary
Due to the lengthy deliberations of the Atlantic Menhaden Management Board, the Board did not discuss the Multispecies Technical Committee Report on Potential Multiple Management Objective Decision Analysis (MODA) Funding Sources. The Report will be addressed at the next Board meeting. For more information, please contact Mike Waine, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mwaine@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions
Move to accept stock assessment update and Technical Committee report as presented.
Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Ms. Fegley. Motion passes unanimously.

Main Motion
Move to eliminate Options A and B under Section 4.2.1.2, TAC Setting Method; use Table 10 describing the ad hoc approach as guidance for ending overfishing; also include 0.85 and 0.95 multipliers in Table 10.
Motion made by Mr. Travelstead and seconded by Mr. Stockwell. Motion substituted.

Motion to Amend
Move to amend to include 0.70 as a multiplier in Table 10.
Motion made by Ms. Fegley and seconded by Mr. Simpson. Motion fails.

Motion to Amend
Move to amend to eliminate 0.25 and 0.50 as multipliers in Table 10.
Motion made by Mr. Travelstead and seconded by Mr. McElroy. Motion fails.

Motion to Substitute
Move to substitute to eliminate Options A and B under Section 4.2.1.2, TAC Setting Method; use the options developed by the PDT in the AP Report for the ad hoc approach with the elimination of the 0.25 multiplier.
Motion made by Mr. Nowalsky and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion carries unanimously. (Roll Call Vote: In favor – ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, DE, MD, PRFC, VA, NC, GA, FL, NMFS, USFWS).

Main Motion as Substituted
Move to eliminate Options A and B under Section 4.2.1.2, TAC Setting Method; use the options developed by the PDT in the AP Report for the ad hoc approach with the elimination of the 0.25 multiplier.
Motion made by Mr. Nowalsky and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to add suboptions for A2, B2, C2 the following reduction/bait allocation scenarios 70%/30%, 60%/40%, 50%/50%.
Motion made by Ms. Fegley and seconded by Mr. Himchak. Motion carries. (Roll Call Vote: In favor – NH, MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, DE, MD, GA, FL, NMFS, USFWS; Opposed – VA, NC; Null – ME; Abstentions – PRFC).

Motion under Section 4.2.1.3 to add an option that any TAC allocation by fishery, state, or region adopted will be revisited and may be modified by the Menhaden Board, with suboptions for 3 or 5 years from FMP implementation.
Motion made by Mr. Grout and seconded by Ms. Fegley. Motion carries without objection.

Move to add 10,000 lb and 20% options to the bycatch allowance issue.
Motion made by Mr. Travelstead and seconded Mr. McElroy. Motion carries without objection.

Move to approve the draft Amendment for public comment as modified, subject to approval by the subcommittee.
Motion made by Mr. White and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion carries. (Roll Call Vote: In favor – ME, NH, MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, DE, MD, PRFC, SC, GA, FL, NMFS, USFWS; Opposed – VA; Null – NC).

Motion to approve the final Amendment at the February 2013 board meeting.
Motion made by Mr. Schick and seconded by Mr. Carpenter. Motion fails (1 in favor, 15 opposed, 1 abstention – PRFC).

STURGEON MANAGEMENT BOARD (August 9, 2012)

Meeting Summary
The Sturgeon Management Board met to review recommendations from the Technical Committee in response to the endangered species listing of Atlantic sturgeon and approve Draft Addendum III for Public Comment.

The Board reviewed and discussed a report from the Technical Committee on potential actions in response to the recent listing of Atlantic sturgeon. The Board requested that an Atlantic sturgeon stock assessment be considered a high priority by the Policy Board for 2013. The 2013 stock assessment funding allocation will be determined by the Policy Board at the Annual Meeting in October. Additionally, the Board directed the Technical Committee to develop a draft petition to delist or downlist Atlantic sturgeon for the Board's review at the Annual Meeting in October.

The Board approved Draft Addendum III for Public Comment. This addendum includes only information on habitat use by Atlantic sturgeon and is based on the 2010 ASMFC Diadromous Fish Habitat Document. The draft addendum will be available at the end of August on the Commission's website. The Board will consider final approval of the Addendum at the Annual Meeting in October. For more information, please contact Kate Taylor, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at ktaylor@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions
Move that the Atlantic Sturgeon Board recommend to the ISFMP Board that a sturgeon stock assessment be a top priority for 2013.
Motion made by Dr. Daniel and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion carries unanimously.

M**ove that the Board direct the Technical Committee to develop a draft delisting/downlisting petition to be considered by the Board at the annual meeting.**
Motion made by Dr. Daniel and seconded by Mr. Adler. Motion passes (15 in favor, 2 abstentions).

Move that the Board initiate and approve the Habitat Addendum for public comment.
Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Young. Motion passes unanimously.

INTERSTATE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM POLICY BOARD (August 8, 2012)

Meeting Summary

The Interstate Fisheries Management Program Policy Board (Policy Board) reviewed the rebuilding progress for each of the species under Commission management. This review was intended to determine if the progress toward each species rebuilding goals was occurring at an appropriate rate. The Board asked staff to focus on the species in the categories of "concern," "depleted," and "unknown" as the 2013 Action Plan is drafted for consideration at the Annual Meeting.

The Policy Board accepted The Offshore Wind Document developed by the Habitat Committee which explores the habitat implications of wind-powered generators being placed offshore. Staff noted there will be a discussion of the future direction of the Commission's Habitat Program at the Annual Meeting in October.

The Atlantic Coastal Fishery Habitat Partnership (ACFHP) updated the Policy Board on Partnership activities including recently endorsed proposed projects, FY12 restoration projects funded, and FY13 restoration project application timeline (deadline is September 14, www.atlanticfishhabitat.org)

The Policy Board agreed to send comments to NOAA Fisheries on their proposed rule-making for illegal, unregulated, and unreported fisheries. The Commission supports the proposed rule and anticipates it will reduce the opportunity for illegally-harvested shark fins in the United States.

Staff updated the Policy Board on the progress of the revisions to the Guidance Document for ASMFC Technical Support Groups and the Orientation Manual for ASMFC Technical Support Group Membership into one comprehensive document. Included in the document will be guidance for public participation during technical committee meetings to address various stakeholders concerns to the Policy Board on the limited guidelines in the current manuals.

The Board discussed stock assessment priorities for 2013 and 2014. Both the Atlantic Menhaden and Sturgeon Boards recommended the Policy Board consider conducting the assessments as quickly as resources allow. The Policy Board agreed that Commission leadership will work with the Assessment Science Committee and staff to develop a proposal for peer priorities for 2013 and 2014.

The Policy Board discussed a letter from North Carolina Congressman Walter B. Jones requesting the Commission broadcast its meetings via the web and take roll call votes on all actions. The Policy Board agreed to develop a white paper describing the options and costs for web broadcasting to be reviewed at the annual meeting. The intent is to start broadcasting meetings in February 2013. The Board also agreed to develop a white paper on options for increasing the use of roll call votes.

For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, Acting ISFMP Director, at tkerns@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

No motions made.

AMERICAN EEL MANAGEMENT BOARD (August 9, 2012)

Press Release

ASMFC American Eel Board Initiates Development of Draft Addendum III to Improve Conservation and Protection of the Stock

Alexandria, VA –The Commission's American Eel Management Board has initiated the development of Draft Addendum III with the goal of reducing mortality and increasing the conservation of American eel stocks across all life stages. The 2012 benchmark stock assessment found the American eel population in U.S. waters is depleted. The stock is at or near historically low levels, due to a combination of including historical overfishing, habitat loss, food web alterations, predation, turbine mortality, environmental changes, toxins and contaminants, and disease.

The Draft Addendum will include a range of options suggested by the American Eel Technical Committee, including possible moratoria on glass (elver) and silver eel harvest, reductions in glass and yellow eel catch and effort, seasonal closures, and future monitoring requirements. The commercial fishery is currently regulated by a six inch size minimum, with the exception of Maine and South Carolina glass eel fisheries, and the recreational fishery is currently regulated by a 50 fish per day creel limit. States and jurisdictions are required to annually report on commercial harvest and monitor juvenile abundance. The Draft Addendum will be developed for preliminary review by the American Eel Management Board in October.

For more information, please contact Kate Taylor, Fishery Management Coordinator, at ktaylor@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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PR12-38

Motions

Move to accept the Technical Committee report and recommendations.
Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Adler. Motion approved.

Move to prepare an addendum that has a goal of furthering eel conservation that includes the range of options suggested by the Technical Committee, including possible moratoria on glass and silver eel harvest, reductions in yellow eel catch and effort, seasonal closures, and future monitoring requirements.
Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Dr. Geiger. Motion carries unanimously.

Move to nominate John Pedrick to American Eel AP.
Motion made by Mr. Young and seconded by Mr. Augustine. Motion carries without objection.

SPINY DOGFISH & COASTAL SHARKS MANAGEMENT BOARD (August 9, 2012)

Meeting Summary

The Spiny Dogfish and Coastal Sharks Fishery Management Board approved final options for Addendum IV to the Spiny Dogfish Fishery Management Plan. The Board decided to continue with the status quo of a maximum of 5% rollover per year, as long as the stock biomass is above the target. Additionally, the Board voted to update the overfishing definition and overfishing threshold to be consistent with the Federal Plan. The updated definition lines up definitions of $F_{threshold}$, the threshold for overfishing, which

is the starting point for determining the yearly spiny dogfish quota. By aligning this starting point, the quotas determined by the Commission and NOAA Fisheries are more likely to be in sync for this complementarily-managed species. Further, the Board decided to retain F_{target}, which the Spiny Dogfish Technical Committee will review and recommend, on a yearly basis, whether a value should be adopted. The Board has the option whether to adopt an F_{target} based on the Spiny Dogfish Technical Committee's recommendation.

The Board received a report from Massachusetts on an additional 2 million pounds of spiny dogfish that was sold to a non-permitted dealer in the 2010/11 season. The northern region will account for this overage in the current 2011/12 season, so the Commission's 2012/13 quota will be aligned with the federal quota.

Additionally, the Board received a report from its Coastal Sharks Technical Committee regarding New Jersey's request to allow removal of all fins on smooth dogfish throughout the entire year. Currently, removal of all fins is only allowed from March through June, whereas the dorsal and tail fin must remain attached from July through February. The Board agreed with the Technical Committee's recommendation to proceed with its study to determine an appropriate fin to carcass ratio. The Board also tasked the Plan Development Team and Technical Committee on drafting an addendum on the issue for review at the Commission's 2013 Winter Meeting, in order to have the addendum finalized by July 1, 2013.

Finally, the Board discussed the past legislative year's state shark finning bills. These bills had been introduced in multiple Atlantic coast states, although none made it into law. As part of this discussion, the Board heard from a representative from the Humane Society of the U.S. as well as a member of the Coastal Sharks Advisory Panel. The Board decided to work further with staff and the Humane Society to address the issues identified in current regulations and the drafted legislation, in order to protect the domestic shark fishery while addressing the illegal shark finning.

For more information, please contact Danielle Chesky, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at dchesky@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Main Motion

Move to accept Issue 1 quota rollover, option A status quo; issue 2 fishing mortality threshold option B; issue 3 fishing mortality target option B.

Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Dr. Laney.

Motion to Amend

Move to amend to select option b for issue 1.

Motion made by Mr. Himchak and seconded by Mr. O'Connell. Motion fails (7 in favor, 9 opposed).

Main Motion

Move to accept Issue 1 quota rollover, option A status quo; issue 2 fishing mortality threshold option B; issue 3 fishing mortality target option B.

Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Dr. Laney. Motion passes (15 in favor, 1 opposed).

Move to approve the addendum as modified today.

Motion made by Mr. Augustine and seconded by Mr. Train. Motion passes (15 in favor, 1 opposed).

SOUTH ATLANTIC STATE/FEDERAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT BOARD (August 9, 2012)

Meeting Summary

The South Atlantic State-Federal Fishery Management Board reviewed the work of the Atlantic Croaker Technical Committee on the 2011 Assessment Triggers. The Board agreed with the Technical Committee's recommendation to not conduct a benchmark or updated stock assessment, although the recreational landings did trigger. The Board tasked the Technical Committee with developing an assessment and management trigger package in order to better inform management decisions between assessment years.

The Board also reviewed the spot triggers for the first time. The triggers had been included as part of the Omnibus Amendment, which the Board approved in August 2011 and became effective July 1, 2012. The triggers, comprised of fishery-dependent and –independent data sets, inform the Board on the current status of the stock in lieu of a coastwide stock assessment, which is currently unable to be performed at this time. The triggers did not trip but were extremely close. The Board agreed to watch the status of the stock for an additional year and see whether the pattern remains before initiating management action. Additionally, the Board agreed with the Spot Plan Review Team to present the triggers mid-year rather than wait until compliance reports are due in November.

The Board reviewed the public comment received on the Black Drum Public Information Document and tasked the Plan Development Team with drafting an Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Black Drum. The Board gave the Plan Development Team latitude to come up with options for bag, creel and size limits for the recreational fishery, as well as a commercial cap and trip limits. The Board also accepted the Fishery Management Plan Reviews for Atlantic Croaker and Red Drum, and approved the *de minimis* requests from the relevant states. Finally, the Board approved the addition of Bernie McCants, Jr. from North Carolina, to the South Atlantic Species Advisory Panel.

For more information, please contact Danielle Chesky, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at dchesky@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

Motions

Move to accept Technical Committee Report and task Technical Committee to look at interim triggers.
Motion made by Mr. Boyles and seconded by Mr. Carpenter. Motion carries.

Move to accept spot PRT recommendation for mid-year trigger report.
Motion made by Dr. Laney and seconded by Mr. Boyles. Motion carries without objection.

Move that the South Atlantic Board recommend to the ISFMP Policy Board that the black drum benchmark stock assessment be delayed with the intent that the delay offers assessment opportunity for Atlantic menhaden and Atlantic sturgeon.
Motion made by Mr. Travelstead and seconded by Mr. Cole. Motion carries without objection.

Move to initiate the development of a Black Drum FMP that contains a suite of management measures, to include recreational bag limits, size limits, slot limits with trophy allowance; commercial harvest cap and trip limits, at a minimum, for consideration by the Board.
Motion made by Dr. Laney and seconded by Mr. Miller. Motion passes unanimously.

Move to accept the Red Drum FMP review including the recommendations of the PRT and grant *de minimis* requests for DE and NJ.
Motion made by Mr. Boyles and second Mr. Podey. Motion carries without objection.

Move to accept the Croaker FMP Review including the recommendations of the PRT and grant *de minimis* requests for FL, GA, SC and DE.
Motion by Mr. Boyles and seconded by Mr. Woodward. Motion carries without objection.

Move to approve Bernie McCants for NC spot on the South Atlantic Advisory Panel.
Motion made by Mr. Boyles and seconded by Mr. Cole. Motion carries without objection.