

Stock status of important coastal fisheries in North Carolina - 2006

Species and Stock	Status					Comments
	Viable	Recovering	Concern	Overfished	Unknown	
Bass, Black Sea						
N. of Hatteras						No longer overfished north of Hatteras, based on the latest stock assessment (2004), as well as the NEFSC survey
S. of Hatteras						Overfished south of Hatteras, based on SAFMC assessment.
Bass, Striped						
Albemarle-Roanoke						A new management plan was approved in May 2004 to manage a recovered stock.
Atlantic Ocean						ASMFC is currently managing under Amendment 6 to the Interstate FMP for Atlantic Striped Bass. Addendum I is in review by the technical committee.
Central/Southern						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 new management plan was approved in May 2004, but due to limited funds, many of the items scheduled to be addressed in the FMP have not been.
Bluefish						The Atlantic stock of bluefish is not experiencing overfishing, but remains in an overfished state (2005 ASMFC/MAFMC stock assessment). The Bluefish Technical Monitoring Committee continues to work on improving and refining the bluefish stock assessment. .
Catfishes (A)						Independent and dependent sampling began March 2004 to fulfill data/research needs for up coming FMP.
Croaker, Atlantic						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.
Dolphin						SAFMC plan approved in 2004.
Drum, Red						Current regulations are designed to stop overfishing allowing for increased juvenile recruitment to the adult population and subsequent stock recovery.
Eel, American						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. It should be noted the status of the stock in the unapproved stock assessment was still unknown.
Flounder, Southern						Stock is overfished and overfishing is still occurring based on the 2004 stock assessment. A North Carolina FMP was approved and management measures implemented in 2005.
Flounder, Summer						Improvements in age class structure, spawning stock biomass, and fishing mortality have occurred since the early 1990s. However, overfishing is occurring.
Grouper, Gag						New assessment to be completed in 2006.

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<u>Herring, River (A)</u>						
Albemarle Sound						River Herring FMP approved by the MFC in February 2000. FMP is being updated and scheduled for completion in 2006. Most recent stock assessment completed May 2005, reports increased mortality rates, decreased recruitment and reduced spawning stock biomass. Chowan River pound net harvest allocation (200,000 lbs.) has not been reached since 2001.
Other Areas						No current sampling program.
<u>Kingfishes (A)</u>						A North Carolina FMP will be completed in 2007. Commercial landings were well below their 10-year average in 2005. This was primarily due to a significant decrease in trips (effort) in the gill net and the shrimp trawl fisheries. Commercial trips landing kingfishes in gill nets and shrimp trawls decreased 34 and 65% respectively, from 2004. Recreational fishery landings decreased in 2005 to a level just below their 10-year average..
<u>Mackerel, King</u>						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.
<u>Mackerel, Spanish</u>						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.
<u>Menhaden, Atlantic</u>						Based on 2003 ASMFC stock assessment F is slightly above target and fecundity is well above target.
<u>Monkfish</u>						FMP developed by NE/MAFMC-10 year rebuilding period.
<u>Mullet, Striped</u>						The stock is not overfished. Landings for 2005 were within management threshold limits. Historically, the commercial fishery has had sustained landings similar to current levels.
<u>Perch, White</u>						Independent and dependent sampling began March 2004 to fulfill data/research needs for up coming FMP
<u>Perch, Yellow</u>						Yellow perch are heavily targeted during their spawning season and within specific river systems.
<u>Reef Fish (B)</u>						Of the 73 species (including black sea bass) in the SAFMC unit, 17 are considered overfished.
<u>Scup</u>						Assessment indicates scup no longer overfished; survey data indicate strong recruitment and some rebuilding of age structure. However, stock status, with respect to overfishing, cannot currently be evaluated due to unknown estimates of discard mortality.
<u>Shad, American</u>						Commercial landings decreased in 2005. However, juvenile abundance was the third highest reported since the juvenile survey began in 1972. ASMFC Shad and River Herring FMP is in place and a coastwide stock assessment for American shad is currently being conducted. DMF is collecting fishery dependent and independent data..
<u>Shad, Hickory</u>						Commercial landings decreased slightly in 2005. However, they are the third-highest reported since 1972. The juvenile abundance index for hickory shad increased in 2005, and is the highest reported since 1998. The DMF has not conducted any assessment work 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 remains recovering as a result of stringent catch restrictions off North Carolina.
Spiny Dogfish						MA/NEFMC plan for federal waters and ASMFC plan for state waters developed. Female spawning stock biomass below rebuilding target. Historically low survey indices for pup production since 1997.
Spot						Fluctuating landings are not unusual for short-lived species such as spot.
Spotted Seatrout						Stock status heavily dependent upon environmental conditions. ASMFC FMP developed (1984), NC FMP scheduled (2007).
Sturgeon, Atlantic						ASMFC is responsible for managing this species and considers the stocks to be depleted along the Atlantic coast. Coastwide prohibition on possession.
Tautog						Current ASMFC coastwide assessment considers tautog overfished.
Weakfish						Most recent ASMFC stock assessment indicated a depleted stock below the biomass threshold. An addendum is being developed to determine what management measures may be necessary to rebuild stock.
Shellfish and Crustaceans						
Clam, Hard						Data are currently insufficient to evaluate status. An update of the 2001 FMP will begin in 2006.
Oyster, Eastern						Concern status due to high mortality from Dermo infections, evidence of increased oyster habitat loss, low catch-per-unit-effort, and reduced spatfall in the northern area. NC FMP approved 2001.
Scallop, Bay						Environmental disturbances 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 2005 fishery yielded the lowest landings and value during the 10-year period 1996-2005. Significantly reduced landings of hard blue crabs for 2000-2002 and 2004-2005, following the historically record high landings observed during 1996 - 1999, have caused increased industry concern for the health of the resource and fishery.
Shrimp(C)						Annual Stock. Abundances may be greatly affected by environmental conditions.
Totals	13	5	8	7	7	

Change Symbols



Stock status improved since last report



Stock status downgraded since last report

(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.