

SCUP

(06/09 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

Stock Status – *Viable* - The assessment model for scup changed in 2008 from a simple index-based model to a complex statistical catch at age model (ASAP). The 2008 Northeast Data Poor Stocks Working Group Peer Review Panel evaluated the scup stock and set the rebuilding goal as 203 million lbs. of spawning stock biomass, which is to be met by January 1, 2015. The updated assessment indicates that the current population size is about 130% of the biomass goal; therefore, the stock is considered rebuilt. The stock is not considered overfished and is not currently experiencing overfishing (based on fishing mortality rates). Greatly improved recruitment and low fishing mortality rates have occurred since 1998. Given the success of the ASAP modeling approach, the stock is no longer considered a data poor stock.

Average Commercial Landings and Value 1999-2008 – 145,257 lbs./\$87,733

2008 Commercial Landings and Value – 205,868 lbs./\$164,204 (quota managed)

Average Recreational Landings 1999-2008 – 3,572 lbs., **2008** – 18,508 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 rebuilding plan and timeline for the scup stock remains undefined at this time.

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 monitor 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

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.

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