

Stock Status Report 2012

Species and Stock	Status					Comments
	Viable	Recovering	Concern	Depleted	Unknown	
Bass, Black Sea						
North of Hatteras						The stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. However, there is significant uncertainty associated with the natural mortality estimate, the assessment model input parameters, and managing a protogynous species (individuals change sex from female to male).
South of Hatteras						The stock is recovering under a federally managed rebuilding plan which went into place in 2006. A 2011 Stock Assessment (SEDAR 25) indicated the stock is not overfished but has not met the rebuilding plan's target.
Bass, Striped						
Albemarle Sound and Roanoke River						Based on results of the 2010 stock assessment the stock is not experiencing overfishing and biomass remains high. The stock age structure is broad including fish 17 years old. Amendment I to the N.C. Estuarine Striped Bass FMP was approved by the MFC to go to public comment in September of 2011. The plan is tentatively planned for final adoption at the November 2012 MFC meeting.
Atlantic Ocean Migratory Stock						Based on results of the ASMFC 2010 updated stock assessment, Atlantic coast striped bass are not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. The model estimates that the resource remains at a high level of abundance with female spawning stock biomass well above the target level.
Central/Southern						Stocks lack a quantified stock assessment and show a truncated size and age distribution that lacks older age classes. Improved dependent and independent data collection must be conducted before an accurate stock assessment can be made. Amendment I to the N.C. Estuarine Striped Bass FMP was approved by the MFC to go to public comment in September 2011. The plan is tentatively scheduled for final adoption at the November 2012 MFC meeting.
Bluefish						The Atlantic stock of bluefish is not overfished and is not experiencing overfishing. The ASMFC Bluefish Technical Committee continues to work on improving and refining bluefish age data and the bluefish stock assessment.
Catfishes (A)						Independent and dependent sampling began March 2004 to fulfill data/research needs for an FMP, however funding was discontinued March 2012.
Croaker, Atlantic						Atlantic croaker is not experiencing overfishing and is likely not overfished. Trends in independent data indicate that biomass has been increasing and more, older fish have been observed in the catch.
Dolphin						SAFMC's Dolphin Wahoo FMP was approved in 2004. The SAFMC continues to work on the Comprehensive Annual Catch Limit Amendment. The amendment will meet federal mandates to establish annual catch limits and accountability measures for managed species that are not undergoing overfishing by the end of 2011.

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Drum, Black						A stock assessment for black drum has not been completed, but the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission plans to begin developing an interstate fishery management plan for black drum this year.
Drum, Red						Overfishing is not occurring. A stock assessment completed in 2009 by the ASMFC continues to indicate that current regulations have been successful.
Eel, American						The stock was declared depleted by the 2012 ASMFC benchmark stock assessment. Stock status is poorly understood due to limited stock assessment results and non-standard sampling protocols across the species' range. No range-wide estimate of abundance exists and reliable indexes of abundance of this species are scarce.
Flounder, Southern						Stock is overfished and overfishing is occurring based on the 2009 stock assessment. Development of Amendment 1 to the DMF FMP is currently underway. Supplement A to the FMP was implemented in February 2011 for the recreational fishery. These reductions, combined with existing commercial measures, achieve sustainable harvest.
Flounder, Summer						Overfishing is no longer occurring and the stock is no longer overfished. The summer flounder stock is considered rebuilt, ahead of the rebuilding deadline of January 1, 2013.
Grouper, Gag						The stock is not overfished but overfishing is occurring. A federal management plan is restricting harvest to end overfishing.
Herring, River (A)						
Albemarle Sound						The MFC 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 DMF in the Albemarle Sound area to re-evaluate spawning habitat, expand juvenile sampling, and monitor the Chowan River adult spawning stock. A N.C. Sustainable Fishery Plan was approved and demonstrates the sustainability of the discretionary harvest as required by Amendment 2 to the ASMFC Shad and River Herring FMP if any fisheries were to remain open. The North Carolina FMP for river herring will be updated in 2012.
Other Areas						No current sampling program.
Kingfishes (A)						The DMF FMP completed in 2007 indicated a healthy age structure in the stock along with increasing trends in juvenile abundance but commercial and recreational landings dropped in 2011.
Mackerel, King						Based on a 2008 SAFMC stock assessment, the South Atlantic king mackerel stock is not overfished. It is uncertain whether overfishing is occurring; however, if it is, it is occurring at a low level. The 2011 recreational and commercial landings were the lowest in the past ten years. A new stock assessment is scheduled for 2013.

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Mackerel, Spanish						Based on a 2008 SAFMC stock assessment, the Spanish mackerel stock in the South Atlantic is not undergoing overfishing; however, the stock assessment model and underlying data are insufficient to make a determination on whether or not the stock is overfished. A new stock assessment will be completed in 2012.
Menhaden, Atlantic						Based on the corrected version of the 2010 benchmark stock assessment, Atlantic menhaden are not overfished but are experiencing overfishing. The ASMFC Atlantic Menhaden Board has begun development of Amendment 2 to the FMP to end overfishing for all fishing sectors and gear types.
Monkfish						Based on revised biomass reference points, NMFS no longer considers the Northern or Southern stocks overfished. The biomass indices for both stocks are above the minimum biomass threshold and biomass target index.
Mullet, Striped						The stock is not overfished. Landings for 2011 were within management threshold limits. Historically, the commercial fishery has had sustained landings similar to current levels.
Perch, White						Independent and dependent sampling began March 2004 to fulfill data/research needs for an FMP; however, funding was discontinued March 2012.
Perch, Yellow						There has been a significant increase in effort and landings since 1991. Fish are targeted in the winter and early spring during spawning within specific river systems. Independent and dependent sampling began March 2004 to fulfill data/research needs for an FMP; however, funding was discontinued March 2012.
Reef Fish (B)						Of the 60 species in the SAFMC unit, several are considered overfished. The overfished stocks include snowy grouper, speckled hind, red porgy, red snapper, red grouper, and Warsaw grouper.
Seatrout, Spotted						The 2009 N.C. spotted seatrout stock assessment indicated that the stock in N.C. and Virginia has been overfished and overfishing has been occurring throughout the entire 18-year time series. Last year's mild winter likely enabled the stock to partially recover from the previous two unusually cold winters.
Scup						The 2011 updated assessment indicates that the stock is not considered overfished and is not currently experiencing overfishing. Greatly improved recruitment and low fishing mortality rates have occurred since 1998.
Shad, American						Commercial landings decreased slightly in 2011, and are slightly lower than the 10-year average. The 2007 ASMFC coast-wide 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. North Carolina is in the process of adopting an American Shad Sustainable Fishery Plan to meet ASMFC requirements.

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Shad, Hickory						Commercial landings declined significantly again in 2011 over 2010 landings after increasing every year since 2007. Landings once again fell below the 10-year average. Two Amendments to the Shad and River Herring FMP recently approved by the ASMFC do not directly address hickory shad. The DMF has not conducted any directed sampling since 1993.
Sharks						The ASMFC has developed a Coastal Shark FMP and NMFS includes sharks in its Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species FMP. Recent assessment results indicate great uncertainty about the various shark species. Its current status is of concern because of the overfished status of sandbar shark, dusky, blacknose, and porbeagle.
Spiny Dogfish						Spiny dogfish are currently managed under the joint MAFMC and NEFMC FMP in federal waters (3– 200 miles) and the ASMFC Spiny Dogfish Interstate FMP in state waters (0– 3 miles). The 2009 Transboundary Resource Assessment Committee assessment update indicates that the spiny dogfish stock is considered to be rebuilt.
Spot						Recreational and commercial landings increased in 2011 from historical lows in 2010. The catch-per-unit-effort in the inshore/offshore gill net commercial fisheries increased and the catch-per-unit-effort in the long haul commercial fishery decreased slightly from 2010. However, the juvenile abundance index decreased.
Sturgeon, Atlantic						The ASMFC is responsible for managing this species and considers the stocks to be depleted along the Atlantic coast. There is a coast-wide prohibition on possession. On April 5, 2012, NMFS listed the Carolina Distinct Population Segment of Atlantic sturgeon as a federally endangered species.
Weakfish (Gray Trout)						The weakfish stock along the Atlantic coast is at a level of low abundance. Coast- wide landings are at their lowest levels on record. The most recent assessment indicates that the cause is likely due to factors other than fishing mortality. The ASMFC has set strict harvest limits in response to the decline in an effort to aid in stock recovery.
Shellfish and Crustaceans						
Clam, Hard						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.
Crab, Blue						Concern for the blue crab stock is due to reduced landings of hard blue crabs during 2000-2002 and 2005-2007, following record-high landings observed during 1996-1999.
Oyster, Eastern						Concern exists due to long term decline caused by overharvesting and habitat disturbances. Sampling data show Dermo has declined in recent years and commercial landings have shown marked improvement. Recreational landings are unknown.

Scallop, Bay						High natural mortality from environmental change and predation cause annual variability in abundance. Sampling showed low abundance in all areas in 2011. The main harvest season (late January – March) was not opened in 2012 due to limited availability of scallops.
Shrimp(C)						Annual shrimp stock condition is determined mainly by environmental and recruitment conditions. Natural mortality far outweighs fishing mortality.
Totals	10	4	13	6	7	



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

N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries • 3441 Arendell Street • Morehead City, NC 28557 • 252-726-7021 or 800-682-2632