

Stock status of important coastal fisheries in North Carolina - 2005

Species and Stock	Status					
	Viable	Recovering	Concern	Overfished	Unknown	Comments
<u>Bass, Black Sea</u>						
N. of Hatteras						Based on the NEFSC survey, black sea bass north of Cape Hatteras are no longer overfished.
S. of Hatteras						Overfished based on SAFMC assessment.
<u>Bass, Striped</u>						
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 Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass. Addendum I to Amendment 6 is in the public comment stage of implementation, and addresses the issue of striped bass discards in all sectors of the striped bass fishery.
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 the stock is being overfished. A new management plan was approved in May 2004.
<u>Bluefish</u>						ASMFC/MAFMC FMP. An ASMFC peer reviewed stock assessment (2005) concluded the Atlantic stock of bluefish is not experiencing overfishing, but remains in an overfished state.
<u>Catfishes (A)</u>						Independent and dependent sampling began March 2004 to fulfill data/research needs for up coming FMP
<u>Croaker, Atlantic</u>						Population in the mid-Atlantic region is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring on the spawning stock biomass based on the ASMFC assessment. The ocean fisheries appear viable and there has been a recent expansion of the length distribution from inside waters.
<u>Dolphin/Wahoo</u>						SAFMC plan approved in 2004.
<u>Drum, Red</u>						Current regulations are designed to stop overfishing allowing for increased juvenile recruitment to the adult population and subsequent stock recovery.
<u>Eel, American</u>						The current status is unknown, ASMFC is planning the completion of a benchmark stock assessment by November 2005.
<u>Flounder, Southern</u>						Stock is overfished and overfishing is still occurring based on the 2004 stock assessment. A North Carolina FMP was approved and management measures being implemented in 2005.
<u>Flounder, Summer</u>						Improvements in age class structure, spawning stock biomass, and fishing mortality have occurred since the early 1990s. However, overfishing is occurring.
<u>Grouper, Gag</u>						Assessment indicates recovery goal has been met.

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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 by March 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 begin in 2005.
<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 the 2004 full 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. Recruitment has been high in recent years, but the age structure of the stock leans heavily towards younger age classes. Historically, the commercial fishery has 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>						Independent and dependent sampling began March 2004 to fulfill data/research needs for up coming FMP
<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>						Landings and juvenile abundance decreased in 2004. ASMFC Shad and River Herring FMP is in place and a coastwide stock assessment is currently being conducted. DMF is collecting fishery dependent and independent data.
<u>Shad, Hickory</u>						Commercial landings increased in 2004 and are the second-highest reported since 1972. The DMF has not conducted any assessment work since 1993.
<u>Sharks</u>						The 2002 large coastal shark stock assessment indicates the two primary shark species in the North Carolina shark fishery (blacktip and sandbar) are not overfished and the large coastal complex as a whole has improved.

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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 not unusual for short-lived species.
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						Although landings data exist on clams, more data are required for stock status. NC FMP approved 2001.
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						Predation from cownose rays is believed to be the cause of low landings.
Crab, Blue						Blue crabs are North Carolina's most valuable commercial fishery and rank second in pounds landed. 2004 hard crab landings declined following a two-year increase in 2002-2003. Peeler/soft crab landings rebounded to late 1990s levels. Reduced landings of hard blue crabs for 2000-2002 and 2004, following record-high landings observed during 1996 -1999, have caused concern.
Shrimp(C)						Annual Stock. Abundances may be greatly affected by environmental conditions.
Totals	12	6	8	8	6	
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.