



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

MAFMC & ASMFC Joint Meeting Summary

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

MAFMC & ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Board & ISFMP Policy Board
December 10, 2024

For more information, please contact Toni Kerns, ISFMP, Tina Berger, Communications or the identified individual at 703.842.0740

Meeting Summaries, Press Releases and Motions

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

MAFMC & SUMMER FLOUNDER, SCUP, AND BLACK SEA BASS MANAGEMENT BOARD (DECEMBER 10, 2024)2

Meeting Summary 2

Motions 3

MAFMC & INTERSTATE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM POLICY BOARD (DECEMBER 10, 2024)..3

Meeting Summary 3

Motions 3

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council met December 10-12, 2024, in Annapolis, MD. As part of the meeting the Commission's Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board (Board), and Interstate Fisheries Management Program Policy Board (Policy Board) met jointly with the Council to take action and discuss a number of issues. The summaries of those meetings follow.

Presentations, briefing materials, motions, and webinar recordings are available at: <http://www.mafmc.org/briefing/december-2024>.

MAFMC & SUMMER FLOUNDER, SCUP, AND BLACK SEA BASS MANAGEMENT BOARD (December 10, 2024)

Meeting Summary

The Commission's Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board (Board) met jointly with the Council to consider 2025 recreational management measures (i.e., bag, size, and season limits) for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass.

2025 Summer Flounder and Scup Recreational Measures

The Board and Council reviewed previously adopted recreational measures for summer flounder and scup and determined that no changes are needed for either species in 2025. Last year, the Board and Council adopted two-year recreational measures for summer flounder and scup following the Percent Change Approach implemented through Addendum XXXIV/Framework 17. For summer flounder, a 28% reduction in harvest was required, which was taken via adjustments to 2024-2025 state waters measures under conservation equivalency. For scup, a 10% reduction in harvest was required, which was taken via adjustments to 2024-2025 state waters measures. The intent of the Percent Change Approach is to hold measures constant across both years unless new data suggest a major change in the expected impacts of those measures on the stock or the fishery.

For summer flounder, state measures under regional conservation equivalency are expected to remain the same as in 2024, as described in the [staff memo](#) for recreational summer flounder measures. For scup, state and federal measures are expected to remain the same as in 2024, as described in the [staff memo](#) for recreational scup measures.

2025 Black Sea Bass Recreational Measures

Unlike summer flounder and scup, black sea bass 2025 recreational measures were not previously adopted. The Board and Council agreed to maintain status quo recreational measures in 2025 given the recreational harvest limit (RHL) is unchanged compared to 2024, stock status remains positive, and an updated assessment will be available in 2025 to inform the setting of 2026-2027 measures. Status quo includes continuing to waive the federal waters measures in favor of state waters measures through conservation equivalency. More details are provided in the Council [staff memo](#). If states wish to consider slight season adjustments under the status quo approach (e.g., to maintain a Saturday opening), those proposals must be approved by the Board.

Please contact Tracey Bauer, FMP Coordinator, at tbauer@asmfc.org for more information on black sea bass, and Chelsea Tuohy, FMP Coordinator, at ctuohy@asmfc.org for more information on summer flounder and scup.

Motions

Move to adopt conservation equivalency for 2025 recreational black sea bass management with status quo measures. Status quo non-preferred coastwide measures are: 15-inch minimum size, 5 fish possession limit, and May 15 – September 8 open season. Status quo precautionary default measures are: 16-inch minimum size, 2 fish possession limit, and June 1 – August 31 open season.

Council: Motion made by Mr. Luisi and seconded by Mr. Grist. Motion carries (18 in favor, 2 opposed).

Board: Motion made by Mr. Luisi and seconded by Mr. Grist. Motion carries (9 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 null).

Roll Call: In Favor - DE, MA, VA, NJ, MD, CT, NOAA, NH, NY; Opposed – NC; Null – RI.

MAFMC & INTERSTATE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM POLICY BOARD (December 10, 2024)

Meeting Summary

The Commission’s Interstate Fishery Management Program Policy Board (Policy Board) met jointly with the Council to consider approval of a draft scoping document/Public Information Document (PID) for the Sector Separation and Data Collection Amendment to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass and Bluefish Fishery Management Plans. This action, previously referred to as the “Recreational Sector Separation and Catch Accounting Amendment,” was initiated in 2020 as part of the [Recreational Reform Initiative](#), but has been on hold since that time to prioritize other management actions. The amendment will (1) explore options for managing for-hire and private/rental recreational fisheries separately (referred to as sector separation), and (2) consider approaches to improve or supplement the collection and use of recreational data that support management decisions for these species.

The Council and Policy Board approved the scoping document/PID, with minor modifications, for public comment in early 2025. As the first step in the amendment process, scoping will provide an opportunity for the public to identify major issues and potential management approaches that should be explored during the development of this amendment. Following the initial phase of information gathering and public comment, the Policy Board and Council will identify categories of options/alternatives for further development.

The final PID will be available on the Commission’s website under Public Input at <https://asmfc.org/about-us/public-input> in early 2025. A press release announcing the hearing schedule and written comment instructions will be released upon the PID’s posting and finalization of the hearing schedule. For more information, please contact Tracey Bauer, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at tbauer@asmfc.org.

Motions

Move to approve the draft scoping document/public information document as modified today for public comment in early 2025.

Policy Board: Motion made by Mr. Hasbrouck and seconded by Mr. Reid. Motion carries by consent.

Council: Motion made by Mr. Luisi and seconded by Ms. Beckwith. Motion carries by consent.