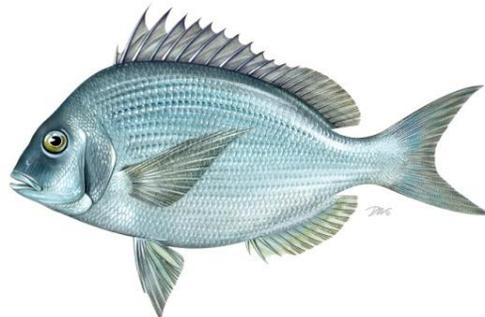


## INTERSTATE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### Scup

#### Species Range

US/Canadian Border-North Carolina (north of Cape Hatteras); the South Atlantic Council manages the southern range – North Carolina (south of Cape Hatteras)-Florida



#### Management Unit

Scup is managed jointly by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (EEZ) and the ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Management Board (state waters).

#### Stock Status

The 2021 management track stock assessment report indicates that the stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring.

#### *Reference Points*

- F Threshold =  $F_{MS\ PROXY} = F_{40\%} = 0.200$ 
  - Current (2019) = 0.136
- Spawning Stock Biomass threshold ( $1/2\ SSB_{MSYPROXY}$ ) = 99 million lbs
- Spawning Stock Biomass target ( $SSB_{MSYPROXY}$ ) = 198 million lbs
  - Current SSB (2018) = 389 million lbs

Fishing mortality was estimated to be 0.136 in 2019, below the fishing mortality threshold of 0.200. Spawning stock biomass (SSB) was estimated to be 389 million pounds, about two times the updated biomass target reference point. The average recruitment from 1984 to 2019 is 136 million fish at age 0. The 2015 year class is estimated to be the largest in the time series at 415 million fish, while the 2017-2019 year classes are estimated to be below average. Stock biomass is projected to further decrease toward the target unless more above average year classes recruit to the stock in the short term.

#### **Next scheduled stock assessment**

June 2023

#### Involved States and Jurisdictions

MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, DE, MD, VA, NC, NOAA Fisheries

## **Active Boards/Committees**

ASMFC Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board; Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council; ASMFC Technical Committee (evaluates and recommends state-specific management measures); Joint Monitoring Committee (recommends yearly specifications for commercial and recreational measures to joint Management Board); ASMFC Plan Review Team (reviews state compliance reports and FMP review); SAW Southern Demersal Working Group; Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Advisory Panel.

## **Chairs**

Board, Chair – Adam Nowalsky (12/2019); Vice-Chair – Justin Davis (12/2019)  
Technical Committee, Chair – Greg Wojcik (12/2016); Vice-Chair – Alexa Galvan (9/2020)  
Advisory Panel, Chair – Vacant

## **Staff Lead**

Chelsea Tuohy, [ctuohy@asmfc.org](mailto:ctuohy@asmfc.org)

## **Management Plan History**

### **[Amendment 8 \(March 1996\)](#)**

The Commission and MAFMC adopted the Scup Fishery Management Plan into the Summer Flounder FMP through Amendment 8.

The objectives of the FMP are to:

- Reduce fishing mortality in the scup fishery to ensure that overfishing does not occur.
- Reduce fishing mortality on immature scup to increase spawning stock biomass.
- Improve the yield from the fisheries.
- Promote compatible management regulations between state and federal jurisdictions.
- Promote uniform and effective enforcement of regulations.
- Minimize regulations to achieve the management objectives stated above.

### **[Amendment 12 \(1998\)](#)**

Specifically, this amendment revises the overfishing definitions for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass and addresses the new and revised National Standards relative to the existing management measures. In addition, this amendment adds a framework adjustment procedure that allows the Board to add or modify management measures through a streamlined public review process via addenda.

### **[Addendum III \(March 2001\)](#)**

The purpose of this Addendum, which was adopted by the states under Amendment 12, is to establish recreational fishing specifications for 2001 for summer flounder and for scup. Its provisions have no application beyond 2001.

### **[Addendum IV \(January 2001\)](#)**

The purpose of this Addendum, which was adopted by the states under Amendment 12, is to harmonize the different procedures for setting specifications under the fishery management

plans for these three species, by adopting a procedure that clarifies the ability of the states to operate effectively and consistently with basic concepts of state sovereignty.

[Addendum V \(February 2002\)](#)

Addendum V to the Scup Fishery Management Plan establishes the state-specific shares of the 2002 summer period quota.

[Addendum VII \(February 2002\)](#)

The purpose of this Addendum, which was adopted by the states under Amendment 12, is to establish recreational fishing specifications for scup for 2002. Its provisions have no application beyond 2002.

[Addendum XIII \(August 2004\)](#)

This Addendum modifies the FMP so that, within a given year, TALs for summer flounder, scup, and/or black sea bass can be specified for up to three years.

[Addendum IX \(March 2003\)](#)

The purpose of this Addendum, which was adopted by the states under Amendment 12, is to establish recreational fishing specifications for scup in 2003. The regional approach outlined in this addendum is still used currently. Massachusetts through New York, which comprise 97% of recreational harvest, annually adopt more restrictive measures than the coastwide measures to constrain harvest to the RHL.

[Addendum XI \(January 2004\)](#)

This Addendum establishes a management system that will constrain the recreational scup fishery to the coastwide recreational harvest limit, and allow states to customize scup recreational management measures in order to deal with burden issues associated with the implementation of coastwide measures. It also proposes a management process that minimizes the administrative burden when implementing conservation equivalency.

[Addendum XIX \(August 2007\)](#)

This Addendum broadens the descriptions of stock status determination criteria contained within the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass FMP to allow for greater flexibility in those definitions, while maintaining objective and measurable status determination criteria for identifying when stocks or stock complexes covered by the FMP are overfished. It establishes acceptable categories of peer-review for stock status determination criteria. When these specific peer-review metrics are met and new or updated information is available, the new or revised stock status determination criteria may be incorporated by the Commission directly into the annual management measures for each species.

<b>Scup Commercial Summer State-by-State Quota Share.</b>	
<b>State</b>	<b>% of Summer Quota</b>
ME	0.1210%
NH	0.0000%
MA	21.5853%
RI	56.1894%
CT	3.1537%
NY	15.8232%
NJ	2.9164%
DE	0.0000%
MD	0.0119%
VA	0.1650%
NC	0.0249%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0000%</b>

### Addendum XX (November 2009)

This Addendum sets policies to reconcile quota overages to address minor inadvertent quota overages. It streamlines the quota transfer process and establishes clear policies and administrative protocols to guide the allocation of transfers from states with underages to states with overages. It also allows for quota transfers to reconcile quota overages after year's end.

### Addendum XXIX (May 2017)

This Addendum shortens the length of the commercial scup summer period and extends the length of the winter II period. The change in the quota period lengths allows for higher possession limits for a longer period of time each year, increasing the likelihood that the commercial fishery will fully harvest the quota. The quota allocation for each period remains unchanged. The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council also took the same action through Framework 10.

### Addendum XXXI (December 2018)

This Addendum recommends NOAA Fisheries establish a transit area through which non-federally permitted for-hire and commercial vessels, in possession of scup, could transit between the Rhode Island state waters surrounding Block Island and the coastal state waters of Rhode Island. Additionally, this Addendum allows for the use maximum sizes in addition to minimum sizes, commonly referred to as slot limits, to control catch in the scup recreational fisheries within state waters.

### **Quota Management**

Total annual quotas are divided between the recreational fishery (22%) and the commercial fishery (78%). Specific management measures for the commercial fishery include minimum size limits, minimum mesh requirements for trawls, and closed seasons. The commercial fishery is split into 3 seasons: Winter I (45.11%): January-April (coastwide quota with trip limits), Summer Period (38.95%): May-September (state quotas (see table for shares) and regulations), and Winter II (15.94%): October-December (coastwide quota and trip limits). The commercial fishery quota is monitored by the NMFS. Weekly quota updates are found on the GARFO webpage [https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/ro/fso/reports/reports\\_frame.htm](https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/ro/fso/reports/reports_frame.htm) Recreational fishery management measures include a combination of minimum size limits, bag limits and fishing seasons.

### **Pending Management Action**

The Board and MAFMC developed a joint amendment to consider an adjustment to the allocations between the commercial and recreational fisheries for summer flounder, scup and black sea bass. The commercial and recreational allocations for all three species are currently based on historical proportions of landings (for summer flounder and black sea bass) or catch (for scup) for each sector. Recent changes in how recreational harvest is estimated have resulted in a discrepancy between the current levels of estimated recreational harvest and the allocations of summer flounder, scup and black sea bass to the recreational sector. Some changes have also been made to commercial catch data since the allocations were established.

This amendment considers whether modifications to the allocations are needed in light of these and other changes in the fisheries. The amendment also considers options that would allow a portion of landings to be transferred between the commercial and recreational sectors each year, in either direction, based on the needs of each sector. At the April 2021 meeting of the Board and MAFMC, final action was postponed to allow for further development of the [Recreational Reform Initiative](#). The Council and Board are now scheduled to take final action on the commercial/recreational allocation amendment at a joint meeting in December 2021. Additional information and updates on this amendment are available at: <http://www.mafmc.org/actions/sfsbsb-allocation-amendment>.

### **Annual Events:**

- TC meets in December/January (before Winter Meeting Week) to evaluate previous year's recreational harvest by state and make recommendations on how management measures should be adjusted to achieve but not exceed the current year's recreational harvest limit.
- February-March: Final commercial allocation memo sent to the Board, depending on the release of final landings numbers. Board determines whether to have coastwide recreational management measures or approve addendum allowing for different state and/or regional management measures.
- April-May: Final recreational harvest information from the previous year is released. The TC determines how the state-implemented recreational management measures should perform based on the updated information. This information is communicated to the NOAA Greater Regional Office for their consideration in setting state management measures.
- Compliance reports are due June 1. Prior to next Board Meeting, the PRT reviews the FMP Review which includes any compliance issues.
- Monitoring committee meets in July to outline recommendations for the upcoming year's fishing regulations, including any proposed changes to the minimum fish size, mesh size, escape vent sizes, or other compliance criteria for the commercial fishery, as well as to recommend changes to the quota to account for management uncertainty. The Monitoring Committee forwards recommendations to the Board and the Council.
- Board and Council meet jointly at the MAFMC August meeting to adopt an Acceptable Biological Catch, a commercial quota, and a recreational harvest limit, and to set commercial specifications.
- Monitoring Committee meets in November to outline recommendations for the upcoming year's recreational measures, including minimum fish size, season, and possession limit. The Monitoring Committee forwards recommendations to the Board and the Council.
- Board and Council meet jointly at the MAFMC December meeting to set recreational specifications.