



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Working towards healthy, self-sustaining populations for all Atlantic coast fish species, or successful restoration well in progress by the year 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 5, 2009

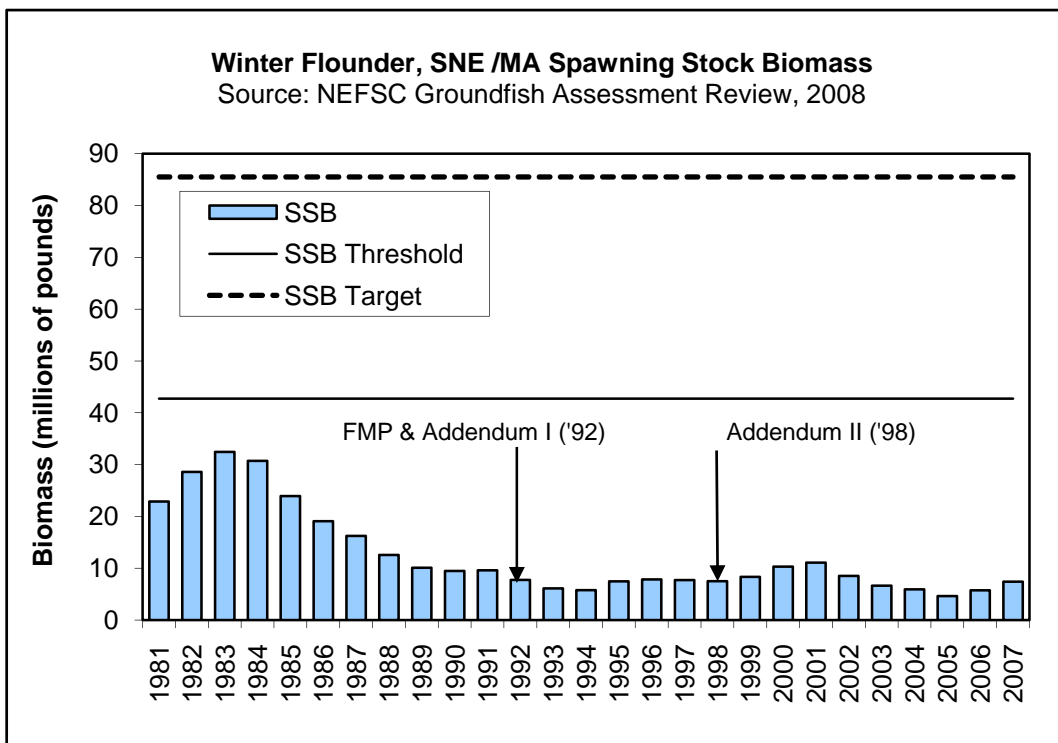
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Winter Flounder Board Fast Tracks Development of Addendum to Initiate Stock Rebuilding of Inshore Stocks

Alexandria, VA – The Commission’s Winter Flounder Management Board approved the development of Draft Addendum I to Amendment 1 the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for the Inshore Stocks of Winter Flounder. The Draft Addendum will propose a suite of management measures to reduce fishing mortality on the inshore stocks of winter flounder (0 – 3 miles). The range of management measures will include zero possession limits; commercial trip limits; recreational bag/size and seasonal limits; and measures to prevent an influx of effort in state waters for Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic (SNE/MA) and Gulf of Maine (GOM) stocks.

This action is taken in response to the findings of the 2008 Groundfish Assessment Report Meeting (GARM III), which estimates that the SNE/MA stock is at 9% of the target biomass (overfished) with overfishing occurring and that the GOM stock is likely to be overfished with overfishing likely to be occurring.

Another factor influencing the Board’s action is pending federal management measures

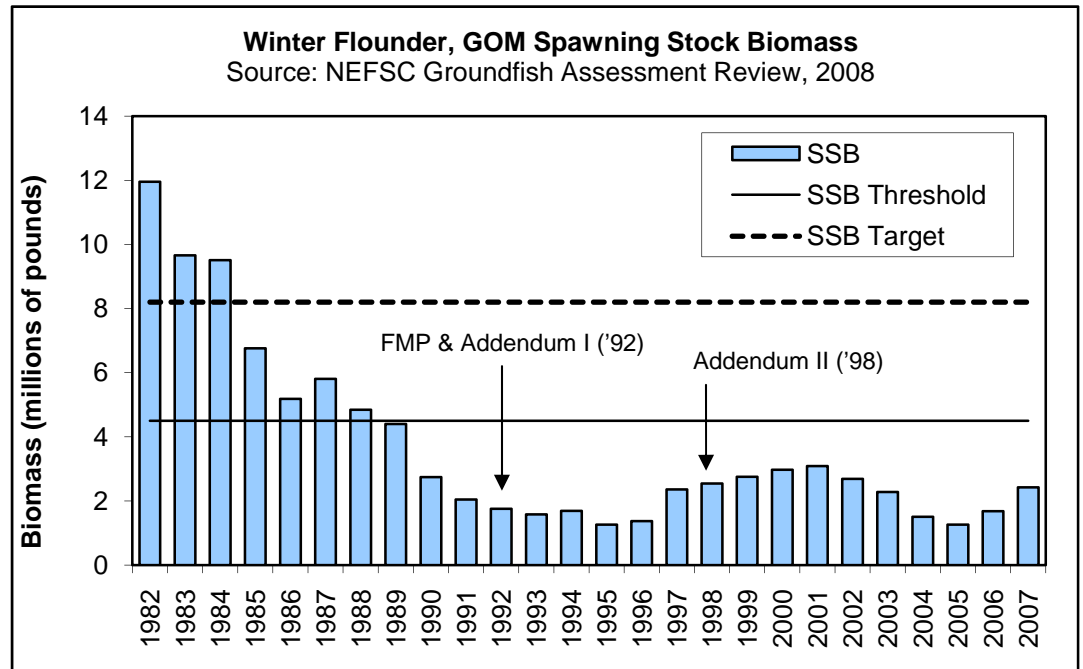


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The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and anadromous species.

on groundfish stocks, which will significantly reduce fishing mortality on federally-managed groundfish stocks in offshore waters (3 – 200 miles). Options under the Draft Addendum will seek to enhance stock rebuilding efforts throughout the species range by reducing fishing related mortality on inshore spawning stocks.

The Board will review and consider approval of Draft Addendum 1 for public comment in March. If approved, the draft addendum will be released for public comment and review in March/April, with state public hearings to be conducted in April. The Board will meet again in May, during the Commission’s Spring Meeting, to review public comment and advisory panel input, and consider final action on the Addendum.



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