



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

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

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Tautog Board Initiates Addendum to Rebuild Stock

Arlington, VA – The Commission’s Tautog Management Board approved the development of Draft Addendum IV to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Tautog. The Draft Addendum will propose the establishment of new biological reference points (target and threshold limits for biomass and fishing mortality) to define stock rebuilding goals.

This action is taken in response to the findings and recommendations of the 2006 peer-reviewed stock assessment, as well as those of the recently updated virtual population analysis (VPA). Both assessments indicate the tautog resource continues to be at low biomass levels. Since the mid-1980s tautog has undergone a substantial decrease in total and spawning stock biomass, with both currently at levels about one-third of their early time series average. Based on the current fishing mortality target (0.29) and the recent fishing mortality estimates for the last two years, overfishing is not occurring.

In addition to defining a coastwide biomass target, the Draft Addendum will also propose allowing individual states or groups of states to develop scientifically-based spawning stock biomass and fishing mortality rate targets and thresholds appropriate for that geographic region. These regional reference points would require Technical Committee review and Management Board approval before they could be implemented at the state and/or regional level.

The Draft Addendum will be available for Board consideration in October at the Commission’s Annual Meeting in Atlantic Beach, North Carolina. If approved, it will be made available for public comment in the fall with final Board approval anticipated for early 2007. For more information, please contact Ruth Christiansen at (202) 289-6400 or rchristiansen@asmfc.org.

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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.

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