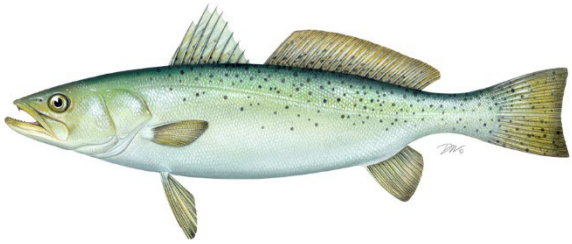
INTERSTATE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Spotted Seatrout



Species Range
Massachusetts through the Florida Keys, although they are most abundant from the Chesapeake Bay southward

Management Unit
Maryland through the east coast of Florida

Stock Status
Stock status is unknown. While no coastwide stock assessment has been conducted, state-specific length and age-structured analyses have been completed in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.

Involved States and Jurisdictions
NJ, DE, MD, PRFC, VA, NC, SC, GA, FL

Active Boards/Committees
Sciaenids Management Board, Spotted Seatrout Plan Review Team, South Atlantic Species Advisory Panel

Chairs
Board, Chair – Ben Dyar (02/2026); Vice-Chair – Ethan Simpson
Advisory Panel, Chair – Craig Freeman (11/2019)

Staff Lead
Tracey Bauer, tbauer@asmfc.org

Management Plan History
Fishery Management Plan for Spotted Seatrout (October 1984)
The Interstate Fishery Management Plan (FMP) is adopted, identifying research and data needs to effectively manage the resource, and recommending management measures to produce a sustainable fishery (i.e., a minimum size limit of 12" total length (TL)).

Amendment 1 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Spotted Seatrout (1991)
Amendment 1 refines the second objective of the FMP to achieve 20 percent spawning potential to minimize the possibility of recruitment failure. While the management program does not require state compliance, all states within the management unit have implemented a

minimum size limit of at least 12” TL and three states have implemented a spawning potential target.

Omnibus Amendment to the Interstate Fishery Management Plans for Spanish Mackerel, Spot, and Spotted Seatrout (August 2011)

The Omnibus Amendment updates the Spotted Seatrout FMP with the requirements of the Atlantic Coastal Fisheries Cooperative Management Act of 1993 and the Interstate Fishery Management Program Charter, initially passed in 1995. The amendment adds *de minimis* criteria, compliance reporting, and adaptive management measures. The plan also requires implementation of a 12” TL minimum size, which all states already had implemented. July 1, 2012 is established as the date for full implementation of the Omnibus Amendment requirements.

Pending Management Action

None.

Annual Events

- Spotted Seatrout compliance reports are due September 1st with a reminder distributed 90 days prior.
- The Plan Review Team produces an annual Spotted Seatrout FMP Review.
- The Advisory Panel receives an update after each Board meeting, and should meet at least once per year.