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# Completed and Upcoming Actions for Coastal Sharks

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# This presentation is an update on various actions...

## Completed Actions:

- 2024 shark commercial season rule
- Prohibition on oceanic whitetip (Atlantic Ocean) and hammerhead sharks (U.S. Caribbean)

## Upcoming Actions:

- Amendment 15 and associated final rule on spatial management and electronic monitoring
- Electronic reporting proposed rule
- Amendment 16 and associated proposed rule on shark fisheries
- Amendment 17 on essential fish habitat
- Atlantic blacknose shark stock status update

# Completed Actions



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# Final Rule: 2024 Atlantic Shark Commercial Fishery Quotas, Opening Dates, and Retention Limits

- Published Nov. 8, 2023; Effective Jan. 1, 2024
- Automatically opens the Atlantic shark commercial fishery on January 1 each year under base quotas and default retention limits
- Sets a new default retention limit of 55 large coastal sharks—other than sandbar sharks—per vessel per trip for Directed shark limited access permit holders
- Adjusts 2024 quota levels based on underharvests from the 2023 fishing year, consistent with existing regulations
- For 2025 and future fishing years:
  - The commercial fishery will automatically open on January 1 under base quotas and default retention limits
  - NMFS will publish any quota adjustments early each year



# Final Rule: Retention Prohibition of Oceanic Whitetip Sharks in U.S. Atlantic Waters and Hammerhead Sharks in the U.S. Caribbean

- Published Jan. 3, 2024; Effective Feb. 2, 2024
- Prohibits the commercial and recreational retention of:
  - Oceanic whitetip sharks in all U.S. waters of the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean Sea
  - Hammerhead sharks (great, scalloped, and smooth) in the U.S. Caribbean
- **Purpose:** To be responsive to two 2020 HMS Biological Opinions and reduce mortality of oceanic whitetip sharks and the Central and Southwest Atlantic Distinct Population Segment of scalloped hammerhead sharks, which are both listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act



# Upcoming Actions



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# Upcoming Final Amendment 15: Mid-Atlantic Shark Closed Area

## Preferred Alternative in the Proposed Rule

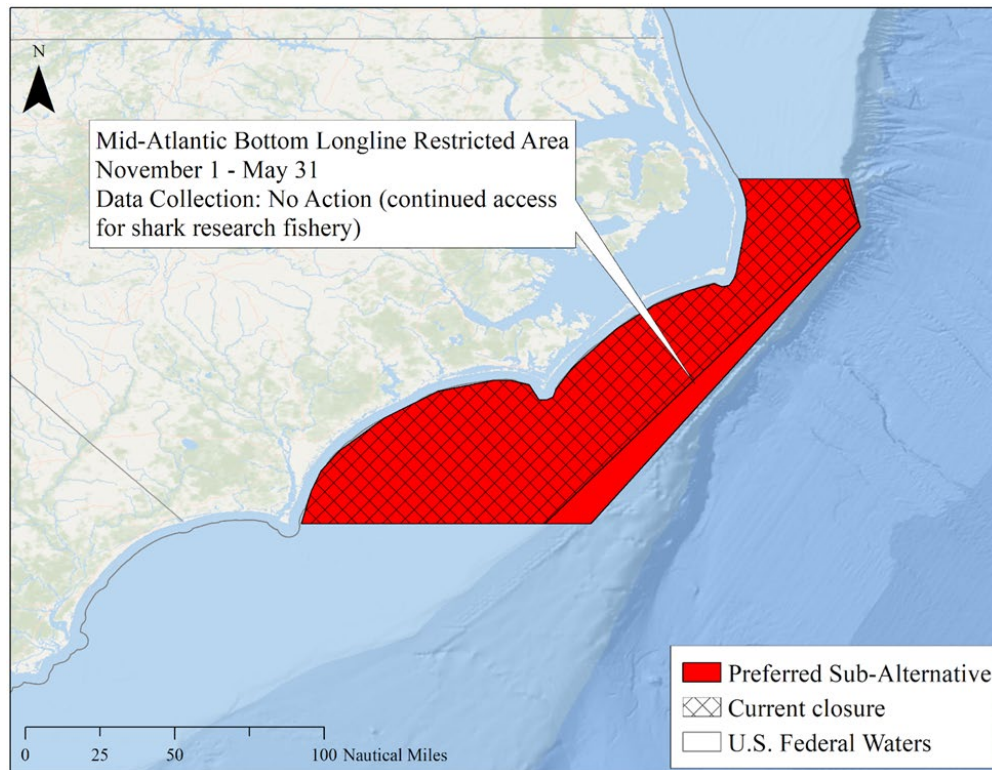
- Extends eastern boundary of the mid-Atlantic closed area
- Shifts the closed timing to Nov. 1 - May 31
- Maintains current data collection programs
- Would be evaluated every 3 years, or earlier, if specific concerns arise

## Public Comments

- Concerns regarding potential impacts on Council-managed bottom longline fisheries and low levels of shark bottom longline effort

## Where are we now?

- Final Environmental Impact Statement expected May 2024
- Final Rule expected summer 2024



# Proposed Rule: Electronic Reporting

- In May 2023, NMFS announced an advance notice of proposed rulemaking to modify or expand reporting requirements for HMS, and accepted public comments through Aug. 18, 2023
- This action would modify or expand electronic reporting requirements for HMS commercial and recreational vessel owners and dealers, consistent with the “One Stop Reporting” initiative
- NMFS received 11 written comments and numerous oral comments during 7 in-person and virtual public hearing, and presentations to 5 regional fishery management councils and the HMS Advisory Panel



# Summary of Public Comments on Electronic Reporting Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

- Some commercial and recreational fishing groups supported of this rulemaking in general, while others supported maintaining status quo reporting requirements
- Overall, commenters supported electronic “One Stop Reporting”
- Commenters requested clear rationale for any changes in reporting requirements, and how data will be used for science or management
- Some commercial groups called for more equitable reporting across sectors
- Several commenters encouraged collaboration with our partners (e.g., regional offices, state, fishery management councils) or working with industry on outreach and education
- Commenters encouraged consideration of how new data streams would be calibrated with existing data, time series, and surveys

## Where are we now?

- Proposed rule expected later in 2024

# Draft Amendment 16 & Proposed Rule

- In May 2023, NMFS announced the availability of a scoping document for Amendment 16 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP, and accepted public comments through Aug. 18, 2023
- Amendment 16 could result in substantial changes to the entire commercial and recreational shark fishery, and is necessary to implement the revised framework for establishing quotas and related management measures for Atlantic shark fisheries, as set forth in Amendment 14
- NMFS received 34 written comments and numerous oral comments during 5 in-person and virtual public hearings, and during presentations to 5 regional fishery management councils, ASMFC, and the HMS Advisory Panel



# Summary of Public Comments on Amendment 16 Scoping

- Overall there was support for Amendment 16
- Councils and states were supportive of NMFS' intent to create more flexibility in shark fisheries management and supported management measures that would increase opportunities for harvest
- Some concerns about the potential lifting of restrictions on shark stocks with an overfished or unknown stock status
- Concerns about the size of this rulemaking, and recommendations to split management measures into multiple, smaller actions

## Where are we now?

- Draft Amendment 16 is dependent upon the completion of the SEDAR 77 hammerhead stock assessment, expected end of 2024
- Considering options for a smaller, more focused initial rulemaking



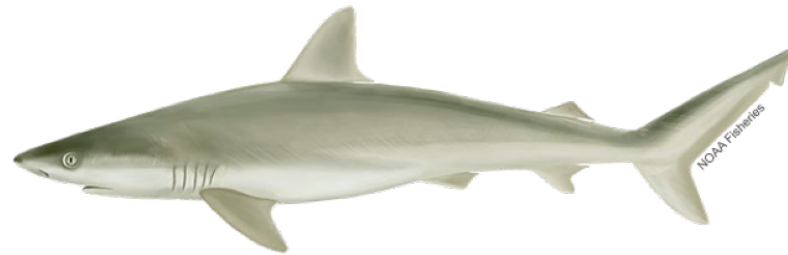
# Amendment 17 on Essential Fish Habitat



- NMFS recently announced the availability of the Final HMS Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) 5-Year Review and intent to initiate Amendment 17 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP
- The Final HMS EFH 5-Year Review gathered relevant new information to determine whether modifications to existing EFH descriptions and designations are warranted
- NMFS has determined that modifications to EFH descriptions are warranted, and will be updated in Amendment 17

# Atlantic Blacknose Shark – Stock Status Update

- In Amendment 14 (finalized 2023), NMFS revised the status determination criteria for Atlantic sharks
- In years when a stock assessment is not conducted, a 3-year rolling average of catch compared to the overfishing limit is used to support the overfishing status determination
- Based on this criteria, NMFS is re-evaluating the overfishing status for the Atlantic stock of blacknose sharks (currently subject to overfishing)
- The updated stock status is expected in June 2024



# Shark Stock Assessments

## Preliminary Results from SEDAR 77 Research Assessment on Hammerhead Sharks

- **Scalloped/Carolina hammerhead:** not overfished; not experiencing overfishing (Stock Synthesis assessment model)
- **Smooth hammerhead:** overfished status is unknown; not experiencing overfishing (Simple Stock Synthesis assessment model)
- **Great hammerhead:** overfished; not experiencing overfishing (JABBA assessment model)

## Next Steps for SEDAR 77

- Operational assessment (for management) expected to be completed in late 2024

## Upcoming SEDAR Stock Assessments (Post-SEDAR 77)

- Bull shark (*Carcharhinus leucas*)
- Sandbar shark (*Carcharhinus plumbeus*)

# Summary of Actions and Timing

| Action   | Relevant Dates  |
|--|---|
| Final Rule: 2024 Atlantic Shark Commercial Fishery Quotas, Opening Dates, and Retention Limits                                   | Effective Jan. 1, 2024  |
| Final Rule: Retention Prohibition of Oceanic Whitetip Sharks in U.S. Atlantic Waters and Hammerhead Sharks in the U.S. Caribbean | Effective Feb. 2, 2024  |
| Amendment 15 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP  | Final Environmental Impact Statement expected May 2024; Final rule expected summer 2024 |
| Electronic Reporting   | Proposed rule expected late 2024  |
| Amendment 16 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP  | Proposed rule expected early 2025   |
| Final HMS Essential Fish Habitat 5-Year Review   | N/A   |
| SEDAR 77: HMS Hammerhead Sharks Stock Assessment   | N/A   |

**HMS Management Division webpage:** <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/topic/atlantic-highly-migratory-species>



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# ICCAT Recommendations

## Recommendation 23-12

- Prohibits retaining on board, transshipping, or landing, in whole or in part, any specimen of whale shark (*Rhinocodon typus*) caught in ICCAT fisheries
- Addresses the interactions between whale sharks and purse seine fisheries
- Measure will be reviewed in 2024 pending further scientific advice
- If approved in 2024, will enter into force Jan. 1, 2025

## Recommendation 23-14

- Prohibits retaining on board, transshipping, landing, or storing in any part or whole carcass of all species of mobulid rays (family Mobulidae) caught in ICCAT fisheries
- Measure will be reviewed in 2024 pending further scientific advice
- If approved in 2024, will enter into force July 1, 2025



# Reminder: Zero Retention of Shortfin Mako Sharks



- The shortfin mako shark retention limit of zero has been in place since July 2022
- There are no changes in international measures
- For more information:  
<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/zero-atlantic-shortfin-mako-shark-retention-limit>

# Questions?

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## Amendment 17 (Essential Fish Habitat)

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- Jennifer Cudney, [jennifer.cudney@noaa.gov](mailto:jennifer.cudney@noaa.gov)



# Complementary State Waters Measures for Oceanic Whitetip Sharks



Coastal Sharks Management Board  
May 2, 2024

# Background



- Final Rule: Retention Prohibition of Oceanic Whitetip Sharks
  - Published Jan. 3, 2024; Effective Feb. 2, 2024
  - Prohibits the commercial and recreational retention of oceanic whitetip sharks in all U.S. waters of the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean Sea
- Oceanic whitetip is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act

# Commission FMP Measures



- Oceanic whitetip is in the Pelagic species group
- 2024 Specifications:
  - No regional quotas
  - No possession limit
  - Annual Quota for Pelagic Sharks Other than Porbeagle or Blue = 488.0 mt dw (**1,075,856 lb dw**)

# Commission FMP Measures



- Addendum V: the Board can consider adjusting the following management measures via Board action:
  - Recreational possession limits
  - Commercial possession limits
- Commercial quota, possession limits, and season start dates can be modified during the season by the Board through a 2/3 majority vote

# Board Action



- Several options:
  1. Change possession limits to zero via Board vote
    - Can be effective immediately
  2. Change species group to prohibited via Addendum
    - More time required to complete addendum
  3. Both?



**Questions?**