



# Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

## NEWS RELEASE

*Vision: Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 18, 2026

PRESS CONTACT: Tina Berger  
703.842.0749

### ASMFC Begins Preparations for Benchmark Stock Assessment for Atlantic Migratory Group Cobia

Arlington, VA – The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission has initiated a benchmark stock assessment for Atlantic migratory group cobia to be completed in 2027. The goals of the assessment are to evaluate the health of the stock along the Atlantic coast from Georgia northward to inform management. While updating the stock assessment model and datasets used in the 2020 benchmark stock assessment (SEDAR 58) will be considered, additional data sources and potential new models will also be explored due to data limitations and changes in management. The Commission's stock assessment process and meetings are open to the public, except for when confidential data are being discussed.



Photo © Aaron Game

The Commission welcomes the submission of data sources that will contribute to the goals of the assessment. This includes, but is not limited to, data on growth, maturation, migration, tagging, natural mortality, environmental impacts, abundance/biomass, and fishery removals. Essential data needs for the Cobia assessment are fishery-independent data sources that can contribute to indices of abundance, data to inform the discards in fisheries, including size information, and bycatch in other directed fisheries. For data sets to be considered, the data must be sent in the required format, with accompanying description of methods, to the Commission by **March 20, 2026**. For more information on submitting data, including the appropriate format, please contact [CJ Schlick](#).

The Commission will hold multiple data workshops in the spring of 2026, with some webinar sessions and one in-person session, to review all available data sources and identify datasets to be incorporated in the stock assessment. The Data Workshops are open to the public, please contact [Emilie Franke](#) or visit <https://asmfc.org/events/> for information on the workshops.

PR26-02

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 diadromous species.