Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Coastal Sharks Management Board

May 5, 2026
2:45 – 4:15 p.m.

Draft Agenda

The times listed are approximate; the order in which these items will be taken is subject to change; other items may be added as necessary

1.	Welcome/Call to Order *(M. Luisi)*	2:45 p.m.
2.	Board Consent • Approval of Agenda • Approval of Proceedings from May 2024	2:45 p.m.
3.	Public Comment	2:50 p.m.
4.	Updates on Highly Migratory Species Federal Rulemaking *(D. DuBeck)*	3:00 p.m.
5.	Updates on Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species Permitting for Smoothhound Sharks *(M. Turton)*	3:30 p.m.
6.	Consider Approval of Fishery Management Plan Review and State Compliance for Coastal Sharks for the 2024 Fishing Year *(C. Starks)* **Action**	4:00 p.m.
7.	Elect Vice Chair **Action**	4:10 p.m.
8.	Other Business/Adjourn	4:15 p.m.

The meeting will be held at The Westin Crystal City (1800 Richmond Highway, Arlington, VA; 703.486.1111) and via webinar; click here for details.

MEETING OVERVIEW

Coastal Sharks Management Board
May 5, 2026
2:45 – 4:15 p.m.

Chair: Mike Luisi (MD) Assumed Chairmanship: 05/25	Technical Committee Chair: Angel Willey (MD)	Law Enforcement Committee Rep: Greg Garner (SC)
Vice Chair: VACANT	Advisory Panel Chair: VACANT	Previous Board Meeting: May 2, 2024
Voting Members: MA, RI, CT, NY, NJ, PA, DE, MD, VA, NC, SC, GA, FL, NMFS (13 votes)		

2. Board Consent

- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Proceedings from May 2024

3. Public Comment – At the beginning of the meeting, public comment will be taken on items not on the agenda. Individuals that wish to speak at this time must sign-in at the beginning of the meeting. For agenda items that have already gone out for public hearing and/or have had a public comment period that has closed, the Board Chair may determine that additional public comment will not provide additional information. In this circumstance, the Chair will not allow additional public comment on an issue. For agenda items that the public has not had a chance to provide input, the Board Chair may allow limited opportunity for comment. The Board Chair has the discretion to limit the number of speakers and/or the length of each comment.

4. Updates on Highly Migratory Species Federal Rulemaking (3:00-3:30 p.m.)

Background

- NOAA Fisheries is working on several actions for the Highly Migratory Species (HMS) FMP relevant to coastal sharks.
- The final rule on Amendment 15 was published in March 2026. Amendment 15 addresses modification, data collection, and assessment of four commercial longline spatial management areas, and administration and funding of the HMS pelagic longline electronic monitoring program.
- Amendment 16 is in development and could result in large changes to the entire commercial and recreational shark fishery including changes to commercial and recreational shark quotas, shark management groups, shark retention or bag limits, and shark minimum size limits.

Presentations

- Update on Highly Migratory Species Federal Rulemaking by K. Brewster-Geisz

5. Updates on Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species Permitting for Smoothhound Sharks (3:30-4:00 p.m.)

Background

- At the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP20) in 2025, the species proposal to include the tope shark and all species in the genus *Mustelus* (smoothhounds) in CITES Appendix II was adopted with a delayed implementation date of 18 months. Smooth dogfish, *Mustelus canis,* is included in this listing.
- Appendix II includes species that are not necessarily currently threatened with extinction but that may become so unless trade is closely controlled. International trade in specimens of Appendix-II species may be authorized by the granting of an export permit, re-export certificate, or introduction from the sea certificate.
- On June 5, 2027, exports and re-exports from the United States of tope sharks and smoothhounds, whether alive or dead, and any parts or derivatives must be accompanied by a CITES export permit or re-export certificate issued by the United States Management Authority. Imports of tope sharks and smoothhounds into the United States must be accompanied by a CITES document issued by the country of export or re-export **(Briefing Materials)**.

Presentations

- Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species Permitting for Smoothhound Sharks by M. Turton

6. Consider Approval of Fishery Management Plan Review and State Compliance for Coastal Sharks for the 2024 Fishing Year (4:00-4:10 p.m.) Action

Background

- State Compliance Reports are due annually on August 1st.
- The Plan Review Team reviewed state reports and compiled the annual FMP Review for the 2024 fishing year.
- Massachusetts has requested continued *de minimis* status.

Presentations

- Overview of the Coastal Sharks FMP Review of the 2024 Fishing Year by C. Starks

Board actions for consideration at this meeting

- Accept 2024 FMP Review and State Compliance Report
- Approve *de minimis* requests from Massachusetts

7. Elect Vice-Chair (4:10 p.m.) Action

8. Other Business/Adjourn

DRAFT PROCEEDINGS OF THE

ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

COASTAL SHARKS MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Westin Crystal City
Arlington, Virginia
Hybrid Meeting

May 2, 2024

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ATTENDANCE

Board Members

Nichola Meserve, MA, proxy for D. McKiernan (AA)
Sarah Ferrara, MA, proxy for Rep. Peake (LA)
Jason McNamee (AA)
Justin Davis, CT (AA)
Bill Hyatt, CT (GA)
Jessie Hornstein, NY, proxy for M. Gary (AA)
Emerson Hasbrouck, NY (GA)
Amy Karlnosky, NY, proxy for Assy. Thiele (LA)
Joe Cimino, NJ (AA)
Jeff Kaelin, NJ (GA)
Adam Nowalksy, NJ, proxy for Sen. Gopal (LA)
John Clark, DE (AA)
Roy Miller, DE (GA)
Craig Pugh, DE, proxy for Rep. Carson (LA)
Michael Luisi, MD, proxy for L. Fegley (AA)
Lewis Gillingham, VA, proxy for J. Green (AA)
Chris Batsavage, NC, proxy for K. Rawls (AA)
Chad Thomas, NC, proxy for Rep. Wray (LA)
Chris McDonough, SC, proxy for B. Keppler (AA)
Ben Dyar, SC, proxy for Sen. Cromer (LA)
Doug Haymans, GA (AA)
Spud Woodward, GA (GA)
Jeffery Renchen, FL, proxy for J. McCawley (AA)
Gary Jennings, FL, (GA)
Karyl Brewster-Geisz, NMFS

(AA = Administrative Appointee; GA = Governor Appointee; LA = Legislative Appointee)

Ex-Officio Members

Angel Willey, Technical Committee Chair
Michael Thomas, Law Enforcement Representative

Staff

Bob Beal
Toni Kerns
Tina Berger
Madeline Musante
Caitlin Starks
Jeff Kipp
Tracy Bauer
James Boyle
Katie Drew
Jainita Patel
Emilie Franke
Chelsea Tuohy

Guests

Auva Amirmokri, Sharks Advocates International
Max Appelman, NOAA
Alan Bianchi, NC DMF
Colleen Bouffard, CT DEEP
Jeffrey Brust, NJ DFW
Scott Curatolo-Wagemann, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County
Becky Curtis, NOAA
Guy DuBeck, NOAA
Julie Evans
Sonja Fordhaun, Sharks Advocates International
Anthony Friedrich, ASGA
Marty Gary, NY (AA)
Matthew Gates
Hannah Hart, MAFMC
Kris Kuhn, PFBC
John Maniscalco, NYS DEC
Joshua McGilly, VMRC
Daniel McKiernan
Brandon Muffley, MAFMC
Allison Murphy, NOAA
Jill Ramsey, VMRC
Bailey Robertory, Chesapeake Research Consortium
Chris Scott, NYS DEC
Somers Smott, VMRC
Renee St. Amand, CT DEEP
Kristen Thiebault, MA DMF
Christina Vaeth
Kelly Whitmore, MA DMF
Travis Williams, NC DEQ
Chris Wright, NOAA
Daniel Zapf, NC DEQ

These minutes are draft and subject to approval by the Coastal Sharks Management Board.
The Board will review the minutes during its next meeting.

The Coastal Sharks Management Board of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convened in the Jefferson Ballroom of the Westin Crystal City Hotel, Arlington, Virginia, via hybrid meeting, in-person and webinar; Thursday, May 2, 2024, and was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Chair Michael Luisi.

CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR MICHAEL LUISI: Good morning, everybody. I would like to call to order this meeting of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Coastal Sharks Management Board. My name is Mike Luisi; I am the Vice-Chair of the Board. Erika Burgess, the Administrative Commissioner from Florida was unable to make today's meeting, so I'll be sitting in for Erika.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CHAIR LUISI: We have a couple of items on the agenda, but before we get to that I would like to start with Board consent and the Approval of the Agenda. Are there any modifications or changes, suggestions for the agenda? Seeing none in the room are there any hands? Seeing none; the agenda is approved by consent.

APPROVAL OF PROCEEDINGS

CHAIR LUISI: Moving on to the proceedings from the October, 2023 meeting of the Board. Are there any modifications to the proceedings? Seeing none; we will consider the proceedings approved by consent.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CHAIR LUISI: Moving on to Public Comment. Is there anyone in the public that would like to provide comment on items that are not on today's agenda? I don't see anyone in the room, no one online.

PROGRESS UPDATE ON ONGOING HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN ACTIONS

CHAIR LUISI: We'll go ahead and move to Item Number 4 on the agenda, which is a Progress Update on the Ongoing Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan Action. We have Karyl Brewster-Geisz with us today to provide us a presentation. Karyl is with the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Management Division of NOAA Fisheries. Karyl, whenever you're ready.

MS. KARYL BREWSTER-GEISZ: Good morning, everybody, it's good to see everyone again. As Mike mentioned, I'm Karyl Brewster-Geisz; I work with the Highly Migratory Species Management Division in NOAA Fisheries. I'm going to give you a quick run down of what we've been doing in the last year or so regarding sharks.

There are a couple actions that we completed recently that I'll touch on, and then a lot of upcoming actions. First the completed ones. I think you all know that last December or November we published our 2024 Shark Specifications that set the commercial quotas, opening dates and retention limits for 2024. Right now, all of our fisheries are open, large coastal sharks are at the maximum, and now a default retention limit of 55 sharks. One thing we haven't really touched on is the fact that in this rule we changed how we do the annual specs. This coming fall we won't have a proposed rule out, and we won't be implementing a final rule come November. Instead, what we will be doing is once we have the underharvest amount, we'll be doing a final rule to adjust the baseline quotas, based on the underharvest. That won't happen until early 2025. The retention limit will start at 55 sharks.

The fisheries will open automatically at baseline quotas on January 1, and then at some point we will adjust those baseline quotas. We haven't really talked about that as a Board, so I wanted to make sure all of you are aware of that, because it might change how we do things in the fall. Earlier this year we also finalized the rule that puts oceanic whitetip on the prohibited species list.

It also puts hammerhead sharks as no retention in the Caribbean Region, which doesn't affect this Board, but in case you were wondering. The purpose of this was to be responsive to two biological opinions, and to reduce the mortality of oceanic whitetip sharks, which as you all know are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

In federal waters oceanic whitetip sharks are now on the prohibited species list. I know an action later on today we will be talking about this in more detail. But I also wanted to let you know that currently, even though they are threatened under ESA, their take is not prohibited. NOAA Fisheries and the Office of Protected Resources are considering putting out a proposed rule that would make take of oceanic whitetip prohibited.

At the moment there are still those loopholes in state waters, which is why we want to have discussion of the action later on. It is possible those loopholes might be closed if NOAA Fisheries does propose it and then finalize it, but that could be several years down the road. Moving on to upcoming actions.

If you remember last summer, a lot of you who are part of the councils but also here, I did a lot of presentations talking about the number of upcoming actions. One of those was Amendment 15, which has to do with changing a lot of our spatial management areas. The main area that is of interest to this Board would be our Mid-Atlantic shark bottom longline closed area off of North Carolina.

We had proposed extending that out, making it a little bit bigger, and then also shifting the timing from January through July to November through May 31st of every year. That timing shift was to be responsive to the fact that the sharks have actually shifted and arrive in that area earlier, and leave earlier as well.

We had a number of public comments throughout the whole final amendment for Draft Amendment 15. For this area there were a lot of concerns about impacts on Council managed fisheries, if we extended out the time period, and a lot of commenters noted that there is very low effort in the bottom longline fishery for sharks right now.

We are working on the final Environmental Impact Statement, and that should be out very shortly. The Final Rule will then follow on that final Environmental Impact Statement, and will be out this summer. Moving on. Another action that I talked about last summer to this Board was our advanced notice of proposed rulemaking for electronic reporting. This was an action where we were looking for comments on moving forward to have everybody report electronically, and bring this in line with one stop reporting, and a lot of other electronic reporting requirements across the Agency and a number of states.

Everybody would be reporting their HMS through all the different paths, along with commercial fishermen using electronic logbooks instead of paper logbooks. We received a number of comments, both written and in person and over webinars, including from the Councils and the Advisory Panel.

A lot of people supported the intent of this rulemaking to match the electronic one stop reporting across the Agency. They did want clear rationale for any changes in the reporting requirements, and how the data will be used. They called for more equitable reporting requirements across all the sectors, so not just commercial and recreational, but those of you who fish for bluefin know we have different commercial categories for bluefins requiring the same sort of reporting across the board.

A lot of people wanted us to collaborate with our partners, which we have been doing and we will continue to do. Then also, encouraging consideration of how the new data streams would be calibrated with existing data and time series. We have reviewed all those comments, and we are

currently working on a proposed rule that you should see later this summer.

Draft Amendment 16 and the Proposed Rule. Amendment 16 is our amendment that would implement new quotas for all of our shark species. These would be not only commercial quotas, but also recreational quotas, and it would fully implement all the measures in Amendment 14. If you remember, Amendment 14 we finalized, set up a tier structure for how we would set up the ACL across the board and also removed the connections between some of our quotas.

We received a lot of comments, more than we did for e-reporting on scoping for Amendment 16. Generally, there was a lot of support for Amendment 16. A lot of the councils wanted more flexibility in shark management, and supported measures that would increase opportunities for harvest, because as you know right now, we are not coming anywhere close to any of our quotas.

There is very little shark effort, so a lot of people were supportive of doing that. But there were also a lot of people who had concerns about potential lifting of restrictions on sharks, noting that we have been working for 30 years now at rebuilding shark species, and the idea that we would just lift restrictions could put us back into that overfished/overfishing state. There were also concerns across the board about how large Amendment 16 could end up being, and that we really need to bring it down in scope somehow.

We are considering all of those comments. We will probably not release Amendment 16 for a little while yet. We are waiting for the completion of SEDAR 77 Hammerhead Assessment, which I will talk about in a couple slides. But in the meantime, we are considering ways to maybe break out a few items and do a smaller rulemaking or maybe two rulemakings before we get to the larger Amendment 16.

We've added another amendment to our list. This has to do with Essential Fish Habitat. We just released the final five-year review for Essential Fish Habitat, and that provided a new look at some of our essential fish habitat descriptions, and we found that it is warranted to do another amendment, and that might have some impact on a few shark species. That is coming, but we don't have a good timeline for that yet.

Atlantic blacknose shark, currently Atlantic blacknose shark, along with shortfin mako, which I'm not going to talk about right now, is the only shark that is experiencing overfishing. If you remember in Amendment 14, finalized back in 2023, we revised our status determination criteria, which would allow us to compare the overfishing limit to where we are now, in terms of landings and catch on a three-year rolling average, and determine whether or not the species is still experiencing overfishing.

We are busy working on that for blacknose shark. It is our first time going through it. Optimistically, we'll know whether or not we're going to change the status in June. Realistically, it might take longer than that as we go through the process, but we will certainly let you know if we determine Atlantic blacknose sharks are no longer experiencing overfishing.

On that note, moving into the stock assessments. We are currently assessing hammerhead sharks, so that is scalloped hammerhead, which is then combined with the Carolina hammerhead, smooth hammerhead and great hammerhead. This is being done through SEDAR. It was our first research track assessment, which means the assessment scientists go through and figure out the appropriate models, and look at all the data.

But they don't actually run the models for management use. They released the final report earlier this year for the research part of it. The preliminary results are pretty positive. Scalloped and Carolina hammerhead were not overfished, not experiencing overfishing. Smooth hammerhead, because there is so little data available, they are not

able to determine overfished status, but based on the model they used, they came up with not experiencing overfishing, and then great hammerhead was overfished not experiencing overfishing.

Those were the preliminary results from the research part. We now need to go through an operational assessment, which will actually fully come up with the stock assessment results. That is expected to be done later this year, probably December, and at that point we would start working on Amendment 16.

After we're done with the hammerhead sharks, we have decided we will work on bull sharks and sandbar sharks. Hopefully that will make some people happy, it's been a little while and it is definitely overdo for sandbar, and we've never done one for bull. That is pretty much it. This is just a summary of some of the actions and relevant dates. You can find more information on our web page, where the link is at the bottom.

There are a couple more things that I thought the Board might be interested in, and that was what happened at the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas. They had a recommendation that would prohibit whale sharks from being landed. As you all know, we already have whale sharks on the prohibited species list, but we're not going to be doing anything. But across the Atlantic they should be prohibited now as well.

Then also, ICCAT has a recommendation regarding mobulid rays. HMS does not manage mobulid rays, but this Board might be interested in knowing about what ICCAT is doing, and maybe taking action there. Lastly, mako sharks. As you all know, we have a zero-retention limit on mako sharks, so do all of you. There have been a lot of rumors on the dock that people can now land mako sharks.

Everybody was expecting the ICCAT measure to just be in place for two years. It was actually in place for at least two years, and until ICCAT takes additional measures. ICCAT did not do anything about it this year, so it remains zero. While we have sent out reminders to people, those rumors persist. It would be helpful if some of you could get out notice as well, reminding people that mako sharks have a zero retention at this point. That's it from me, if there are questions, I'm here.

CHAIR LUISI: Yes, thanks, Karyl. Okay, so there is a lot of information in Karyl's presentation, and thank you for the presentation. Let me look around the table to see if anyone has any questions for Karyl. Yes, John Clark.

MR. JOHN CLARK: Thaks for the presentation, Karyl. Any timeline as to when the sandbar shark assessment might take place, and any plans for a sand tiger assessment for obvious reasons?

MS. BREWSTER-GEISZ: Thank you for that, so with sandbar we have not yet tried to figure out the timing. We need hammerhead to finish, which is going to be December, and then we will work on the timing for bull and sandbar this coming summer. We are expecting both bull and sandbar to be fully complete within two years. As you know that can shift. We don't know whether we'll do them together or separately one after another. I would say at least two years from the start of 2025, and sand tiger, no we have not yet started thinking about that one.

CHAIR LUISI: Any other questions for Karyl? Any comments? Is there anyone online, Tina? Seeing no one on line, I'll ask the audience, does anyone have any comments or questions? Seeing none at this time, there is no action needed. This was nothing more than an update, but we appreciate Karyl.

Karyl, we appreciate your being here with us, to help us navigate the challenges or the extent of the changes that are being planned from the HMS group.

CONSIDER IMPLEMENTING COMPLEMENTARY STATE WATERS MEASURES TO PROHIBIT RETENTION OF OCEANIC WHITETIP SHARKS

CHAIR LUISI: Let's go ahead and turn our attention to the last item on today's agenda, which is the Consideration for Implementing Complementary State Waters Measures to Prohibit the Retention of Oceanic Whitetip sharks. We have Caitlin Starks, FMP Coordinator with the Commission. Caitlin, I'll turn things over to you.

MS. CAITLIN STARKS: I'm just going to talk the Board through the potential action that can be taken to come in line with what NOAA Fisheries has done for whitetip shark. As Karyl just mentioned in her presentation, NOAA published a final rule, which prohibits the retention of oceanic whitetip sharks in all U.S. waters of the Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean, on January 3rd this year, and that became effective February 2nd of this year.

As we heard, this is responding to the biological opinion and the listing of oceanic whitetip as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. In the Commission's FMP, oceanic whitetip is in the pelagic species group. The specifications for the pelagic group for 2024 include no regional quotas, no possession limit, and an annual quota for all pelagics, other than poor beagle or blue shark, of 488 metric tons dressed weight. In Addendum V, our regulations allow the Board to consider adjusting the following management measures via Board action, along with a bunch of others. But recreational and commercial possession limits are on that list of things that can be adjusted via Board action.

Changing the commercial quota possession limit midseason start dates can be modified during the season by the Board through a two-thirds majority vote. For the Board's consideration there are several options that the Board can think about for making our FMP complementary to NOAAs regulations, and that would be changing the possession limits to zero via Board action for the commercial and recreational fisheries, and that could be effective immediately or any time this Board sets.

Then the second option would be changing the species group of oceanic whitetips to the prohibited group via an addendum, so that would take a little bit more time to complete. Then third, the Board could do both of these things, either start both now or do one now and one later. Those are the three paths that the Board can consider today.

CHAIR LUISI: Great, thank you, Caitlin. I'll ask the first question, as far as timing. With what you just had up on the screen, there is no set time for when we have to have these measures in place, it's just we need to get it done to be complementary. Questions for Caitlin. John Clark.

MR. CLARK: Caitlin, what would be, if we set the possession limit to zero via vote today, why would we then go to an addendum? What would be the purpose?

MS. STARKS: It would just make that more permanent, in terms of the possession limit not being able to be changed from zero as easily. It would have to go through an addendum to change it, if you were to put it on the prohibited species group.

MR. CLARK: Sounds like it's just, I mean I get it, but it seems like it is extra work that is not really necessary.

CHAIR LUISI: Yes, John, I think it's just some states have asked me whether or not we can make those changes. Some states need a Board action in order to facilitate the change. Not every state has the same flexibility in establishing those limits, they need an action by the Board. As Caitlin mentioned, you know we could do both.

We could set the retention limit for those states that could implement that retention limit immediately, following this meeting we could go back and work on that and then consider the longer-term plan to shift oceanic whitetips into the

prohibited list. Just a couple thoughts. Chris Batsavage.

MR. CHRIS BATSAVAGE: This might be a question for Karyl, but since oceanic whitetip sharks are listed as threatened, and will eventually no possession will be part of that. There is really no path forward for the possession of oceanic whitetips anytime soon, right? I mean things don't come off the endangered species list very easily. Just trying to get an understanding if we looked at the second option of how permanent will they be on the prohibited list, at least under ESA and HMS.

CHAIR LUISI: Karyl.

MS. BREWSTER-GEISZ: As I mentioned, right now take is allowed of oceanic whitetips. If somebody in state waters were to catch an oceanic whitetip, who did not have an HMS federal permit, they could land that oceanic whitetip shark, and that will be true for the time being. NOAA Fisheries would need to issue a proposed and then final rule to stop that take. At the moment we have not yet issued a proposed rule, we're still working and considering that option. At the moment there is still that loophole within state waters, where oceanic whitetip sharks could be landed.

CHAIR LUISI: Good, Chris, okay, Roy Miller.

MR. ROY W. MILLER: I gather you are looking for a motion to change the possession limit in state waters for oceanic whitetips to zero to get that. Changing the species group to prohibited, again I don't quite understand the nuance and the difference. I presume that would be adding it to the group that includes white sharks and all that long list of prohibited sharks. I'm not sure what additional that gets us, but I would certainly be willing to offer a motion to change the possession limit to zero.

CHAIR LUISI: Okay, I'll come back to you, Roy. I think we're trying to, so federally the oceanic whitetip is moved to the prohibited list. To be complementary to that and to mimic that, we could have the same effect by establishing the zero-retention limit. However, unless we move the species to the other group, it's going to be a bit misaligned.

Caitlin did though just mention to me just another food for thought. If we were to take action today immediately, and set those retention limits to zero, we could hold off on moving the species until another addendum is started somewhere else, and it could be just a part of another addendum, to officially shift that species into the prohibited group. Just another thing to think about, depending on your workload back home and staff workload width the Commission. Toni.

MS. KEARNS: I think a question to the Board is, if the Board just did a motion today to move it to zero, and either effective immediately or by such time that all states could actually get that measure in place, can everybody do that? Does that get everybody to changing their regulation to zero, or does somebody need an addendum in order to move you to zero down the line?

CHAIR LUISI: Yes, I think that is pretty clear. Are there any states, I'll ask directly to the state representatives around the table. Are there any states that would not be able to take an action unless an addendum were initiated and finalized? Okay, Doug.

MR. DOUG HAYMANS: Under normal circumstances that would be the case for us, but for some reason we're ahead of the pack, and we've already prohibited it. At this instance I don't need to.

CHAIR LUISI: Well, look at you! You could have stayed in bed 'til nine o'clock today. All right, seeing no other hands, let me ask Caitlin if there is anyone online. Okay, no one on line. Let's come back to Roy. Go ahead, Roy.

MR. MILLER: I will offer a motion to set the possession limit to zero for oceanic whitetip sharks in state waters.

CHAIR LUISI: Supply a little more, read the one up there.

MR. MILLER: Yes, **move to set the state waters commercial and recreational possession limit for oceanic whitetip sharks to zero, effective immediately**. Thank you.

CHAIR LUISI: Thank you, Roy, we have a motion made on behalf of Roy Miller, seconded by Chris Batsavage. Roy, did you want to offer any rationale?

MR. MILLER: No, we're just complying with the federal action.

CHAIR LUISI: Chris.

MR. BATSAVAGE: No, I think this just closes any loop holes on the regulations, the prohibited harvest in federal waters.

CHAIR LUISI: Any comments on the motion and discussion. Jeffrey.

MR. JEFFREY BRUST: Yes, more just a question on just the timing of this. Based on our schedule, you know we wouldn't be able to get this in effect until more like spring, 2025. I just want to make sure that is in line with what other states to be in compliance with this.

CHAIR LUISI: Bob Beal.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROBERT E. BEAL: I think what effective immediately means in this case is really, a state should start working through their state administrative process to get these regulations in place. We know it's not immediately. Just because it happens here doesn't mean it's law in a state, by any means. The states implement laws. I think, or we all know that the state timelines are all different for every state, and the Board will review compliance, but if states are working toward that, I think they usually give a lot of deference to the states as they work through that process. I think it's just the states are encouraged or required here to go home and start working through their process.

CHAIR LUISI: That makes sense, thanks, Bob. Any other comments? John.

MR. CLARK: Do we need to put anything on record, the idea that Caitlin came up with, with adding these to the prohibited list, once we do a new addendum would be I think worth doing next time, if there is something else that needs to be done with the shark FMP.

CHAIR LUISI: Yes, I think we can dispense with this motion and then put a comment on the record about the Board's intent in moving forward at some point. Seeing no other hands; I'm going to turn to the audience for any comment regarding the motion. Sonja. It's been a long time since I've been part of the HMS Group, but it's nice to see you, Sonja.

MS. SONJA FORDHAM: Sonja Fordham; Shark Advocates International. I appreciate this opportunity to come here and express very strong support for a state complementary action to prohibit retention of oceanic whitetip sharks. I think the rationale for the action and the fact that they are listed under the ESA has been covered quite well. I just want to add and emphasize that this is a species of global concern for the conservation community. IUCN categorizes as globally critically endangered.

It is the only shark that all of the four major tuna RFMOs have made prohibited. It has been listed on the Convention on International Trade and Endangered Species for more than a decade, and more recently that listed under the appendices that mandates strict protection under the conventional migratory species, and the specially protected areas

and wildlife protocol under the Cartagena Convention for the Caribbean.

A lot of attention, but none of these treaties is perfect. All of them face significant implementation challenges, and in fact we're still seeing a significant amount of oceanic whitetip fins in the Hong Kong fin markets, so still have some work to do. I think although this is not a very coastal species, this action closing loop holes, ensuring that the United States has a comprehensive policy for this species is really quite important for this body.

It will also help the U.S. sort of strengthen the policy stance, so that the U.S. can continue to work to strengthen protective policies on the international stage around the world. In terms of preferences for the actions specifically. I would like to actually, as you might imagine, see you take both actions.

I'll just note that adding the species to the prohibited list as soon as possible, I think is important to ensure that this species gets long term protection that it clearly needs, and I also think doing both actions reflects the severity of the situation, and sends the proper message to the public. Thanks very much.

CHAIR LUISI: Thank you, Sonja, is there anyone else from the audience that would like to provide any comment on the motion? Seeing none; is there anyone online? No hands currently online. Does the Board need time to caucus on this one? Seeing none**; is there any objection to this motion? Seeing no objection, no objections online, any abstentions? Seeing none the motion carries by unanimous consent.** Okay, to the matter of the addendum, does anyone have any interest in making a motion to consider moving into the addendum process to move the sharks to the other group at this time? Chris.

MR. BATSAVAGE: We'll give it a shot. **Move to initiate an addendum to change the species group for oceanic whitetip sharks to the prohibited species group.**

CHAIR LUISI: Thanks, Chris, do I have a second? Jason McNamee second. Chris.

MR. BATSAVAGE: I mean whether we do it now or do it later, I think it's going to end up on the prohibited list for this FMP, so it makes sense while we're talking about it today to go ahead and initiate the addendum, understanding work time, it may not get to it immediately, but at least have it there.

I guess we could wait for other coastal sharks' issues to come up and kind of bundle those together in one addendum. I'm not sure what else we could possibly be doing, other than maybe updating the de minimis status for the FMP, which if there was a thought of doing that, we could do that do in this. But yes, just a thought. Might as well go ahead and get this addendum started now, as opposed to waiting.

CHAIR LUISI: There is a lot of talking going on over to my right. I don't want to get in trouble, I wasn't even supposed to be up here today. Last thing I want to do is get in trouble, but I'm being told that I think we're good to go if you're okay with this. Nichola.

MS. NICHOLA MESERVE: I'm just going to speak in favor of waiting to bundle this with other actions, in recognition of staff workload and higher priority issues given that we've already taken an action that has the same effect in the short term.

CHAIR LUISI: Thanks, Nichola. Adam Nowalsky, and then Jeffrey I'll come to you.

MR. ADAM NOWALSKY: Given the comments about at least some desire around the table to delay this, what would staff's preferred way forward be if our intent was to bundle this with a future motion? Would the intent be to see this voted down today, or would the preferred way forward be to postpone this motion until say, the initiation of the next coastal shark's addendum? At least then we have it in the hopper, it will automatically come up. We're

kind of getting it started that way, but it's kind of got a place holder. What would staff's preference be?

CHAIR LUISI: I would say staff were probably hoping that Chris was getting some doughnuts while I ask that question. But I'm going to let Toni or Caitlin or Bob iron this one out. Toni.

MS. KEARNS: If it's the Board's desire to wait until we just do an action later, then I would substitute this motion to say, move to include oceanic whitetips in the next addendum action or amendment action by the management board. I can't just say action to do stuff in this board here, so that is what I would do if that is your intention.

CHAIR LUISI: Yes, I think that is a better message than voting down something that we ultimately would like to follow up with. Roy Miller.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Chair, it is unclear to me what that next action might be on our part, because our annual specifications for complying with federal limits on sharks we don't do by addendum, as I recall. That is a Board action. What would constitute the next likely time? Maybe Karyl has an idea on another species on the horizon that we would contemplate this action for. Is there a way forward, or is it all very vague at this point in time?
CHAIR LUISI: Caitin.

MS. STARKS: As Karyl discussed earlier, NOAA is still working on Amendment 16, and I believe that there is a chance that within the wide range of things being considered under that addendum, we might have to do something to respond to be complementary at the Commission, so that is one thing that may happen in the somewhat near-ish future.

CHAIR LUISI: Jeffrey.

MR. BRUST: Yes, just thinking about when we did previous actions for shortfin mako. Did we ever move that to the prohibited species list? I think we just made that zero retention and left it at there, so this seems like this would be a similar action, just to do that and kind of save work and just be intentional like shortfin mako.

CHAIR LUISI: Toni.

MS. KEARNS: I think the Board's rationale was that there are very few of these species in state waters, and moving them to zero was satisfactory to the Board at that time, when we talked about Makos. I assume that that is the same feeling here today.

CHAIR LUISI: Any other comments? Seeing no comments, and with the suggestions that were made by staff, and seeing no interest in perhaps substituting at this time for this motion. Does the Board need a chance to caucus on this? Well, you just raised your hand then, John.

MR. CLARK: I **would like to substitute** what Toni said for this motion.

CHAIR LUISI: Okay, we'll draft something quickly, and then John, I'll have you read it into the record.

MR. CLARK: Does that look good?

CHAIR LUISI: Go ahead, John, you can read that for the record. I'll look for a second.

MR. CLARK: Thanks to my motion writers, **move to substitute to move to include oceanic whitetip on the prohibited species group in the next addendum or amendment action**.

CHAIR LUISI: Okay, we have a motion by John Clark, seconded by Nichola Meserve. Discussion on that motion. Anyone online? Seeing no discussion, does the Board need a chance to caucus or an opportunity to caucus on this? Seeing none**, is there any objection to the motion to substitute? Seeing no objection, motion to substitute passes or carries unanimously, and becomes our main motion.**

We now have a new main motion which is property of the Board. The motion is **move to include oceanic whitetip on the prohibited species group in the next addendum or amendment action**. Is there any need for discussion? **Is there any objection? Seeing none, this motion carries by unanimous consent.** Is there anything else that needs to come before the Board at this time? John.

MR. CLARK: As long as Karyl is here, I just want to bring up another one of the weird things about Delaware. The Aquarium Permits for the sand tiger shark, Karyl. We received it and it looks like that that has already been cleared. Is there any consideration about those, like you said the sand tigers are not on the list yet for assessment.

Just because we are getting some pushback, as you know, from our local anglers, wondering why this group can profit off these things, these sand tigers. When I see where they are going, I get jealous of the travel, going to Italy, Dubai, Viet Nam, Portugal. You know as I said, I'm just curious as to whether each year this comes up, I get a lot of questions, and I say, well it's one population. Whether they take them in Delaware or they take them elsewhere.

It's still the same population of sand tigers, but some of them are saying well, the population hasn't been assessed, I mean decades now, right? It's prohibited species to recreational anglers, and yet you have this group that can take these. I'm just curious as to whether there is any look into other ways to handle this.

MS. BREWSTER-GEISZ: When we do Amendment 16, we will be taking a look at all of the quotas, and that includes quotas for display permits and exempted fishing permits.

MR. CLARK: Is there more sand tiger demand than just this kind of one group, or are there.

MS. BREWSTER-GEISZ: Yes, we issue sand tiger display permits to several aquariums, not just that one group. These yes, while some of them go overseas, some of them also go to the Midwest or to the West Coast. It's not always international. Some of the aquariums target sand tigers and then use them in their own aquariums, and it' not just sand tigers that, as you know, are caught for display. But a lot of aquariums like sand tigers, they do well in aquariums.

ADJOURNMENT

CHAIR LUISI: That takes us to the last item on our agenda, which is Other Business. Is there any other business to come before the Coastal Sharks Management Board at this time? Seeing no hands, this meeting is adjourned.

(Whereupon the meeting adjourned at 8:45 a.m. on Thursday, May 2, 2024)

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
International Affairs
5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: IA
Falls Church, VA 22041-3803

March 12, 2026

Dear U.S. importer/exporter/re-exporter of *Galeorhinus galeus* and *Mustelus* species:

This letter is to inform you of recent actions taken by the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) regarding international trade in tope (*Galeorhinus galeus*), and smoothhounds (*Mustelus* spp.).

At the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP20), held November 24 to December 5, 2025, the species proposal to include the tope shark and all species in the genus *Mustelus* (smoothhounds) in CITES Appendix II was adopted with a delayed implementation date of 18 months. Upon entry into force on June 5, 2027, certain requirements for international trade in these species will be effective, as outlined below.

CITES Appendix II
Appendix II includes species that are not necessarily currently threatened with extinction but that may become so unless trade is closely controlled. International trade in specimens of Appendix-II species may be authorized by the granting of an export permit, re-export certificate, or introduction from the sea certificate. No import permit is necessary for these species under CITES (although a permit is needed in some countries that have enacted stricter domestic measures than CITES requires).

Requirements for international trade
General
On June 5, 2027, exports and re-exports from the United States of tope sharks and smoothhounds, whether alive or dead, and any parts or derivatives must be accompanied by a CITES document (a permit in case of export and a certificate in case of re-export) issued by the United States Management Authority. On June 5, 2027, imports of tope sharks and smoothhounds into the United States must be accompanied by a CITES document issued by the country of export or re-export. Even if a shipment was exported or re-exported before the effective date but will arrive in the United States or a foreign country of import, on or after the effective date, it must be accompanied by the required CITES document. Importers and exporters are urged to communicate with their foreign trade partners to ensure that shipments are in compliance with CITES requirements and are accompanied by the appropriate CITES document.

For tope sharks and smoothhounds that were taken in the marine environment not under the jurisdiction of any country, i.e. high seas, and transported into the United States on or after June 5, 2027, by a U.S. flagged vessel will need a U.S. introduction from the sea certificate.

CITES is implemented in the United States through the Endangered Species Act. *See* 16 U.S.C. §§ 1532(4), 1537a, 1538(c)(1) (making it unlawful "to engage in any trade in any specimens contrary to the provisions of [CITES], or to possess any specimens traded contrary to the provisions

of [CITES]"), 1538(g), 1539(g), 1540. U.S. CITES implementing regulations can be found at 50 CFR Part 23. The Secretary of the Interior is designated the U.S. Management Authority and U.S. Scientific Authority for CITES purposes, and the respective functions of each are carried out by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). *See* 16 U.S.C. § 1537a; 50 C.F.R. § 23.6.

When applying for a CITES document or otherwise claiming the benefit of a permit or exception, it is the responsibility of the person engaging or seeking to engage in trade to provide sufficient information to demonstrate that all requirements are met. *See, e.g.*, 16 U.S.C. § 1539(g); 50 C.F.R. §§ 23.33, 23.92(b).

U.S. export permits

In order to export tope and smoothhounds from the United States, the shipment must be accompanied by a U.S. CITES export permit issued by FWS. The requirements for issuance of a U.S. CITES export certificate can be found at 50 CFR § 23.36. Before FWS issues a CITES export permit, it must determine if the animal was acquired legally, and that the proposed export would not be detrimental to the survival of the species.

If you are requesting to export tope shark and/or smoothhound specimens, including its parts or derivatives, removed from the wild from U.S. waters or previously introduced from the sea (i.e. taken from the high seas) for commercial purposes, you will need to use application form 3-200-27. When submitting the application, you will need to provide supporting documentation, including but not limited to, copies of any applicable local, Tribal, State, or Federal government authorization approving the activity (e.g., harvest or collection).

U.S. re-export certificates

For a shipment of CITES-listed wildlife to be legally re-exported from the United States, it must be accompanied by a U.S. CITES re-export certificate issued by FWS. The requirements for issuance of a U.S. CITES re-export certificate can be found at 50 CFR § 23.37. To apply for a CITES re-export certificate, you will need to use application form 3-200-73. You will be required to provide supporting documentation, as described in the application, that demonstrates the specimens were legally imported to the United States.

Foreign CITES documents for importation into the United States

Imports of tope sharks and smoothhounds into the United States must be accompanied by a CITES document issued by the country of export or re-export. We recommend importers contact the CITES Management Authority of the relevant foreign country for more information on obtaining the appropriate foreign CITES documents. Contact information can be found on the CITES website at: https://cites.org/eng/parties/country-profiles/national-authorities. (**Note**: some countries designate more than one Management Authority, each with specific responsibilities related to permitting, marine trade, etc.)

Introduction from the sea certificates

U.S. flagged vessels landing tope sharks and smoothhounds in the United States that originated from the marine environment not under the jurisdiction of any country (i.e. high seas), will need to apply for a U.S. introduction from the sea certificate issued by FWS. An introduction from the sea certificate is not needed for U.S. flagged vessels landing tope and smoothhounds in the United States that originated from U.S. waters (e.g. state, federal, or territorial waters). To apply for a U.S. introduction from the sea certificate, you will need to use application form 3-200-31. For more information regarding if you need an introduction from the sea certificate, visit our website: https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2025-03/shark-ray-flowchart-10.16.2024-final.pdf

Pre-Convention specimens

If the specimens being traded internationally were harvested before June 5, 2027 (the date the species was first included in the CITES Appendices), but traded after the effective date, the shipment must still be accompanied by a CITES document. A CITES pre-Convention certificate may be issued for these specimens, if all applicable requirements are met. The definition of "pre-Convention" can be found at 50 CFR § 23.5, the requirements for issuance of a U.S. pre-Convention certificate can be found at 50 CFR § 23.45, and additional guidance can be found in CITES Resolution Conf. 13.6 (Rev. CoP18) on *Implementation of Article VII, paragraph 2, concerning 'pre-Convention' specimens*, which can be found on the CITES website at www.cites.org. To apply for a pre-Convention certificate, you will need to use application form 3-200-23. You will need to provide documentation, as described in the application, to establish that the item(s) or specimen(s) you are requesting to export/re-export were removed from the wild or born in captivity prior to their listing date under the CITES.

Designated port requirements

Unless otherwise exempted, all shipments of fish and wildlife (including all CITES-listed species and their parts and products) imported, exported, or re-exported into or out of the United States must be declared and cleared by FWS Office of Law Enforcement through a designated port. Non-designated ports may be used in special circumstances as outlined in 50 CFR Part 14 Subpart C. To declare wildlife being imported or exported to FWS, you need to file a Declaration for the Importation or Exportation of Fish or Wildlife (Form3-177). The easiest way to file a declaration for both commercial and personal shipments is via our online eDecs system at https://edecs.fws.gov/. Importers and exporters of wildlife shipments containing live or perishable wildlife must notify FWS Office Law Enforcement at least 48 hours prior to the estimated time of arrival. Additional information can be found on our website at: https://www.fws.gov/program/office-of-law-enforcement/information-importers-exporters

We look forward to working with you on implementing these new listings. If you have questions, please feel free contact us by telephone: 703-358-2095 or email: managementauthority@fws.gov. If you have specific questions about declaration and clearance requirements or the designated wildlife ports, please contact your local Wildlife Inspection Office. Wildlife Inspection Office Contacts may be found online at: https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2024-06/ole-wildlife-trade-wildlife-inspection-offices-2024_0.pdf

Sincerely,

Naimah Aziz, Head
Division of Management Authority
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Cc: NOAA Fisheries
Cc: CITES Secretariat
Cc: AFWA
Cc: ASMF

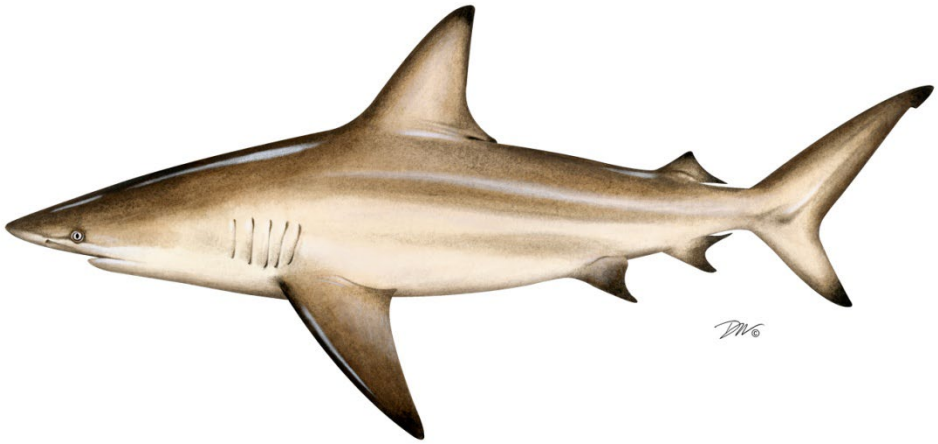
DRAFT FOR BOARD REVIEW

ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

REVIEW OF THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN

FOR COASTAL SHARKS

2024 FISHING YEAR



Prepared by the Coastal Sharks Plan Review Team

May 2026

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

DRAFT FOR BOARD REVIEW

REVIEW OF THE ASMFC FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN AND STATE COMPLIANCE FOR COASTAL SHARKS FOR THE 2024 FISHERY

Management Summary

Date of FMP Approval:	August 2008
Amendments:	None
Addenda:	Addendum I (September 2009) Addendum II (May 2013) Addendum III (October 2013) Addendum IV (August 2016) Addendum V (October 2018)
Management Unit:	Entire coastwide distribution of the resource from the estuaries eastward to the inshore boundary of the EEZ
States With Declared Interest:	Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida
Active Boards/Committees:	Coastal Shark Management Board, Advisory Panel, Technical Committee, and Plan Review Team

I. Status of the Fishery Management Plan

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC; Commission) adopted its first fishery management plan (FMP) for coastal sharks in 2008. Coastal sharks were initially managed under this plan as six different complexes: prohibited, research, small coastal, non-sandbar large coastal, pelagic and smooth dogfish. The Board does not actively set quotas for any shark species. The Commission follows National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA Fisheries) openings and closures for small coastal sharks, non-sandbar large coastal shark, and pelagic sharks. Species in the prohibited category may not be possessed or taken. Sandbar sharks may only be taken with a shark fishery research permit. All species must be landed with their fins attached to the carcass by natural means. This was adjusted through subsequent addenda listed below. The Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Coastal Sharks (FMP) established the following goals and objectives.

GOAL
The goal of the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Coastal Sharks is "to promote stock rebuilding and management of the coastal shark fishery in a manner that is biologically, economically, socially, and ecologically sound."

OBJECTIVES

In support of this goal, the following objectives for the FMP include:

1. Reduce fishing mortality to rebuild stock biomass, prevent stock collapse, and support a sustainable fishery.
2. Protect essential habitat areas such as nurseries and pupping grounds to protect sharks during particularly vulnerable stages in their life cycle.
3. Coordinate management activities between state and federal waters to promote complementary regulations throughout the species' range.
4. Obtain biological and improved fishery related data to increase understanding of state water shark fisheries.
5. Minimize endangered species bycatch in shark fisheries.

The FMP has been adapted through the following addenda:

Addendum I (September 2009)

Approved in September 2009, Addendum I modified the FMP to allow commercial fishermen to process (remove the fins of) smooth dogfish at sea from March – June of each year, but also requires a 5-95% fin to carcass ratio for all dressed smooth dogfish carcasses. This Addendum also removed recreational smooth dogfish possession limits, as well as the two-hour gill-net check requirement for commercial fishermen, which applied to all shark species.

Addendum II (May 2013)

Approved in May 2013, Addendum II modified Addendum I to allow commercial fishermen to process (remove the fins of) smooth dogfish at sea year-round but requires a 12-88% fin-to-carcass ratio for all dressed smooth dogfish carcasses. This ratio was consistent with the Shark Conservation Act of 2010. Addendum II also allocates state-shares of the upcoming federal smoothhound shark quota based on historical landings from 1998-2010.

Addendum III (October 2013)

Addendum III modifies the species groups to ensure consistency with NOAA Fisheries. It creates two new species groups (Blacknose and Hammerhead Species Groups). The addendum also increases the recreational minimum size limit for all hammerhead species to 78 in fork length (FL).

Addendum IV (August 2016)

Addendum IV allows smooth dogfish carcasses to be landed with corresponding fins removed from the carcass as long as the total retained catch, by weight, is composed of at least 25% smooth dogfish, consistent with federal management measures.

Addendum V (October 2018)

Addendum V allows the Board to respond to changes in the stock status of coastal shark populations and adjust regulations through Board action rather than an addendum, ensuring greater consistency between state and federal shark regulations. Addendum V allows the Board to change a suite of commercial and recreational measures, such as recreational size and possession limits, season length, and area closures (recreational and commercial), in addition to

the current specifications for just the commercial fishery, throughout the year when needed. Under this provision, if the Board chooses to adjust measures through Board action, the public will be able to provide comment prior to Board meetings, as well as at Board meetings at the discretion of the Board Chair. Additionally, the Board can still implement changes in shark regulations through an addendum.

In 2019, in response to measures implemented by NOAA Fisheries through Amendment 11 for Federal Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Permit Holders, the Board approved changes to the recreational size limit for Atlantic shortfin mako sharks in state waters, specifically, a 71 in straight line FL for males and an 83 in straight line FL for females. These measures were implemented in response to the 2017 Atlantic shortfin mako shark stock assessment that found the resource is overfished and experiencing overfishing. The states were required to implement the changes to the recreational minimum size limit for Atlantic shortfin mako sharks by January 1, 2020.

Additionally in 2019, the Board moved to require non-offset circle hooks for the recreational shark fishery in state waters with an implementation date of July 1, 2020. The Board chose to do so after NOAA Fisheries requested that the states implement a circle hook requirement for the recreational fishery consistent with the measures approved in HMS Amendment 11.

In May 2022 the Board approved a zero retention limit in state waters for Atlantic shortfin mako sharks for both recreational and commercial fisheries. These measures are consistent with those implemented by NOAA Fisheries for federal HMS permit holders. This action was taken in response to the 2019 Atlantic shortfin mako shark stock assessment update that indicates the resource is overfished and experiencing overfishing, with a rebuild date of 2070.

In May 2024, the Board established a zero possession limit for oceanic whitetip sharks for recreational and commercial fisheries, consistent with the NOAA Fisheries final rule prohibiting the retention and possession of oceanic whitetip in US waters of the Atlantic Ocean, effective February 2, 2024.

Table 1. List of commercial shark management groups

Species Group	Species within Group
Prohibited	Sand tiger, bigeye sand tiger, whale, basking, white, dusky, bignose, Galapagos, night, reef, narrowtooth, Caribbean sharpnose, smalltail, Atlantic angel, longfin mako, bigeye thresher, sharpnose sevengill, bluntnose sixgill and bigeye sixgill sharks
Research	Sandbar sharks
Non-Blacknose Small Coastal	Atlantic sharpnose, finetooth, and bonnethead sharks
Blacknose	Blacknose sharks
Aggregated Large Coastal	Silky, tiger, blacktip, spinner, bull, lemon, and nurse sharks
Hammerhead	Scalloped hammerhead, great hammerhead and smooth hammerhead
Pelagic	Shortfin mako*, porbeagle, common thresher, oceanic whitetip*, and blue sharks
Smoothhound	Smooth dogfish and Florida smoothhound sharks

*Zero retention limits are in place for these species

II. Status of the Stocks

Stock status is assessed by species or by species complex if there are not enough data for an individual assessment. Eleven species have been assessed domestically, three species have been assessed internationally, and the rest have not been assessed. Table 2 describes the current stock status of all assessed shark species along with references for the stock assessments.

A research track assessment of the hammerhead complex (SEDAR 77) was completed in 2024. Based on the 2009 stock assessment for the Northwest Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico populations of scalloped hammerhead sharks (*Sphyrna lewini*), which indicated the Northwest Atlantic stock is overfished and experiencing overfishing (Hayes et al. 2009), NOAA Fisheries established a scalloped hammerhead rebuilding plan that ends in 2023. Since the assessment, research has determined that in the U.S. Atlantic, a portion of animals considered scalloped hammerheads are actually a cryptic species, recently named the Carolina hammerhead (*Sphyrna gilberti*; Quattro et al. 2013). Little to no species-specific information exists regarding the distribution, abundance and life history of the two species, therefore for now, both species are currently managed under the name scalloped hammerhead. The SEDAR 77 assessment preliminarily indicates that the scalloped hammerhead shark was not overfished and overfishing was not occurring in the terminal year (2019). For smooth hammerheads it suggests overfishing most likely is not occurring and the stock has been rebuilding since 2000. The assessment found that for the great hammerhead shark the stock is overfished, and no overfishing is occurring in the terminal year.

In December 2020, Southeast Data and Assessment Review SEDAR completed a benchmark assessment of the Atlantic blacktip shark (*Carcharhinus limbatus*) stock (SEDAR 65), which indicates the stock is not overfished and not experiencing overfishing.

In June 2020, the International Commission on the Convention of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)'s Standing Committee on Research and Statistics (SCRS) completed an assessment of Porbeagle sharks (*Lamna nasus*), which indicates the stock is overfished and not experiencing overfishing. As a result of the previous 2009 assessment, NOAA Fisheries established a 100-year rebuilding plan for porbeagle sharks; the expected rebuilding date is 2108.

The 2017 ICCAT assessment of the North Atlantic population of shortfin mako sharks (*Isurus oxyrinchus)* indicates that the stock is overfished and overfishing is occurring. Multiple models were explored and new data sources were integrated. Combined probability of overfishing occurring and the stock being in an overfished state was 90% across all models.

The 2017 stock assessment (SEDAR 54) for sandbar sharks (*Carcharhinus plumbeus*) indicates the stock is overfished and not experiencing overfishing. This assessment used a new approach (Stock Synthesis) instead of the State Space Age Structure Production Model that was used in the previous assessment (SEDAR 21). A replication analysis conducted using the prior model

(updated with data through 2015) resulted in the same stock status as the new model (overfished, no overfishing occurring). The rebuilding date for sandbar sharks is 2070.

The 2016 stock assessment update (SEDAR 21) for Atlantic dusky sharks (*Carcharhinus obscurus*) indicates the stock is overfished and experiencing overfishing. This latest review functioned as an update to the 2011 assessment, so no new methodology was introduced. However, all model inputs were updated with more recent data (i.e., 2010-2015 effort, observer, and survey data). The rebuilding date for dusky sharks is 2107.

In 2015, a benchmark stock assessment (SEDAR 39) was conducted for the smoothhound complex, including smooth dogfish (*Mustelus canis*), the only species of smoothhound occurring in the Atlantic. The assessment indicates Atlantic smooth dogfish are not overfished and not experiencing overfishing.

The North Atlantic blue shark (*Prionace glauca*) stock was assessed by ICCAT's SCRS in 2015. Similar to the results of the previous 2008 stock assessment, the assessment indicated the stock is not overfished and not experiencing overfishing. However, scientists acknowledge there is a high level of uncertainty in the data inputs and model structural assumptions; therefore, the assessment results should be interpreted with caution.

SEDAR 34 (2013) assessed the status of Atlantic sharpnose sharks (*Rhizoprionodon terraenovae*) and bonnetheads (*Sphyrna tiburo*). The Atlantic sharpnose shark stock is not overfished and not experiencing overfishing. The stock status of bonnethead stocks (Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico) is considered unknown. Assessment results indicated the stock is not overfished with no overfishing occurring, however all available data pointed towards separate stocks. As the assessment framework would not allow stocks to be split, the assessment continued under a single stock scenario. The results of the assessment were rejected by reviewers noting that the stocks need to be assessed independently. A benchmark assessment is recommended for both stocks of bonnetheads.

A 2011 benchmark assessment (SEDAR 21) of blacknose sharks (*Carcharhinus acrontus*) indicated the stock is overfished and experiencing overfishing. As described in the Magnuson-Stevens Act, NOAA Fisheries must establish a rebuilding plan for an overfished stock. As such, the rebuilding date for blacknose sharks is 2043.

The 2007 SEDAR 13 assessed the SCS complex, finetooth (*Carcharhinus isodon*), Atlantic sharpnose, and bonnethead sharks (SEDAR 2007). The SEDAR 13 peer reviewers considered the data to be the 'best available at the time' and determined the status of the SCS complex to be adequate. Finetooth, Atlantic sharpnose, and bonnethead were all considered to be not overfished and not experiencing overfishing.

Stock assessments are expected to occur for sandbar sharks (assessment update) and bull sharks in 2026 and 2027.

Table 2. Stock Status of Atlantic Coastal Shark Species and Species Groups

Species or Complex Name	Stock Status		References/Comments
	Overfished	Overfishing	
Pelagic			
Porbeagle	Yes	No	Porbeagle Stock Assessment, ICCAT Standing Committee on Research and Statistics Report (2020); Rebuilding ends in 2108 (HMS Am. 2)
Blue	No	No	ICCAT Standing Committee on Research and Statistics Report (2015)
Shortfin Mako	Yes	Yes	ICCAT Standing Committee on Research and Statistics Report (2017)
All other pelagic sharks	Unknown	Unknown	
Aggregated Large Coastal Sharks (LCS)			
Atlantic Blacktip	No	No	SEDAR 65 (2020)
Aggregated Large Coastal Sharks - Atlantic Region	Unknown	Unknown	SEDAR 11 (2006); difficult to assess as a species complex due to various life history characteristics/ lack of available data
Non-Blacknose Small Coastal Sharks (SCS)			
Atlantic Sharpnose	No	No	SEDAR 34 (2013)
Bonnethead	Unknown	Unknown	SEDAR 34 (2013)
Finetooth	No	No	SEDAR 13 (2007)
Hammerhead			
Scalloped	No	No	SEDAR 77 (2024) preliminary results
Smooth	Unknown	No	SEDAR 77 (2024) preliminary results; Stock assessment suggests rebuilding has been occurring since 2000.
Great	Yes	No	SEDAR 77 (2024) preliminary results
Blacknose			
Blacknose	Yes	Yes	SEDAR 21 (2010); Rebuilding ends in 2043 (HMS Am. 5a)
Smoothhound			
Atlantic Smooth Dogfish	No	No	SEDAR 39 (2015)
Research			
Sandbar	Yes	No	SEDAR 54 (2017); Rebuilding ends 2070 (HMS Am. 2)
Prohibited			
Dusky	Yes	Yes	SEDAR 21 update (2016); Rebuilding ends in 2108 (HMS Am. 5b)
All other prohibited sharks	Unknown	Unknown	

III. Status of the Fishery

Specifications (Opening, closures, quotas)

NOAA Fisheries sets quotas for coastal sharks through the 2006 Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fishery Management Plan and its amendments. The opening dates, closure dates, and quotas are detailed in Table 3. All non-prohibited coastal shark management groups opened on January 1, 2024. NOAA Fisheries closes commercial shark fisheries when 80% of the available quota is reached. When the fishery closes in federal waters, the Interstate FMP dictates that the fishery also closes in state waters. For 2024, the fishery did not close for any of the species groups before December 31.

Table 3. Commercial quotas and opening dates for the 2024 shark fishing season

Region or Sub-region	Management Group	2024 Annual Adjusted Quota*	Quota Linkages	Commercial Retention Limits for Directed Shark Limited Access Permit Holders (in-season adjustments are possible)	Season Opening Dates
Atlantic	Aggregated Large Coastal Sharks	168.9 mt dressed weight (dw) (372,552 lb dw)	Linked	55 LCS other than sandbar sharks per vessel per trip. If the quota is landed too quickly, NMFS will consider in-season reduction as needed	January 1, 2024
	Hammerhead Sharks	27.1 mt dw (59,736 lb dw)			
	Non-Blacknose Small Coastal Sharks	264.1 mt dw (582,333 lb dw)	Linked (South of 34°N. lat. only)	N/A	January 1, 2024
	Blacknose Sharks (South of 34° N. lat. only)	17.2 mt dw (37,921 lb dw)		8 blacknose sharks per vessel per trip (applies to directed and incidental permit holders)	
	Smoothhound sharks	1,802.6 mt dw (3,973,902 lb dw)	Not Linked	N/A	January 1, 2024
No regional quotas	Non-Sandbar LCS Research	50.0 mt dw (110,230 lb dw)	Linked	N/A	January 1, 2024
	Sandbar Shark Research	90.7 mt dw (199,943 lb dw)			
	Blue Sharks	273.0 mt dw (601,856 lb dw)	Not Linked	N/A	
	Porbeagle Sharks	1.7 mt dw (3,748 lb dw)			
	Pelagic Sharks Other Than Porbeagle or Blue	488.0 mt dw (1,075,856 lb dw)			

*1 mt dw = 2,204.6 lb dw

Commercial Landings

In previous years, commercial landings data have been provided in the annual NOAA Fisheries Stock Assessment and Fisheries Evaluation (SAFE) Report. However, data for years beyond 2021 have not yet been published in the SAFE report. Preliminary estimates of 2024 commercial landings from NOAA fisheries are provided in Tables 4-5.

Table 4. Preliminary 2024 Atlantic commercial shark landings, Atlantic Region. Source: NOAA HMS, March 12, 2026.

Shark Management Group	2024 Quota (dressed weight, dw)	Estimated Landings through 12/31/2024 (dw)	% of 2024 Quota	2023 Landings through Same Reporting Period (dw)
Aggregated LCS (quota linked to Hammerhead)	168.9 mt (372,552 lb)	84.2 mt (185,731 lb)	50%	120.3 mt (265,198 lb)
Hammerhead (quota linked to Agg. LCS)	27.1 mt (59,736 lb)	17.8 mt (39,191 lb)	66%	24.1 mt (53,203 lb)
Non-Blacknose Small Coastal (quota linked to Blacknose south of 34° N. lat. only)	264.1 mt (582,333 lb)	77.7 mt (171,377 lb)	29%	85.2 mt (187,938 lb)
Blacknose (South of 34° N. lat. only)	17.2 mt (37,921 lb)	5.4 mt (11,852 lb)	31%	5.9 mt (13,104 lb)
Smoothhound	1,802.6 mt (3,973,902 lb)	333.8 mt (735,890 lb)	19%	410.0 mt (903,951 lb)

Table 5. Preliminary 2024 Atlantic commercial shark landings, No regional quotas. Source: NOAA HMS, March 12, 2026.

Shark Management Group	2024 Quota (dressed weight, dw)	Estimated Landings through 12/31/2024 (dw)	% of 2024 Quota	2023 Landings through Same Reporting Period (dw)
Shark Research Fishery (Aggregated LCS)	50.0 mt (110,230 lb)	9.1 mt (20,016 lb)	18%	2.7 mt (5,911 lb)
Shark Research Fishery (Sandbar only)	90.7 mt (199,943 lb)	56 mt (123,059 lb)	62%	<23 mt (<50,706 lb)
Blue	273.0 mt (601,856 lb)	<1 mt (< 2,205 lb)	<1%	<2 mt (<4,408 lb)
Porbeagle	1.7 mt (3,748 lb)	<1 mt (<2,205 lb)	<30%	<1 mt (<2,204 lb)
Common Thresher††	488.0 mt (1,075,856 lb)	16.3 mt (35,963 lb)	3%	20.1 mt (44,323 lb)

Recreational Landings

The NOAA Fisheries SAFE Report has not provided data for 2024 recreational shark landings. For 2024, recreational data provided in state compliance reports are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Recreational harvest estimates (numbers of sharks) reported by state in 2024. Most estimates are from the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) and have high percent standard error (PSE). Aggregated LCS and SCS are unspecified species reports.

Species	MA	RI	CT	NY	NJ	DE	MD	VA	NC	SC	GA	FL
Total Hammerhead												
Blacktip												
Total Aggregated LCS									13			18,086
Blacknose												3,608
Bonnethead										144,250	16,292	
Finetooth												
Atl. Sharpnose							5			160,752		
Spinner										286		
Thresher	3731		911	33			1					
Total Aggregated SCS									745			554,667
Blue	0											
Porbeagle	202											
Smooth dogfish	13,619	13,028	1,915	26,150	10,108		1	89	402	5,721		
Prohibited												
Shortfin mako				10								

IV. Status of Research and Monitoring

Under the Interstate Fishery Management for Coastal Sharks, the states are not required to conduct any fishery-dependent or independent monitoring; however, states are encouraged to submit any information collected while surveying for other species. This section describes the research and monitoring efforts through the 2023 fishing year, where available.

The Cooperative Atlantic States Shark Pupping and Nursery (COASTSPAN) Survey appears in multiple state monitoring efforts. The survey monitors the presence of young-of-year and juvenile sharks along the east coast. It is managed and coordinated by NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) through the Apex Predators Program based at the NEFSC's Narragansett Laboratory in Rhode Island. Longline and gillnet sampling, along with mark-recapture techniques are used to determine relative abundance, distribution, and migration of sharks utilizing nursery grounds from Massachusetts to Florida. In 2023, COASTSPAN program participants were the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, and University of North Florida (samples Georgia and north Florida state waters). Standardized indices of abundance from COASTPAN surveys are used in the stock assessments for large and small coastal sharks.

Massachusetts

DMF continued its research on the fine-scale predatory behavior of white sharks off the coast of Massachusetts. In 2024, 28 white sharks were tagged with acoustic transmitters and 11 white sharks were tagged with acceleration data logging camera tags off the Outer Cape. When combined with collaborative tagging efforts off Canada (1), New York (1), New Jersey (1), North Carolina (3), South Carolina (37), and Florida (1), this brings the total to 386 individuals tagged since 2009. These data will be used to examine swimming patterns (e.g., traveling, resting, hunting, foraging, mating), bioenergetics, and, ultimately, provide estimates of the intensity of white shark predation on gray seals.

Rhode Island

The RI Division of Fish & Wildlife, Marine Fisheries Section (RIDEM DMF) has conducted a monthly and seasonal trawl survey since 1979 within Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island Sound and Block Island Sound. Smooth dogfish are the only coastal shark species captured in the trawl survey regularly. A summary of fishery-independent monitoring for coastal sharks is summarized in Figure 3 below. The Fall survey catches smooth dogfish most frequently, with indices from the Fall and Monthly surveys greater than the Spring survey in recent years.

RIDEM DMF has been improving Rhode Island's monitoring efforts on coastal sharks. An acoustic receiver array is now established in RI state waters, which will detect tagged fish within 0.5-1 km of a receiver. The receiver array is traditionally deployed from mid-April through mid-November/early December. To date, the array has detected sand tiger sharks, white sharks, smooth dogfish, blue sharks, shortfin mako sharks, thresher sharks, and sandbar sharks. Additional sampling is also being conducted through a Baited Remote Underwater Video System (BRUVS) survey and shark tagging efforts to understand their residence time in RI state

waters. The BRUVS is intended to monitor various species, including sharks. The tagging is directed at the pelagic shark complex.

In 2022, RIDEM DMF began a state waters observing program with gillnet harvesters. Data are reviewed to assess catch rates for coastal shark species when encountered in commercial gillnets.

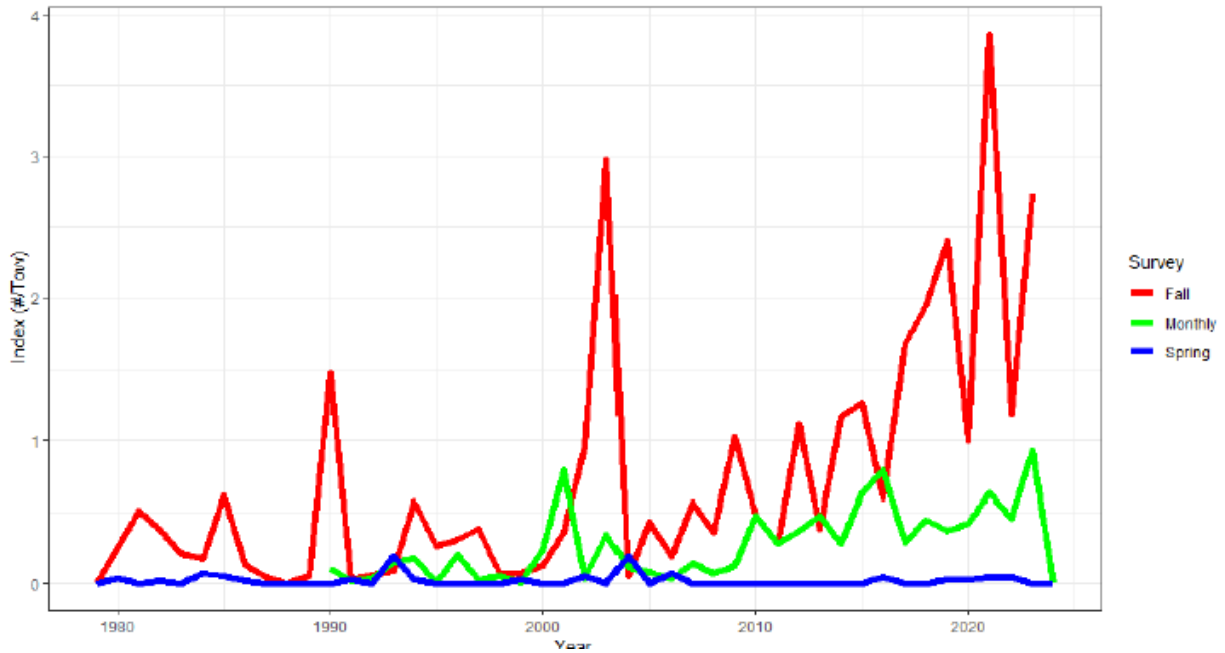


Figure 3. Smooth dogfish (*Mustelus canis*) annual mean number per tow from the RIDEM DMF bottom trawl surveys.

Connecticut

The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) monitors the abundance of marine resources in nearby coastal waters with the Long Island Sound Trawl Survey. Spring (April, May and June) and fall (September and October) surveys are conducted each year. Other than smooth dogfish, coastal sharks are not typically encountered by the Long Island Sound Trawl Survey. However, one sand tiger shark was caught in October 2024 measuring 1220 mm FL and weighing 9.94 kg. Smooth dogfish are caught most often in the fall and the fall indices are presented below. (Figure 4). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Long Island Sound Trawl Survey was not conducted in 2020 but resumed in 2021. More information on the Long Island Sound Trawl Survey report can be found here.

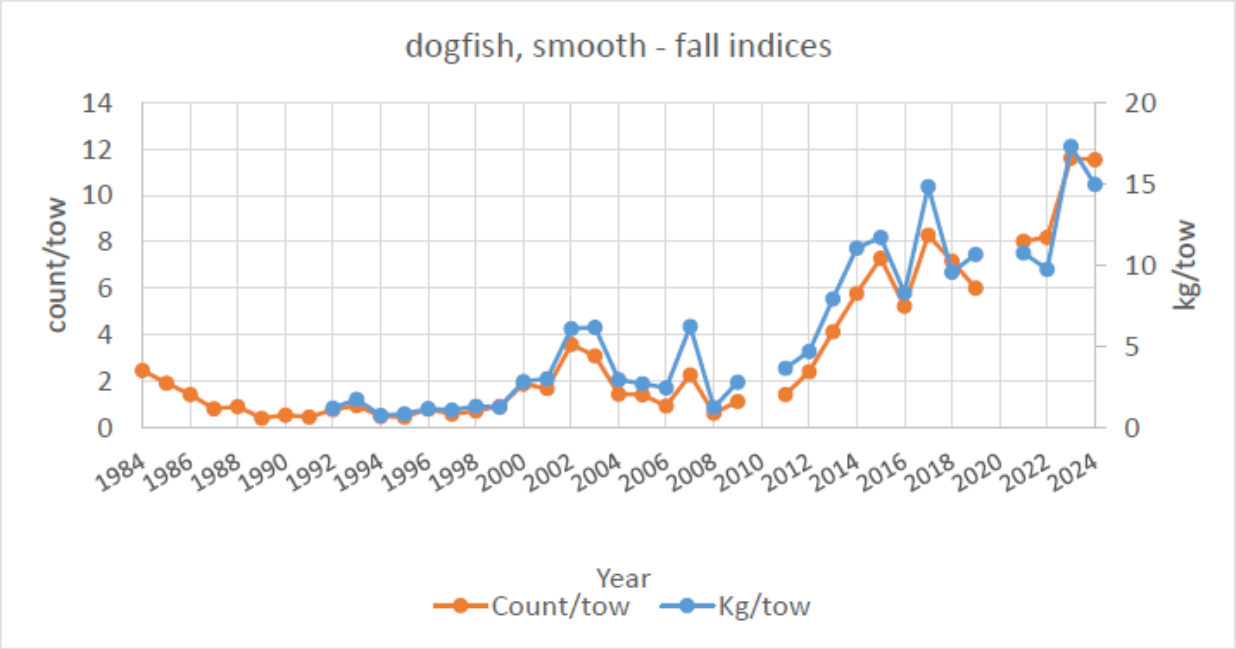


Figure 4. CT DEEP Long Island Sound Trawl Survey Smooth Dogfish Indices

New York

NYSDEC started a near shore multispecies ocean trawl survey fall of 2017. Three trips were completed on May 12 - 15, June 18 - 23, and August 11 – 14, and six non-dogfish sharks were captured on the near shore survey in 2024. Additionally, six research permits were issued in 2024 for the collection of information on sharks. Combined, researchers sampled 12 different shark species from June – September. A total of 223 sharks were sampled and released under the purview of their permits. Information on each shark (morphometrics and sex), as well location, date, biological samples collected, telemetry gear deployed, and final disposition of the animals were recorded. Collectively, these permitholders deployed 145 acoustic tags, 55 mTags, and 12 satellite tags on the sharks sampled in 2024.

New Jersey

New Jersey does not currently conduct any fishery-independent monitoring programs specifically for Atlantic coastal sharks, but does encounter sharks from the state's Ocean Stock Assessment Survey. The New Jersey Ocean Trawl Survey did not sample in 2021 due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Survey operations resumed in 2022. In 2024, the Survey caught a total of 1,034 pounds of coastal sharks (Table 7).

Sharks sampled by the New Jersey Ocean Stock Assessment Survey are collected by a 30-meter otter trawl every January, April, June, August, and October since 1989. Tows are approximately 1 nautical mile and are performed via a stratified random sampling design. Latitudinal strata are identical to those used by the National Marine Fisheries Service groundfish survey. Longitudinal boundaries are defined by the 18-30, 30-60, and 60-90-foot isobaths. Smooth Dogfish are cumulatively weighed and measured by total length in centimeters. All other shark

species are sorted by gender, weighed individually, and measured by total length in centimeters.

Table 7. Atlantic Coastal Sharks caught in the NJ 2024 Ocean Stock Assessment Survey

Weight (lbs) Species	Year 2024
ATLANTIC ANGEL SHARK	52
ATLANTIC SHARPNOSE SHARK	44
SANDBAR SHARK	14
SMOOTH DOGFISH	908
THRESHER SHARK	16
Grand Total	1,034

Delaware

Delaware conducts a 30 ft adult trawl survey and a 16 ft juvenile trawl survey in the Delaware Bay. In the adult trawl survey, the smoothhound is the most common shark species caught (Figure 5), with the sand tiger shark (Figure 6) and sandbar shark (Figure 7) taken in low numbers. Thresher, atlantic angel, Atlantic sharpnose (Figure 8) and Dusky Shark have been rarely caught in the past. Sand tiger and sandbar shark catch per nautical mile decreased in 2024 compared to 2023. Smooth dogfish catch per nautical mile slightly increased in 2024 but still remains relatively low compared to the early 2000s. In the juvenile trawl, the species caught include sand tiger sharks (Figure 9), sandbar sharks (Figure 10) and smoothhound (Figure 11). Apart from smoothhound, the capture of coastal sharks in the juvenile trawl is a rare occurrence.

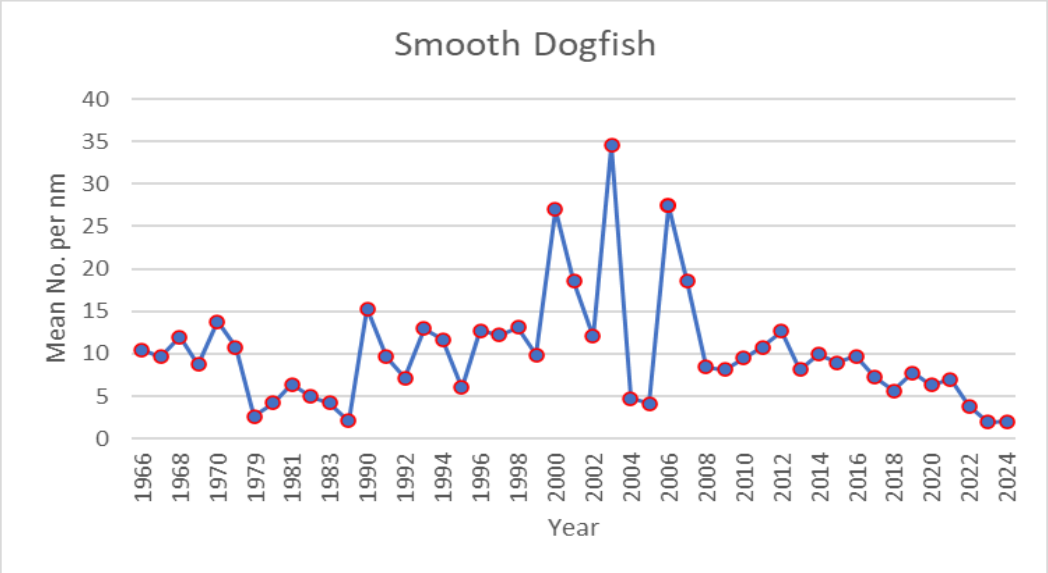


Figure 5. Smooth dogfish relative abundance (mean number per nautical mile), time series (1966 – 2024) as measured in 30-foot trawl sampling in the Delaware Bay.

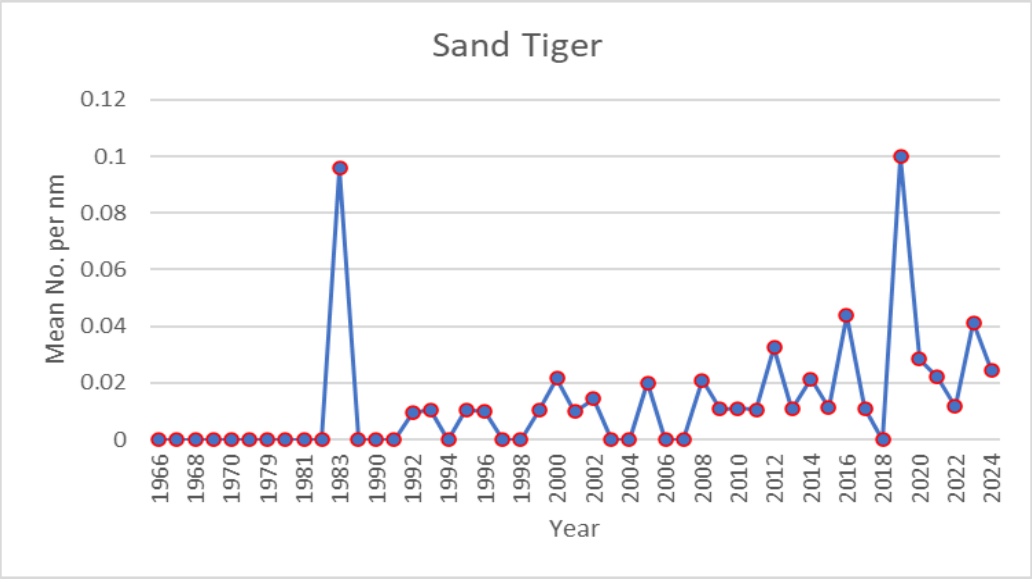


Figure 6. Sand tiger shark relative abundance (mean number per nautical mile), time series (1966 – 2024) as measured in 30-foot trawl sampling in the Delaware Bay.

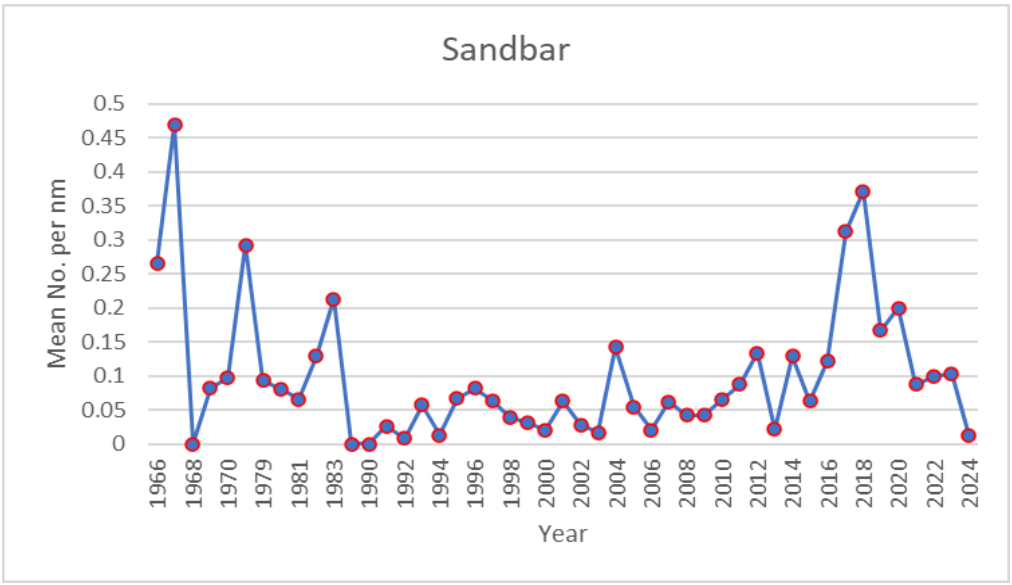


Figure 7. Sandbar shark relative abundance (mean number per nautical mile), time series (1966 – 2024) as measured in 30-foot trawl sampling in the Delaware Bay.

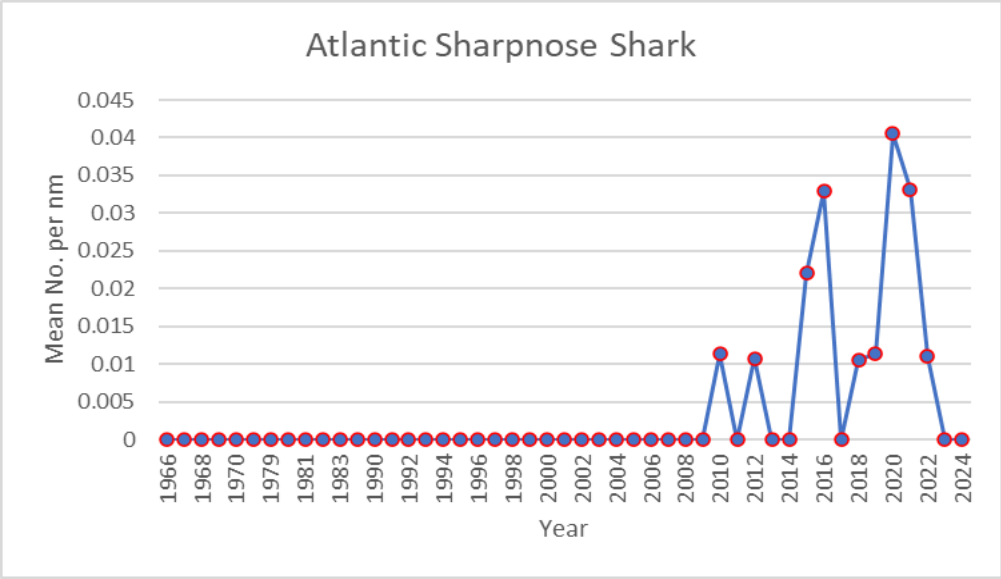


Figure 8. Atlantic sharpnose shark relative abundance (mean number per nautical mile), time series (1966 – 2024) as measured in 30-foot trawl sampling in the Delaware Bay.

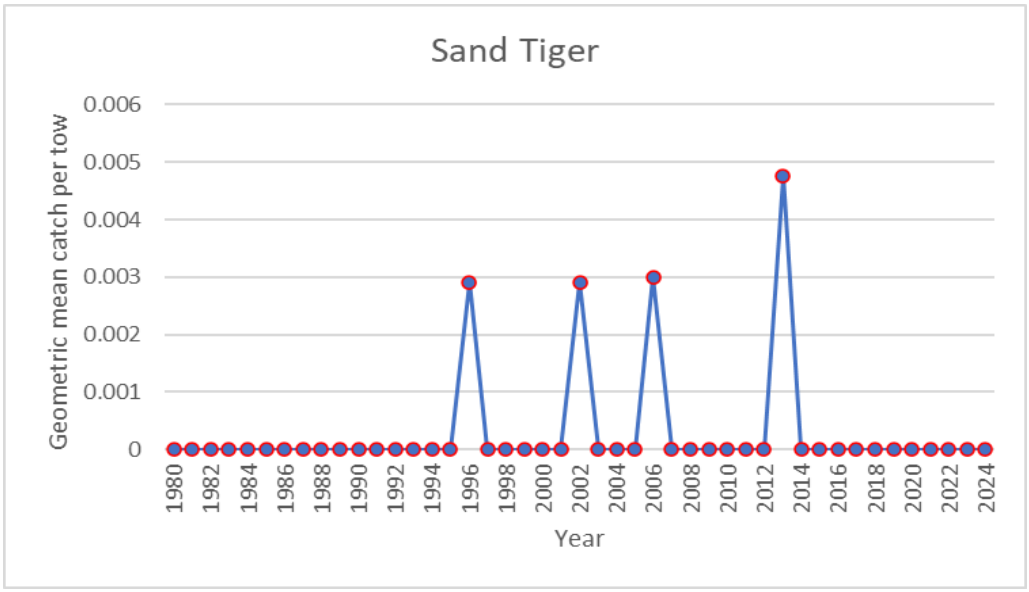


Figure 9. Index of sand tiger shark, time series (1980 – 2024) as measured by 16-foot trawl sampling in the Delaware Estuary.

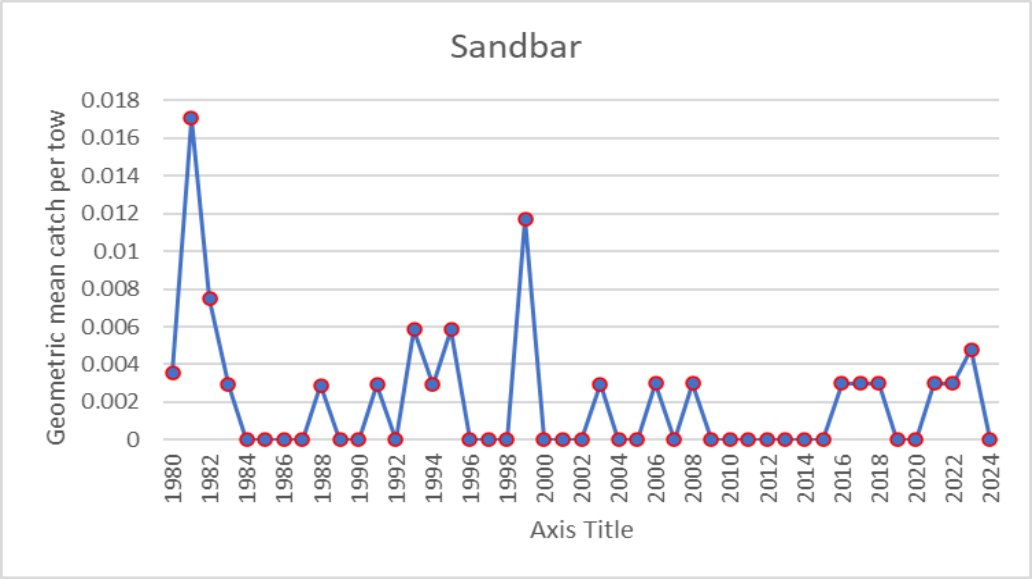


Figure 10. Index of sandbar shark, time series (1980 – 2024) as measured by 16-foot trawl sampling in the Delaware Estuary.

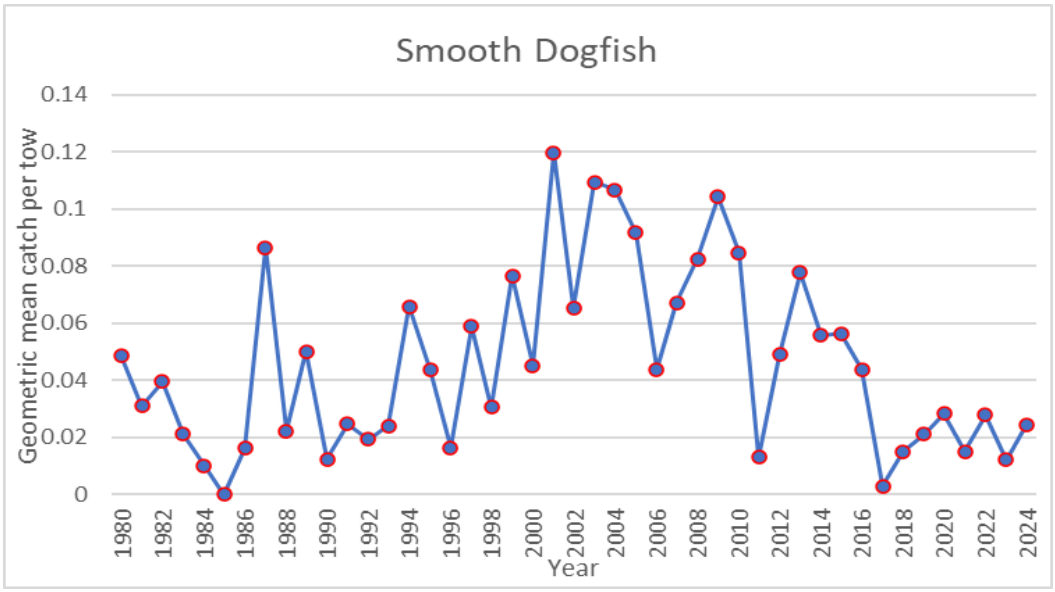


Figure 11. Index of young-of-year smooth dogfish abundance, time series (1980 – 2024) as measured by 16-foot trawl sampling in the Delaware Estuary.

Maryland

No fishery-independent monitoring for Atlantic coastal sharks was conducted in Maryland state waters.

Virginia

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science Shark Research Program began in 1973 and is one of the longest running longline surveys in the world. The program has provided data on habitat utilization, age, growth, reproduction, trophic interactions, basic demographics, and relative

abundance for dominant shark species. Cruise times have been variable over the time series, but sampling generally has occurred monthly from May through October. The survey utilizes a fixed station design with six core sampling locations, although additional auxiliary locations have been sampled frequently over the years.

Beginning in 2012, a separate longline survey conducted by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science designed specifically to target young-of-year sandbar sharks in the lower Chesapeake Bay and Eastern Shore was initiated. The new survey follows a stratified random sampling design, rather than a fixed survey design, and falls under the broader COASTSPAN umbrella survey.

In 2024, sandbar shark was the most commonly encountered species by the offshore survey followed by Atlantic sharpnose shark, dusky shark , spinner shark, blacktip shark, and blacknose shark. A single blacknose shark, dusky shark, and silky shark were also collected (Table 8). Three tiger sharks, along with two sand tiger sharks and scalloped hammerheads were also collected. Seasonal patterns in survey catches were also evident with May and June showing the highest overall catches of sharks, while catches were lower during July and September.

Monthly COASTSPAN catches of neonate sandbar shark (<= 71 cm TL) in the lower Chesapeake Bay were lowest in June and increased during July and August. In the coastal lagoons of the Eastern Shore, peak neonate catch occurred in in June and declined as the season progressed (Table 9). As in previous years, neonate total catch in 2024 was higher in the coastal lagoons of the Eastern Shore when compared to that of the lower Chesapeake Bay.

Table 8. Monthly catch summaries for key shark species encountered during offshore longline cruise conducted by VASMAP, 2024 pooled across the standard six sampling sites. Effort is expressed as total longline soak time of 100 hooks.

Month	Effort (hrs)	Sand Tiger	Sandbar	Tiger	Atlantic Sharpnose	Spinner	Blacknose	Blacktip	Scalloped Hammerhead	Dusky	Silky	Total
May	29.4	0	11	0	0	1	0	0	2	13	0	27
Jun	33.4	2	3	2	22	1	0	3	0	1	0	34
Jul	28.0	0	8	1	2	0	4	1	0	0	0	16
Sep	19.8	0	14	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	16
Total		2	36	3	24	4	4	4	2	14	0	93

Table 9. Neonate catch summaries for each monthly COASTSPAN cruise in 2024, pooled across the sampling sites with the lower Chesapeake Bay and coastal lagoons of the Eastern Shore. Effort is expressed as total longline soak time of 50 hooks.

Lower Chesapeake Bay

Month	Effort (hrs)	Neonate
Jun	10.0	11
Jul	10.2	27
Aug	10.6	35
Total		73

Lagoons, Eastern Shore

Month	Effort (hrs)	Neonate
Jun	7.5	96
Jul	7.5	82
Aug	7.5	29
Total		207

North Carolina

Fishery-Dependent

Fishery-dependent sampling of North Carolina commercial fisheries has been ongoing since 1982 (conducted under Title III of the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act and funded in part by the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Marine Fisheries Service). Predominate fisheries sampled includes the ocean gill net, estuarine gill net, ocean trawl, long haul seine/swipe net, beach seine, and pound net fisheries. Shark species were sampled from 10 commercial trips in 2024. From these trips, 81 sharks comprised of 5 species were sampled (Table 10).

Table 10. North Carolina 2024 fishery-dependent shark sampling summary by species for total number of individuals and total sampled weight.

Shark Species	#Total Individuals	Weight (kg)
Atlantic sharpnose	50	78.5
Blacktip	13	109.4
Bonnethead	1	1.4
Hammerhead	3	113.4
Smoothhound	14	22.7
Total	81	325.4

Fishery-Independent

The NCDMF has two fishery-independent surveys that collect coastal sharks: A gill net survey (Program 915) and a red drum long line survey (Program 365). Program 915 was initiated in 2001. The objective of this project is to provide annual relative abundance indices for key estuarine species in the near shore, Pamlico Sound, Pamlico, Pungo, Neuse, New, and Cape Fear rivers. The survey employs a stratified random sampling design and utilizes multiple mesh gill nets (3.0 in to 6.5 in stretched mesh, by 0.5 in increments). Program 365 was initiated in 2007 for developing an index of abundance for adult red drum. This project also allows for capture and tagging of Atlantic coastal sharks in collaboration with the NOAA Fisheries Cooperative Shark Tagging Program.

Nine species of shark were encountered in Program 915 in 2024, with Atlantic sharpnose (n=311) representing the highest abundance (Table 11). Six sharks were caught in Program 365 in 2024, including Atlantic sharpnose, sandbar, and spinner.

Table 11. Summary of shark captures from NCDMF fishery-independent gill net survey for 2024.

Shark Species	Number Measured	Minimum TL (mm)	Maximum TL (mm)	Average TL (mm)
Atlantic sharpnose	311	287	1,041	515
Blacknose	4	1080	1,560	1,231
Blacktip	21	498	1,710	1,283
Bonnethead	98	486	1,550	870
Bull	170	405	2,002	747
Finetooth	20	535	1,570	1,191
Sandbar	227	535	1,294	809
Smooth dogfish	80	464	853	626
Spinner	2	962	1,019	991

South Carolina

Currently, data are collected from estuarine waters by the SCDNR Cooperative Atlantic States Shark Pupping and Nursery Habitat survey (COASTSPAN), the SCDNR trammel net survey, and the Coastal Longline Survey. The COASTSPAN survey monitors the presence and abundance of young-of-year and juvenile sharks in the estuaries and bays of South Carolina. The survey operates from April-September using gillnets, longlines and drumlines to sample index stations. Species captured are measured, sexed, tagged and released, and physical and water quality parameters are recorded (Table 12).

The SCDNR trammel net survey is designed to sample recreationally important species in shallow estuarine waters. Sharks are not a target species, but their abundance as well as length and sex data are recorded (Table 12). Stations selected based on suitable habitats are randomly sampled using a multi-panel net to encircle a section of marsh. Species captured are measured,

sexed if possible, and released. In addition, physical and water quality data are recorded for each sample location.

The presence and abundance of juvenile and adult coastal sharks in the bays, sounds and coastal waters of South Carolina are documented by the Coastal Longline Survey. This survey uses a stratified-random approach to sample for adult red drum and coastal sharks. The survey operates annually from August to December using longlines to sample suitable habitat for targeted species. Species captured are measured, sexed, tagged, and released, and physical and water quality parameters are recorded. The data gathered from these programs are shared with the NMFS Apex Predators Program and are utilized in stock assessments and management decisions in South Carolina.

Table 12. Number of sharks captured and tagged by South Carolina Department of Natural Resources' Cooperative Atlantic States Shark Pupping and Nursery Habitat Survey (COASTSPAN), Trammel Net Survey, and Coastal Longline survey in 2024.

	COASTSPAN		Trammel Net		Coastal Longline Survey	
Shark Species	Captured	Tagged	Captured	Tagged	Captured	Tagged
Atlantic Sharpnose	132	0	26	0	741	7
Blacknose	2	2	0	0	153	151
Blacktip	80	51	16	0	85	66
Bonnethead	183	138	200	0	29	26
Bull	10	9	1	0	5	2
Dusky	0	0	0	0	0	0
Finetooth	232	124	15	0	112	99
Great Hammerhead	1	0	0	0	1	1
Lemon	13	12	19	0	8	4
Nurse	0	0	0	0	5	1
Sand Tiger	0	0	0	0	3	2
Sandbar	189	169	3	0	172	153
Scalloped/Carolina Hammerhead	142	11	1	0	8	6
Smooth Dogfish	0	0	0	0	0	0
Spinner	1	1	0	0	19	19
Tiger	0	0	0	0	1	1

Georgia

Fishery-Dependent

Although a directed fishery for sharks does not exist in Georgia waters, there is a fishery-dependent sampling project conducted by the Coastal Resources Division (CRD) that can result in the incidental capture of coastal sharks. The Marine Sportfish Carcass Recovery Project, a partnership with recreational anglers along the Georgia coast, is used to collect biological data from finfish. In 2024, no coastal shark species were included.

Fishery-Independent

Georgia has several fishery-independent surveys that sample in areas where coastal shark species are encountered and one survey specifically designed to sample sub-adult sharks in Georgia's inshore waters.

- *Coastal Longline Survey (SEAMAP):* The Coastal Longline Survey is designed to sample adult Red Drum and coastal sharks. Sampling occurs in inshore and nearshore waters of southeast Georgia from mid-June through mid-December. Sampling gear consists of a bottom set 926 m, 600 lb test monofilament mainline configured with 60, 0.5 m gangions made of 200 lb test monofilament. Each gangion consists of a longline snap and a 15/0 circle hook. Soak time for each set is 30 minutes. During 2024, CRD staff deployed 140 sets consisting of 8,400 hooks and 70 hours of soak time. A total of 468 sharks were captured, representing 11 species (Table 13).
- *Shark Nursery Survey (COASTSPAN):* The University of North Florida assumed field operations for this survey in 2016. Data for the complete time series are maintained by the NMFS Apex Predators Program in Narragansett, RI (contact: Cami McCandless).
- *Ecological Monitoring Trawl Survey (EMTS):* The EMTS is designed to sample penaeid shrimp, blue crab, and other marine organisms typically encountered in the trawl for management and monitoring purposes. Each month, a 40 ft flat otter trawl with neither a turtle excluder device nor bycatch reduction device is deployed at 36 stations across six estuaries. At each station, a standard 15-minute tow is made. During 2024, 318 tows/observations were conducted, totaling 78.71 hours of tow time. A total of 147 sharks, representing 6 species, were captured during 2024 (Table 13). It should be noted that the EMTS was not performed until April in 2024 due to a mechanical issue.
- *Marine Sportfish Population Health Survey (MSPHS)*: The MSPHS is a multi-faceted ongoing survey used to collect information on the biology and population dynamics of recreationally important finfish. Sampling is ongoing in three Georgia estuaries: the Altamaha River System, St. Andrew, and Wassaw. During the June to August period, young-of-the-year Red Drum in the three estuaries are collected using gillnets to gather data on relative abundance and location of occurrence. Between September and November, fish populations in the Altamaha River System and Wassaw Estuary are monitored using trammel nets to gather data on relative abundance and size composition. In 2024, a total of 324 gillnet and 225 trammel net sets were made, resulting in the capture of 187 individuals representing 8 species of coastal sharks (Table 13).

Table 13. Numbers of coastal sharks captured in Georgia fishery-independent surveys in 2021 by species and by survey.

	CLS	EMTS	MSPHS
SHARK, ATLANTIC SHARPNOSE	159	15	4
SHARK, BLACKNOSE	157	1	1
SHARK, BLACKTIP	40	6	8
SHARK, BONNETHEAD	16	118	154
SHARK, BULL	3	---	1
SHARK, FINETOOTH	32	5	8
SHARK, LEMON	---	---	9
SHARK, NURSE	2	---	---
SHARK, SANDBAR	42	2	---
SHARK, SCALLOPED HAMMERHEAD	3	---	---
SHARK, SPINNER	9	---	2
SHARK, TIGER	5	---	---
ALL SPECIES COMBINED	468	147	187

Florida

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission had no fisheries-independent monitoring programs for coastal sharks during the 2024 calendar year.

V. Status of Management Measures and Issues

Coastal Sharks are managed under the Interstate FMP for Coastal Sharks, which was adopted in August 2008 and effective in January 1, 2009, Addendum I (2009), Addendum II (2013), Addendum III (2013), Addendum IV (2016), and Addendum V (2018). The FMP addresses the management of 41 species and establishes a suite of management measures for recreational and commercial shark fisheries in state waters (0 – 3 miles from shore). Addendum V provided the Board the ability to respond to changes in the stock status of coastal shark populations and adjust regulations through Board action rather than an addendum, ensuring greater consistency between state and federal shark regulations.

As described in more detail above, the Board approved changes to the recreational size limit for Atlantic shortfin mako sharks and changes to the gear requirements for recreational shark fishing in state waters in 2019. In 2022, the Board approved a zero retention limit in state waters for Atlantic shortfin mako sharks for both recreational and commercial fisheries. All of these measures are consistent with those implemented by NOAA Fisheries for federal HMS permit holders based on the ICCAT recommendations.

ASMFC will continue to respond to changes in the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species FMP and make changes as necessary to the interstate FMP.

VI. Implementation of FMP Compliance Requirements for 2023

Addendum III to the Coastal Sharks FMP was implemented in March 2014, which modified the recreational minimum size limits and the commercial species groupings in the FMP. The Board

annually sets specifications, generally maintaining complimentary management with federal waters measures.

In 2019, the Board approved the requirement for non-offset, corrodible, non-stainless steel circle hooks, except when fishing with flies or artificial lures. In 2022, the Board adopted a zero retention limit for Atlantic shortfin mako sharks for recreational and commercial state waters fisheries. In May 2024 the Board also established a zero-possession limit for oceanic whitetip sharks for recreational and commercial fisheries.

Appendix 1 provides an overview of required coastal shark fishery regulations. All states must demonstrate through the inclusion of regulatory language that these recreational and commercial management measures were implemented.

Recreational Size Limits

Table 14. Recreational minimum size limits, 2024.

No Minimum Size	Minimum Fork Length 54 inches		Minimum Fork Length 78 inches
Smoothhound	Tiger	Nurse	Great hammerhead
Atlantic sharpnose	Blacktip	Porbeagle	Scalloped hammerhead
Bonnethead	Spinner	Thresher	Smooth hammerhead
	Bull	Oceanic whitetip	
	Lemon	Blue	
	Blacknose	Finetooth	

Commercial Species Groupings

This FMP establishes eight commercial 'species groups' for management (Table 1): Prohibited, Research, Smoothhound, Non-Blacknose Small Coastal, Blacknose, Aggregated Large Coastal, Hammerhead, and Pelagic. These groupings apply to all commercial shark fisheries in state waters.

VII. PRT Recommendations

State Compliance

- Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Maryland did not report shark landings by month including number of trips.
- Georgia's regulations do not establish a zero-retention limit for shortfin mako sharks. All federally-permitted harvesters are required to comply with the federal regulations, including the zero-retention limit for shortfin mako, regardless of where they are fishing. However, the current regulations appear to allow harvest of shortfin mako in state waters by non-federally permitted commercial and recreational harvesters.
- With the exceptions noted above, the PRT determined that all states have implemented regulations consistent with the FMP requirements.

De Minimis Status

The Coastal Sharks FMP does not establish specific *de minimis* guidelines that would exempt a state from regulatory requirements contained in this plan. *De minimis* shall be determined on a

case-by case basis. *De minimis* often exempts states from monitoring requirements in other fisheries but this plan does not contain any monitoring requirements.

De minimis guidelines are established in other fisheries when implementation and enforcement of a regulation is deemed unnecessary for attainment of the fishery management plan's objectives and conservation of the resource. Due to the unique characteristics of the coastal shark fishery, namely the large size of sharks compared to relatively small quotas, the taking of a single shark could contribute to overfishing of a shark species or group. Therefore, exempting a state from any of the regulatory requirements contained in this plan could threaten attainment of this plans' goals and objectives.

Massachusetts is the only state that has been granted *de minimis* status. Massachusetts can continue to have *de minimis* status until their landings patterns change or they request a discontinuation. In some cases, it is unnecessary for states with *de minimis* status to implement all regulatory requirements in the FMP. Massachusetts has implemented all regulations with two exceptions: it is exempt from the possession limit and closures of the aggregated large coastal and hammerhead shark fisheries.

VIII. Research Recommendations

Research recommendations were identified in 2018 in the Commission's Fisheries Research Priorities document (p. 42).

APPENDIX 1. OVERVIEW OF COASTAL SHARK REGULATIONS

Coastal Sharks FMP Regulatory Requirements

1. Recreational seasonal closure (Section 4.2.1)
    a. Recreational anglers are prohibited from possessing silky, tiger, blacktip, spinner, bull, lemon, nurse, scalloped hammerhead, great hammerhead, and smooth hammerhead in the state waters of Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and New Jersey from May 15 through July 15—regardless of where the shark was caught.
    b. Recreational fishermen who catch any of these species in federal waters may not transport them through the state waters of VA, MD, DE, and NJ during the seasonal closure.
2. Recreationally permitted species (Section 4.2.2)
    a. Recreational anglers are allowed to possess aggregated large coastal sharks, hammerheads, tiger sharks, SCS, and pelagic sharks. Authorized shark species include: aggregated LCS (blacktip, bull, spinner, lemon, and nurse); hammerhead (great hammerhead, smooth hammerhead, scalloped hammerhead); tiger sharks; SCS (blacknose, finetooth, Atlantic sharpnose, and bonnethead sharks); and, pelagic sharks (blue, common thresher, oceanic whitetip, and porbeagle). Sandbar sharks and silky sharks (and all prohibited species of sharks) are not authorized for harvest by recreational anglers.
3. Landings Requirements (Section 4.2.3)
    a. All sharks (with exception) caught by recreational fishermen must have heads, tails, and fins attached naturally to the carcass. Anglers may still gut and bleed the carcass by making an incision at the base of the caudal peduncle as long as the tail is not removed. Filleting sharks at sea is prohibited.
    b. All sharks (with exception) harvested by commercial fishermen within state boundaries must have the tails and fins attached naturally to the carcass through landing. Fins may be cut as long as they remain attached to the carcass (by natural means) with at least a small portion of uncut skin. Sharks may be eviscerated and have the heads removed. Sharks may not be filleted or cut into pieces at sea.
    c. Exception: Fishermen holding a valid state commercial permit may process smooth dogfish sharks at sea out to 50 miles from shore, as long as the total weight of smooth dogfish shark fins landed or found on board a vessel does not exceed 12 percent of the total weight of smooth dogfish shark carcasses landed or found on board.
4. Recreational Minimum Size Limits (Section 4.2.4)
    a. Sharks caught in the recreational fishery must have a fork length of at least 4.5 feet (54 inches) with the exception of Atlantic sharpnose, bonnethead, and

smoothhound which have no minimum size. Hammerhead species must have a fork length (FL) of 6.5 feet (78 inches).

5. Authorized Recreational Gear (Section 4.2.5)
    a. Recreational anglers may catch sharks only using a handline or rod & reel. Handlines are defined as a mainline to which no more than two gangions or hooks are attached. A handline must be retrieved by hand, not by mechanical means.
    b. Non-offset, corrodible, non-stainless steel circle hooks are required when fishing for sharks recreationally, in state waters. The only exception is when fishing with flies or artificial lures.
6. Possession limits in one twenty-four hour period (Section 4.2.7 and 4.3.6)
    a. Recreational and commercial possession limits as specified in Table 18.
    b. Smooth dogfish harvest is not limited in state waters and recreational shore-anglers may harvest an unlimited amount of smooth dogfish.
7. Commercial Seasonal Closure (Section 4.3.2)
    a. All commercial fishermen are prohibited from possessing silky, tiger, blacktip, spinner, bull, lemon, nurse, scalloped hammerhead, great hammerhead, and smooth hammerhead in the state waters of Virginia, Maryland, Delaware and New Jersey from May 15 through July 15. Fishermen who catch any of the above species in a legal manner in federal waters may transit through the state waters listed above if all gear is stowed.
8. Quota Specification (Section 4.3.4)
    a. When NOAA Fisheries closes the fishery for any species, the commercial landing, harvest, and possession of that species will be prohibited in state waters until NOAA Fisheries reopens the fishery.
9. Permit requirements (Section 4.3.8)
    a. State: Commercial shark fishermen must hold a state commercial license or permit in order to commercially catch and sell sharks in state waters.
    b. Federal: A federal Commercial Shark Dealer Permit is required to buy and sell any shark caught in state waters.
    c. Display and research permit is required to be exempt from seasonal closure, quota, possession limit, size limit, gear, and prohibited species restrictions. States are required to include annual information for all sharks taken for display throughout the life of the shark.
10. Authorized commercial gear (Section 4.3.8.3)
    a. Commercial fishermen can only use one of the following gear types (and are prohibited from using any gear type not listed below) to catch sharks in state waters.

i. **Rod & reel.**
ii. **Handlines.** Handlines are defined as a mainline to which no more than two gangions or hooks are attached. A handline is retrieved by hand, not by mechanical means, and must be attached to, or in contact with, a vessel.
iii. **Small Mesh Gillnets.** Defined as having a stretch mesh size smaller than 5 inches.
iv. **Large Mesh Gillnets.** Defined as having a stretch mesh size equal to or greater than 5 inches.
v. **Trawl nets.**
vi. **Shortlines.** Shortlines are defined as fishing lines containing 50 or fewer hooks and measuring less than 500 yards in length. A maximum of 2 shortlines are allowed per vessel.
vii. **Pounds nets/fish traps.**
viii. **Weirs.**

11. Bycatch Reduction Measures (Section 4.3.10)

    a. Any vessel using a shortline must use corrodible circle hooks. All shortline vessels must practice the protocols and possess the recently updated federally required release equipment for pelagic and bottom longlines for the safe handling, release, and disentanglement of sea turtles and other non-target species, all captains and vessel owners must be certified in using handling and release equipment.

12. Smooth Dogfish

    a. Each state must identify their percentage of the overall quota (Addendum II, 3.1)

    b. Smooth dogfish must make up at least 25%, by weight, of total catch on board at time of landing. Trips that do not meet the 25% catch composition requirement can land smooth dogfish, but fins must remain naturally attached to the carcass (Addendum IV, 3.0; modifies Addendum II Section 3.5).

Table 18. Possession/retention limits for shark species in state waters

Recreational	*Shore-angler*	1 shark (of any species except prohibited) per person per day; plus one Atlantic sharpnose, and one bonnethead. No limit on smoothhound.
	Vessel-fishing	1 shark (of any species except prohibited) per vessel per trip; plus one Atlantic sharpnose, and one bonnethead per person per vessel. No limit on smoothhound.
Commercial	*Directed permit*	Variable possession limit for aggregated large coastal sharks and hammerhead shark management groups. The Commission will follow NMFS for in-season changes to the possession limit. The possession limit range is 0-55, the default is 45 sharks per trip. No limit for SCS or pelagic sharks.
	Incidental permit	3 aggregated LCS per vessel per trip and 16 pelagic or SCS (combined) per vessel per trip

APPENDIX 2.

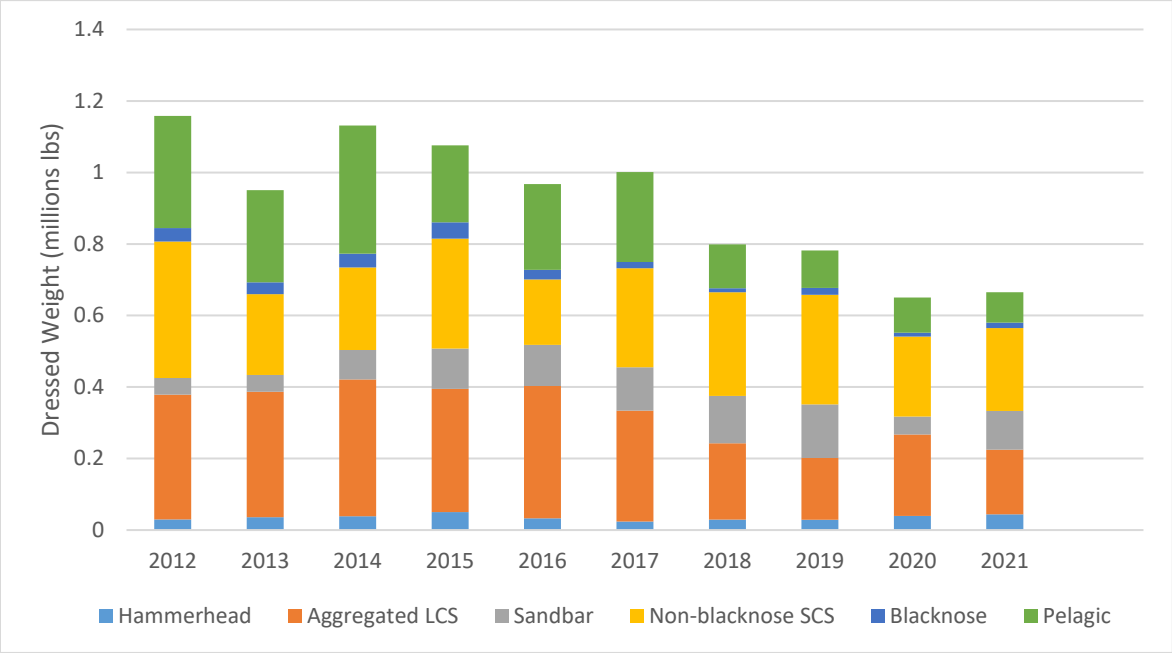


Figure A1: Commercial landings of coastal sharks off the east coast of the United States by species group, 2012-2021. Source: NOAA Fisheries Stock Assessment and Fisheries Evaluation Report, June 2023.

Table A1. Estimated recreational harvest of Atlantic shark species by species group in numbers of fish, 2016-2021. Source: NOAA Fisheries Stock Assessment and Fisheries Evaluation Report, June 2023.

Species	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Blacktip	6,520	1,527	500	224	1,506	673
Bull	26	3,750	32	0	17	0
Lemon	1,207	764	0	4	0	0
Nurse	21	2	5	13	2	1
Spinner	761	623	153	66	27	61,359
Tiger	2,061	0	1	0	0	1
Unclassified	732	625	7,544	83,129	37,790	384
LCS Total	**11,328**	**7,291**	**8,235**	**83,436**	**39,342**	**62,635**
Hammerhead Total	**799**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**5**	**0**
Blue shark[1]	30.8	21.9	15.2	16.7	8.4	9.3
Mako, shortfin[1]	167.5	192.4	125.1	25.2	24.5	21.8
Oceanic whitetip[1]	0	0	0	< 0.1	0	< 0.1
Porbeagle[1]	4.3	7.7	2.8	11.8	4.9	1.2
Thresher[1]	74.3	92	96.6	108.8	54.1	3.3
Pelagic Total[1]	**276.9**	**314**	**239.7**	**162.5**	**91.9**	**35.6**

Blacknose	225	13	13	83	661	2,917
Bonnethead	37,832	18,239	37,168	31,086	28,861	34,840
Finetooth	0	1,219	0	176	113	166
Atlantic sharpnose	155,023	38,784	24,468	40,144	34,256	72,912
SCS Total	**193,080**	**58,255**	**61,649**	**71,489**	**63,891**	**110,835**
Smoothhound	**145,689**	**58,446**	**40,736**	**56,375**	**61,129**	**37,534**

[1]Pelagic shark data for 2016-2020 is Atlantic only, but reported in metric tons whole weight.

Table A2. Estimated recreational mortality (harvest and dead discards) of prohibited Atlantic shark species in numbers of fish, 2016-2021. Source: NOAA Fisheries Stock Assessment and Fisheries Evaluation Report, March 2022.

Species	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Atlantic angel	113	98	31	29	24	12
Basking	8	4	8	3	3	12
Bigeye sand tiger	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bigeye sixgill	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bigeye thresher	28	21	13	24	2	3
Bignose	1	0	0	0	1	1
Caribbean reef	0	0	1	0	0	37
Caribbean sharpnose	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dusky	29	22	121	19	4	36
Galapagos	0	0	0	0	0	0
Longfin mako	15	14	4	14	0	4
Narrowtooth	0	0	0	0	0	0
Night	8	31	74	83	0	6
Sand tiger	26	9	48	20	23	11
Sevengill	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sixgill	0	1	0	0	0	0
Whale	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	0	10	5	3	1	3
Prohibited Total	**228**	**210**	**305**	**195**	**58**	**125**

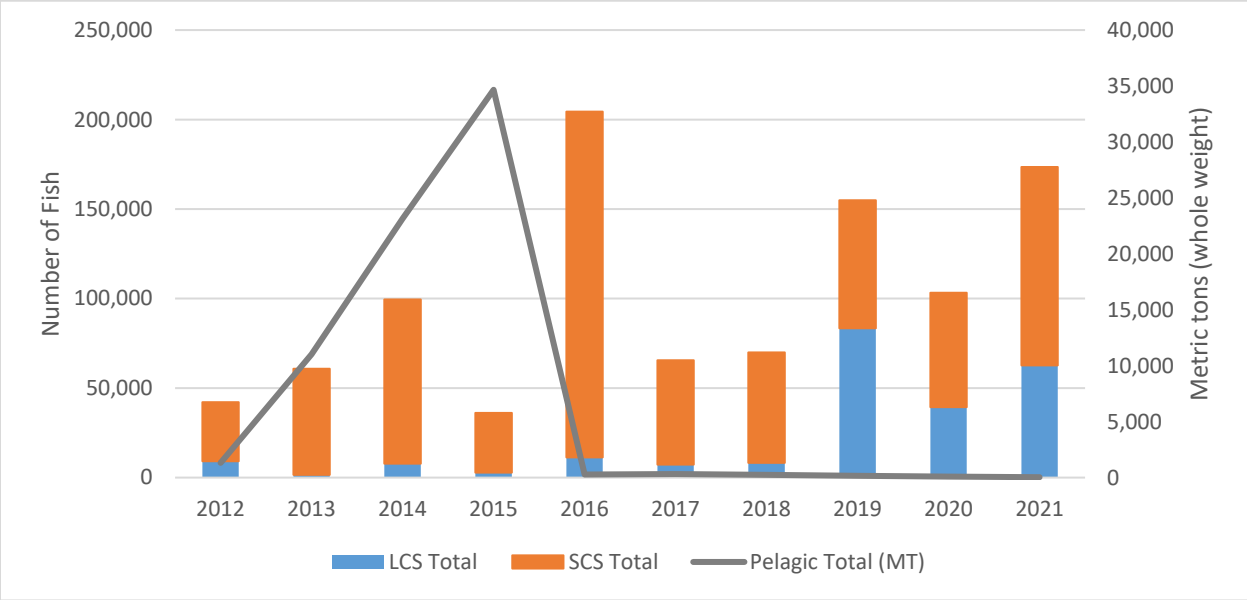


Figure A2. Estimated recreational harvest for LCS, pelagic, and SCS by species group, in numbers of fish, 2012-2020. Source: NOAA Fisheries Stock Assessment and Fisheries Evaluation Report, June 2023.