DRAFT Scoping Document

Comprehensive Summer Flounder Management Amendment to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan

August 2014

Prepared by the
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC or Council)

In cooperation with the
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC or Commission)

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Public Comment Opportunities and Instructions

Public scoping hearings will be held on the following dates:

TBD	TBD - New Bedford, MA ADDRESS
TBD	TBD - Providence, RI ADDRESS
TBD	TBD - East Satauket, NY ADDRESS
TBD	TBD – Brooklyn, NY (?) ADDRESS
TBD	TBD - Dover, DE ADDRESS
TBD	TBD - Belmar, NJ (?) ADDRESS
TBD	TBD - Galloway, NJ ADDRESS
TBD	TBD - Ocean City, MD ADDRESS
TBD	TBD - Newport News, VA ADDRESS
TBD	TBD - Washington, NC ADDRESS
TBD	Internet webinar: http://mafmc.adobeconnect.com/summerflounder_scoping/

Written comments:

In addition to providing information and comments at the above scoping meetings, you may submit written comments by 11:59 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, on **[DATE]** per the notice of intent and scoping, published in the Federal Register here: **[LINK]**

Written comments may be sent by any of the following methods:

- Email to the following address: **[EMAIL].** Include "Summer Flounder Amendment Scoping Comments" in the subject; or
- Mail to Chris Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 North State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901. Mark the outside of the envelope "Summer Flounder Amendment Scoping Comments"; or
- Fax to Chris Moore, Ph.D., 302-674-5399. Include "Summer Flounder Amendment Scoping Comments" in the fax.

****The public will be notified via the Federal Register of additional opportunities to comment later in the process, however, this is the first and best opportunity for members of the public to raise concerns related to the scope of issues that will be considered in the amendment.****

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Timeline for Completion of Proposed Comprehensive Summer Flounder Amendment[1]

	December 2013	Council initiates amendment
	April-June 2014	Draft action plan developed; Fishery Management Action Team (FMAT) formed; Council's Demersal Committee meets to discuss scoping process
Current Step →	**August 2014**	**Joint Council/Board draft scoping document developed; Council/Board review and consider draft document for public comment**
	Fall 2014	Scoping hearings and public comment period
	Winter 2014/2015	Council and Board identify priority issues for inclusion in the amendment; Issue-specific working groups established; FMAT and working group meetings; FMAT beings development of options
	Spring/Summer 2015	FMAT continues development of options (with working group input); meetings of the FMAT, working groups, Council/Board, Advisory Panel
	Fall 2015/ Winter 2016	Management Board/Council reviews FMAT and working group recommendations for options; DEIS development begins
	Spring/Summer 2016	Range of options refined and approved; DEIS development continues
	Fall 2016	DEIS finalized; Management Board/Council, selects preferred options; public hearings
	Winter 2016 /Spring 2017	Management Board/Council considers public comments; final action; rulemaking and comment periods (5-7 months)

FMAT = Fishery Management Action Team

DEIS = Draft Environmental Impact Statement

[1] **Note:** This timeline is preliminary and subject to change.

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Introduction

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council ("Council") proposes to develop an amendment to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA). The Council would like your input on the range of issues and information that should be considered during development of this amendment. This amendment will consider updating the goals and objectives of the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) as related to summer flounder, as well as consider modifications to any and all current management strategies used in the summer flounder commercial and recreational fisheries. The Council and Commission are seeking your comments on the specific issues identified in this document, as well as any other issues that might be of concern to you regarding summer flounder management.

The summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass fisheries are managed cooperatively by the states through the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) in state waters (0-3 miles), and by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) and NOAA Fisheries in Federal waters (3-200 miles). The management unit for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass in US waters is the western Atlantic Ocean from the southern border of North Carolina northward to the US-Canadian border.

Why is this action being proposed?

The Council has initiated this amendment in order to: 1) perform a comprehensive review of all aspects of the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan (FMP) related to summer flounder, 2) update the FMP goals and objectives for summer flounder management, and 3) modify management strategies and measures as necessary to achieve those goals and objectives.

A number of issues and concerns relative to summer flounder management have been raised by Commission and Council members, advisors, and other interested stakeholders. The Council received significant input on summer flounder management during the Council's Visioning and Strategic Planning process, conducted from 2011-2013. During this process, input gathered from surveys, port meetings, and other comment opportunities indicated there is significant stakeholder interest in re-examining and updating many of the management strategies and measures currently in place.

In addition, the Commission and Council have also proposed this action to evaluate the need for management response to changing conditions in the summer flounder fishery. This includes addressing apparent shifts in the distribution and center of biomass for the summer flounder stock (possibly related to the effects of rebuilding and/or climate change), as well as changing social and economic drivers for these fisheries. This action was proposed so that the FMP goals, objectives, and management strategies can be assessed in light of these changing fishery conditions, and aligned better with stakeholder priorities.

Amendment Process and Timeline

The Council will first gather information during the scoping period. The scoping process is the first and best opportunity for members of the public to raise concerns related to the scope of issues that will be considered in the comprehensive summer flounder amendment. The Council

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needs your input both to identify management issues and develop effective alternatives. Your comments early in the amendment development process will help us address issues of public concern in a thorough and appropriate manner.

Following the initial phase of information gathering and public comment, the Council and Commission will evaluate potential management alternatives for inclusion in the amendment. The Council and Commission will then develop a draft amendment, incorporating the identified management alternatives, for public review. The Council will also prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to analyze the impacts of the management alternatives being considered as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). A draft EIS will be distributed for public review. During a 45-day comment period which will include public hearings, the public may comment on any aspect of the draft EIS. Following a review of the comments, the Council will then choose preferred management measures for submission with the Final EIS to the Secretary of Commerce for publishing a proposed and then final rule, both of which have additional comment periods.

This is the public's opportunity to inform the Council and Commission about changes observed in the fishery, things the public feels should or should not be done in terms of management, regulation, enforcement, research, development, enhancement, and any other concerns the public has about the resource or the fishery. The measures outlined in this document are not a list of "preferred alternatives" or measures that the Council will necessarily include in the amendment. No management measures have yet been analyzed for their effectiveness or impacts. Please comment on which management measures may or may not be useful or practical and explain your rationale. Please also comment on any other issues that should be addressed in the amendment. The list of relevant issues may be expanded as suggestions are offered during the scoping process.

A tentative schedule for the completion of the amendment is included at the beginning of this document. Please note these dates are subject to change.

Background on Summer Flounder Management

The Commission created the first Summer Flounder FMP, implemented in 1982. The Council's FMP was implemented in 1988 and was based on the Commission's plan. Since then, twelve of the fourteen amendments that have been developed and approved for the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass FMP have made changes to Summer Flounder management. A complete list of the amendments, addenda, and framework changes to the Summer Flounder FMP are listed in Table 1.

Amendment 2 (1992), introduced the allocation of the total allowable landings (TAL) to the commercial sector (60% of the TAL) and recreational sector (40% of the TAL) in the form of annual quotas and harvest limits. The initial quota-based management system set state-by-state percent shares of the commercial summer flounder allocation for each year's coastwide quota based on the 1980-1989 commercial landings by state from Maine to North Carolina. This was stipulated in Amendment 2 and revised slightly in Amendment 4 (both in 1993). States manage their quotas using trip limits, gear restrictions, seasons, and Individual Fishing Quotas (IFQs) to best utilize their state quota and meet their fisheries' needs. In Federal waters, commercial fishermen holding a moratorium permit may fish for summer flounder. Permit data for 2013 indicates that 824 vessels held commercial permits for summer flounder.

For the recreational sector, Amendment 2 required each state to adopt the same minimum size and possession limit as established in Federal waters, allowing only for different open seasons. The consistent measures were intended to achieve conservation equivalency in all state and Federal waters throughout the range of the resource. However, states soon found that one set of measures applied coastwide did not achieve equivalent conservation due to the significant geographic differences in summer flounder abundance and size composition. To address this disparity, the FMP was amended via Framework 2 (2001) and Addendum VIII (2003) to allow for the use of state conservation equivalency to manage recreational harvests. Since 2001, the FMP has allowed for, and the Commission and Council have utilized, a state-by-state harvest target, based on the proportion of estimated state recreational landings in 1998 as reported in the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistical Survey (MRFSS). The individual state targets, as a percentage of the total coastwide recreational harvest limit, are given in Table 3.

Under conservation equivalency, states have the flexibility to tailor their regulations – using minimum size, possession, and season limits – to meet the needs and interests of their fishermen, provided that the targets are not exceeded. Additionally under conservation equivalency, Federal regulations are waived, with anglers subject to the regulations of the state in which they land. The Commission and Council still have the option of deciding annually between coastwide measures and conservation equivalent measures. For 2014, the Council and Commission voted to implement regional-based conservation equivalency measures (Table 4).

Description of the Summer Flounder Resource

Status of the Stock

The summer flounder stock was declared rebuilt in November of 2011 (NEFSC 2011). The 2013 Benchmark Stock Assessment (SAW/SARC 57) includes 2012 commercial and recreational fishery catch data, research survey indices of abundance, and estimates of stock size and fishing mortality. The summer flounder stock was not overfished and overfishing was not occurring in 2012 relative to the new (updated) biological reference points established in the 2013 SAW 57 assessment.

Stock Definition

The Commission and Council FMP for summer flounder defines the management unit as all summer flounder from the southern border of North Carolina northward to the US-Canada border. For assessment purposes, the definition of a unit stock (Wilk et al. 1980) extending from Cape Hatteras north to New England was accepted in the 2013 Benchmark Assessment as well as in previous assessments. The current management unit is consistent with a summer flounder genetics study, which revealed no population subdivision at Cape Hatteras (Jones and Quattro 1999). A study by Kraus and Musick (2001) using tagging data supported a summer flounder stock structure theory of stocks north and south of Cape Hatteras, with the stock north of Cape Hatteras possibly composed of two distinct spawning aggregations, off of New Jersey and Virginia-North Carolina.

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Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB)

Estimated summer flounder SSB has changed significantly over the last 30 years, having increased from 12.1 million pounds in 1989 to a peak of 117.2 million pounds in 2010. In 2012, SSB was estimated to be 112.96 million pounds, 82% of the new biomass target reference point (SSB_{MSY}) = 137.6 million pounds. The 2012 year class is estimated to be about 37 million fish, about 14% below average, but higher than the 2010 (34.6 million fish) and 2011 (19.6 million fish) year classes.

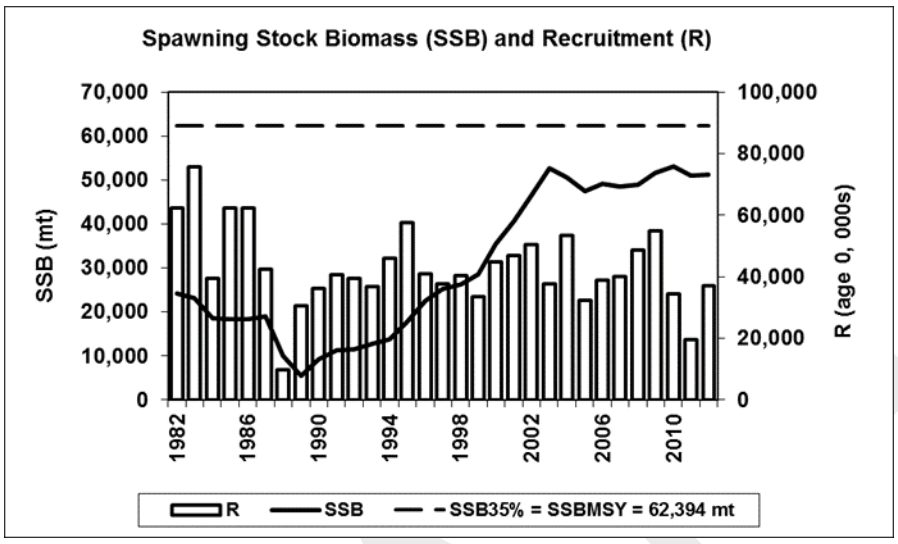

Figure 1. Summer flounder spawning stock biomass (SSB; solid line) and recruitment at age 0 (R; vertical bars) by calendar year. The horizontal dashed line is the 2013 SAW/SARC 57 biomass reference point proxy.

Fishing Mortality

From 1982-1996, the fishing mortality rate (F) on summer flounder ranged between 0.790 and 1.745. Since then, the fishing mortality rate has decreased from 0.849 in 1997 to 0.285 in 2012, below the new fishing mortality threshold reference point = FMSY = $F_{35\%}$ = 0.309.

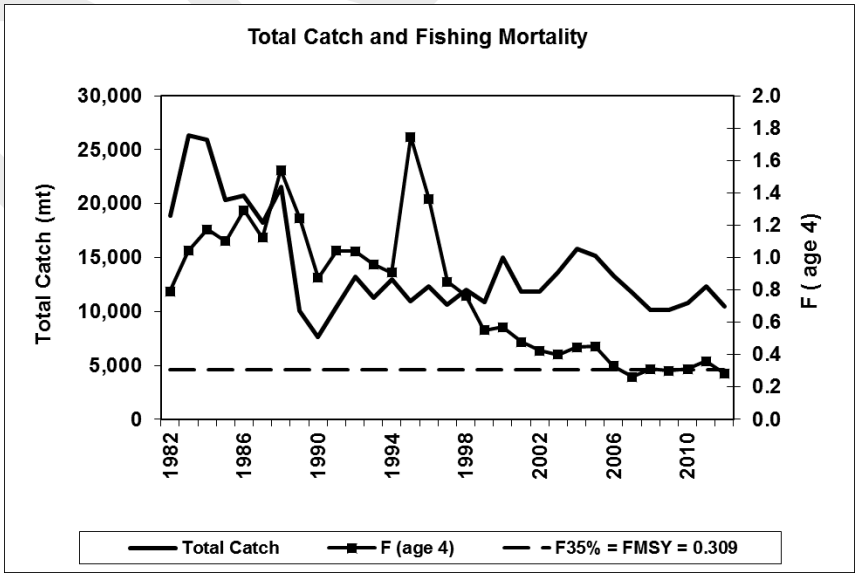

Figure 2. Total fishery catch and fully-recruited fishing mortality (F, peak at age 4) of summer flounder. The horizontal dashed line is the 2013 SAW/SARC57 fishing mortality reference point proxy.

Description of the Fishery

Commercial Fishery

Based on Vessel Trip Report (VTR) data for 2013, the bulk of the summer flounder commercial landings were taken by bottom otter trawls (97 percent), followed by bottom scallop trawls (1 percent), with other gear types (e.g. hand lines, scallop dredges, sink gill nets) each accounting for 1 percent or less of landings. Current regulations require a 14 inch total length minimum fish size in the commercial fishery and a 5.5 inch diamond or 6 inch square minimum mesh in the entire net for vessels possessing more than the threshold amount of summer flounder, i.e., 200 lbs. in the winter and 100 lbs. in the summer. Summer flounder ex-vessel revenues based on dealer data have ranged from $14.3 to $30.2 million for the 1994 through 2013 period. The mean price for summer flounder (unadjusted) has ranged from a low of $1.34/lb. in 2002 to a high of $2.38/lb. in 2008 (Figure 1). In 2013, 12.49 million pounds of summer flounder were landed generating $29.2 million in revenues ($2.34/lb.).

Recreational Fishery

There is a significant recreational fishery for summer flounder in state waters, which occurs seasonally when the fish migrate inshore during the warm summer months. The majority of recreational harvest over last 30 years has been by the states of New York and New Jersey (Table 5). When anglers are intercepted through the surveys conducted for the recreational statistics programs, they are asked about where the majority of their fish were caught (i.e., inland, state waters (<=3 miles), exclusive economic zone (EEZ; > 3 miles)). While these data are somewhat imprecise, they do provide a general indication of where the majority of summer flounder are landed recreationally. These data indicate that on average, about 90 percent of the landings (in numbers of fish) have occurred in state waters over the past ten years — about 77 percent of landings came from state waters in 2013 (Table 6). Additionally fish are primarily landed by private and rental boats (Table 7).

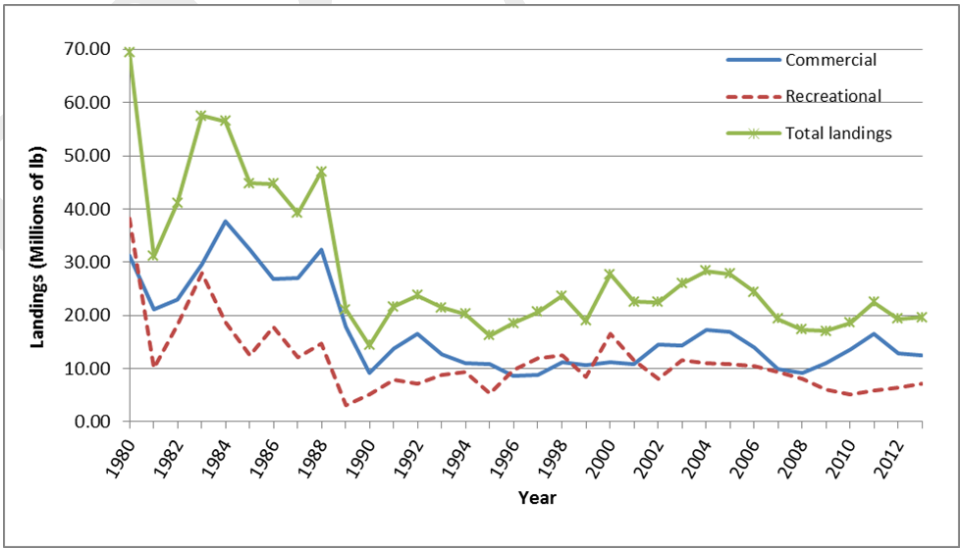

Figure 3. Commercial and Recreational U.S. Summer Flounder Landings (lbs) from Maine- North Carolina, 1980-2013.

Issues for Public Comment

Public comment is sought on a range of issues that may be considered in the draft amendment. The issues listed below are not necessarily exhaustive, but are intended to focus the public comment and provide the Commission and Council with the input necessary to develop the amendment. The public is encouraged to submit comments on the issues listed below as well as any other issues that should be addressed in the amendment.

ISSUE 1: FMP Goals and Objectives

Background

Amendment 2 (1993) contains the first set of shared objectives of the FMP between the Commission and Council. The six goals of the FMP are the following:

1. Reduce fishing mortality in the summer flounder fishery to assure that overfishing does not occur.

2. Reduce fishing mortality on immature summer flounder to increase spawning stock biomass.

3. Improve the yield from the fishery.

4. Promote compatible management regulations between State and Federal jurisdictions.

5. Promote uniform and effective enforcement of regulations.

6. Minimize regulations to achieve the management objectives stated above.

Statement of the Problem

As the management of summer flounder over the last 20 years has changed through amendments, framework adjustments, and addendums, the management objectives have remained the same. During this period, the status of the stock has changed, as well as attributes of the fisheries that the resource supports. Given these changes, do the management objectives still capture the needs and goals of the FMP?

Management Questions

- **Are the existing objectives appropriate for managing the summer flounder fishery?**
- **If these are not appropriate, what should the goals and objectives be?**

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ISSUE 2: QUOTA ALLOCATION BETWEEN THE COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL FISHERIES

Background

Since Amendment 2 (1993), the annual quotas have been derived from the total allowable landings (TAL) with 60% for the commercial fishery and 40% for the recreational fishery.

Statement of the Problem

While the designation of the 60/40 split in 1993 was determined based on the historical significance of the summer flounder fishery, the characteristics and participation in both the commercial and recreational fisheries has changed over the last 20 years.

Management Questions

- **Is the existing allocation between the commercial and recreational sectors based on the annual TAL appropriate for managing the summer flounder fishery?**
- **If not, how should the current allocations be revised?**

ISSUE 3: COMMERCIAL SUMMER FLOUNDER MANAGEMENT MEASURES AND STRATEGIES

Background

Amendment 2 (1993) set the commercial state-by-state quotas based on commercial landings between 1980 and 1989. Since then a series of amendments, frameworks, and addendums has further specified the season length, allowable gear types, permits, monitoring and reporting requirements, and exemption programs.

Statement of the Problem

To address and update the commercial management of summer flounder, the following items may be considered within this amendment for revision in the FMP:

- Commercial fishing gear requirements and restrictions, including, but not limited to: mesh requirements, net dimensions, bycatch reduction devices, head and footrope lengths
- Minimum fish size requirements
- Possession limit and trigger requirements
- Time/area closures and exemption programs
- Licensing
- Commercial quota allocation strategies
- Landings flexibility (regional, coastwide, other)

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ISSUE 3: COMMERCIAL SUMMER FLOUNDER MANAGEMENT MEASURES AND STRATEGIES (Continued)

Management Questions

- **Are the existing commercial sector management measures appropriate for managing the summer flounder fishery?**
- **If not, how should current measures and requirements be revised?**

ISSUE 4: RECREATIONAL SUMMER FLOUNDER MANAGEMENT MEASURES AND STRATEGIES

Background

Amendment 2 (1993) introduced the annual specification of a coastwide Recreational Harvest Limit (RHL) for states with a declared interest in the fishery. Under conservation equivalency, State-by-state shares of the annual RHL and subsequent state-by-state measures were first implemented in 2001 and based on the 1998 coastwide recreational harvest.

Statement of the Problem

The interim solution of state-by-state conservation equivalency based on estimated state harvests in 1998 succeeded, initially, in mitigating the disparity in conservation burden among states, but the approach is increasingly being viewed as an inadequate long-term solution, given recent changes in resource status and fishery performance. Further, the 1998-based allocation formula set forth by the FMP does not reflect changes in socio-economic patterns over the past fifteen years, particularly with regard to the number and distribution of anglers along the coast.

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To address and update the recreational management of summer flounder, the following items may be considered within this amendment for revision in the FMP;

- Recreational bag limits, size limits, and seasonal limits
- Recreational fishing gear requirements and restrictions
- Inter-jurisdictional management processes and strategies (including use of state-by-state or regional Conservation Equivalency vs. Coastwide measures)
- Management strategies specific to the party/charter (for-hire) recreational fleet
- Management strategies specific to private recreational anglers
- Recreational quota allocation strategies (by state, fishing sector, other)

Management Questions

- **Are the existing recreational sector requirements appropriate for managing the summer flounder fishery?**
- **If not, what are appropriate requirements for managing the recreational summer flounder fishery?**

ISSUE 5: SUMMER FLOUNDER DISCARDS IN THE COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL FISHERIES

Background

Over the last 30 years, discards in the recreational and commercial summer flounder fisheries have persisted. In the recreational sector, released alive fish (MRIP B2) have increased from 30% of total recreational catch in 1981 to 84% (Table 8). For the commercial sector, commercial discards have constituted 8% of the total catch since 1982, with commercial discard loses in the otter trawl and scallop dredge fisheries having accounted for approximately 14% of the total commercial catch (NEFSC 2013).

Statement of the Problem

To address concerns over the discard rates as raised by managers and stakeholders, this amendment will consider changes to the summer flounder FMP regarding the management of discards in the commercial and recreational fisheries.

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OTHER ISSUES:

- ***ECOSYSTEM, HABITAT, BYCATCH, AND PROTECTED SPECIES ISSUES***

Statement of the Problem
To address the changes in the distribution and abundance of summer flounder, this amendment will consider changes to the summer flounder FMP regarding the ecosystem, habitat and protected species associated with the summer flounder fishery.

- ***DATA COLLECTION REQUIREMENTS AND PROTOCOLS***

Statement of the Problem
To address the changes in the technological and communications systems over the last 30 years in both commercial and recreational fisheries, this amendment will consider changes to the summer flounder FMP regarding the data collection requirements and protocols.

References

Jones WJ, Quattro JM. 1999. Genetic structure of summer flounder (*Paralichthys dentatus*) populations north and south of Cape Hatteras. Marine Biology 133: 129-135.

Kraus RT, Musick JA. 2001. A brief interpretation of summer flounder, *Paralichthys dentatus*, movements and stock structure with new tagging data on juveniles. Mar. Fish. Rev. 63(3): 1-6.

Northeast Fisheries Science Center. 2011. Stock Assessment of Summer Flounder 2011. US Dept Commerce, Northeast Fish Sci Cent Ref Doc. 11-20; 147 p. Available from: National Marine Fisheries Service, 166 Water Street, Woods Hole, MA 02543-1026, or online at: http://nefsc.noaa.gov/publications/.

Northeast Fisheries Science Center. 2013. 57th Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop (57th SAW) Assessment Summary Report. US Dept Commerce, Northeast Fish Sci Cent Ref Doc. 13-14; 39 p. Available from: National Marine Fisheries Service, 166 Water Street, Woods Hole, MA 02543-1026, or online at: http://nefsc.noaa.gov/publications/.

Wilk SJ, Smith WG, Ralph DE, Sibunka J. 1980. The population structure of summer flounder between New York and Florida based on linear discriminant analysis. Trans. Am. Fish. Soc. 109:265-271.

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Tables and Figures

Table 1. Summary of Management Actions taken in the FMP, including Amendments, Addenda, and Framework adjustments to the FMP.

Year	Document	Plan Species	Management Action(s)
1982	ASMFC FMP	Summer flounder	Established management plan for summer flounder
1988	MAFMC FMP	Summer flounder	Established management plan for summer flounder
1991	Amendment 1	Summer flounder	Established an overfishing definition for summer flounder
1993	Amendment 2	Summer flounder	Established rebuilding schedule, commercial quotas, recreational harvest limits, size limits, gear restrictions, permits, and reporting requirements for summer flounder; created the Summer Flounder Monitoring Committee
1993	Amendment 3	Summer flounder	Revised the exempted fishery line for summer flounder; increased the large mesh net threshold for summer flounder; established otter trawl retention requirements for large mesh use in the summer flounder fishery
1993	Amendment 4	Summer flounder	Revised state-specific shares for summer flounder commercial quota allocation
1993	Amendment 5	Summer flounder	Allowed states to combine or transfer summer flounder commercial quota
1994	Amendment 6	Summer flounder	Set criteria for allowance of multiple nets on board commercial vessels for summer flounder; Established deadline for publishing catch limits, Established commercial management measures for summer flounder.
1995	Amendment 7	Summer flounder	Revised the fishing mortality rate reduction schedule for summer flounder.
1996	Amendment 8	Summer flounder and scup	Incorporated Scup FMP into Summer Flounder FMP Established scup management measures, including commercial quotas, recreational harvest limits, size limits, gear restrictions, permits, and reporting requirements.
1996	Amendment 9	Summer flounder and black sea bass	Incorporated Black Sea Bass into Summer Flounder FMP; Established black sea bass measures, including commercial quotas, recreational harvest limits, size limits, gear restrictions, permits, and reporting requirements.

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Table 1 *(continued)*:

Year	Document	Plan Species	Management Action(s)
1997	Amendment 10	Summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass	Modified commercial minimum mesh requirements; Continued commercial vessel moratorium; Prohibited transfer of summer flounder at sea; Established special permit for party/charter sector for summer flounder
1998	Amendment 11	Summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass	Modified certain provisions related to vessel replacement and upgrading, permit history transfer, splitting, and permit renewal regulations
1999	Amendment 12	Summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass	Revised FMP to comply with the Sustainable Fisheries Act and established framework adjustment process
2001	Framework 1	Summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass	Established quota set-aside for research for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass
2001	Addendum 3	Summer flounder	Recreational specification for the Summer Flounder and Scup fisheries in 2001
2001	Framework 2	Summer flounder	Established state-specific conservation equivalency measures
2003	Framework 3	Scup	Allowed the rollover of winter scup quota; Revised the start date for summer quota period for scup fishery
2003	Framework 4	Scup	Established system to transfer scup at sea
2003	Amendment 13	Summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass	Addressed disapproved sections of Amendment 12; revised black sea bass commercial quota system; addressed other black sea bass management measures; updated Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) requirements for all three species
2003	Addendum 8	Summer flounder	Established state-specific targets for recreational landings derived from the coastwide harvest limit based on each state's proportion of landings in 1998
2006	Framework 6	Summer flounder	Established region-specific conservation equivalency measures for summer flounder
2007	Framework 7	Summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass	Built flexibility into process to define and update status determination criteria for each plan species
2007	Amendment 16	Summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass	Standardized bycatch reporting methodology
2007	Amendment 14	Scup	Established a rebuilding schedule for scup; Scup GRAs made modifiable through a framework adjustment process

Table 1 *(continued)*:			
Year	**Document**	**Plan Species**	**Management Action(s)**
2011	Amendment 15	Summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass	Established Annual Catch Limits (ACLs) and Accountability Measures (AMs)
2013	Amendment 19	Summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass	Revised recreational Accountability Measures for each plan species
2014	Addendum 25	Summer flounder and black sea bass	Set regional management for summer flounder recreational management in 2014; ad hoc regional management for black sea bass in 2014, with the option of extending into 2015
	MAFMC		
	ASMFC		
	Joint ASMFC/MAFMC		

Table 2. State-by-state allocation for annual commercial quota.

State	Allocation (%)
Maine	0.04756%
New Hampshire	0.00046%
Massachusetts	6.82046%
Rhode Island	15.68298%
Connecticut	2.25708%
New York	7.64699%
New Jersey	16.72499%
Delaware	0.01779%
Maryland	2.03910%
Virginia	21.31676%
North Carolina	27.44584%
Total	100%

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Table 3. Recreational summer flounder harvest by state in 1998 and the proportion of harvest conservation equivalency was based on for management between 2001-2013.

State	1998 estimated harvest (thousands of fish)	Percent of the 1998 harvest
Massachusetts	383	5.5%
Rhode Island	395	5.7%
Connecticut	261	3.7%
New York	1,230	17.6%
New Jersey	2,728	39.1%
Delaware	219	3.1%
Maryland	206	3.0%
Virginia	1,165	16.7%
North Carolina	391	5.6%

Table 4. 2014 Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Approved State-by-State Conservation Equivalent Recreational Measures for Summer Flounder.

State	Minimum Size (inches)	Possession Limit	Open Season
Massachusetts	16	5 fish	May 22-September 30
Rhode Island	18	8 fish	May 1-December 31
Connecticut	18	5 fish	May 17- September 21
CT shore program 45 designed shore sites	16		
New York	18	5 fish	May 17- September 21
New Jersey	18	5 fish	May 23- September 27
NJ pilot shore program 1 site	16	2 fish	Tentatively May 23-September 27
Delaware	16	4 fish	January 1- December 31
Maryland	16	4 fish	January 1- December 31
PRFC	16	4 fish	January 1- December 31
Virginia	16	4 fish	January 1- December 31
North Carolina	15	6 fish	January 1- December 31

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Table 5. Percentage of Summer Flounder Recreational Harvest (MRIP Type A+B1 in numbers of fish) Maine-North Carolina from 1981-2013.

Year	ME	NH	MA	RI	CT	NY	NJ	DE	MD	VA	NC
1981	0.0	0.0	0.8	1.2	0.8	18.7	44.8	1.6	1.9	23.0	7.2
1982	0.0	0.0	7.4	2.1	0.9	10.6	25.6	5.2	1.2	35.9	11.1
1983	0.0	0.0	2.0	0.4	2.7	16.9	35.1	3.0	4.0	31.3	4.5
1984	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.6	1.8	17.3	51.8	4.4	3.0	10.0	9.8
1985	0.0	0.0	0.3	1.6	1.7	10.8	70.0	1.3	0.9	5.5	7.9
1986	0.0	0.0	9.8	9.1	4.2	13.8	47.6	0.9	1.7	4.4	8.6
1987	0.0	0.0	3.8	2.2	2.8	19.5	44.0	2.0	7.8	14.4	3.5
1988	0.0	0.1	2.0	1.4	0.8	20.1	44.8	4.3	6.9	13.1	6.6
1989	0.0	0.4	1.1	5.1	1.6	18.4	23.2	5.9	11.6	20.5	12.2
1990	0.0	0.7	0.8	1.1	0.5	25.7	38.5	3.6	4.6	11.1	13.5
1991	0.0	0.0	0.8	1.3	1.1	16.6	50.0	2.9	4.7	19.2	3.5
1992	0.0	0.0	1.1	1.4	2.2	9.2	56.0	5.7	6.4	13.9	4.1
1993	0.0	0.0	2.1	2.1	1.2	18.6	49.8	5.7	3.7	11.0	5.9
1994	0.0	0.0	2.5	2.6	4.7	27.7	42.2	3.4	1.2	9.9	5.8
1995	0.0	0.0	3.2	3.6	5.7	17.4	39.2	3.0	4.2	19.2	4.5
1996	0.0	0.0	1.3	5.1	4.0	11.3	47.5	6.9	2.2	16.8	5.0
1997	0.0	0.0	3.1	3.5	3.4	16.8	52.2	2.8	0.9	13.2	4.0
1998	0.0	0.0	5.5	5.7	3.7	17.6	39.1	3.1	3.0	16.7	5.6
1999	0.0	0.0	4.3	10.5	5.2	18.5	36.6	4.4	5.5	9.2	5.8
2000	0.0	0.0	4.9	10.3	4.8	21.4	38.7	4.3	3.3	7.4	4.8
2001	0.0	0.0	2.9	5.1	2.9	13.2	39.1	2.8	2.6	25.3	6.2
2002	0.0	0.0	4.8	5.8	2.9	21.3	30.3	3.3	2.1	23.7	5.8
2003	0.0	0.0	3.9	4.5	3.6	33.8	39.1	2.3	0.9	9.9	1.9
2004	0.0	0.0	5.2	5.8	5.0	23.7	37.5	2.6	1.0	15.6	3.6
2005	0.0	0.0	6.6	4.1	3.9	28.9	32.3	1.8	2.9	17.0	2.5
2006	0.0	0.0	6.0	6.7	3.5	19.0	39.4	2.2	0.9	19.3	2.8
2007	0.0	0.0	4.4	5.7	3.6	27.9	34.3	3.5	3.3	12.8	4.5
2008	0.0	0.0	9.9	8.7	6.2	25.9	32.4	1.5	2.5	11.1	1.9
2009	0.0	0.0	2.8	4.0	2.5	16.5	45.7	4.8	3.6	16.0	4.1
2010	0.0	0.0	3.0	7.9	2.3	22.3	36.8	3.6	1.7	17.3	5.1
2011	0.0	0.0	3.2	8.8	2.6	20.4	40.0	3.6	0.8	17.3	3.3
2012	0.0	0.0	3.3	4.5	2.8	22.4	49.7	2.0	1.0	11.4	2.8
2013	0.0	0.0	1.2	4.9	11.1	18.3	50.5	2.2	2.1	7.8	1.9
Total Avg.	**0.0**	**0.0**	**3.5**	**4.5**	**3.2**	**19.4**	**41.9**	**3.4**	**3.2**	**15.5**	**5.5**

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Table 6. Percentage summer flounder recreational landings (MRIP Type A+B1 in numbers of fish) by area (state vs. Federal waters), Maine through North Carolina, 2004-2013. Area information is self-reported based on where the majority of fishing activity occurred per angler trip.

Year	State <= 3 mi	EEZ > 3 mi
2004	87.7%	12.3%
2005	81.2%	18.8%
2006	90.4%	10.0%
2007	88.9%	11.1%
2008	96.8%	3.5%
2009	90.8%	9.2%
2010	92.3%	7.7%
2011	95.4%	4.7%
2012	87.8%	12.3%
2013	77.1%	22.9%
Avg. 2004 - 2013	88.9%	11.3%
Avg. 2011 - 2013	86.8%	13.3%

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Table 7. The number of summer flounder landed from Maine through North Carolina by mode, 1981-2013.

Year	Shore	Party/Charter	Private/Rental
1981	3,145,683	1,362,252	5,058,639
1982	1,120,521	5,936,006	8,416,173
1983	3,963,680	3,574,229	13,458,398
1984	1,355,595	2,495,733	13,623,843
1985	786,185	1,152,247	9,127,759
1986	1,237,033	1,608,907	8,774,921
1987	406,095	1,150,095	6,308,572
1988	945,864	1,134,353	7,879,442
1989	180,268	141,320	1,395,177
1990	261,898	413,240	3,118,447
1991	565,404	597,610	4,904,637
1992	275,474	375,245	4,351,387
1993	342,225	1,013,464	5,138,352
1994	447,184	836,362	5,419,145
1995	241,906	267,348	2,816,460
1996	206,927	659,876	6,130,182
1997	255,066	930,633	5,981,121
1998	316,314	360,777	6,302,004
1999	213,447	300,807	3,592,741
2000	569,612	648,755	6,582,707
2001	226,996	329,705	4,736,910
2002	154,958	261,554	2,845,647
2003	203,717	389,142	3,965,811
2004	200,368	463,776	3,652,354
2005	104,295	498,614	3,424,557
2006	154,414	315,935	3,479,934
2007	98,418	499,160	2,510,000
2008	79,339	171,951	2,098,583
2009	62,691	176,997	1,566,490
2010	59,812	160,109	1,281,546
2011	34,849	137,787	1,667,240
2012	106,342	96,386	1,996,407
2013	132,684	208,207	2,116,398
% of Total, 1981-2013	9%	14%	78%
% of Total, 2009-2013	4%	9%	87%

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Table 8. Recreational summer flounder landings data from NMFS recreational statistics databases, 1981-2013.

Year	Recreational harvest (A+B1)	Recreational Releases (B2)	Total Catch (A+B1+B2)	Recreational Releases as % of Total Catch
1981	9,566,574	4,012,208	13,578,782	29.5
1982	15,472,701	8,089,316	23,562,017	34.3
1983	20,996,303	11,065,966	32,062,269	34.5
1984	17,475,171	12,309,755	29,784,926	41.3
1985	11,066,190	2,459,731	13,525,921	18.2
1986	11,620,861	13,671,598	25,292,459	54.1
1987	7,864,761	13,158,691	21,023,452	62.6
1988	9,959,660	7,211,078	17,170,738	42.0
1989	1,716,763	959,831	2,676,594	35.9
1990	3,793,585	5,307,236	9,100,821	58.3
1991	6,067,647	10,007,163	16,074,810	62.3
1992	5,002,107	6,907,447	11,909,554	58.0
1993	6,494,043	16,410,096	22,904,139	71.6
1994	6,702,689	11,022,356	17,725,045	62.2
1995	3,325,716	12,981,914	16,307,630	79.6
1996	6,996,987	11,997,418	18,994,405	63.2
1997	7,166,824	12,860,261	20,027,085	64.2
1998	6,979,096	15,106,746	22,085,842	68.4
1999	4,106,995	17,270,721	21,377,716	80.8
2000	7,801,075	17,583,349	25,384,424	69.3
2001	5,293,609	22,893,605	28,187,214	81.2
2002	3,262,156	13,412,134	16,674,290	80.4
2003	4,558,670	15,973,231	20,531,901	77.8
2004	4,316,494	16,019,711	20,336,205	78.8
2005	4,027,467	21,778,113	25,805,580	84.4
2006	3,950,282	17,449,726	21,400,008	81.5
2007	3,107,580	17,623,924	20,731,504	85.0
2008	2,349,874	20,546,974	22,896,848	89.7
2009	1,806,181	22,279,002	24,085,183	92.5
2010	1,501,465	22,220,121	23,721,586	93.7
2011	1,839,877	19,718,824	21,558,701	91.5
2012	2,272,219	14,256,233	16,528,452	86.3
2013	2,419,351	13,138,665	15,558,016	84.4

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