Council Recommends Increase in Spiny Dogfish Quota

The Mid-Atlantic Council met October 11-13, 2011 in Galloway, NJ to adopt spiny dogfish management measures for the 2012 fishing year. Following an update on the current status of the spiny dogfish stock and a review of the Scientific and Statistical Committee’s (SSC’s) recommendations, the Council voted to recommend that the commercial quota for spiny dogfish be 35.694 million pounds in 2012. The Council also voted to recommend a 2012 daily commercial trip limit of 4,000 pounds. Both of these actions represent increases over the existing quota (20 million pounds) and trip limit (3,000 pounds).

The Mid-Atlantic and New England Councils jointly manage spiny dogfish. In order for these recommendations to go into effect in federal waters, similar measures will have to be adopted by the New England Council at its November 2011 meeting. The National Marine Fisheries Service will then have to approve both Councils’ recommendations. Management measures for state water fisheries will be determined by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission at its November 2011 meeting.

These increases follow a ten year rebuilding effort during which the directed fishery for spiny dogfish was effectively eliminated through a combination of very low quotas and trip limits. Declaration of the rebuilt status of the spiny dogfish stock came from the National Marine Fisheries Service in 2010.