










































Stock status of important coastal fisheries in North Carolina, 2004

Species and Stock	Status					Comments
	Viable	Recovering	Concern	Overfished	Unknown	
<u>Bass, Black Sea</u>						
N. of Hatteras						Based on the NEFSC survey, black sea bass north of Cape Hatteras are no longer overfished.
S. of Hatteras						Overfished based on SAFMC assessment. Size and bag limits should address concerns.
<u>Bass, Striped</u>						
Albemarle-Roanoke						New management plan approved in May 2004 to manage a recovered stock.
Atlantic Ocean						ASMFC is currently managing under Amendment 6 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass.
Central/Southern						Stocks are much lower than historical levels. Despite stocking efforts, numbers of mature fish on the spawning grounds are relatively low. Analysis of data collected on the spawning grounds indicates that the stock is being overfished. "New management plan approved in May 2004".
<u>Bluefish</u>						ASMFC/MAFMC FMP. Biomass models infer fishing mortality has steadily declined since 1987. A 2004 stock assessment is pending review.
<u>Catfishes (A)</u>						Independent and dependent sampling began March 2004 to fulfill Data/Research needs for up coming FMP
<u>Croaker, Atlantic</u>						Awaiting the completion of a coastwide stock assessment from the ASMFC in the fall 2004. A recruitment driven stock where biomass and landings fluctuate in response to large year classes. The ocean fisheries appear viable and there has been a recent expansion of the length distribution from inside waters.
<u>Dolphin/Wahoo</u>						SAFMC plan approved in 2004.
<u>Drum, Red</u>						Current regulations are designed to divert overfishing allowing for increased juvenile recruitment to the adult population and subsequent stock recovery.

Species and Stock	Status					Comments
	Viable	Recovering	Concern	Overfished	Unknown	
Eel, American						Much remains unknown about American eel life history and fisheries. Juvenile recruitment survey for North Carolina was initiated in 2001 as part of the ASMFC eel FMP.
Flounder, Southern						Stock is overfished and overfishing is still occurring based on the 2004 stock assessment. A North Carolina FMP is being developed and is scheduled for final approval in December 2004.
Flounder, Summer						Dramatic improvements in age distributions, spawning stock biomass, and fishing mortality have occurred since the early 1990's. The stock appears to be viable.
Grouper, Gag						Assessment indicates recovery goal has been met.
Herring, River (A)						
Albemarle Sound						River herring FMP approved by MFC February 2000. FMP is up for review 2004-2005. Reduced number of age classes in harvest, low juvenile production, fewer numbers of repeat spawners. Chowan River pound net harvest allocation has not been reached since 2001.
Other Areas						No current sampling program.
Kingfishes (A)						Gill nets and shrimp trawls are responsible for most of the N.C. commercial catch. However, since 2000, landings from ocean gill nets have been on the rise and comprised 75% of the commercial landings in 2003. A North Carolina FMP is slated to begin in 2005.
Mackerel, King						Based on the 2003 stock assessment the spawning stock biomass is above target and fishing mortality is below target. Concern over estimates of Atlantic and Gulf stock mixing rates in south Florida and addition of up to date aging data has delayed the 2004 stock assessment.
Mackerel, Spanish						Based on the 2003 stock assessment, spawning stock biomass is above target and fishing mortality is below target.
Menhaden, Atlantic						F is slightly above target and fecundity is well above target

Species and Stock	Status					Comments
	Viable	Recovering	Concern	Overfished	Unknown	
Monkfish						FMP developed by NE/MAFMC - 10 year recovery period.
Mullet, Striped						Large yearly landings and heavy fishing effort during its spawning period are cause for concern. Fishery management plan is currently being written.
Perch, White						Independent and dependent sampling began March 2004 to fulfill Data/Research needs for up coming FMP
Perch, Yellow						Independent and dependent sampling began March 2004 to fulfill Data/Research needs for up coming FMP
Reef Fish (B)						Of the 73 species (including black sea bass) in the SAFMC unit, 17 are considered overfished
Scup						Assessment indicates scup no longer overfished; survey data indicate strong recruitment and some rebuilding of age structure. However, stock status with respect to overfishing cannot currently be evaluated due to unknown estimates of discard mortality.
Shad, American						Landings and juvenile abundance increased. ASMFC FMP is in place. DMF is conducting fishery dependent and independent sampling.
Shad, Hickory						Commercial landings second lowest reported since 1997. No assessment work has been conducted since 1993.
Sharks						Although federal, commercial, and recreational harvest restrictions have been in place since 1993, and a state commercial retention prohibition since 1997, no conclusive evidence exists to suggest that stocks as a whole are recovering for these slow growing, late maturing animals.
Spiny Dogfish						MA/NEFMC plan for federal waters and ASMFC plan for state waters developed. Female spawning stock biomass below rebuilding target. Historically low survey indices for pup production since 1997.

Spot						Fluctuating landings not unusual for short-lived species.
Species and Stock Status						
	Viable	Recovering	Concern	Overfished	Unknown	Comments
Spotted Seatrout						Stock status heavily dependent upon environmental conditions. ASMFC FMP developed (1984), NC FMP scheduled (2006).
Sturgeon, Atlantic						ASMFC is responsible for managing this species and considers the stocks to be depleted along the Atlantic coast. Coastwide prohibition on possession.
Tautog						Current ASMFC coastwide assessment considers tautog overfished. NC statewide assessment has not been conducted.
Weakfish						Viable based on all criteria. Record high spawning stock biomass, expanded age structure, and low fishing mortality.
Shellfish and Crustaceans						
Clam, Hard						Although landings data exist on clams, more data are required for stock status. NC FMP approved 2001.
Oyster, Eastern						Concern status due to high mortality from Dermo infections, evidence of increased oyster habitat loss, low catch-per-unit-effort, and reduced spatfall in the northern area. NC FMP approved 2001.
Scallop, Bay						Low landings and recruitment were caused by varying environmental conditions.
Crab, Blue						Blue crabs are North Carolina's number one commercial fishery in value and number two fishery in pounds landed, with increased hard crab landings for the second year in a row (2002 and 2003). Significantly reduced landings of hard blue crabs for 2000-2002, following the historically record high landings observed during 1996 - 1999, has caused increased industry concern for the health of the resource and fishery.
Shrimp(C)						Annual Stock. Abundances may be greatly affected by environmental conditions.
Totals	14	4	8	8	6	

Change Symbols		Stock status improved since last report				

(A) Catfishes includes 5 species, Kingfishes (Sea Mullet) includes 3 species, and there are two species of river herring. **(B)**The reef fish group includes about 75 species, while there are more than 40 species of sharks. Within these groups, individual species range from Viable to Overfished. The status indicated is for the group as a whole. **(C)**Shrimp consists of 3 species - brown, pink, and white.