

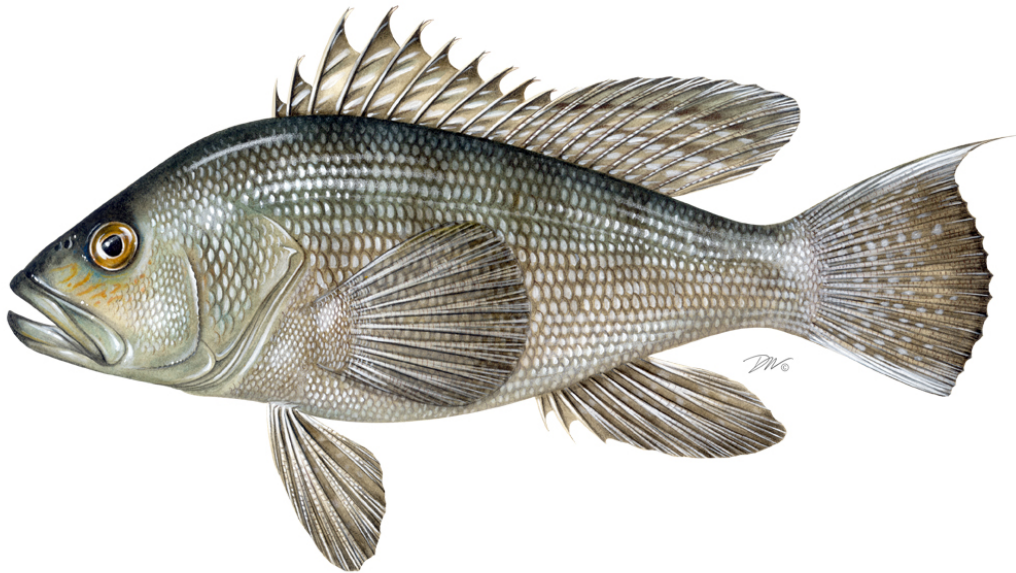
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ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

REVIEW OF THE INTERSTATE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN

FOR BLACK SEA BASS
(Centropristis striata)

2021 FISHING YEAR



Prepared by the Plan Review Team
Drafted June 2022



Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

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2022 Review of the ASMFC Fishery Management Plan for Black Sea Bass

I. Status of the Fishery Management Plan

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC or Commission) management of black sea bass was initiated as one component of a multi-species fishery management plan (FMP) addressing summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass. In 1990, summer flounder was singled out for immediate action under a joint ASMFC and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC or Council) plan. Further action on the scup and black sea bass plan was delayed until 1992 to expedite the summer flounder FMP and subsequent amendments. The joint Black Sea Bass FMP was completed and approved in 1996. The MAFMC approved regulations for black sea bass as Amendment 9 to the Summer Flounder FMP in May 1996.

The management unit of the Black Sea Bass FMP includes all black sea bass in U.S. waters in the western Atlantic Ocean from Cape Hatteras, North Carolina north to the Canadian border. The Commission's Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board (or Board) and the MAFMC guide development of the FMP. New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina have declared an interest in black sea bass; Maine and New Hampshire declared interest in 2014, then declined interest in the fishery in 2017 and 2018, respectively. New Hampshire re-declared an interest in 2020 and rejoined the Board in 2021. The Black Sea Bass Plan Review Team conducts annual reviews and monitors compliance, and the Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Advisory Panel provides industry input and advice. Technical issues are addressed through the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Technical and Monitoring Committees.

The objectives of the FMP are to reduce fishing mortality to ensure overfishing does not occur, reduce fishing mortality on immature black sea bass to increase spawning stock biomass, improve yield from the fishery, promote compatible regulations among states and between federal and state jurisdictions, promote uniform and effective enforcement, and minimize regulations necessary to achieve the stated objectives. The initial [black sea bass FMP \(1996\)](#) aimed to reduce fishing mortality using a coastwide commercial quota allocated into quarterly periods beginning in 1998, and a recreational harvest limit constrained through the use of minimum size, possession limit, and seasonal closures.

[Amendment 12](#) to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass FMP was approved by the Commission and MAFMC in October 1998. The Amendment revised overfishing definitions, identified and described essential fish habitat, and defined the framework adjustment process.

[Addendum IV](#), approved in 2001, provides that upon the recommendation of the relevant monitoring committee and joint consideration with the Council, the Board will decide state regulations rather than forward a recommendation to NMFS. Addendum IV also made the states responsible for implementing the Board's decisions on regulations.

DRAFT FOR BOARD REVIEW

Starting in 1998, the fishery was subject to lengthy closures and had some significant quota overages in the commercial sector. Fishery closures occurring as a result of exceeded quotas resulted in increased discards of legal sized black sea bass in mixed fisheries for the remainder of the closed period. A significant financial hardship for the fishing industry resulted from a decrease in market demand caused by a fluctuating supply. To address these issues, the Board enacted a series of Emergency Rules in 2001 that established initial possession limits, triggers, and adjusted possession limits. These measures helped reduce the length of fishery closures, but the rapidly changing regulations confused fishermen and added significant administrative burden to the states. To simplify the process for all parties, the Board approved Addendum VI to provide a mechanism for initial possession limits, triggers, and adjusted possession limits to be set during the annual specification setting process without the need for further Emergency Rules.

[Amendment 13](#), approved by ASMFC and MAFMC in 2002, implemented a federal, annual coastwide commercial quota managed in state waters by ASMFC using a state-by-state allocation system. The Amendment was implemented for 2003 and 2004. State-specific commercial shares are listed in Table 1. Amendment 13 also removed the necessity for fishermen who have both a Northeast Region (NER, now referred to as the Greater Atlantic Region) Black Sea Bass permit and a Southeast Region (SER) Snapper Grouper (S/G) permit to relinquish their permits for a six-month period prior to fishing south of Cape Hatteras during a northern closure.

[Addendum XII](#), approved in 2004, continued the use of an annual coastwide commercial quota managed by the ASMFC through a state-by-state allocation system.

[Addendum XIII](#) and the MAFMC's complementary Framework 5, approved in 2004, modified the FMP so that Total Allowable Landings (TALs) for the summer flounder, scup, and/or black sea bass can be specified for up to three years.

[Addendum XIX](#), approved in 2007, continued the state-by-state black sea bass commercial management measures, without a sunset clause. This addendum, and the MAFMC's complementary Framework 7, also broadened the descriptions of stock status determination criteria contained within the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass FMP to allow for greater flexibility in those definitions, while maintaining objective and measurable status determination criteria for identifying when stocks or stock complexes covered by the FMP are overfished. It established acceptable categories of peer-review for stock status determination criteria. When these specific peer-review metrics are met and new or updated information is available, the new or revised stock status determination criteria may be incorporated by the Commission directly into the annual management measures for each species, rather than requiring a modification to the FMP.

[Addendum XX](#), approved in 2009, set policies to reconcile commercial quota overages to address minor inadvertent quota overages. It streamlined the quota transfers process and established clear policies and administrative protocols to guide the allocation of transfers from

DRAFT FOR BOARD REVIEW

states with underages to states with overages. It also allowed for commercial quota transfers to reconcile quota overages after the year's end.

Beginning in 2011 due to concerns about equitable access to the resource, a series of addenda replaced the use of uniform coastwide measures to manage the recreational fishery.

[Addendum XXI](#) established state shares of the recreational harvest limit (RHL) for 2011.

[Addenda XXII](#), [XXIII](#), [XXV](#), and [XXVII](#) implemented an ad hoc regional management approach for 2012-2017, whereby the northern region states of Massachusetts through New Jersey individually crafted state measures aimed at liberalizing or reducing harvest by the same percent to achieve the RHL, while the southern region states of Delaware through North Carolina largely set regulations consistent with the measures set for federal waters.

For 2018, [Addendum XXX](#) established a regional allocation of the coastwide RHL to address state concerns regarding equity and accountability in recreational black sea bass management. Based on a combination of exploitable biomass information from the latest stock assessment and historical harvest, the RHL was allocated to three regions: 1) Massachusetts through New York, 2) New Jersey as a state-specific region, and 3) Delaware through North Carolina. The 2018 state recreational measures were then revised in May 2018 following an appeal of the Addendum to the ISFMP Policy Board by Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut and New York.

In December 2018, the Board approved [Addendum XXXI](#) (and the Council approved corresponding Framework 14), which modified the FMP to allow federal conservation equivalency (i.e., waiving federal waters measures in favor of state waters measures) as an option for the recreational black sea bass fishery beginning in 2020, and implemented transit provisions for Block Island Sound for recreational and commercial fisheries for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass in the same area as the existing striped bass transit zone. The Council's framework action also modified the Council's FMP to allow a maximum size limit to be used in the recreational fisheries for summer flounder and black sea bass.

[Addendum XXXII](#), approved in December 2018, established a new process for developing recreational management measures for black sea bass and summer flounder whereby measures will be set annually through a specifications process, rather than addenda. The Board will approve measures in early spring each year, based on Technical Committee analysis of stock status, resource availability, and harvest estimates. To further aid in setting specifications, the Addendum established standards and guiding principles intended to structure the development of recreational measures on a regional basis. Public input on specifications will be gathered by states through their individual public comment processes.

In February 2021, the Board approved [Addendum XXXIII](#) and the Council approved Amendment 23 making changes to black sea bass commercial state allocations. These changes were implemented for 2022. Connecticut's baseline allocation increased to 3% of the coastwide quota. State allocations will be calculated by allocating 75% of the coastwide quota according to new, adjusted baseline quotas after the increase to Connecticut. The other 25% of quota will

DRAFT FOR BOARD REVIEW

be allocated to three regions (Maine-New York, New Jersey, and Delaware-North Carolina) based on the most recent regional biomass distribution from the stock assessment. The Council and Board also approved addition of the state specific commercial allocations in the Council FMP, along with modifications to regulations for federal in-season closures. The Council amendment is currently undergoing NOAA Fisheries review. In March 2021, New York appealed the allocation changes approved by the Board. In May 2021, the Policy Board remanded Section 3.1.1 of Addendum XXXIII back to the Board for corrective action to adjust New York's allocation. Based on this directive, the Board and Council approved a 1% increase to New York's baseline allocation, bringing it to 8% of the coastwide quota.

In December 2021, the Commission and Council took final action on the Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Commercial/Recreational Allocation Amendment which modified the allocations between the commercial and recreational sectors for the three species. The Board and Council agreed to modify the commercial and recreational black sea bass allocations from landings-based 49% commercial and 51% recreational to catch-based 45% commercial and 55% recreational. The Council forwarded these changes to the National Marine Fisheries Service for review and rulemaking. These changes are expected to take effect January 1, 2023.

In June 2022, the Commission's Interstate Fisheries Management Program Policy Board (Policy Board) and the Council approved Addendum XXXIV and a Council Framework which modified the process for setting recreational measures and made minor modifications to the recreational accountability measures. The new process will give greater consideration to stock status when determining whether recreational measures should be restricted, liberalized, or remain unchanged for the upcoming two years (Table 2). The new process is intended for use starting in 2023 and will sunset no later than the end of 2025 with a goal of implementing an improved process by the beginning of 2026.

II. Status of the Stock

The most recent benchmark stock assessment for black sea bass was peer reviewed in December 2016 (SAW-62). The assessment used an age-structured assessment model (ASAP) that partitioned the resource into two spatial sub-units separated at approximately Hudson Canyon. This approach was accepted as the best scientific information available for determining stock status for black sea bass; however, it should be noted that the two sub-units were not considered separate stocks by the stock assessment working group, peer review panel, nor the MAFMC Scientific and Statistical Committee.

A management track assessment that incorporated fishery-dependent and -independent data through 2019, including revised recreational estimates from MRIP, was peer reviewed and accepted in June 2021¹. The management track assessment was limited to data through 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Data from 2020 was either not available or limited. The 2021 Management Track Assessment found that the black sea bass stock north of Cape Hatteras,

¹ The final report for the 2021 Operational Assessment can be found here: <https://apps-st.fisheries.noaa.gov/sis/docServlet?fileAction=download&fileId=7410>

DRAFT FOR BOARD REVIEW

North Carolina was not overfished and overfishing was not occurring in 2019 relative to the revised reference points. Spawning stock biomass (SSB) in 2019 was 65.63 million pounds (adjusted for retrospective bias), 2.1 times the updated biomass reference point (i.e., $SSB_{MSY\ proxy} = SSB_{40\%} = 31.84$ million pounds). The average fishing mortality on fully selected ages 6-7 fish in 2019 was 0.39 (adjusted for retrospective bias), 85% of the updated fishing mortality threshold reference point (i.e., $F_{MSY\ proxy} = F_{40\%} = 0.46$). Recruitment (R) of the 2018 year class as age 1 in 2019 was estimated at 46.2 million (79.4 million with the retrospective adjustment), above the 1989-2018 time series average of 39 million fish. The 2011 year class was estimated to be the largest in the time series at 170.4 million fish and the 2015 year class was the second largest at 93.8 million fish. The 2019 estimates of SSB, F, and R were adjusted for internal model retrospective error.

III. Status of the Fishery

Through 2022, the commercial fishery was allocated 49% of the total allowable landings (TAL) for black sea bass, loosely based on the proportion of recreational to commercial landings from 1983-1992. The principal gears used in the fishery are otter trawls, fish pots (or traps), and handlines. After peaking at 21.8 million pounds in 1952, commercial landings markedly decreased in the 1960s and have ranged from 1.14 to 4.50 million pounds since 1981. In 1998, a commercial quota system was incorporated into management and state-by-state shares were introduced in 2003. From 2006-2016 commercial landings ranged between 1.14 million pounds in 2009 to 2.53 million pounds in 2016 (Tables 3 and 4). From 2017-2020, higher quotas resulted in commercial landings of ranging between 3.34 million pounds in 2018 to 4.17 million pounds in 2020. The 2021 landings were 4.50 million pounds, which was under the coastwide quota of 6.09 million pounds by approximately 25% (Tables 3 and 4)¹.

Through 2022, the recreational fishery was allocated 51% of the TAL for black sea bass, loosely based on the proportion of recreational to commercial landings from 1983-1992. In 2018, recreational harvest estimates from the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) were recalibrated based on the new Fishing Effort Survey (FES). In general the recalibration resulted in higher harvest estimates throughout the time series, with more divergence in recent years. After a peak in 1986 at 11.19 million pounds, recreational harvest averaged 5.02 million pounds annually from 1987 to 1997. Recreational harvest limits were put in place in 1998 and harvest generally increased from 1.92 million pounds in 1998 to 9.06 million pounds in 2015 (Table 5). In 2016 and 2017 harvest jumped up to 12.05 and 11.48 million pounds, respectively; however the 2016 and 2017 estimates are regarded as implausibly high outliers by the Technical Committee. In 2021, recreational harvest for black sea bass from Maine to Cape Hatteras was estimated at 11.97 million pounds, a 32% increase from 2020. Recreational live discards as a proportion of total catch have generally increased over the time series, averaging 46% in the 1980s, and 85% over the last decade. According to MRIP, total live recreational discards from Maine to Virginia were 35.99 million fish in 2021. Assuming 15% hook and release mortality, estimated recreational discard losses in 2021 were estimated to be 5.40 million fish, equal to 46% of the total recreational removals (harvest plus dead discards).

¹ Commercial landings for 2021 are preliminary and are derived from state compliance reports.

DRAFT FOR BOARD REVIEW

Starting in 2018, the Council and Commission have provided states the opportunity to open their recreational black sea bass fisheries during the month of February under specific conditions. States must opt into this fishery. Participating states must match the federal waters measures during this opening. Participating states may need to adjust their recreational management measures during March-December to account for expected February harvest to help ensure that the participation in this optional opening does not increase the likelihood of coastwide total annual harvest increasing beyond the target level. Only Virginia participated in 2021. Estimated February 2021 harvest was 15,326 pounds for Virginia. As part of the 2021 conservation equivalency (CE) proposal, Virginia forfeited 15 days from Wave-3 (May/June) to account for the recreational landings that occurred in February of that year.

IV. Status of Assessment Advice

A management track stock assessment was peer reviewed in June 2021, and was accepted for management use. According to the assessment, the black sea bass stock north of Cape Hatteras, North Carolina was not overfished and overfishing was not occurring in 2019 compared to the revised reference points. The next stock assessment will be a research track assessment that will be peer reviewed in February 2023. The research track assessment is not intended to provide outputs that will be used directly in management. Rather, the research track assessment model will be used in a management track assessment in the summer of 2023, which will incorporate the most recent data available and will provide outputs for use in management. Updated black sea bass management track assessments are expected to be available every other year

V. Status of Research and Monitoring

Commercial landings information is collected by the Vessel Trip Reporting (VTR) system and dealer reports. States are also required to collect and report landings data. The Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) uses observer data to estimate discards for the trawl and gill net fisheries, and VTR data is used to estimate discards from pots and hand lines if observer data are insufficient. The NEFSC weigh-out program provides commercial age and length information. Recreational landings and discards were estimated through the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS) until it was replaced by MRIP, which has provided recreational landings and discards from 2008 to present. In 2018, MRIP released recalibrated harvest estimates derived from a new mail-based fishing effort survey (FES), rather than the Coastal Household Telephone Survey. Recreational discards in weight are estimated by the NEFSC. New York conducts fishery-dependent surveys of the recreational and commercial fishery, and North Carolina conducts dockside commercial sampling.

Fishery-independent surveys are conducted by Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. The Virginia Game Fish Tagging Program has targeted black sea bass since 1997. Recruitment and stock abundance data are also provided by the NEFSC spring, autumn, and winter trawl surveys.

DRAFT FOR BOARD REVIEW

VI. Status of Management Measures and Developing Issues

Recreational Reform Initiative topics that were approved for further development in March 2019 include an amendment and technical guidance document. Further progress may be made in 2023. The amendment will consider the following two topics: 1) Options for managing for-hire recreational fisheries separately from other recreational fishing modes (referred to as sector separation), and 2) Options related to recreational catch accounting, such as private angler reporting and enhanced vessel trip report requirements. The Technical Guidance Document will consider topics such as identifying and smoothing MRIP outlier estimates, use of preliminary current year MRIP data, and guidelines for maintaining status quo recreational measures.

Updates on ongoing recreational reform work can be found [here](#).

VII. Black Sea Bass Compliance Criteria

2021 Commercial Fishery Requirements

Minimum size of possession: 11"

Minimum mesh: Nets must possess a minimum of 75 meshes of 4.5" diamond mesh in the codend, or the entire net must have a minimum mesh size of 4.5" throughout; for codends with fewer than 75 meshes, the entire net must have 4.5" diamond mesh or larger throughout

Threshold to trigger minimum mesh requirements: 500 lbs for January-March and 100 lbs for April-December

Maximum roller rig trawl roller diameter: 18"

Pot and trap escape vents: 2 ½" for circular, 2" for square, and 1-3/8 x 5-3/4" for rectangular. Must be 2 vents in the parlor portion of the trap.

Pot and trap degradable fastener provisions: a) untreated hemp, jute, or cotton string 3/16" (4.8 mm) or smaller; b) magnesium alloy timed float releases or fasteners; c) ungalvanized, uncoated iron wire of 0.094" (2.4mm) or smaller. The opening covered by a panel affixed with degradable fasteners is required to be at least 3" x 6".

Commercial quota: 6.09 million lbs

Pot and trap definition: A black sea bass pot or trap is defined as any pot or trap used by a fisherman to catch and retain black sea bass.

2021 Recreational Fishery Requirements

Recreational harvest limit: 6.34 million lbs

2021 recreational measures were held status quo from 2020. See Table 6 for 2021 state recreational measures.

Other Measures

Reporting: States are required to submit an annual compliance report to the Chair of the Black Sea Bass Plan Review Team by June 1st. The report must detail the state's management program for the current year and establish proof of compliance with all mandatory management measures. It should include landings information from the previous year and the

DRAFT FOR BOARD REVIEW

results of any monitoring or research programs.

Black Sea Bass FMP Compliance Schedule*

Commercial	
11" Size Limit	1/1/02
4.5" diamond minimum mesh throughout codend and threshold provisions	1/1/02
Pot and trap escape vents and degradable fasteners	1/1/97
Maximum 18" roller diameter restriction	1/1/97
States must report to NMFS all landings from state waters	1/1/98
Recreational	
Size Limit	1/1/97
Harvest Limit	1/1/98
Ability to implement possession limits and seasonal closures	1/1/98
General	
Annual compliance report	Annually, 6/1

*This summary of compliance criteria is intended to serve as a quick reference guide. It in no way alters or supersedes compliance criteria as contained in the Black Sea Bass FMP and any Amendments thereto. Management measures may change annually.

VIII. Status of Implementation of FMP Requirements

For 2021, states and jurisdictions required to comply with the provisions of the Black Sea Bass FMP are: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Potomac River Fisheries Commission, Virginia, and North Carolina.

Most states appear to have regulations consistent with the FMP provisions for fishing year 2021; however, the following issues were noted:

- Connecticut regulation does not appear to include the requirement of two escape vents in the parlor portion of the trap/pot.
- Rhode Island regulation does not specifically state that the opening covered by the panel affixed with biodegradable fasteners must be at least 3" x 6". This is in the process of being rectified via direct regulation change.

Therefore, the PRT determined that all states have made a good faith effort to implement regulations that are consistent with the requirements approved by the Board.

In addition, the PRT made the following recommendations to improve state compliance reports:

- State compliance reports should either include a web link to current regulations, or a copy of the regulations in effect for the relevant fishing year to facilitate the review process. When regulations encompass multiple species, the portions that apply to black sea bass should be highlighted in some way.

DRAFT FOR BOARD REVIEW

- Pots/traps should be separated from other types of gear in the commercial harvest by gear tables included in compliance reports.

IX. Research Recommendations

Research recommendations were identified during the [2016 Black Sea Bass Benchmark Stock Assessment at the 62nd SAW](#) (pg. 65)

X. References

NEFSC (Northeast Fisheries Science Center). 2017. 62nd Northeast Regional Stock Assessment Workshop (62nd SAW) Assessment Report. US Dept Commer, Northeast Fish Sci Cent Ref Doc. 17-03; 822 p. Available from: National Marine Fisheries Service, 166 Water Street, Woods Hole, MA 02543-1026, or online at <http://nefsc.noaa.gov/publications/>.

NEFSC. 2021. Black Sea Bass Operational Assessment for 2021. Available at: <https://apps-st.fisheries.noaa.gov/sis/docServlet?fileAction=download&fileId=7410>

DRAFT FOR BOARD REVIEW

Table 1. State by state allocation of annual commercial quota for 2021 fishing year.

State	% Allocation
Maine	0.50%
New Hampshire	0.50%
Massachusetts	13%
Rhode Island	11%
Connecticut	1%
New York	7%
New Jersey	20%
Delaware	5%
Maryland	11%
Virginia	20%
North Carolina	11%

Table 2. Process for determining the appropriate percent change in harvest when developing management measures.

Future RHL vs Harvest Estimate ¹	Stock Size SSB/SSB _{MSY}	Change in Harvest
Future 2-year avg. RHL greater than upper bound of harvest estimate confidence interval	> 1.5	Liberalization percent equal to difference between harvest estimate and 2-year avg. RHL, not to exceed 40%
	1 – 1.5	Liberalization percent equal to difference between harvest estimate and 2-year avg. RHL, not to exceed 20%
	< 1	10% Liberalization
Future 2-YR avg. RHL within confidence interval of harvest estimate	> 1.5	10% Liberalization
	1-1.5	0%
	< 1	10% Reduction
Future 2-YR avg. RHL less than lower bound of harvest estimate confidence interval	> 1.5	10% Reduction
	1-1.5	Reduction percent equal to difference between harvest estimate and 2-year avg. RHL, not to exceed 20%
	< 1	Reduction percent equal to difference between harvest estimate and 2-year avg. RHL, not to exceed 40%

¹ The two year average MRIP estimate with associated CI is intended as a predictor of future harvest under status quo measures. This may be replaced with statistical model based approaches for predicting harvest.

DRAFT FOR BOARD REVIEW

Table 3. Black Sea Bass Commercial Landings by State (2011-2021) in pounds. Source: State Compliance Reports & ACCSP (June 2022).

Year	ME	NH	MA	RI	CT	NY	NJ	DE	MD	VA	NC*	TOTAL
2012			292,010	204,360	18,158	153,338	310,842	C	114,174	392,332	61,187	1,579,032***
2013			328,393	265,691	23,066	180,694	421,310	C	234,074	495,938	88,242	2,037,409***
2014			307,046	267,703	26,957	223,677	493,775	C	251,724	387,518	212,488	2,173,311***
2015			347,820	238,647	24,591	151,409	468,248	111,508	236,183	422,333	241,538	2,242,277
2016			354,031	294,343	29,236	184,529	525,647	96,794	271,512	553,491	225,405	2,534,987
2017			541,932	458,153	43,798	285,122	898,665	117,452	409,594	745,087	388,858	3,888,660
2018			481,146	374,637	37,912	274,114	700,130	172,180	373,991	606,240	315,983	3,336,459
2019	C		530,770	399,085	62,261	296,333	719,544	172,738	369,507	590,526	279,008	3,497,182***
2020	C		722,428	553,749	85,613	415,017	1,076,593	182,815	397,203	521,691	217,847	4,173,157***
2021**			759,362	660,033	91,198	434,076	1,112,447	258,225	482,233	491,601	200,565	4,498,155

* Landings from NC are from north of Cape Hatteras

** 2021 landings are preliminary from state compliance reports

*** Totals do not include confidential landings

Delaware landings from 2012 to 2014 and Maine landings in 2019 and 2020 are confidential.

DRAFT FOR BOARD REVIEW

Table 4. 2021 Commercial Landings and 2021 Black Sea Bass State by State Quotas (pounds). Source: State Compliance Reports, June 2022.

State	% Allocation	2021 ASMFC Initial Quota	2021 Quota After Transfers	Preliminary 2021 Landings
Maine	0.5	30,450	1,450	0
New Hampshire	0.5	30,450	5,450	0
Massachusetts	13	791,700	791,700	759,362
Rhode Island	11	669,900	677,690	660,033
Connecticut	1	60,900	107,900	91,198
New York	7	426,300	426,300	434,076
New Jersey	20	1,218,000	1,218,000	1,112,447
Delaware	5	304,500	304,500	258,225
Maryland	11	669,900	669,900	482,233
Virginia	20	1,218,000	1,217,210	491,601
North Carolina	11	669,900	669,900	200,565
Coastwide Total	100%	6,090,000	6,090,000	4,498,155

* Landings from North Carolina are from North of Cape Hatteras

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Table 5. Black Sea Bass Recreational Harvest Estimates by State (2011-2021) in pounds.

Source: MRIP, 2022. NC estimates for North of Cape Hatteras from compliance reports, June 2022.

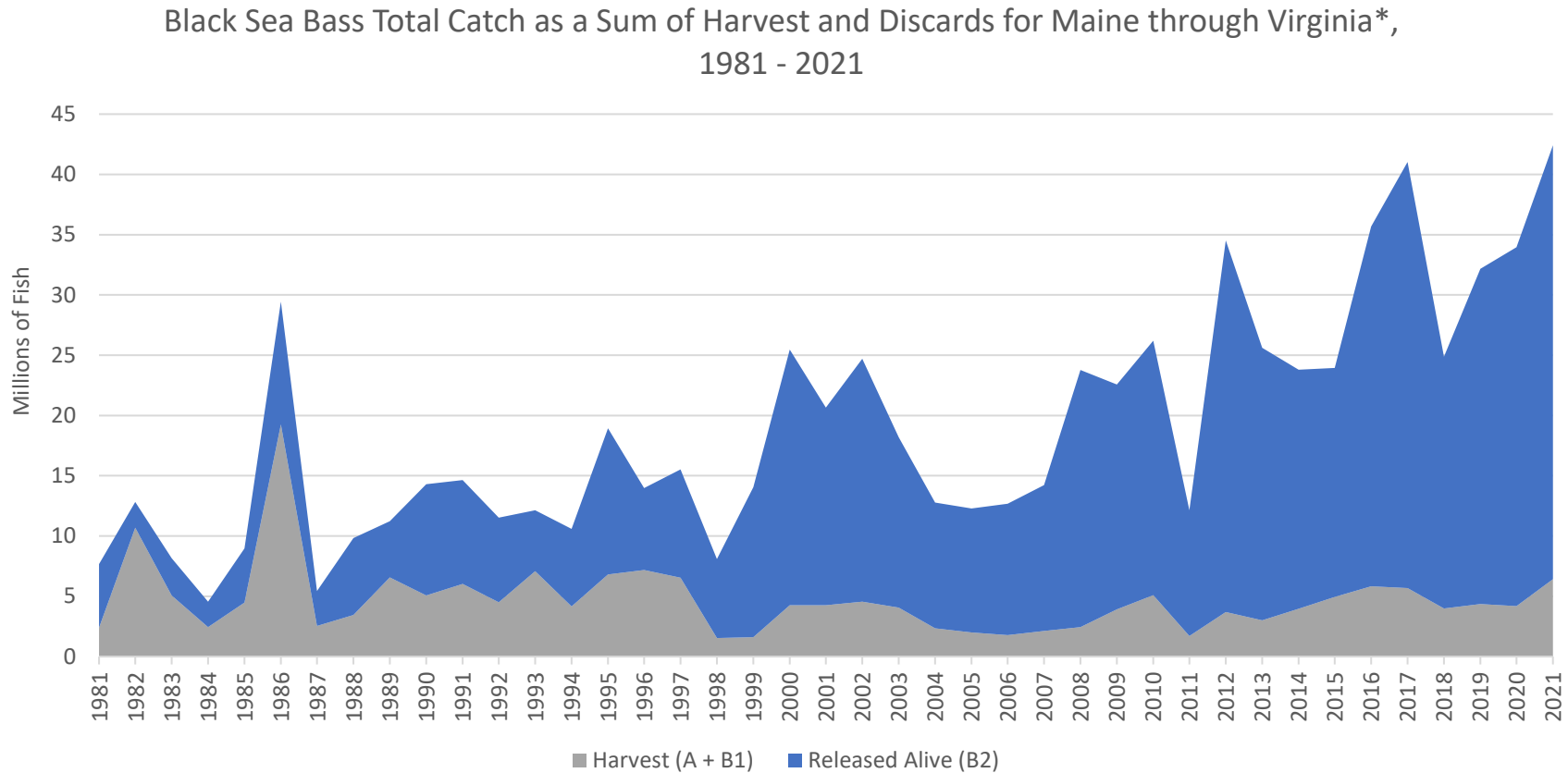
State	ME	NH	MA	RI	CT	NY	NJ	DE	MD	VA	NC*	Coastwide
2012		19,130	2,839,821	645,039	429,493	936,640	1,778,079	173,628	198,815	11,278	8,231	7,040,154
2013		64,478	1,228,732	313,316	413,558	2,106,973	1,389,868	56,384	35,802	58,919	21,617	5,689,647
2014			2,148,079	659,562	1,063,682	2,224,755	892,307	62,504	79,659	109,054	1,269	7,240,871
2015			1,629,169	807,840	1,011,926	4,722,098	596,811	59,710	118,061	104,944	6,224	9,056,782
2016			1,765,705	1,124,414	1,364,242	6,547,541	693,808	127,182	274,441	148,818	1,591	12,047,742
2017			1,444,180	749,965	1,102,722	5,515,386	2,088,631	150,530	239,715	156,810	33,421	11,481,361
2018			1,818,682	1,628,875	873,055	1,726,555	1,440,761	109,365	189,711	123,937**	9,494	7,920,435
2019			1,361,112	1,225,057	1,180,400	3,126,473	1,117,658	61,974	156,986	371,523**	11,639	8,612,822
2020		3,388	1,537,990	1,480,782	905,145	2,808,726	1,147,599	188,978	103,461	796,053**	74,149	9,046,271
2021		4,101	2,622,511	1,116,032	2,094,825	1,927,674	2,613,242	478,941	278,677	823,538**	6,564	11,966,105

*Harvest is from north of Hatteras.

**Virginia participated in the February 2018-2021 black sea bass recreational fishery, and the February harvest estimate is not included in the state total for 2018-2021.

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Figure 1. **Black Sea Bass Total Recreational Harvest and Discards.** Source: MRIP, June 2022. Note that this figure includes live and dead discards. It is assumed that 15% of all recreational black sea bass discards later die.



*Discard estimates for NC north of Cape Hatteras are not yet available.

DRAFT FOR BOARD REVIEW

Table 6. 2021 Black Sea Bass Recreational Management Measures by State

State	Minimum Size (inches)	Possession Limit	Open Season
Maine	13	10 fish	May 19-September 21; October 18-December 31
New Hampshire	13	10 fish	January 1-December 31
Massachusetts	15	5 fish	May 18-September 8
Rhode Island	15	3 fish	June 24-August 31
		7 fish	September 1-December 31
Connecticut (Private & Shore)	15	5 fish	May 19-December 31
CT (Authorized party/charter monitoring program vessels)	15	5 fish	May 19-August 31
		7 fish	September 1-December 31
New York	15	3 fish	June 23-August 31
		7 fish	September 1-December 31
New Jersey	12.5	10 fish	May 15-June 22
		2 fish	July 1-August 31
		10 fish	October 8-October 31
	13	15 fish	November 1-December 31
Delaware	12.5	15 fish	May 15 – September 21; October 22 – December 31
Maryland	12.5	15 fish	May 15-December 31
Virginia	12.5	15 fish	February 1-29
	12.5	15 fish	May 29-December 31
North Carolina, North of Cape Hatteras (N of 35° 15'N)	12.5	15 fish	February 1-29
	12.5	15 fish	May 17-November 30
Federal Measures	12.5	15 fish	February 1-28 May 15-December 31