



October 19, 2020

Michael Luisi, Chair
 Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
 800 North State Street, Suite 201
 Dover, DE 19901

Patrick C. Keliher, Chair
 Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
 1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200 A-N
 Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Mike and Pat:

On behalf of the Secretary of Commerce, we approved Amendment 21 to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan (FMP), including all the management measures recommended by the Council in this amendment. Amendment 21 revises the state-by-state allocations of summer flounder when the coastwide quota exceeds 9.55 million lb and updates the FMP goals and objectives specific to summer flounder. We expect to publish a final rule implementing allocation changes by the end of 2020. Publication in 2020 will enable us to apply the allocation changes to the 2021 specifications.

State-by-State Allocations

Amendment 21 changes the state-by-state commercial quota allocations when the coastwide quota exceeds 9.55 million lb. When the coastwide quota is 9.55 million lb or less, the quota will be distributed according to the baseline allocations. In years when the coastwide quota exceeds 9.55 million lb, any additional quota beyond this threshold will be distributed in equal shares to all states except Maine, Delaware, and New Hampshire, which would split 1 percent of the additional quota. The 9.55-million-lb threshold reflects a combined 10-year (2009-2018) and 5-year (2014-2018) average of commercial summer flounder quotas. The Council and Summer Flounder Board selected this allocation alternative to balance preservation of historical state access and infrastructure at recent quota levels, with an intent of providing equitability among states when the stock and quota are at high levels.

Table 1. Revised state-by-state allocations.

State	Allocation of baseline quota \leq 9.55 mil lb (Percent Share)	Allocation of <u>additional</u> quota beyond 9.55 mil lb (Percent Share)
ME	0.04756	0.333
NH	0.00046	0.333
MA	6.82046	12.375
RI	15.68298	12.375



CT	2.25708	12.375
NY	7.64699	12.375
NJ	16.72499	12.375
DE	0.01779	0.333
MD	2.03910	12.375
VA	21.31676	12.375
NC	27.44584	12.375
Total	100	100

Fishery Management Plan Goals and Objectives

The Council and Board also updated the FMP objectives for summer flounder through this amendment. Three overarching goals were set and linked to a series of specific objectives. These changes were made to provide more meaningful guidance for the management of the summer flounder fishery.

We appreciate the efforts of the Council, Board, and staff to develop this amendment and ongoing efforts to improve the summer flounder fishery. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Michael Pentony
Regional Administrator

Cc: Dr. Christopher M. Moore, Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
Robert Beal, Executive Director, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council