

MAFMC 2020 COUNCIL MEETINGS

February 11-13, 2020	The Sanderling Resort 1461 Duck Road Duck, NC 27949 855-412-7866
April 7-9, 2020	Seaview 401 South New York Road, Galloway, NJ 08205 609-652-1800
NEW DATE June 16-18, 2020	Hilton Virginia Beach Oceanfront 3001 Atlantic Avenue Virginia Beach, VA 23151 757-213-3000
August 10-13, 2020	The Notary Hotel 21 N. Juniper St. Philadelphia, PA 19107 215-496-3200
October 6-8, 2020	Hyatt Place Long Island East End 451 East Main St. Riverhead, NY 11901 631-208-0002
December 14-17, 2020	Royal Sonesta Harbor Court Baltimore 550 Light St. Baltimore, MD 21202 410-234-0550



Status of Council Actions Under Development

AS OF 1/30/20

FMP	Action	Description	Status	Staff Lead
Mackerel, Squid, Butterfish	<i>Illex</i> Permit and MSB Goals and Objectives Amendment	This action will consider modifications to the <i>Illex</i> permitting system as well as revisions to the goals and objectives for the MSB FMP. http://www.mafmc.org/actions/illex-permitting-msb-goals-amendment	The Council reviewed comments in June, and development is expected through 2019 and in to 2020. Public hearings are planned for Spring, with final action anticipated in June 2020.	Didden
Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass	Commercial/Recreational Allocation Amendment	This joint MAFMC/ASMFC amendment will reevaluate and potentially revise the commercial and recreational sector allocations for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass. This action was initiated in part to address the allocation-related impacts of the revised recreational data from MRIP. http://www.mafmc.org/actions/sfsbsb-allocation-amendment	Scoping hearings will be held February 13 – March 3.	Beaty/Coutre/Dancy
	Black Sea Bass Commercial State Allocation Amendment	This joint MAFMC/ASMFC action will consider adjusting the allocations of the black sea bass commercial quota among states and whether the allocations should be managed jointly by the Council and Commission.	The Council will review a scoping document and scoping plan in April 2020. The Council and Board plan to discuss next steps for this action during their joint meeting in May 2020.	Beaty
Bluefish	Bluefish Allocation and Rebuilding Amendment	This joint MAFMC/ASMFC amendment considers potential revisions to the allocation of Atlantic bluefish between the commercial and recreational fisheries and the commercial allocations to the states. This action will also review the goals and objectives of the bluefish FMP and the quota transfer processes and establish a rebuilding plan for bluefish. http://www.mafmc.org/actions/bluefish-allocation-amendment	The Council will hold a second round of scoping hearings February 13 - March 4.	Seeley

FMP	Action	Description	Status	Staff Lead
Omnibus	Omnibus Amendment for Data Modernization	This amendment will address the regulatory changes needed to fully implement the Agency's Fishery-Dependent Data Initiative.	The Council last received an update at the October 2018 meeting.	GARFO/ NEFSC
	Commercial eVTR Framework	This joint MAFMC/NEFMC framework considers requiring commercial fishing vessels with federal permits for species managed by the MAFMC or NEFMC to submit VTRs electronically. http://www.mafmc.org/actions/commercial-evtr-framework	The MAFMC and NEFMC approved this framework at their December 2019 and January 2020 meetings, respectively. Both Councils approved a 48 hour reporting deadline.	Coutre
Non-FMP	Golden and Blueline Tilefish Private Recreational Permitting and Reporting Issues	This action will develop permitting and reporting regulations for private recreational tilefish vessels. The action was approved in a final rule amending the golden tilefish FMP to include blueline tilefish in November 2017 with delayed implementation.	The proposed rule for tilefish recreational permitting and reporting is expected to publish in the Federal Register on January 29, 2020 with a comment period through February 28, 2020. Implementation and outreach are expected by May 1, 2020.	GARFO lead MAFMC Contact: Seeley
	Recreational Reform Initiative	This is a joint initiative with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to develop strategies to increase management flexibility and stability for jointly managed recreational fisheries (i.e., black sea bass, summer flounder, scup, and bluefish).	A steering committee has met several times to prioritize specific topics to address. The Council and Board will receive an update during their joint meeting in May 2020.	Beaty

Timeline and Status of Recent MAFMC Actions and Amendments/Frameworks Under Review

As of 1/30/2020

The table below summarizes the status of actions after they have been approved by the Council. For information about the status of Council actions under development, please see the document titled "Status of Council Actions Under Development."

Status	Amendment/Framework	Action Number	Council Approval	Initial Submission	Final Submission	NOA Published	Proposed Rule Published	Approval/Disapproval Letter	Final Rule Published	Regs Effective	Notes
Open	Atlantic Mackerel Rebuilding Framework	MSB FW 13	8/13/18	9/27/18	2/28/19	N/A	6/7/19		10/30/19	11/29/19	
Complete	Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Framework on Conservation Equivalency, Block Island Sound Transit, and Slot Limits	SFSBSB FW 14	12/11/18	3/21/19	5/8/19	N/A	8/8/19		11/19/19	12/30/19	
Open	Summer Flounder Commercial Issues and Goals and Objectives Amendment	TBD	3/6/19								
Open	Chub Mackerel Amendment	MSB AM 21	3/7/19	5/31/19	10/25/19						
Open	Excessive Shares Amendment	TBD	12/9/19								
Open	Omnibus Risk Policy Framework	TBD	12/9/19								Workgroup is updating analyses to evaluate the modified alternative recommended by the Council

Timeline and Status of Current and Upcoming Specifications for MAFMC Fisheries

As of 1/30/2020

Current Specifications	Year(s)	Council Approval	Initial Submission	Final Submission	Proposed Rule	Final Rule	Regs Effective	Notes
Golden Tilefish	2018-2020	4/11/17	6/5/17	8/16/17	9/7/17	11/7/17	11/2/17	2019 specs were reviewed in April 2018. No changes were recommended.
Surfclam and Ocean Quahog	2018-2020	6/6/17	8/14/17	9/22/17	12/8/17	2/6/18	3/8/18	2020 specs were reviewed in June 2019. No changes were recommended.
Longfin Squid and Butterfish	2018-2020	6/7/17		8/24/17	12/13/17	3/1/18	4/2/18	2019 specs were reviewed in October 2018. No changes were recommended.
<i>Illex</i> Squid	2019-2021	10/3/18	12/4/18	2/11/19	5/1/19	8/2/19	8/1/19	
Atlantic Mackerel (MSB FW 13)	2019-2021	8/13/18	9/27/18	2/28/19	6/7/19	10/30/19	11/29/19	
Atlantic Mackerel (including RH/S cap)	2020	6/5/19	8/22/19	9/30/19	12/17/19			
Chub mackerel	2020-2022	3/7/19	5/31/19	10/25/19				
Scup	2020	3/7/19	6/11/19	7/24/19	7/26/19	10/9/2019	1/1/2020	Interim specs to be replaced as soon as possible after results of 2019 operational assessment are available
Scup	2020-2021	10/8/19	1/15/20					Revised specifications based on the 2019 operational stock assessment
Blueline Tilefish	2019-2021	4/11/18	8/17/18	10/24/18	11/19/18	2/12/19	2/12/19	
Bluefish	2020	3/7/19	6/11/19	7/24/19	7/26/19	10/9/2019	1/1/2020	Interim specs to be replaced as soon as possible after results of 2019 operational assessment are available
Bluefish	2020-2021	12/10/19	1/23/20					
Summer Flounder	2020-2021	3/6/19	6/25/19	7/18/19	7/26/19	10/9/19		
Black Sea Bass	2020	3/7/19	6/11/19	7/24/19	7/26/19	10/9/2019	1/1/2020	Interim specs to be replaced as soon as possible after results of 2019 operational assessment are available
Black Sea Bass	2020-2021	10/9/19	1/15/20					Revised specifications based on the 2019 operational stock assessment
Spiny Dogfish	2019-2021	10/2/18	11/30/18	3/5/19	3/29/19	5/15/19	5/15/19	In multi-year specs

Recreational Management Measures

Current Management Measures	Year(s)	Council Approval	Initial Submission	Final Submission	Proposed Rule	Final Rule	Regs Effective	Notes
Summer flounder recreational measures	2020	12/10/19	1/22/20					Rulemaking required each year to continue use of conservation equivalency
Black sea bass recreational measures	2020	2/14/18	3/5/18	4/10/18	4/11/18	5/31/18	5/31/18	Reviewed in 2019. No changes from previous year's measures.
Scup recreational measures	2020	12/10/14	3/20/15		5/5/15	6/19/15	6/19/15	Reviewed in 2019. No changes from previous year's measures.
Bluefish recreational measures	2020	12/10/19	1/23/20					

Memorandum

Date: January 29, 2020

To: Chris Moore and Mike Luisi

From: Fiona Hogan and Nick Napoli

Re: Ocean Data Portals Project

NROC and MARCO have partnered with RODA to engage commercial fishermen in the development of updated maps and data for the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portals. The goals of this project include increased collaboration with the fishing industry on the development of products that represent their interests and improved fishing industry trust in regional data products and the data that are being used to inform decisions. This will be achieved by partnering with fishing industry representatives and organizations to determine the need and potential uses for fisheries data products, to design and review draft products, and to develop documentation and communications about the appropriate application and use of final data products that are available on the ocean data portals.

Most fishing industry participation in this project will be facilitated by the Responsible Offshore Development Alliance (RODA). RODA is a broad membership-based coalition of fishing industry associations and fishing companies with an interest in improving the compatibility of new offshore development with their businesses. RODA includes members from throughout the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions and it is broadly representative of the different sectors, gear types, and businesses that operate in the area. NROC and MARCO will identify additional industry contacts, will use other venues, and may partner with additional fishing industry organizations, as necessary, to fill gaps in RODA's membership and reach. This will be determined on an as needed basis.

This use of funds will improve products and collaboration around the highest data priority for ocean management decision-making in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions. It also overlaps with several of the top ten national priorities identified in the Regional Data Platform Scoping Study conducted by BOEM and NOAA OCM under Executive Order 13840. Fisheries maps and data products are among the most highly used and requested data on both regional data portals. Recently they've been used to inform planning, management, and regulatory processes related to offshore wind development, aquaculture, telecommunications cables, and ocean disposal site designation. There is a critical need to update fisheries data products in collaboration with the industry as the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic Regional Data Portals are increasingly being used to inform these and other decisions. This project will increase collaboration, trust, and data and information sharing around a high priority ocean management data need in both regions and set an example and road map for ensuring that data products are updated and developed in collaboration with the industry in the future.

Please feel free to reach out to RODA staff if you are interested in providing feedback. RODA staff will be reaching out to individual fishermen for feedback and Council Advisory Panels.

Contact email: Fiona Hogan at RODA: fiona@rodafisheries.org

Nick Napoli at NROC: nicknapoli01@gmail.com



Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council Updates for January 17, 2020:

February Council Meeting Agenda: The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council will meet February 11-13, 2020 in Duck, North Carolina. The agenda is available [here](#).

Bluefish Allocation and Rebuilding Amendment: The MAFMC has scheduled eleven scoping hearings to gather public input for the Bluefish Allocation and Rebuilding Amendment. Hearings will be held between February 13 and March 4, 2020. Written comments will be accepted through March 17, 2020. Additional details are available in the [hearing announcement](#) and [scoping document](#).

Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Commercial/Recreational Allocation Amendment: The MAFMC and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission have scheduled eleven scoping hearings to gather public input on the range of issues and information to be considered in the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Commercial/Recreational Allocation Amendment. Hearings will be held between February 13 and March 3. Written comments will be accepted through March 17, 2020. Additional details are available in the [hearing announcement](#) and [scoping document](#).

SSC Nominations: The MAFMC is seeking candidates to fill four seats on its Scientific and Statistical Committee. Applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, January 24, 2020. View the [announcement](#) for details and application instructions.

IT Specialist Vacancy: The MAFMC is seeking candidates for the position of IT Specialist and Data Manager. Applications are due January 31, 2020. See the [vacancy announcement](#) for more information.

Offshore Wind Updates: The latest update on offshore wind activities in the Mid-Atlantic and Southern New England is available [here](#). Sign up for our [offshore wind email list](#) to receive these updates (be sure to check the box next to "Offshore Wind Updates").

SSC Agenda: An agenda for the March 10-11 Scientific and Statistical Committee meeting is now available [here](#).

Longfin Squid: Longfin squid incidental catch permit applications are due by February 29, 2020. See the [NOAA Fisheries bulletin](#) for more information.

Rutgers IFISSH Course: January 24th is the deadline to register for Rutgers Cooperative Extension's Introductory Fisheries Science for Stakeholders (IFISSH) Course. This course was developed to educate New Jersey's commercial and

recreational fishing industries' stakeholders on fisheries science and management. Classes will meet every Tuesday from January 28 through March 31, 2020. Learn more on the [IFISSH web page](#).

Spanish Mackerel Trip Limits: The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council is seeking input on proposed commercial trip limit reductions for Spanish mackerel in the Atlantic Northern Zone (federal waters from the North Carolina/South Carolina line northward to the New York/Rhode Island/Connecticut line). The reductions are proposed to help extend the commercial season. Webinar hearings will be held January 22 and 23 at 6:00 p.m. Written comments will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. on February 7. More information is available [here](#).

Upcoming Meetings:

- **Jan 31:** [Northeast Trawl Advisory Panel Meeting \(Webinar\)](#)
- **Feb 4:** [Mackerel, Squid, Butterfish Advisory Panel Meeting - Illex Quota Discussion #1 \(Webinar\)](#)
- **Feb 6:** [Mackerel, Squid, Butterfish Advisory Panel Meeting \(Webinar\)](#)
- **Feb 7:** [Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Committee Meeting \(Webinar\)](#)
- **Feb 11-13:** [February 2020 Council Meeting](#)
- **Feb 18:** [Mackerel, Squid, Butterfish Advisory Panel Meeting - Illex Quota Discussion #2 \(Webinar\)](#)
- **Feb 25:** [Spring 2020 Management Track Assessment Oversight Panel Meeting](#)

Questions? Contact Mary Sabo - msabo@mafmc.org, (302) 518-1143.

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

www.mafmc.org

800 North State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901

Phone: [\(302\) 674-2331](tel:(302)674-2331) | Toll-Free: [\(877\) 446-2362](tel:(877)446-2362) | Fax: (302) 674-5399



Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
800 North State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901
Phone: 302-674-2331 | FAX: 302-674-5399 | www.mafmc.org
Michael P. Luisi, Chairman | G. Warren Elliott, Vice Chairman
Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 22, 2020
To: Chris Moore, Executive Director
From: Julia Beaty, staff
Subject: Council outreach on offshore wind

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) maintains three webpages and an email list to communicate updates on offshore wind energy development with interested stakeholders.

The webpages are maintained jointly with the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) and NOAA Fisheries. The main webpage, <http://www.mafmc.org/northeast-offshore-wind> (see screenshot), provides general background information on offshore wind energy development in the northeast region and includes links to all MAFMC and NEFMC comment letters on offshore wind energy projects.

A second webpage titled “Offshore Wind Notices to Fishermen” (<http://www.mafmc.org/offshore-wind-notices>) includes notices provided by offshore wind project developers regarding offshore surveys, buoy installations, and other activities that may occur in areas used by fishermen. This page is updated frequently.

The third webpage is titled “Offshore Wind Comment Opportunities” (<http://www.mafmc.org/offshore-wind-comment-opportunities>) and contains links to open public comment periods. We expect this page to be updated with many additional comment opportunities in 2020.

Lastly, in October 2019, the Council created an email list for offshore wind updates relevant to Mid-Atlantic fisheries. Anyone can subscribe using the form at <http://www.mafmc.org/email-list>. Updates are sent approximately once a month. We have received very positive feedback on this list. Almost 250 email addresses are currently subscribed.



Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
800 North State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901
Phone: 302-674-2331 | FAX: 302-674-5399 | www.mafmc.org
Michael P. Luisi, Chairman | G. Warren Elliott, Vice Chairman
Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 31, 2020
To: Chris Moore, Executive Director
From: Karson Coutre, Staff
Subject: McMurdo's Omnitrac's VMS Unit Replacement

What is the current situation?

A total of 705 commercial vessels in the Mid-Atlantic and New England regions use McMurdo's Omnitrac's (previously 'Boatrac's') Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) units to fulfill Greater Atlantic Region fishing permit requirements. Mid-Atlantic species permits with associated VMS requirements include monkfish, mackerel, Illex and longfin squid, surfclam, and ocean quahog. On December 19, 2019, McMurdo notified NMFS and its customers that the McMurdo 'Omnitrac's' VMS operated by vessels with Greater Atlantic Region permits would not be supported by its satellite provider after March 31, 2020. According to GARFO's notice to fishermen (distributed January 15, 2020) the 'Omnitrac's' VMS unit will not function with any other satellite provider and **must be replaced by April 1, 2020 or risk being out of compliance** with VMS regulations in the region. There are currently 2 other vendors that have approved VMS units and McMurdo has a new replacement VMS called 'OmniCom' which is currently undergoing expedited testing and approval in the Greater Atlantic Region.

What are the associated issues?

Several stakeholders in the Mid-Atlantic region have voiced their concern with this transition. Currently, fishermen are responsible for coordinating the purchase and installation of a new VMS unit. This is a costly burden that may not be able to be accomplished through no fault of the vessel owner/operators (new units vary in price but are approximately \$3,000). In addition, according to the NMFS Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) update to the New England Fishery Management Council (January 28, 2020), the new McMurdo unit undergoing testing for approval lacks the inventory to support the 705 vessels that will require new hardware.

Next Steps

Finally, due to the ongoing approval process, inventory issues, and installation services needed across a large geographic range, it may not be realistic to expect all affected vessels to have compliant VMS units by April 1, 2020, raising enforcement issues. Additionally, NOAA has a VMS reimbursement program managed by OLE headquarters, however a vessel owner is only eligible if they have not received a previous reimbursement for a unit for that vessel. The reimbursement policy only allows a second reimbursement if the government caused the unit to become non-compliant. The Council should discuss with NMFS what options may be available to address these issues.



January 2020

Each year, the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council reviews commercial landings of unmanaged species from Maine through North Carolina.¹ To date, these reports have not filtered out species managed by individual states. To assist the Council in creating a more meaningful report, please check the box for each species below which is managed with the associated type of management measure in your state waters. You do not need to provide details on any management measures. The list below does not contain species managed in the Mid-Atlantic or New England by one of the regional fishery management councils or the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

If you have any questions, please contact Julia Beaty (jbeaty@mafmc.org, 302-526-5250).

Please email the completed form to jbeaty@mafmc.org by March 31, 2020.

State name _____

Common Name(s)	Scientific Name	Possession limit or prohibition, size limit, seasonal closure, and/or limited access	Permit and/or reporting requirement
FISH			
AFRICAN POMPANO	ALECTIS CILIARIS		
ALMACO JACK	SERIOLA RIVOLIANA		
AMBERJACK, GREATER	SERIOLA DUMERILI		
AMBERJACK, LESSER	SERIOLA FASCIATA		
ANGELFISH/BUTTERFLY FISH	CHAETODONTIDAE		
ARGENTINE	ARGENTINIDAE		
BANDED RUDDERFISH	SERIOLA ZONATA		
BARBIER, RED	BALDWINELLA VIVANUS		
BARRACUDAS	SPHYRAENIDAE		
BARRELFISH	HYPEROGLYPHE PERCIFORMIS		
BAY ANCHOVY	ANCHOA MITCHILLI		
BEARDED BROTLA	BROTULA BARBATA		
BIG ROUGHY	GEPHYROBERYX DARWINII		
BIGEYE, ATLANTIC	PRIACANTHUS ARENATUS		
BIGEYES	PRIACANTHIDAE		
BLACK BELLY ROSE FISH	HELICOLENUS DACTYLOPTERUS		
BLUE RUNNER	CARANX CRYSOS		
BONITO	SARDA SARDA		
BOWFIN	AMIA CALVA		
BULLET MACKEREL	AUXIS ROCHEI		
BUTTERFISH, GULF	PEPRILUS BURTI		

¹ The 2019 version of this report is available at: http://www.mafmc.org/s/Tab05_UnmanagedLandingsUpdate_2019-06.pdf

Common Name(s)	Scientific Name	Possession limit or prohibition, size limit, seasonal closure, and/or limited access	Permit and/or reporting requirement
CAPELIN	MALLOTUS VILLOSUS		
CATFISH, SEA	ARIIDAE		
CERO	SCOMBEROMORUS REGALIS		
CREVALLE	CARANX HIPPOS		
CUNNER	TAUTOGOLABRUS ADSPERSUS		
CUSK	BROSME BROSME		
CUTLASSFISH, ATLANTIC	TRICHIURUS LEPTURUS		
DOGFISH, BLACK	CENTROSCYLLIUM FABRICII		
DOGFISH, CHAIN	SCYLIIORHINUS RETIFER		
DOGFISH, OTHER (NOT BLACK, CHAIN, SPINY, OR SMOOTH DOGFISH)	SQUALIDAE		
DOLPHINFISH, POMPANO	CORYPHAENA EQUISELIS		
DORY	ZEIFORMES		
EEL, CONGER	CONGER OCEANICUS		
EEL, OTHER (NOT CONGER OR AMERICAN EEL)	ANGUILLIFORMES		
ESCOLAR	LEPIDOCYBIUM FLAVOBRUNNEUM		
FLORIDA/ COMMON POMPANO	TRACHINOTUS CAROLINUS		
FLOUNDER, FOURSPOT	HIPPOGLOSSINA OBLONGA / PARALICHTHYS OBLONGUS		
FLOUNDER, GULFSTREAM	CITHARICHTHYS ARCTIFRONS		
FLOUNDER, SOUTHERN	PARALICHTHYS LETHOSTIGMA		
FRIGATE MACKEREL	AUXIS THAZARD		
GARFISHES	LEPISOSTEIDAE		
GOOSEFISH, BLACKFIN	LOPHIUS GASTROPHYSUS		
GRAYSBY	CEPHALOPHOLIS CRUENTATA		
GROUPEL, GAG	MYCTEROPERCA MICROLEPIS		
GROUPEL, RED	EPINEPHELUS MORIO		
GROUPEL, SCAMP	MYCTEROPERCA PHENAX		
GROUPEL, SNOWY	EPINEPHELUS NIVEATUS		
GROUPEL, YELLOWEDGE	EPINEPHELUS FLAVOLIM		
GROUPERS	SERRANIDAE		
GRUNTS	HAEMULIDAE		
HAGFISH	MYXINIDAE		
HAKE, SOUTHERN	UROPHYCIS FLORIDANA		

Common Name(s)	Scientific Name	Possession limit or prohibition, size limit, seasonal closure, and/or limited access	Permit and/or reporting requirement
HAKE, SPOTTED	UROPHYCIS REGIA		
HALIBUT, GREENLAND	REINHARDTIUS HIPPOGLOSSOIDES		
HARVESTFISH	PEPRILUS ALEPIDOTUS/ PEPRILUS PARU		
HERRING, ATLANTIC THREAD	OPISTHONEMA OGLINUM		
HERRING, ROUND	ETRUMEUS TERES		
HIND, RED	EPINEPHELUS GUTTATUS		
HIND, ROCK	EPINEPHELUS ADSCENSIONIS		
HOGCHOKER	TRINECTES MACULATUS		
HOGFISH	LACHNOLAIMUS MAXIMUS		
HOUNDFISH	TYLOSURUS CROCODILUS		
JACK, BAR	CARANGOIDES RUBER		
JOHN DORY	ZENOPSIS OCELLATA		
KINGFISH, NORTHERN	MENTICIRRHUS SAXATILIS		
LADYFISH	ELOPS SAURUS		
LAMPREY	PETROMYZON MARINUS		
LITTLE TUNNY/ FALSE ALBACORE	EUTHYNNUS ALLETTERATUS		
LIZARDFISH	SYNODUS FOETENS		
LOOKDOWN	SELENE VOMER		
LUMPFISH	CYCLOPTERUS LUMPUS		
MACKEREL, KING	SCOMBEROMORUS CAVALLA		
MARGATE	HAEMULON ALBUM		
MULLET, STRIPED	MUGIL CEPHALUS		
MULLETS	MUGILIDAE		
NEEDLEFISH, ATLANTIC	STRONGYLURA MARINA		
NEEDLEFISHES	TYLOSURUS SPP		
OILFISH	RUVETTUS PRETIOSUS		
OPAH	LAMPRIS GUTTATUS		
PARROTFISH	SCARIDAE		
PERCH, ATLANTIC	SEBASTES MARINUS		
PERCH, SAND	DIPLECTRUM FORMOSUM		
PERCH, WHITE	MORONE AMERICANA		
PERCH, YELLOW	PERCA FLAVESCENS		
PERMIT	TRACHINOTUS FALCATUS		
PIGFISH	ORTHOPRISTIS CHRYSOPTERA		
PINFISH	LAGODON RHOMBOIDES		
PINFISH, SPOTTAIL	DIPLODUS HOLBROOKII		
PIPEFISH	SYNGNATHIDAE		
PITAR	PITAR		

Common Name(s)	Scientific Name	Possession limit or prohibition, size limit, seasonal closure, and/or limited access	Permit and/or reporting requirement
POMFRETS	BRAMIDAE		
POMPANO	TRACHINOTUS		
PORGY, JOLTHEAD	CALAMUS BAJONADO		
PORGY, KNOBBED	CALAMUS NODOSUS		
PORGY, LITTLEHEAD	CALAMUS PRORIDENS		
PORGY, RED	PAGRUS PAGRUS		
PORGY, SAUCEREYE	CALAMUS CALAMUS		
PORGY, WHITEBONE	CALAMUS LEUCOSTEUS		
PORGIES, OTHER (NOT JOLTHEAD, KNOBBED, LITTLEHEAD, RED, OR SCUP)	SPARIDAE		
PUFFER, NORTHERN	SPHOEROIDES MACULATUS		
PUFFER, OTHER (NOT NORTHERN)	SPHOEROIDES & TETRAODONTIDAE		
RAINBOW TROUT/ STEELHEAD TROUT	ONCORHYNCHUS MYKISS		
RAY, COWNOSE	RHINOPTERA BONASUS		
RAY, OTHER (NOT COWNOSE)	RAJIFORMES		
RED LIONFISH	PTEROIS VOLITANS		
RIBBONFISH	TRACHIPTERIDAE		
SAND LANCE, AMERICAN	AMMODYTES AMERICANUS		
SAND LANCE, NORTHERN	AMMODYTES DUBIUS		
SAND SEA TROUT/ SAND WEAKFISH	CYNOSCION ARENARIUS		
SCAD, ROUND	DECAPTERUS PUNCTAUS		
SCAD, ROUGH	TRACHURUS LATHAMI		
SCORPIONFISH	SCORPAENIDAE		
SCULPIN, LONGHORN	MYOXOCEPHALUS OCTODECEMSPINOSUS		
SCULPINS, OTHER (NOT LONGHORN)	COTTIDAE		
SEA BASS, BANK	CENTROPRISTIS OCYURUS		
SEA BASS, ROCK	CENTROPRISTIS PHILADELPHICA		
SEA BASS, OTHER (NOT BANK, ROCK, OR BLACK)	CENTROPRISTIS		
SEA CHUBS	KYPHOSIDAE		
SEA CUCUMBERS	HOLOTHUROIDEA		
SEA RAVEN	HEMITRIPTERUS AMERICANUS		
SEA ROBIN, ARMORED	PERISTEDION MINIATUM		
SEA ROBIN, NORTHERN	PRIONOTUS CAROLINUS		
SEA ROBIN, STRIPED	PRIONOTUS EVOLANS		
SEA ROBIN, OTHER (NOT ARMORED, NORTHERN, OR STRIPED)	TRIGLIDAE		

Common Name(s)	Scientific Name	Possession limit or prohibition, size limit, seasonal closure, and/or limited access	Permit and/or reporting requirement
SEA URCHINS	STRONGYLOCENTROTUS		
SHEEPSHEAD	ARCHOSARGUS PROBATOCEPHALUS		
SHEEPSHEAD MINNOW	CYPRINODON VARIEGATUS		
SILVERSIDE, ATLANTIC	MENIDIA MENIDIA		
SILVERSIDE, OTHER (NOT ATLANTIC)	ATHERINIDAE		
SMELTS	OSMERIDAE		
SNAPPER, BLACKFIN	LUTJANUS BUCCANELLA		
SNAPPER, CUBERA	LUTJANUS CYANOPTERUS		
SNAPPER, DOG	LUTJANUS JOCU		
SNAPPER, GRAY	LUTJANUS GRISEUS		
SNAPPER, MUTTON	LUTJANUS ANALIS		
SNAPPER, QUEEN	ETELIS OCULATUS		
SNAPPER, RED	LUTJANUS CAMPECHANUS		
SNAPPER, SILK	LUTJANUS VIVANUS		
SNAPPER, VERMILLION	RHOMBOPLITES AURORUBENS		
SNAPPER, YELLOWTAIL	OCYURUS CHRYSURUS		
SNAPPER, OTHER (NOT BLACKFIN, CUBERA, DOG, GRAY, MUTTON, QUEEN, RED, SILK, VERMILLION, OR YELLOWTAIL)	LUTJANIDAE		
SPADEFISH, ATLANTIC	CHAETODIPTERUS FABER		
SPOTTED SEA TROUT/SPOTTED WEAKFISH	CYNOSCIION NEBULOSUS		
SEA TROUT, OTHER (NOT SPOTTED)	CYNOSCIION SPP		
SQUIRRELFISH	HOLOCENTRIDAE		
STARGAZER, NORTHERN	ASTROSCOPUS GUTTATUS		
STINGRAY, ATLANTIC	DASYATIS SABINA		
STINGRAY, OTHER (NOT ATLANTIC)	DASYATIDAE		
TARPON	MEGALOPS ATLANTICUS		
TILEFISH, SAND	MALACANTHUS PLUMIERI		
TILEFISH, OTHER (NOT SAND, GOLDEN, OR BLUELINE)	MALACANTHIDAE		
TOADFISH, OYSTER	OPSANUS TAU		
TOADFISH, OTHER (NOT OYSTER TOADFISH)	BATRACHOIDIDAE		
TORPEDO, ATLANTIC	TORPEDO NOBILIANA		
TRIGGERFISH, GRAY	BALISTES CAPRISCUS		
TRIGGERFISH, QUEEN	BALISTES VETULA		
TRIGGERFISH, OTHER (NOT GRAY OR QUEEN)	BALISTIDAE		
TRIPLETAIL	LOBOTES SURINAMENSIS		

Common Name(s)	Scientific Name	Possession limit or prohibition, size limit, seasonal closure, and/or limited access	Permit and/or reporting requirement
TUNA, BLACKFIN	THUNNUS ATLANTICUS		
WHITING, KING	MENTICIRRHUS		
WOLFFISH, NORTHERN	ANARHICHAS DENTICULATUS		
WOLFFISH, SPOTTED	ANARHICHAS MINOR		
WRECKFISH	POLYPRION AMERICANUS		
INVERTEBRATES			
BLOODWORM	GLYCERA DIBRANCHIATA		
CLAM, ARCTIC SURF	MACTROMERIS POLYNYMA		
CLAM, BLOODARC	ANADARA OVALIS		
CLAM, FALSE QUAHOG	PITAR MORRHAUNUS		
CLAM, RAZOR	ENSIS DIRECTUS		
CLAM, SOFT	MYA ARENARIA		
CLAM, STOUT RAZOR	TAGELUS PLEBEIUS		
CLAM, RANGIA	RANGIA CUNEATA		
CLAM, SUNRAY VENUS	MACROCALLISTA NIMBOSA		
CLAM, OTHER (NOT ATLANTIC SURF, ARCTIC SURF, BLOODARC, FALSE QUAHOG, RAZOR, SOFT, STOUT RAZOR, RANGIA, OR SUNRAY VENUS)	BIVALVIA		
CONCHS	STROMBIDAE		
CRAB, BLUE	CALLINECTES SAPIDUS		
CRAB, FLORIDA STONE	MENIPPE MERCENARIA		
CRAB, GREEN	CARCINUS MAENAS		
CRAB, HERMIT	PAGURUS		
CRAB, JAPANESE SHORE	HEMIGRAPSUS		
CRAB, LADY	OVALIPES OCELLATUS		
CRAB, ROCK	CANCER IRRORATUS		
CRAB, SNOW	CHIONOECETES OPILIO		
CRAB, SPIDER	MAJIDAE		
LOBSTER, SPINY	PANULIRUS ARGUS		
MANTIS SHRIMP	STOMATOPODA		
MUSSEL, BLUE	MYTILUS EDULIS		
NORTHERN QUAHOG/ HARD CLAM	MERCENARIA MERCENARIA		
SOUTHERN QUAHOG/HARD CLAM	MERCENARIA CAMPECHIENSIS		
OCTOPUS	OCTOPODIDAE		
OYSTER, EASTERN	CRASSOSTREA VIRGINICA		
OYSTER, EUROPEAN FLAT	OSTREA EDULIS		
PERIWINKLES	LITTORINIDAE		
SANDWORMS	NEREIS		
SCALLOP, BAY	ARGOPECTEN IRRADIANS		
SCALLOP, CALICO	ARGOPECTEN GIBBUS		

Common Name(s)	Scientific Name	Possession limit or prohibition, size limit, seasonal closure, and/or limited access	Permit and/or reporting requirement
SCALLOP, ICELANDIC	CHLAMYS ISLANDICA		
SHRIMP (SICYONIA)	SICYONIA		
SHRIMP, BROWN	FARFANTEPENAEUS AZTECUS		
SHRIMP, CARIDEAN	CARIDEA		
SHRIMP, PENAEID	PENAEIDAE		
SHRIMP, PINK	FARFANTEPENAEUS DUORARUM		
SHRIMP, ROYAL RED	PLEOTICUS ROBUSTUS		
SHRIMP, WHITE	LITOPENAEUS SETIFERUS		
SHRIMP, OTHER (NOT NORTHERN, SICYONIA, BROWN, CARIDEAN, PENAEID, PINK ROYAL RED, OR WHITE)	DENDROBRANCHIATA		
SNAIL, SLIPPER	CREPIDULA FORNICATA		
SNAILS (MOON)	NATICIDAE		
STARFISH	ASTEROIDEA		
WHELK, CHANNELED	BUSYCOTYPUS CANALICULATUS		
WHELK, KNOBBED	BUSYCON CARICA		
WHELK, LIGHTNING	BUSYCON SINISTRUM		
WHELK, WAVED	BUCCINUM UNDATUM		
ALGAE			
BLADDER WRACK	FUCUS VESICLOSUS		
BROWN ALGAE	PHAEOPHYTA		
DULSE	PALMARIA PALMATA		
FINGERED KELP	LAMINARIA DIGITATA		
KELP, SUGAR	LAMINARIA SACCHARINA		
OARWEED KELP	LAMINARIA LONGICRURIS		
WINGED KELP	ALARIA ESCULENTA		
ROCKWEED/ KNOTTED WRACK/ WORMWEED	ASCOPHYLLUM NODOSUM		
ROCKWEED, OTHER	FUCACEAE		



Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
800 North State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901
Phone: 302-674-2331 | FAX: 302-674-5399 | www.mafmc.org
Michael P. Luisi, Chairman | G. Warren Elliott, Vice Chairman
Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 31, 2020
To: Chris Moore, Executive Director
From: Julia Beaty, staff
Subject: Scoping for Black Sea Bass Commercial Allocation Amendment

Background

During their joint meeting with the Council in October 2019, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (Commission's) Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board (Board) initiated an addendum to consider changes to the allocations of the black sea bass commercial quota among states. At the December 2019 joint meeting, the Council voted to make this a joint action. For the Council, the allocation changes under consideration must be made through an amendment. More information on this developing action is available at: <http://www.mafmc.org/actions/bsb-commercial-allocation>.

Typically, the Council undertakes a public scoping process shortly after initiation of an amendment. This includes one or more public scoping hearings and a written comment period. Scoping helps the Council decide which types of management alternatives should be further developed through the amendment process.

The Black Sea Bass Commercial Allocation Amendment is unique in that development of potential management alternatives began several months before the joint amendment/addendum was formally initiated. Potential alternatives were discussed at many public meetings between October 2018 and December 2019, including eight Council and/or Board meetings and one Advisory Panel meeting.

NOAA Fisheries staff have advised that based on the anticipated range of alternatives and the fact that these alternatives have already been discussed at multiple public meetings, additional public scoping meetings are not required under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act or the National Environmental Policy Act.

Staff Recommendation for Scoping

Although an additional public scoping process is not required, staff recommend that, during their February 2020 meeting, the Council agree to hold one public scoping webinar in late April or early May 2020 with an associated written comment period. A draft scoping document will be presented to the Council at their April meeting.

The proposed webinar scoping meeting will provide an additional formal public comment opportunity prior to finalization of a range of alternatives, which is expected to occur during the May 2020 joint meeting. An extensive scoping period with multiple hearings is not recommended as many potential alternatives for this amendment have already been partially developed and discussed in detail at multiple public meetings, as described above.



NEWS RELEASE



Robert E. Beal, Executive Director

Christopher Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
January 7, 2020

MAFMC PRESS CONTACT: Mary Sabo, 302-518-1143
ASMFC PRESS CONTACT: Tina Berger, 703-842-0740

MAFMC and ASMFC to Hold Scoping Hearings for Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Commercial/Recreational Allocation Amendment

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) have scheduled a series of scoping hearings to gather public input on the range of issues and information to be considered in the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Commercial/Recreational Allocation Amendment. Hearings will be held February 13 – March 3. Written comments will be accepted through **March 17, 2020**. All comments provided at public hearings or in writing will be presented to the Council and Commission.

This amendment will consider potential modifications to the allocations of catch or landings between the commercial and recreational sectors for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass. The commercial and recreational allocations for all three species were set in the mid-1990s based on historical proportions of landings (for summer flounder and black sea bass) or catch (for scup) from each sector. In July 2018, the Marine Recreational Information Program released revisions to its time series of catch (harvest and discards) estimates. These revisions resulted in much higher recreational catch estimates compared to previous estimates, affecting the entire time series of data going back to 1981. Some changes have also been made to commercial catch data since the allocations were established. The current commercial and recreational allocation percentages for all three species do not reflect the current understanding of the recent and historic proportions of catch and landings from the two sectors. This amendment will consider whether changes to these allocations are warranted.

Scoping is the first and best opportunity to raise concerns related to the scope of issues that will be considered. You are encouraged to submit comments on which options may or may not be useful or practical for meeting the goal of this action and any other relevant issues the Council and Commission should consider.

Learn More

The Scoping and Public Information Document contains background information on summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass management and on issues that may be addressed in the amendment, as well as a description of the amendment process and timeline. This document, along with additional information and updates on development of this amendment, is available on the Council's website at <http://www.mafmc.org/actions/sfsbsb-allocation-amendment>.

Contacts

Julia Beaty, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, jbeaty@mafmc.org, 302-526-5250

Dustin Colson Leaning, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, dleaning@asmfc.org, 703-842-0740

www.asmfc.org

Given summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass's presence in, and movement between, state waters (0-3 miles from shore) and federal waters (3-200 miles from shore), the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council jointly manage these species.

www.mafmc.org

Hearing Schedule

Date and Time	Location	Contact
Thursday, Feb. 13 6:00-7:30 PM	Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Admiral's Hall 101 Academy Drive, Buzzards Bay, MA 02532	Nichola Meserve 617-626-1531
Wednesday, Feb. 19 6:00-7:00 PM	Delaware Dept. of Natural Resources & Environmental Control DNREC Auditorium, Richards & Robbins Building 89 Kings Highway, Dover, DE 19901	John Clark 302-739-9914
Monday, Feb. 24 6:00-8:00 PM	Belmar Municipal Court Room 601 Main Street, Belmar, NJ 07719	Joe Cimino 609-748-2020
Tuesday, Feb. 25 3:30-4:45 PM	Berlin Library 13 Harrison Avenue, Berlin, MD 21811	Steve Doctor 410-213-1531
Tuesday, Feb. 25 6:00-8:00 PM	Galloway Township Branch Library 306 East Jimmie Leeds Road, Galloway, NJ 08205	Joe Cimino 609-748-2020
Tuesday, Feb. 25 6:00-8:00 PM	North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries, Pamlico District Office 943 Washington Square Mall, US Highway 17, Washington, NC 27889	Chris Batsavage 252-808-8009
Wednesday, Feb. 26 6:00-7:30 PM	University of Rhode Island Bay Campus, Corless Auditorium South Ferry Road, Narragansett, RI 02882	Jason McNamee 401-423-1943
Wednesday, Feb. 26 7:00-8:00 PM	Connecticut Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection Marine Headquarters Boating Education Center (Rear Building) 333 Ferry Road, Old Lyme, CT 06371	Justin Davis 860-447-4322
Thursday, Feb. 27 6:00-7:30 PM	Stony Brook University, School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences Room 120 Endeavor Hall, Stony Brook, NY 11794-5000	Maureen Davidson 631-444-0483
Monday, Mar. 2 5:00-6:00 PM	Virginia Marine Resources Commission 380 Fenwick Road, Building 96, Fort Monroe, VA 23651	Patrick Geer 757-247-2078
Tuesday, Mar. 3 6:00-7:30 PM	Internet Webinar http://mafmc.adobeconnect.com/sfsbsb_com_rec_allocation_scoping/ <i>Audio: 1-800-832-0736 and entering room number 5068871.</i>	Julia Beaty 302-526-5250

Please note that some hearings will be held in conjunction with (immediately before or after) supplemental scoping hearings for an ongoing Bluefish Allocation Amendment. A schedule for the bluefish hearings will be posted at: <http://www.mafmc.org/actions/bluefish-allocation-amendment>.

Written Comments

In addition to providing comments at any of the scheduled public hearings, you may submit written comments by 11:59 pm EST on **Tuesday, March 17, 2020**. Written comments may be sent by any of the following methods:

1. **ONLINE:** <http://www.mafmc.org/comments/sfsbsb-allocation-amendment>
2. **EMAIL:** jbeaty@mafmc.org
3. **MAIL or FAX:** Dr. Christopher Moore, Executive Director
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
800 North State Street, Suite 201
Dover, DE 19901
FAX: 302.674.5399

Please include "Fluke/Scup/Sea Bass Allocation Amendment" in the subject line if using email or fax, or on the outside of the envelope if submitting written comments. All comments, regardless of submission method, will be compiled into a single document for review and consideration by both the Council and Commission. **Please do not send separate comments to the Council and Commission.**



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 13, 2020

PRESS CONTACT: Mary Sabo
(302) 518-1143

Mid-Atlantic Council to Hold Supplemental Scoping Hearings for Bluefish Allocation and Rebuilding Amendment

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold eleven supplemental scoping hearings to gather public input for the Bluefish Allocation and Rebuilding Amendment. The Council is developing this action in cooperation with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) in order to (1) update the goals and objectives of the Bluefish Fishery Management Plan (FMP); (2) perform a comprehensive review of the bluefish sector allocations, commercial allocations to the states, and transfer processes; and (3) initiate a bluefish rebuilding plan. Scoping hearings will be held between **February 13 and March 4, 2020**. Written comments will be accepted through **March 17, 2020**.

An initial round of scoping was conducted in the summer of 2018 to gauge public interest in the development of an amendment. Since then, recalibrated Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) estimates became available and were incorporated into the 2019 bluefish operational assessment. The assessment concluded that the stock was overfished but not experiencing overfishing. The Council and Commission subsequently recommended including the rebuilding plan into this ongoing amendment. Because the additional issue modifies the scope of the amendment, the Council is holding additional hearings to provide the public ample opportunities to comment on the expanded scope of the amendment.

Public comments during scoping will help the Council address issues of public concern in a thorough and appropriate manner. Some management questions for consideration in this amendment include:

- Are the existing goals and objectives appropriate for managing the bluefish fishery?
- Is the existing allocation between the commercial and recreational sectors based on the annual catch limit appropriate for managing the bluefish fishery?
- Are the existing commercial state allocations appropriate for managing the bluefish fishery?
- Are the existing transfer processes appropriate for managing the bluefish fishery?
- What is the appropriate approach to take for rebuilding?

Learn More

The Supplemental Scoping and Public Information Document contains background information on bluefish management and on issues that may be addressed in the amendment. This document, along with additional information and updates on development of this amendment, is available on the Council's website at <http://www.mafmc.org/actions/bluefish-allocation-amendment>.

Contact

Please direct any questions about the amendment to Matt Seeley, (302) 526-5262, mseeley@mafmc.org.

Hearing Schedule

Date and Time	Location
February 13, 2020, 7:30-9:00 PM	Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Admiral's Hall 101 Academy Drive, Buzzards Bay, MA 02532
February 18, 2020, 6:00-8:00 PM	Ocean County Administration Building – Room 119 101 Hooper Avenue, Toms River, New Jersey 08753
February 19, 2020, 7:00-8:00 PM	Delaware Dept. of Natural Resources & Environmental Control Auditorium Richardson & Robbins Building, 89 Kings Highway, Dover, Delaware 19901
February 25, 2020, 4:45-6:00 PM	Berlin Library 13 Harrison Ave. Berlin, MD 21811
February 26, 2020, 7:30-9:00 PM	University of Rhode Island Bay Campus, Corless Auditorium South Ferry Road, Narragansett, Rhode Island 02882
February 26, 2020, 8:00-9:00 PM	Connecticut Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection Marine Headquarters Boating Education Center (Rear Building) 333 Ferry Road, Old Lyme, CT 06371
February 27, 2020, 6:00-7:30 PM	NC Division of Marine Fisheries Central District Office 5285 Highway 70 West, Morehead City, North Carolina 28557
February 27, 2020, 7:30-9:00 PM	Stony Brook University, School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences Room 120 Endeavour Hall; Stony Brook, NY 11794
March 2, 2020, 6:00-8:00 PM	Merritt Island Service Center Complex 2575 N. Courtenay Pkwy #205, Merritt Island, FL 32953
March 2, 2020, 6:00-7:00 PM	Virginia Marine Resources Commission 380 Fenwick Road Bldg 96 Fort Monroe, VA 23651
March 4, 2020, 6:00-7:30 PM	Internet webinar: http://mafmc.adobeconnect.com/bf_allocation_rebuilding_scoping/ For audio-only access, dial 800-830-0736 and enter room number 5068609.

Please note that some hearings will be held immediately before or after scoping hearings for an ongoing Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Commercial/Recreational Allocation Amendment. A schedule for those hearings is available at <http://www.mafmc.org/newsfeed/2020/mafmc-asmfc-sfsbsb-allocation-scoping-hearings>.

Written Comments

In addition to providing comments at any of the scheduled public hearings, you may submit written comments by 11:59 pm EDT on **Tuesday, March 17, 2020**. Written comments may be sent by any of the following methods:

1. **ONLINE:** <http://www.mafmc.org/comments/bluefish-allocation-rebuilding-amendment>
2. **EMAIL:** mseeley@mafmc.org
3. **MAIL or FAX:** Dr. Christopher Moore, Executive Director
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
800 North State Street, Suite 201
Dover, DE 19901
FAX: 302.674.5399

Please include “Bluefish Scoping Comments” in the subject line if using email or fax, or on the outside of the envelope if submitting written comments. All comments, regardless of submission method, will be compiled into a single document for review and consideration by both the Council and Commission.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 29, 2020

PRESS CONTACT: Janice Plante, jplante@nefmc.org
PRESS CONTACT: Mary Sabo, msabo@mafmc.org

Councils Approve Omnibus Commercial eVTR Framework

The New England Fishery Management Council and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council have taken final action on an omnibus framework adjustment that will require commercial fishermen to submit vessel trip reports (VTRs) electronically as eVTRs instead of on paper for all species managed by both Councils. The Mid-Atlantic Council initiated the action in December of 2018 and signed off on the framework during its December 2019 meeting. The New England Council joined the framework in June of 2019 and took final action during its late-January 2020 meeting in Portsmouth, NH.

Once approved and implemented by the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS/NOAA Fisheries), the framework will:

- Require commercial vessels with federal permits for all species managed by both Councils to submit currently required VTRs to NOAA Fisheries through electronic means; and
- Change the VTR reporting deadline to 48 hours after entering port at the conclusion of the trip.

This action does not change any other existing requirements associated with VTRs but would be an administrative modification in the method and timing for submitting these reports.

The vast majority of fishermen currently submit VTRs on paper even though the option to submit vessel trip reports electronically has been available since 2013. NMFS is aware that the learning curve will be steep, and the agency already has indicated that a final rule would include an extended implementation deadline of up to a year to allow for

Number of Commercial eVTRs Submitted in 2018

Paper	73, 132
Electronic	7,727

The above VTR numbers were reported by GARFO for vessels issued a commercial permit in 2018 for New England or Mid-Atlantic Council-managed species.

New England Fishery Management Council Affected Stocks / Management Plans	Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council Affected Stocks / Management Plans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northeast Multispecies (Groundfish) • Atlantic Sea Scallops • Atlantic Herring • Skates • Small-Mesh Multispecies (Whiting) • Atlantic Deep-Sea Red Crab • Monkfish – managed jointly with Mid-Atlantic • Spiny Dogfish – managed jointly with Mid-Atlantic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass • Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish • Bluefish • Surfclams and Ocean Quahogs • Tilefish • Spiny Dogfish – managed jointly with New England • Monkfish – managed jointly with New England



adequate preparation and training for software developers, managers, and affected users. The Mid-Atlantic Council is arranging for in-person training sessions and workshops throughout the Greater Atlantic Region and will be hosting online webinars. Any video-based training materials provided by software distributors will be posted on the [eVTR webpage](#) along with available presentations and other helpful outreach tools.

Vessel operators will be able to choose which NMFS-approved eVTR application they prefer to use, and operators will be able to switch applications at any time.

The table below lists free applications that currently are NMFS-approved. Additional systems may be developed and will be added to the list if approved.

The table on the next page lists two applications that come with fees, generally for installation and/or monthly or annual usage. These two fee-based applications are pending recertification to meet GARFO’s technical requirements.

NOTE: The Mid-Atlantic Council already has an eVTR requirement in place for the [charter and party fleet](#) for species managed by the MAFMC. The New England Council will develop a **separate action** to address eVTRs for recreational for-hire vessels later this year.

The Mid-Atlantic Council has posted a recorded demonstration of the free ACCSP eTrips Mobile app and GARFO’s Fish Online app. Watch the [demo recording](#).

FREE NMFS-APPROVED eVTR APPLICATIONS

APPLICATION / (PROVIDER)	COMPATIBLE DEVICES
eTrips Mobile 2 (ACCSP)	Android and Apple tablet/smartphone, Windows 10, or web browser
Fish Online (GARFO)	iPhone/iPad or web browser
Elog (Teem Fish)	Android and Apple tablet/smartphone, Windows 10, or web browser (used with electronic monitoring)
FLDRS (NEFSC)*	Computer (used for cooperative research)

*The applications above are maintained at **no cost to the user**. *FLDRS is designed to collect high resolution fisheries data for research that also satisfies eVTR requirements. FLDRS also is the only current application that complies with reporting guidelines for ocean quahog and surfclams.*



FEE-BASED eVTR APPLICATIONS

APPLICATION / (PROVIDER)	COMPATIBLE DEVICES
FACTS (Electric Edge)	Windows computer
Olrac DDL (OLSPS)	Web browser, Windows computer, Windows tablet

(1) Fees are associated with above the applications. (2) The above applications are currently pending recertification to meet GARFO's technical requirements.

Why Is This Happening?

The Commercial eVTR Omnibus Framework states that this action is needed to:

- 1) Increase the timeliness and availability of data submitted through VTRs;
- 2) Reduce the reporting burden on data providers (commercial vessel operators) by eliminating the need for paper-based reporting, and
- 3) Increase the accuracy and quality of data by reducing recall bias associated with delayed completion and submission of paper forms.

NOAA Fisheries said, "Electronic reporting will make the collection of important data on fishing vessel activity more efficient, convenient, and timely" for fishery managers, and other data users.

Materials used during the New England Council's January 28, 2020 discussion and decision-making are available at [commercial eVTRs](#).

For more information contact either:

- **Mid-Atlantic Council** – Karson Coutre at (302) 526-5259, kcoutre@mafmc.org
- **New England Council** – Sam Asci at (978) 465-0492 ext. 116, sasci@nefmc.org



Find Out More! Visit the Commercial eVTR Webpage

The Mid-Atlantic Council established a webpage containing documents and meeting materials related to the joint Commercial eVTR Omnibus Framework Adjustment.

- Take a look at [eVTR info](#).
- Scroll down and sign up to receive eVTR [email updates](#). The sign-up box looks like this:

Sign up to receive email updates:

First Name Last Name

Email*

Submit

Name: William Bartlett

Email: wbartlett@md.metrocast.net

Comments: MENHADEN

I think that most people familiar with the menhaden issue know that the Secretary of Commerce has placed a moratorium on fishing for the menhaden in the Chesapeake Bay to begin effective June 17, 2020. Omega Protein (owned by Cooke of Canada) is the only company still in the business of catching menhaden in the Bay.

Much has been discussed and written about how important the menhaden are to the Bay. Menhaden have been called the most important fish in the sea. It is always mentioned that menhaden feed numerous other fishes like striped bass and bluefish, as well as whales and sharks, but there is more to the menhaden story.

We seem to dwell on the oyster as the great water filterer to clean the Bay. Oysters do not move. They lay on the bottom or may be in some manmade floats at the surface. They have to wait for the tide or the current to bring them food or they filter the same water over and over. The opening of an oyster shell to feed is almost imperceptible. Menhaden have large mouths compared to other fish and they leave them wide open as they move through the water collecting anything that floats. They feed mostly on plankton: phytoplankton (tiny plants) and zooplankton (tiny animals), the two things that cloud so much of the water. We need to improve the clarity of the water to a point where the sun can penetrate it. This would allow grasses to grow which in turn would remove more nutrients and help clear the water. You may notice that menhaden swim in schools near the surface of the water. This is because phytoplankton grows there, where they can receive the sunlight they need to grow.

Zooplankton then feeds on the phytoplankton. As part of the food chain, several species of whales eat zooplankton. The largest fish in the sea is the whale shark and it also eats zooplankton. Doesn't it seem a little strange that some of the largest creatures on earth eat the smallest creatures? Shrimp, snails, jelly fish and menhaden also feed on zooplankton. Even most baby fish feed on some plankton. We need to have enough filter feeders in the water to keep it clean or stop putting so many nutrients into the water. The filter feeders, grasses and oysters are all part of cleaning up the Bay.

Let's do one scenario to the nth degree. Let's say an osprey is returning to her nest with a menhaden fish when she encounters an eagle. The eagle is bigger and stronger than the osprey, but the osprey is a better fisher. The eagle steals the fish. The osprey must now start to hunt for another school of menhaden. She can't find a menhaden close by and has to fly far to get one. By the time she returns to her nest she finds that a group of crows has found her nest and eaten the eggs. Could happen.

Many people use omega 3 oil as a supplement. It is touted as being good for your health. Omega 3 oil is extracted from commercially caught menhaden and sold as fish oil. The actual omega 3 oil is not produced by the fish but comes from the plankton they eat. It is a plant oil and no animal can produce it. We could grow phytoplankton to produce omega 3 oil instead of getting it from the menhaden.

Another scenario we must look at is filial cannibalism. This is where fish eat their own young. Many fish do this and also eat each others' young, though studies suggest they would prefer to eat menhaden. If there were enough menhaden around maybe so many young fish would not be eaten by other fish. This same theory could also be applied to fish eating crabs.

We do not want the Bay to look like a swimming pool. We need all the things in the Bay to be in balance. But removing so many menhaden is keeping things out of balance. To get things in balance we need to remove a lot of plankton. Menhaden are filter feeders and are well equipped to do the job. Just consider what Omega Protein is doing by removing up to 51,000 metric tons of menhaden. That is over 10 million pounds of fish. And that is just in the Bay. Most fish have a food conversion rate of 1.5 to 2. That means the menhaden have to eat 1.5 to 2 pounds of plankton to gain 1 pound. The number of menhaden Omega Protein is allowed to catch would eat over 20 million pounds of plankton. And the company recently caught 87,000 metric tons that put them "not in compliance." The numbers of menhaden caught in total by Omega Protein makes the situation almost incomprehensible.

It is interesting to note how bluefish play an important role in the Bay. Bluefish will attack a school of menhaden and keep on attacking even after they are full of menhaden. When they are caught they may even regurgitate some of the menhaden they ate. Other fish that don't have sharp teeth like the bluefish wait below to eat the pieces that float by. In past years I remember large flocks of seagulls sitting on piers waiting for the bluefish to start feeding. They would get up and fly to the school of fish and feed on the scraps that the bluefish tore up. Sea gulls can't catch menhaden on their own. Many of the pieces of menhaden sink to the bottom where bottom feeding fish and crabs find a meal. So the bluefish feed other fish, crabs and birds. Ain't Mother Nature great.

I remember a project in St. Mary's County where there was an attempt to grow oysters in floats. It was on a large tidal pond off the Potomac River. They used only one finger of the creek. The tide came in and raised the level of water in the finger but there was no exchange of water in the finger. Therefore there were no new plankton for the oysters to feed on. Without more food, the project was bound to fail. One day when I was in the finger I used my oar and pushed it down as far as I could. I could still see the end of the oar, another sign that there were no plankton in the water. When I returned to the river I did the same experiment with the oar. The tip disappeared before the oar was halfway down.

It is ludicrous to think you can remove millions of pounds of fish from an area without damaging the ecology of that area. We have been trying to bring back the oysters and grasses only with varying degrees of success. Why is it that one foreign country can take for free what belongs to all of us and then sell it back to us in the form of fish oil and farmed fish. Our last best chance to return the Chesapeake Bay to some semblance of its past, is to abolish the wholesale slaughter of menhaden.
Bill Bartlett Valley Lee, Maryland

(Sent via [Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council](#))