



NMFS ANNOUNCES THE AVAILABILITY OF THE FINAL RULE FOR AMENDMENT 3 TO THE CONSOLIDATED HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is amending the 2006 Consolidated Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP) and implementing a range of management measures that will affect commercial and recreational shark fishermen and dealers. Recent (2007 and 2008) stock assessments determined that blacknose sharks are overfished and experiencing overfishing, and shortfin mako sharks are experiencing overfishing. This rulemaking will rebuild overfished blacknose shark stocks, end overfishing of blacknose and shortfin mako sharks and add smooth dogfish and Florida smoothhound to the management unit. The final rule will publish on June 1, 2010 and most final measures will be effective on July 1, 2010. The blacknose and non-blacknose small coastal sharks (SCS) fisheries will open on June 1, 2010 with the following quotas, blacknose: 19.9 metric tons (mt) dressed weight (dw), and non-blacknose SCS: 221.6 mt dw.

Management measures include, but are not limited to:

SCS Commercial Quotas:

- Non-blacknose SCS, base quota: 221.6 mt dw
- Blacknose shark, base quota: 19.9 mt dw
- The non-blacknose SCS and blacknose shark fisheries will both close when either quota reaches 80 percent

Commercial Gear Restrictions:

- Maintain all currently authorized gear types for the Atlantic shark fishery including gillnet gear

SCS Recreational measures:

- Maintain current recreational retention and size limits for all shark species

Pelagic Shark Commercial and Recreational Measures:

- Take action at the international level through international and regional fisheries management organizations to end overfishing of shortfin mako sharks
- Promote the live release of shortfin mako sharks

Smoothhound (smooth dogfish & Florida smoothhound):

- Add smooth dogfish and Florida smoothhound under NMFS management
- Delay implementation of management measures until the start of the season in 2012
- Require an open access federal vessel permit
- Implement a federal commercial quota of 715.5 mt dw

- Require that fins remain naturally attached to the carcass through offloading
- Require federal dealers to report smooth dogfish and Florida smoothhound

NMFS has prepared an Amendment 3 compliance guide to help fishery participants comply with the measures in this amendment, and has updated the recreational shark identification guide. Copies of these documents and other Amendment 3 documents are available upon request from the Highly Migratory Species Management Division, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (phone: 301-713-2347, fax: 301-713-1917). The information will also be posted on the HMS website at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/>.

This notice is a courtesy to the HMS fishery participants to help keep you informed about your fishery. Official notice of Federal actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of Federal Register. For further information on Amendment 3 to the Consolidated HMS FMP, contact LeAnn Southward Hogan or Karyl Brewster-Geisz at 301-713-2347.


Emily H. Menashes
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Date

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