

Mid-Atlantic Flynet Fishery

Fishing gear type: Trawl

Current category: Category II*

Basis for current classification on the LOF: Based on analogy with other Category II bottom trawl fisheries that use similar gear.

Current list of marine mammal species/stocks injured/killed: None documented.

Estimated number of current participants: 21

Take Reduction Teams/Plans that affect this fishery: N/A

Year added to the LOF: 2007

Category when originally listed: Category II

Basis for original classification on the LOF: This fishery was categorized as a Category II based on analogy with other Category II bottom trawl fisheries that use similar gear. A superscript "2" was added to Table 2 in the LOF, indicating that the fishery is categorized by analogy.

Estimated number of participants when originally listed: 21

Past names, if any: None.

Gear description/method for fishing: This fishery uses flynets, which are high profile trawls similar to bottom otter trawls. These nets typically range from 80-120 ft (24.4-36.6 m) in headrope length, with wing mesh sizes of 16-64 in (41-163 cm), following a slow 3:1 taper to smaller mesh sizes in the body, extension, and codend sections of the net.

Target species: The nearshore component of the fishery targets Atlantic croaker, weakfish, butterfish, harvestfish, bluefish, menhaden, striped bass, kingfishes, and other finfish species. The deeper water component of the fishery targets bluefish, Atlantic mackerel, *Loligo* squid, black sea bass, and scup. *Illex* squid are also targeted offshore (70-200 fathoms [420-1,200 ft; 128-366 m]) during summer months from May-September.

Spatial/temporal distribution of effort: The multispecies fishery is composed of nearshore and offshore components that operate along the eastern coast of the Mid-Atlantic United States. The nearshore fishery operates from October-April inside of 30 fathoms (180 ft; 55 m) from North Carolina to New Jersey. The offshore component operates from November-April outside of 30 fathoms (180 ft; 55 m) from the Hudson Canyon off New York, south to Hatteras Canyon off North Carolina.

Levels of observer coverage each year[†]: NMFS has placed observers on a voluntary basis on flynet vessels operating out of Wanchese, NC, and approximately 12 trips have been observed.

Management and regulations: This fishery is managed under Federal, state, and Interstate Fishery Management Plans. This fishery is not permitted south of Cape Hatteras to protect weakfish stocks.

* The fishery is classified by analogy to other gear types or fisheries that are known to cause mortality or serious injury of marine mammals.

[†] Observer coverage levels include the latest information reported in the most current final Stock Assessment Report (SAR).

History of Changes on the LOF

2008 LOF: Changed the fishery definition to: "The Category II Mid-Atlantic flynet fishery is a multispecies fishery composed of nearshore and offshore components that operate along the eastern coast of the mid-Atlantic United States. Flynets are high profile trawls similar to bottom otter trawls, except that they fish just off the bottom, rather than on the bottom (72 FR 14475, March 28, 2007). These nets typically range from 80 to 120 feet (24.4 to 36.6 m) in headrope length, with wing mesh sizes of 16 to 64 inches (41 to 163 cm), following a slow 3:1 taper to smaller. The nearshore fishery operates from October through April inside of 30 fathoms from North Carolina to New Jersey. This nearshore fishery targets Atlantic croaker, weakfish, butterfish, harvestfish, bluefish, menhaden, striped bass, kingfishes, and other finfish species. Flynet fishing is no longer permitted south of Cape Hatteras in order to protect weakfish stocks. The offshore component operates from November through April outside of 30 fathoms from the Hudson Canyon off New York, south to Hatteras Canyon off North Carolina. These deeper water fisheries target bluefish, Atlantic mackerel, squid, black sea bass, and scup (72 FR 7382, February 15, 2007). Squid are also targeted offshore (70-200 fathoms) during summer months from May through September."