



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Silver Spring, MD 20910

NMFS Has Determined that Atlantic Scalloped Hammerhead Sharks are Overfished and Experiencing Overfishing

In October 2009, Hayes *et al.* (2009) published in the North American Journal of Fisheries Management a stock assessment of the Atlantic population of scalloped hammerhead sharks in U.S. waters. Based on this stock assessment, in 2005, the population was estimated to be at 45 percent of the biomass that would produce the maximum sustainable yield (MSY), and fishing mortality was estimated to be 129 percent of fishing mortality associated with MSY. The stock is estimated to be depleted by approximately 83 percent of virgin stock size (*i.e.*, the current population is only 17 percent of the virgin stock size). In addition, it was estimated that a total allowable catch (TAC) of 2,853 scalloped hammerhead sharks per year (or 69 percent of 2005 catch) would allow a 70 percent probability of rebuilding within 10 years.

NMFS has reviewed this paper and concluded that: the assessment is complete; the assessment is an improvement over a 2008 aggregated species assessment for hammerhead sharks; and the assessment is appropriate for U.S. management decisions.

Based on the results of this paper, NMFS is making the determination that scalloped hammerhead sharks are overfished and experiencing overfishing. In conjunction with the results of the ongoing sandbar, dusky, and blacknose shark stock assessments, NMFS will publish a Notice of Intent regarding the development of a fishery management plan amendment and implementing regulations to end overfishing and rebuild this stock within two years as mandated under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

This notice is a courtesy to the HMS fishery participants to help keep you informed about the fishery. Copies of the above mentioned documents are available upon request from the Highly Migratory Species Management Division, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 or on the HMS website at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/>. For further information, contact Peter Cooper at 301-713-2347 or Jackie Wilson at 240-338-3936.

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4/28/2011
Date

Hayes, C., Y. Jiao, and E. Cortéz. 2009. Stock Assessment of Scalloped Hammerheads in the Western Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico. North American Journal of Fisheries Management 29:1406-1417.

