

**NOAA FISHERIES ANNOUNCES AVAILABILITY OF
THE LARGE COASTAL SHARK ASSESSMENT REPORT AND
THE MEETING REPORT OF THE SHARK EVALUATION WORKSHOP**

Numerous species of large coastal sharks (LCS) are caught in directed fisheries and as bycatch by commercial and recreational fishermen along the U.S. Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coasts. The species in this management group presently include, but are not limited to, sandbar, blacktip, silky, tiger, spinner, and bull sharks. The previous stock assessment of LCS was conducted in 1998 and classified this group as being overfished.

A substantial amount of information has become available since then, including four more years of catch estimates, new biological data, and extended fishery-independent and fishery-dependent catch rate series. The final meeting report summarizes discussions of the available data, how the data should be used, and the types of models and sensitivity tests that should be conducted. The stock assessment report uses this information to estimate the status of LCS and to project their future abundance under a variety of future catch levels in waters off the U.S. Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coasts.

Hard copies of the document are available upon request.

This notice is a courtesy to Atlantic shark fishery interests to keep you informed about your fishery. Official notice of Federal fishery actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of the Federal Register. For further information, contact Karyl Brewster-Geisz, 301-713-2347.

John H. Dunnigan October 9, 2002
Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries