Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

# Acronyms, Abbreviations & Technical Terms Used in Fisheries Management Documents

***Without knowing these terms understanding fisheries managment reports can be confusing***

• **ABC** = Acceptable Biological Catch - An annual catch level recommended ty a Council's Scientific and Statistical Commiteee (SSC) for that stock. The SSC's ABC recommendation should incorporate consideration for the stock's life history and reproductive potential, vulnerability to overfishing, and the degree of uncertainty in the science upon with the ABC recommendation is based.

• **Biomass** = The total weight of a stock of fish or of a defined subunit of a stock, such as spawning females (SSB)

• **Bycatch** = That portion of a catch taken incidentally to the targeted catch because of non-selectivity of fishing gear to either species or size differences. Some by catch may be retained, but most is usually discarded

• **Coastal Pelagic** = Fish that migrate along the coast, generally near shore, and live in the water column rather than in association with the bottom.

• **CPUE = C/E** = The catch taken by a given amount of fishing gear during a given period of time. Over time, CPUE data often provides an indication of trends in abundance in a fish stock

• **Demersal** = Refers to organisms which live at or near the bottom, but not in (Benthic) the bottom

• **EEZ = Exclusive Economic Zone** – These are the "federal waters" from 3 to 200 nautical miles offshore. Fisheries in the EEZ are generaly under federal control

• **Estuary** = A coastal area landward of the ocean beach where freshwater and saltwater mix. Estuaries are among the most biologically productive and environmentally sensitive habitats.

• **F = Fishing mortality** - the instaneous rate at with fish in a stock will die because of fishing. Typically includes measured bycatch, if data available.

• **FMP = Fisheries Management Plan** - A plan to achieve specified management goals for a fishery, typically including data, analysis and management measures. ASMFC, Regional Management Councils and NMFS have the authority to develop MFPs for Atlantic coast fish stocks.

• **ITQ = Individual transferable quota** + A form of controlled access in which individual persons or vessels receive a property right to a share or specific allocation of the total expected harvest of fish which they can buy, sell, lease, etc.

• **Mortality rate** = the rate at which fish die. Mortality can be expressed as annual percentages or instantaneous rates (the fraction of the stock which dies within each small amount of time). Fishery scientists utilize several different types of mortality to evaluate status of fish stocks, and some serve as biological reference points (Instantaneous rates are used in most stock assessments)

• **M = Natural Mortality** - The instantaneous rate at which fish die from all causes other than harvest. This rate has traditionally included unmeasured bycatch mortality, but as research had documents by bycatch, it is increasingly included in "F". Usually "M" is an assumption or estimate from maximum age data or the value used for other species with similar life history strategy. Natural mortality can rarely be measured directly.

• **A = Annual mortality** = the percentage of a fish stock which dies from all causes during a year.

• **Fishing mortality (F)** = A measurement of the rate of removal of fish from a population by fishing. Fishing mortality can be reported as either annual or instantaneous. Annual mortality is the percentage of fish dying in one year. Instantaneous is that percentage of fish dying at ny one time. The acceptable rates of fishing mortality may vary from species to species. There are several kinds of fishing mortality rates; some of the more common include the following:

  • $\mathbf{F_{max}}$ **= The rate of fishing mortality** which maximizes the weight taken from a single cohort* over its entire life. (* a group of fish spawned during a given period, usually in a single year)

  • $\mathbf{F_{msy}}$ **= The rate of fishing mortality,** which maximizes the weight of the harvest within a year.

  • $\mathbf{F_{0,1}}$ **= The rate of fishing mortality** at which an increase in catch for a given increase in effort is only 10% of what it would be from an unfished stock.

• **MT = Metric Ton** = 2,204.6 pounds

• **MRFSS** = Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey

• **MRIP = Marine Recreational Information Program** - Ongoing recreational data collection and reporting effort that replaces MRFSS program that began in the 1970s. MRIP was initiated in 2007 by NOAA Fisheries and a broad collection of scientists, managers, fishermen and others with a stake in sustainable, abundant ocean resources (estimates the number, catch, and effort of recreational fishermen).

• **MSP = Maximum spawning potential** = The estimated female spawning stock biomass or egg production in the absence of fishing. A percentage of this value (% MSP) can be used as a measure of the health of a stock.

• **MSY = Maximum sustainable yield** = The largest catch, on average, which can be taken from a stock over time under existing environmental conditions without affecting the reproductive capacity of the stock.

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