

(i) Whether the availability of data on which the recommended management measures are based allows for adequate time to publish a proposed rule, and whether the regulations would have to be in place for an entire harvest/fishing season.

(ii) Whether there has been adequate notice and opportunity for participation by the public and members of the affected industry in the development of recommended management measures.

(iii) Whether there is an immediate need to protect the resource.

(iv) Whether there will be a continuing evaluation of management measures adopted following their implementation as a final rule.

(3) *NMFS action.* If the Council's recommendation includes adjustments or additions to management measures and, if after reviewing the Council's recommendation and supporting information:

(i) NMFS concurs with the Council's recommended management measures and determines that the recommended management measures should be issued as a final rule based on the factors specified in paragraph (a)(2) of this section, the measures will be issued as a final rule in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(ii) If NMFS concurs with the Council's recommended management measures and determines that the recommended management measures should be published first as a proposed rule, the measures will be published as a proposed rule in the FEDERAL REGISTER. After additional public comment, if NMFS concurs with the Council recommendation, the measures will be issued as a final rule and published in the FEDERAL REGISTER.

(iii) If NMFS does not concur, the Council will be notified in writing of the reasons for the non-concurrence.

(4) *Emergency actions.* Nothing in this section is meant to derogate from the authority of the Secretary to take emergency action under section 305(e) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

(b) [Reserved]

[64 FR 57595, Oct. 26, 1999]

Subpart H—Management Measures for the Scup Fishery

SOURCE: 61 FR 43426, Aug. 23, 1996, unless otherwise noted.

§ 648.120 Catch quotas and other restrictions.

(a) *Annual review.* The Scup Monitoring Committee shall review the following data, subject to availability, on or before August 15 of each year: Commercial, recreational and research data; current estimates of fishing mortality; stock status; recent estimates of recruitment; virtual population analysis results; levels of noncompliance by fishermen or individual states; impact of size/mesh regulations; impact of gear on the mortality of scup; and any other relevant information. This review will be conducted to determine the allowable levels of fishing and other restrictions necessary to achieve the F that produces the maximum yield per recruit (F_{max}).

(b) *Recommended measures.* Based on this review and requests for research quota as described in paragraph (e) of this section, the Scup Monitoring Committee shall recommend the following measures to the Demersal Species Committee of the MAFMC and the Commission to ensure that the exploitation rate specified in paragraph (a) of this section will not be exceeded:

(1) The commercial quota for each of the three periods specified in paragraph (d)(1) of this section, to be set from a range of 0 to the maximum allowed to achieve the specified exploitation rate, set after the deduction for research quota. The commercial quota will be established by estimating the annual total allowable catch (TAC), allocating it into the three periods, and deducting the discard estimates for each period.

(2) Possession limits for the Winter I and Winter II periods. The possession limit is the maximum quantity of scup that is allowed to be landed within a 24-hour period (calendar day).

(3) Percent of landings attained at which the landing limit for the Winter I period will be reduced.

(4) Commercial minimum fish size.

(5) Minimum mesh size.

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(6) Recreational possession limit set from a range of 0 to 50 scup to achieve the specified exploitation rate, set after the reduction for research quota.

(7) Recreational minimum fish size set from a range of 7 inches (17.8 cm) TL to 10 inches (25.4 cm) TL.

(8) Recreational season.

(9) Restrictions on gear.

(10) Season and area closures in the commercial fishery.

(c) *Annual fishing measures.* The Demersal Species Committee shall review the recommendations of the Scup Monitoring Committee. Based on these recommendations and any public comment, the Demersal Species Committee shall recommend to the MAFMC measures necessary to assure that the specified exploitation rate will not be exceeded. The MAFMC's recommendation must include supporting documentation, as appropriate, concerning the environmental and economic impacts of the recommendations. The Regional Administrator shall review these recommendations and any recommendations of the Commission. After such review, NMFS will publish a proposed rule to implement a commercial quota in the FEDERAL REGISTER, specifying the amount of quota allocated to each of the three periods, landings limits for the Winter I and Winter II periods, the percentage of landings attained during the Winter I fishery at which the landing limits will be reduced, a recreational harvest limit, and additional management measures for the commercial fishery. If the Regional Administrator determines that additional recreational measures are necessary to assure that the specified exploitation rate will not be exceeded, he or she will publish a proposed rule in the FEDERAL REGISTER to implement additional management measures for the recreational fishery. After considering public comment, the Regional Administrator will publish a final rule in the FEDERAL REGISTER to implement annual measures.

(d) *Distribution of Commercial Quota.*

(1) The annual commercial quota will be allocated into three periods, based on the following percentages:

Period	Percent
Winter I—January–April	45.11

Period	Percent
Summer–May–October	38.95
Winter II—November–December	15.94

(2) The commercial quotas for each period will each be distributed to the coastal states from Maine through North Carolina on a coastwide basis.

(3) All scup landed for sale in any state during a quota period shall be applied against the coastwide commercial quota for that period, regardless of where the scup were harvested. Any current year landings in excess of the commercial quota in any quota period will be deducted from that quota period's annual quota in the following year as prescribed below:

(i) For the Winter I and Summer quota periods, landings in excess of the allocation will be deducted from the appropriate quota period for the following year in the final rule that establishes the annual quota. The overage deduction will be based on landings for the current year through October 31, and on landings for the previous calendar year that were not included when the overage deduction was made in the final rule that established the period quotas for the current year. If the Regional Administrator determines during the fishing year that any part of an overage deduction was based on erroneous landings data that were in excess of actual landings for the period concerned, he/she will restore the overage that was deducted in error to the appropriate quota allocation. The Regional Administrator will publish a notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER announcing the restoration.

(ii) For the Winter II quota period, landings in excess of the allocation will be deducted from the Winter II period for the following year in a notice published in the FEDERAL REGISTER during July of the following year. The overage deduction will be based on landings information available for the Winter II period as of June 30 of the following year. If the Regional Administrator determines during the fishing year that any part of an overage deduction was based on erroneous landings data that were in excess of actual landings for the period concerned, he/she will restore the overage that was deducted in

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error to the appropriate quota allocation. The Regional Administrator will publish a notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER announcing the restoration.

(e) *Research quota.* See § 648.21(g).

[61 FR 43426, Aug. 23, 1996, as amended at 62 FR 27984, May 22, 1997; 65 FR 33497, May 24, 2000; 66 FR 12911, Mar. 1, 2001; 66 FR 42161, Aug. 10, 2001; 66 FR 45187, Aug. 28, 2001; 67 FR 6880, Feb. 14, 2002]

§ 648.121 Closures.

(a) *Period closures.* The Regional Administrator will monitor the harvest of commercial quota for each quota period based on dealer reports, state data, and other available information and shall determine the date when the commercial quota for a period will be harvested. NMFS shall close the EEZ to fishing for scup by commercial vessels for the remainder of the indicated period by publishing notification in the FEDERAL REGISTER advising that, effective upon a specific date, the commercial quota for that period has been harvested, and notifying vessel and dealer permit holders that no commercial quota is available for landing scup for the remainder of the period.

(b) [Reserved]

[62 FR 27985, May 22, 1997, as amended at 65 FR 33497, May 24, 2000]

§ 648.122 Time and area restrictions.

(a) *Southern Gear Restricted Area—(1) Restrictions.* From January 1 through March 15, all trawl vessels in the Southern Gear Restricted Area that fish for or possess non-exempt species as specified in paragraph (a)(2) of this section must fish with nets that have a minimum mesh size of 4.5 inches (11.43 cm) diamond mesh, applied throughout the codend for at least 75 continuous meshes forward of the terminus of the net. For codends with fewer than 75 meshes, the minimum-mesh-size codend must be a minimum of one-third of the net, measured from the terminus of the codend to the headrope, excluding any turtle excluder device extension, unless otherwise specified in this section. The Southern Gear Restricted Area is an area bounded by straight lines connecting the following points in the order stated (copies of a chart depicting the area are available from the Regional Administrator upon request):

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SOUTHERN GEAR RESTRICTED AREA

Point	N. Lat.	W. Long.
SGA1	39°20'	72°50'
SGA2	39°20'	72°25'
SGA3	38°00'	73°55'
SGA4	37°00'	74°40'
SGA5	36°30'	74°40'
SGA6	36°30'	75°00'
SGA7	37°00'	75°00'
SGA8	38°00'	74°20'
SGA1	39°20'	72°50'

(2) *Non-exempt species.* Unless otherwise specified in paragraph (d) of this section, the restrictions specified in paragraph (a)(1) of this section apply only to vessels in the Southern Gear Restricted Area that are fishing for or in possession of the following non-exempt species: *Loligo* squid, black sea bass and silver hake (whiting).

(b) *Northern Gear Restricted Area I—(1) Restrictions.* From November 1 through December 31, all trawl vessels in the Northern Gear Restricted Area I that fish for or possess non-exempt species as specified in paragraph (b)(2) of this section must fish with nets that have a minimum mesh size of 4.5 inches (11.43 cm) diamond mesh, applied throughout the codend for at least 75 continuous meshes forward of the terminus of the net. For codends with fewer than 75 meshes, the minimum-mesh-size codend must be a minimum of one-third of the net, measured from the terminus of the codend to the headrope, excluding any turtle excluder device extension, unless otherwise specified in this section. The Northern Gear Restricted Area I is an area bounded by straight lines connecting the following points in the order stated (copies of a chart depicting the area are available from the Regional Administrator upon request):

NORTHERN GEAR RESTRICTED AREA I

Point	N. Lat.	W. Long.
NGA1	41°00'	71°00'
NGA2	41°00'	71°30'
SGA3	40°00'	72°40'
SGA4	40°00'	72°05'
NGA1	41°00'	71°00'

(2) *Non-exempt species.* Unless otherwise specified in paragraph (d) of this