

Fishery Landings Trends

Commercial and recreational fishing off the northeastern U.S. coast provides a significant portion of total U.S. landings. Total U.S. commercial landings in 1996 were estimated at more than 4.3 million metric tons (mt), of which approximately 17 percent came from the Northeast. U.S. recreational landings were estimated to exceed 94,000 mt (excluding Alaska, Hawaii, and Pacific Coast salmon). Aggregate statistics for U.S. fisheries are detailed in *Fisheries of the United States, 1996*.

Prior to 1994, fishery statistics were collected in the Northeast under a voluntary reporting system. Landings and price data were collected by NMFS port agents and state personnel at the point of first sale through dealer reports or "weighout receipts". This information was complemented by interviews of vessel captains by NMFS port agents at dockside, to collect detailed data on fishing effort, gear used and areas fished; and a monthly canvas to collect landings data at secondary ports. In June of 1994, voluntary reporting was replaced by a mandatory reporting system in which dealer reports were retained, and dockside interviews were replaced by a logbook reporting system. This system is now used in all fisheries subject to federal fishery management plans or FMPs (except the American lobster and Atlantic herring fisheries). Further, many vessels that fish for lobster and herring are permitted under one or more of the remaining federal FMPs, and are therefore subject to mandatory reporting. Recreational fishermen are surveyed both in the field as they complete fishing trips and through

telephone calls to households. These independent components, along with census data, produce estimates of recreational catch, effort, and participation.

Table 2 provides commercial (domestic and foreign) and recreational landings data for 36 of the 39 species, or species groups, reviewed in this document (Atlantic salmon and sturgeons excluded). "Foreign" landings include Canadian and distant-water fleet catches outside of the U.S. EEZ for transboundary stocks fished by the U.S., such as Canadian landings of groundfish and scallops from eastern Georges Bank, and Atlantic mackerel from off Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. They also include catches made by U.S. vessels during internal waters processing (IWP) operations in state waters, which are transferred to foreign vessels and later landed in foreign ports. It is logical to group these species into several assemblages: principal groundfish, flounders, other groundfish, principal pelagics, other pelagics, anadromous fish, and invertebrates.

For these assemblages, landings totalled 485,600 mt in 1996, an increase of 61,900 mt (15%) from 1995 (Table 2). Of these landings, 13% were from foreign, 81% from domestic commercial, and 6% from domestic recreational fishing. The 1996 increase was primarily due to a substantial rise in U.S. commercial landings of Atlantic herring and to a lesser extent, Atlantic mackerel. Preliminary figures for 1997 indicate a total of 466,200 mt (17% foreign, 78% domestic commercial, and 5% domestic recreational). The 1994-1995 average was 433,000 mt.

Principal groundfish (Atlantic cod, haddock, redfish, silver hake, red hake, and pollock) and flounders (yellowtail, summer flounder, American plaice, witch and winter flounder, and windowpane) have together accounted for less than 20% of the total landings by weight since 1994 (16% in 1996). Principal pelagics (Atlantic herring and Atlantic mackerel) and invertebrates (squids, American lobster, northern shrimp, surfclams, ocean quahogs, and sea scallops) accounted for 30% and 31%, respectively, of the 1994-1997 total (32% and 29% in 1996). Other groundfish (goosefish, scup, black sea bass, ocean pout, white hake, cusk, Atlantic wolffish, tilefish, spiny dogfish, and skates) accounted for 16% of the 1994-1997 total (17% for 1996). See Table 2.

Total foreign landings of species and stocks within these assemblages have fluctuated in recent years without a clear trend. U.S. commercial landings have increased somewhat, primarily due to increased landings of principal pelagics, which have offset declines for principal groundfish and invertebrates (Table 2).

For more information

NMFS [National Marine Fisheries Service]. 1997. Fisheries of the United States, 1996. *Current Fishery Statistics* No. 9600. USDOC/NOAA/NMFS, Silver Spring, MD.

Table 2. Total landings of selected assessment species groups off the northeastern United States, from domestic and foreign commercial fishing, and from recreational fishing, 1994 and 1995 (1,000 mt)

Species	Commercial				Recreational		Total	
	Foreign		U.S.		1994	1995	1994	1995
	1994	1995	1994	1995				
Principal Groundfish								
Atlantic cod	5.3	1.1	17.8	13.7	4.1	3.9	27.2	18.7
Haddock	2.4	2.1	0.3	0.4	<0.1	<0.1	2.7	2.5
Redfish	<0.1	<0.1	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.4
Silver hake	0.0	0.0	16.1	14.7	<0.1	<0.1	16.1	14.7
Red hake	0.0	0.0	1.7	1.6	<0.1	<0.1	1.7	1.6
Pollock	15.2	9.9	3.8	3.4	0.2	0.3	19.2	13.6
Subtotal	22.9	13.1	40.1	34.2	4.3	4.2	67.3	51.5
Flounders								
Yellowtail flounder	2.1	0.5	3.1	1.9	0.0	0.0	5.2	2.4
Summer flounder	0.0	0.0	6.6	7.0	4.1	2.5	10.7	9.5
American plaice	<0.1	0.0	5.1	4.7	0.0	0.0	5.1	4.7
Witch flounder	<0.1	<0.1	2.7	2.2	0.0	0.0	2.7	2.2
Winter flounder	<0.1	<0.1	3.6	4.0	0.6	0.7	4.2	4.7
Windowpane	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.8
Subtotal	2.1	0.5	21.6	20.6	4.7	3.2	28.4	24.3
Other Groundfish								
Goosefish	0.5	0.4	22.9	26.4	<0.1	<0.1	23.4	26.8
Scup	0.0	0.0	4.1	2.9	1.2	0.6	5.3	3.5
Black sea bass	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.9	1.4	2.6	2.3	3.5
Ocean pout	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.1
White hake	1.0	0.5	4.8	4.3	<0.1	<0.1	5.8	4.8
Cusk	0.2	0.2	1.1	0.8	<0.1	<0.1	1.3	1.0
Atlantic wolffish	<0.1	<0.1	0.5	0.5	<0.1	<0.1	0.5	0.5
Tilefish	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.7	<0.1	<0.1	0.8	0.7
Spiny dogfish	1.8	1.0	18.8	22.7	1.1	0.7	21.7	24.4
Skates	0.0	0.0	8.8	7.2	0.0	0.0	8.8	7.2
Subtotal	3.5	2.1	62.9	66.5	3.7	3.9	70.1	72.5
Principal Pelagics								
Atlantic herring	22.2	18.2	54.3	76.1	0.0	0.0	76.6	94.4
Atlantic mackerel	20.7	17.7	10.1	8.5	1.1	1.2	31.9	27.4
Subtotal	42.9	35.9	64.4	84.6	1.1	1.2	108.5	121.8
Other Pelagics								
Atlantic butterfish	0.0	0.0	3.6	2.0	0.0	0.0	3.6	2.0
Bluefish	0.0	0.0	4.3	3.6	7.9	7.2	12.2	10.8
Subtotal	0.0	0.0	7.9	5.6	7.9	7.2	15.8	12.8
Anadromous Fish								
River herring	<0.1	<0.1	0.4	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.6
American shad	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.6
Striped bass	0.0	0.0	0.8	1.6	3.3	5.5	4.1	7.1
Subtotal	<0.1	<0.1	1.8	2.8	3.3	5.5	5.1	8.3
Invertebrates								
Shortfin squid	6.0	1.0	18.3	14.1	0.0	0.0	24.3	15.1
Longfin inshore squid	0.0	0.0	22.5	18.0	0.0	0.0	22.5	18.0
American lobster	0.2	0.1	31.7	31.7	0.0	0.0	31.9	31.9
Northern shrimp	0.0	0.0	3.7	6.8	0.0	0.0	3.7	6.8
Atlantic surfclam	0.0	0.0	31.1	28.7	0.0	0.0	31.1	28.7
Ocean quahog	0.0	0.0	21.1	22.2	0.0	0.0	21.1	22.2
Sea scallop	5.0	2.0	7.5	7.7	0.0	0.0	12.5	9.8
Subtotal	11.2	3.1	135.9	129.2	0.0	0.0	147.1	132.5
Total	82.6	54.7	334.6	343.5	25.0	25.2	442.3	423.7

Table 2 (cont'd). Total landings of selected assessment species groups off the northeastern United States, from domestic and foreign commercial fishing, and from recreational fishing, 1996 and 1997 (1,000 mt)

Species	Commercial				Recreational		Total	
	Foreign		U.S.		1996	1997	1996	1997
	1996	1997	1996	1997				
Principal Groundfish								
Atlantic cod	1.9	2.9	14.3	13.0	2.9	1.0	19.1	16.9
Haddock	3.7	2.7	0.6	1.5	<0.1	<0.1	4.3	4.2
Redfish	<0.1	<0.1	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.3
Silver hake	0.0	0.0	16.2	15.5	<0.1	<0.1	16.2	15.5
Red hake	0.0	0.0	1.1	1.3	<0.1	0.2	1.1	1.5
Pollock	9.3	11.9	3.0	4.3	0.0	0.2	12.3	16.4
Subtotal	14.9	17.5	35.5	35.9	2.9	1.4	53.3	54.8
Flounders								
Yellowtail flounder	0.5	0.8	2.3	2.9	0.0	0.0	2.8	3.7
Summer flounder	0.0	0.0	5.8	4.1	4.7	5.0	10.5	9.1
American plaice	<0.1	<0.1	4.4	3.9	0.0	0.0	4.4	3.9
Witch flounder	<0.1	<0.1	2.1	1.8	0.0	0.0	2.1	1.8
Winter flounder	<0.1	0.1	4.8	5.3	0.7	0.6	5.5	6.0
Windowpane	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.5
Subtotal	0.5	0.9	20.4	18.5	5.4	5.6	26.3	25.0
Other Groundfish								
Goosefish	0.2	0.2	26.6	28.2	<0.1	<0.1	26.8	28.4
Scup	0.0	0.0	2.5	2.2	1.0	0.5	3.5	2.7
Black sea bass	0.0	0.0	1.5	1.1	2.6	1.5	4.1	2.6
Ocean pout	0.0	0.0	0.1	<0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	<0.1
White hake	0.4	0.3	3.3	2.2	<0.1	<0.1	3.7	2.5
Cusk	0.2	0.1	0.5	0.4	<0.1	<0.1	0.7	0.5
Atlantic wolffish	<0.1	<0.1	0.4	0.3	<0.1	<0.1	0.4	0.3
Tilefish	0.0	0.0	1.1	1.8	<0.1	<0.1	1.1	1.8
Spiny dogfish	0.4	0.2	27.2	18.1	0.4	0.8	28.1	19.1
Skates	0.0	0.0	14.2	10.4	0.0	0.0	14.2	10.4
Subtotal	1.2	0.8	77.4	64.7	4.0	2.8	82.7	68.3
Principal Pelagics								
Atlantic herring	15.9	20.7	103.7	98.2	0.0	0.0	119.6	118.9
Atlantic mackerel	20.4	18.5	15.8	15.4	1.3	1.6	37.6	35.5
Subtotal	36.3	39.2	119.5	113.6	1.3	1.6	157.2	154.4
Other Pelagics								
Atlantic butterfish	0.0	0.0	3.6	2.8	0.0	0.0	3.6	2.8
Bluefish	0.0	0.0	3.9	4.0	7.4	7.6	11.3	11.6
Subtotal	0.0	0.0	7.5	6.8	7.4	7.6	14.9	14.4
Anadromous Fish								
River herring	<0.1	<0.1	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.4
American shad	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.5
Striped bass	0.0	0.0	2.2	2.2	6.7	6.7	8.9	8.9
Subtotal	<0.1	<0.1	3.2	3.1	6.7	6.7	9.9	9.8
Invertebrates								
Shortfin squid	8.7	15.4	17.0	13.6	0.0	0.0	25.7	29.0
Longfin inshore squid	0.0	0.0	12.5	16.2	0.0	0.0	12.5	16.2
American lobster	0.1	0.2	32.4	32.1	0.0	0.0	32.6	32.3
Northern shrimp	0.0	0.0	9.5	6.4	0.0	0.0	9.5	6.4
Atlantic surfclam	0.0	0.0	28.8	25.6	0.0	0.0	28.8	25.6
Ocean quahog	0.0	0.0	21.6	19.8	0.0	0.0	21.6	19.8
Sea scallop	3.0	4.2	7.6	6.0	0.0	0.0	10.6	10.2
Subtotal	11.8	19.8	129.4	119.7	0.0	0.0	141.3	139.5
Total	64.7	78.2	392.9	362.3	27.7	25.7	485.6	466.2