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

## Atlantic Shark Commercial Fishery Update and Extension of the Comment Period for the 2007 1<sup>st</sup> Trimester Season Proposed Rule

On October 5, 2006, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) published a proposed rule (71 FR 58778) outlining the quotas and season lengths for the North Atlantic, South Atlantic, and Gulf of Mexico (GOM). Alternatives for addressing the overharvest of large coastal sharks (LCS) in the South Atlantic were presented at that time. On October 20, 2006, NMFS was notified that the Southeast Fishery Science Center (SEFSC) had not received all of the dealer reports for the 2006 first trimester, and that there were landings that had not been accounted for in the proposed rule or in previously released landing updates. Since October 20, NMFS has been working to contact all shark dealers to ensure the revised estimates presented above are accurate; however, some dealers still have not reported. Due to the additional landing reports received by SEFSC, total landings of LSC and small coastal sharks (SCS) in the GOM and South Atlantic have increased. Please note the change in total landings and percent of quota utilized for the South Atlantic and GOM presented in the last table.

Below are preliminary landings estimates in metric tons (mt) and pounds (lb) dressed weight (dw) for the Atlantic shark commercial fisheries for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester seasons of 2006. The landings estimates include landing reports received as of November 6, 2006. The first and second season landings presented below represent total landings reported through the Pelagic Dealer Compliance (PDC) and the Automated Landings Reporting System (ALS), often referred to as the Quota Monitoring System and General Canvass. The third trimester landings are from the PDC only and will be updated in the future as additional PDC and ALS landings are received. Numbers in bold represent changes from previously reported landings.

First Trimester Season 2006					
Species Group	Region	Season Closure Date	Quota mt dw	Estimated Landings mt dw	% Quota Taken
Large Coastal Sharks- i.e., sandbar, silky, tiger, blacktip, spinner, bull, lemon, nurse, and hammerheads	Gulf of Mexico	CLOSED April 15	222.8 (491,185 lbs dw)	<b>336.6</b> ( 742,068 lbs dw)	<b>151.1%</b>
	South Atlantic	CLOSED March 15	141.3 (311,510 lbs dw)	<b>393.1</b> (866,626 lbs dw)	<b>278.2%</b>
	North Atlantic	CLOSED April 30	5.3 (11,684 lbs dw)	0.2 ( 562 lbs dw)	3.8%
Small Coastal Sharks- i.e., Atlantic sharpnose, finetooth, blacknose, and bonnethead	Gulf of Mexico	CLOSED April 30	14.8 (32,628 lbs dw)	<b>78.0</b> (171,900 lbs dw)	<b>527.0%</b>
	South Atlantic		284.6 (627,429 lbs dw)	44.5 ( 98,105 lbs dw)	15.6%
	North Atlantic		18.7 (41,226 lbs dw)	0.0 (0 lbs dw)	0.0%
Blue sharks	No regional quotas	CLOSED April 30	91.0 (200,619 lbs dw)	0.04 (82 lbs dw)	0.0%
Porbeagle sharks			30.7 (67,681 lbs dw)	0.5 (1,013 lbs dw)	1.5%
Pelagic sharks- other than blue or porbeagle			162.7 (358,688 lbs dw)	19.9 (43,850 lbs dw)	12.2%



Second Trimester Season 2006					
Species Group	Region	Season Closure Date	Quota mt dw	Estimated Landings mt dw	% Quota Taken
Large Coastal Sharks- i.e., sandbar, silky, tiger, blacktip, spinner, bull, lemon, nurse, and hammerheads	Gulf of Mexico	CLOSED July 31	180 (396,828 lbs dw)	216.9 (478,178 mt dw)	120.5%
	South Atlantic	CLOSED Aug. 16	151.7 (334,438 lbs dw)	205.5 (453,045 mt dw)	135.5%
	North Atlantic	CLOSED Aug. 6	66.3 (146,165 lbs dw)	63.2 (139,233 mt dw)	95.3%
Small Coastal Sharks- i.e., Atlantic sharpnose, finetooth, blacknose, and bonnethead	Gulf of Mexico	CLOSED Aug. 31	38.9 (85,759 lbs dw)	24.6 (54,131 lbs dw)	63.2%
	South Atlantic		333.5 (735,234 lbs dw)	72.6 (160,054 lb dw)	21.8%
	North Atlantic		35.9 (53,351 lbs dw)	0.0 (0 mt dw)	0.0%
Blue sharks	No regional quotas	CLOSED Aug. 31	91.0 (200,619 lbs dw)	0.2 (410 lbs dw)	0.2%
Porbeagle sharks			30.7 (67,681 lbs dw)	0.3 (669 lbs dw)	1.1%
Pelagic sharks- other than blue or porbeagle			162.7 (358,688 lbs dw)	23.8 (52,458 lbs dw)	14.6%

Third Trimester Season 2006					
Species Group	Region	Season Closure Date	Quota mt dw	Estimated Landings mt ww	% Quota Taken
Large Coastal Sharks- i.e., sandbar, silky, tiger, blacktip, spinner, bull, lemon, nurse, and hammerheads	Gulf of Mexico	Nov. 7	225.6 (497,358 lbs dw)	149.9 (330,470 lbs dw)	66.4%
	South Atlantic	CLOSED Oct. 3	50.3 (110,891 lbs dw)	49.1 (108,246 lbs dw)	97.6%
	North Atlantic	CLOSED	0 (0 lbs dw)	4.0 (7,878 lbs dw)	
Small Coastal Sharks- i.e., Atlantic sharpnose, finetooth, blacknose, bonnethead	Gulf of Mexico	To be determined as necessary	30.8 (67,902 lbs dw)	15.5 (34,171 lbs dw)	50.3%
	South Atlantic		263.7 (581,353lbs dw)	16.5 (36,376 lbs dw)	6.3%
	North Atlantic		28.2 (62,170 lbs dw)	0.0 (0 lbs dw)	0.0%
Blue sharks	No regional quotas	To be determined as necessary	91.0 (200,619 lbs dw)	0.0 (0 lbs dw)	0.0%
Porbeagle sharks			30.7 (67,681 lbs dw)	0.1 (171 lbs dw)	0.3%
Pelagic sharks- other than blue or porbeagle			162.7 (358,688 lbs dw)	6.8 (14,945 lbs dw)	4.2%

Species Group	Region	2006 1st Season Quota	Landings in Proposed Rule (mt dw)	Revised Landings (mt dw)	Under(+) / Over(-) Harvest in Proposed Rule (mt dw)	Revised Under(+) / Over(-) Harvest (mt dw)
Large Coastal Sharks- i.e., sandbar, silky, tiger, blacktip, spinner, bull, lemon, nurse, and hammerheads	Gulf of Mexico	222.8	103.1	336.6	119.7	-113.8
	South Atlantic	141.3	326.1	393.1	-184.3	-251.8
	North Atlantic	5.3	0.3	0.2	5.0	5.1
Small Coastal Sharks- i.e., Atlantic sharpnose, finetooth, blacknose, bonnethead	Gulf of Mexico	14.8	5.0	78.0	9.8	-63.2
	South Atlantic	284.6	42.1	44.5	242.5	240.1
	North Atlantic	18.7	0.1	0.0	18.6	18.7

NMFS is currently considering options to address the overharvest of LCS and SCS in the GOM, and is reviewing options for the South Atlantic as outlined in the proposed rule (71 FR 58778; October 5, 2006). On November 1, 2006, a notice was published (71 FR 64213) extending the comment period on the proposed rule to November 13, 2006. NMFS is working on another extension to ensure the public has time to review these revised landings during the comment period. The new deadline for written comments will be 5:00 pm on November 17, 2006. Please submit written comments via the following:

**Email:** [SF1.091106B@noaa.gov](mailto:SF1.091106B@noaa.gov)

**Mail:** 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910

**Fax:** (301) 713-1917

**Federal e-Rulemaking Portal:** <http://www.regulations.gov>

Include "I.D. 091106B" in the subject line

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, please contact Michael Clark or Karyl Brewster-Geisz, Highly Migratory Species Management Division, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910, 301-713-2347, or see the HMS webpage (<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms>).

*for James P. Burgen*  
 Alan D. Risenhoover  
 Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries  
 National Marine Fisheries Service

*11/07/06*  
 Date