

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

SUMMARY

Monkfish Amendment 6 Scoping Hearing
Hilton, New Bern, NC
February 9, 2011

Hearing Chair: Howard King

Staff: Rich Seagraves

Attendance: 4

The meeting started at approximately 4:30 PM.

The first fisherman said he represents the six H permit holders. He said that he can see some benefit coming from catch shares if they allow H permit holders to make better use of their fishing potential, get their landings earlier in the year, not waste fish, and avoid negative environmental impacts. He was asked about his concerns on the allocation issue. He said he thinks trip limit x DAS might be a fair system. He was asked why he didn't suggest historic landings as a basis. He said that the history of the H permit is one of underutilization. He added that there are numerous spatial and seasonal restraints on the use of H permits that artificially constrain fishing potential.

Following, there was some discussion by Council members about the history of the FMP as it relates to fishing in North Carolina.

A second commenter addressed the constraints on the trawl fishery in North Carolina and expressed a need to acknowledge this component of the historic fishery and introduce fairness, so they are not perpetually disenfranchised.

A third commenter voiced his support for catch shares for H permit fishermen. He described some of the restraint exercised by these fishermen in carrying out their work. He said that the flexibility available under a catch share program will allow them to fish in a conscientious way that will minimize waste. He also said that the scallop fleet exploited monkfish surreptitiously during the 1990s.

A fourth commenter spoke in favor of using the Council's visioning process to explore catch shares in the monkfish fishery.

The fifth commenter, a monkfish fisherman, spoke in favor of keeping the fishery a small boat fishery. He said that consolidation of the fleet would cost jobs. He spoke in favor of a separate management approach in the southern management area. He said he has concern about catch shares since he has seen what happened in the clam fishery.

The meeting ended at about 5:20 P.M.