



Paul J. Diodati
Director

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Division of Marine Fisheries
251 Causeway Street, Suite 400
Boston, MA 02114
(617) 626.1520
Fax (617) 626.1509



Deval Patrick
Governor
Ian Bowles
Secretary
Mary B.
Griffin
Commissioner

July 19, 2010

Marine Fisheries Advisory

**SUMMER PERIOD COMMERCIAL BLACK SEA BASS FISHERY TO OPEN
AUGUST 1ST AT A REDUCED TRIP LIMIT: 50 LBS.**

The summer period commercial black sea bass fishery will open on August 1, 2010 with a commercial possession limit of 50 lbs. per 24-hour day. Commercial hook and line fishermen and holders of sea bass pot permits will be allowed to retain black sea bass four days per week: Monday through Thursday. Trawlers will be allowed to retain black sea bass Sunday through Thursday. This strategy will allow for sea bass by-catch in the 4-days per week directed commercial scup fishery as well as the 5-days per week commercial fluke fishery.

Under current regulations adopted in 2009, possession limits for the August 1 through December 31 commercial black sea bass fishery are established by the Director after a determination of available quota remaining from the spring fishery. Landings from the 2010 spring fishery that closed on May 24, 2010 consumed over 90% of the annual Massachusetts black sea bass quota (228,619 lbs.). Under the specified 50-lb. possession limit, the 2010 black sea bass commercial quota is expected to be reached before the end of August. Once reached, a closure notice will be posted to *Marine Fisheries'* Listserv, the *Marine Fisheries* website, and the Massachusetts Register.

In 2009, the summer fishery was kept closed because the spring catch rates were so high that there was insufficient remaining quota to re-open the fishery. Unprecedented rates of daily landings in the 2010 spring fishery have resulted in little quota remaining for the summer fishery despite a 100,000-lb. increase in the state's overall quota from 2009 to 2010. Environmental factors, particularly warm water temperatures, appear to have contributed to elevated catch rates this May.

For further information please visit www.mass.gov/marinefisheries