



NMFS Proposes 2026–2027 Atlantic Spiny Dogfish Limits and Easier Overage Paybacks; Commercial Quota Set Near 9.2 Million Pounds, Comments Due November 12

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NOAA Fisheries proposes Framework Adjustment 7 for Atlantic spiny dogfish: a coastwide commercial quota of about 9.2 million pounds for the 2026 fishing year, 1.5 percent below 2025, and an end to full payback of catch-limit overages when the stock is healthy. Comments are due November 12, 2026.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), part of NOAA, has proposed Framework Adjustment 7 to the Atlantic Spiny Dogfish Fishery Management Plan. The proposed rule is on Federal Register public inspection as FR Doc. 2026-20863 and is scheduled to publish October 13, 2026. That starts a 30-day comment period, which ends about November 12, 2026.

What is proposed

- Catch limits for fishing year 2026 and projected limits for 2027. Each fishing year runs May 1 to April 30. The Mid-Atlantic and New England Fishery Management Councils recommended these limits.
- A coastwide commercial quota of 9.2 million pounds (4,172 metric tons). NMFS says that is a 1.5 percent decrease from 2025, mainly because estimated discards went up. The councils used the 2022–2024 average discard ratio of 43.8 percent.
- More flexible accountability measures. Paybacks for going over the annual catch limit would not be required when the stock is above its target. They would be partial when the stock is between 75 and 100 percent of its target, and full only at or below 75 percent.

Stock status

NMFS says its 2023 assessment found Atlantic spiny dogfish are not overfished, not experiencing overfishing, and above the biomass target. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission voted on February 3, 2026 to set matching limits in state waters from Maine to North Carolina.

Who is affected

Dogfish boats and dealers along the East Coast. NMFS reports recent total ex-vessel revenue from spiny dogfish of about \$2.2 million.

How to comment

Go to [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov), docket NOAA-NMFS-2026-1321. Contact: Laura Deighan, NMFS, (978) 281-9184. The environmental assessment is posted at [mafmc.org](https://www.mafmc.org).

Source

- Federal Register public inspection, FR Doc. 2026-20863, NMFS proposed rule, "Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Framework Adjustment 7 to the Atlantic Spiny Dogfish Fishery Management Plan" (RIN 0648-BO48), scheduled to publish October 13, 2026.

Notes

- Image: A juvenile spiny dogfish (*Squalus acanthias*), Prince William Sound, Alaska. Photo: David Csepp, NMFS/AKFSC/ABL via Wikimedia Commons (Public domain).

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