

Atlantic Herring Benchmark Assessment Q&A



**NOAA
FISHERIES**

2018 Atlantic Herring Benchmark Assessment

During a benchmark stock assessment all data, models, and methods are up for review.

The NEFSC has heard concerns about herring as forage and their overall role in both the ecosystem and fisheries. The assessment will evaluate data that addresses those concerns.

The results of this stock assessment will be available to managers for the 2019 fishing year.



How is the health of the Atlantic herring stock?

Atlantic herring are a relatively healthy stock. They are not overfished, and overfishing is not occurring. They are reproductively mature at age 4, and are fully selected by the fishery at age 5. The 2015 stock assessment estimated the spawning stock biomass at 311,000 metric tons, which is roughly twice the target spawning stock biomass of 157,000 metric tons.

Are any new data evaluated in this assessment?

Scientists will consider:

- Landings, recruitment, and biomass
- The role of Atlantic herring in the food habits of predators and those effects on mortality.



Scientific Data

Federal Surveys

Fishery Data

Vessel Trip Reports

Biological data from
landings

2018 Benchmark Assessment Process

Atlantic Herring Working Group Meetings

Data: February 2018

Model: May 2018

Peer Review Panel

June 2018

Assessment materials available to managers

August 2018

For more information: [Visit
nefsc.noaa.gov/benchmark-assessments](http://nefsc.noaa.gov/benchmark-assessments)

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Do we anticipate any effects from the delay of the 2017 NEFSC Fall Bottom Trawl Survey?

Due to the delay some areas in the Mid-Atlantic Bight were not sampled. In past surveys those areas did not contain a high density of Atlantic herring. We anticipate that the missing data will be negligible in the Atlantic herring stock assessment.

What is the range of Atlantic herring?

Atlantic herring can be found from Labrador to Cape Hatteras. The Northeast US stock is managed from the Gulf of Maine to Cape Hatteras.

Are we seeing shifts in distribution within the Atlantic herring stock?

No. Unlike other species in the region that appear to be redistributing as ocean waters warm, Atlantic herring distribution along the shelf has not shifted significantly.

Recent Atlantic herring assessment history

