



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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American Lobster Board Approves Addendum XXXI to Postpone Implementation of Addendum XXVII Measures

Annapolis, MD – The Commission’s American Lobster Management Board approved Addendum XXXI to Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster. The Addendum postpones the implementation of certain measures from Addendum XXVII to July 1, 2025 to allow Canada more time to consider implementing complementary management measures, as well as reduce potential impacts to the US and Canadian lobster industries.

In October 2023, a series of changes to the current gauge and escape vent sizes in Lobster Conservation Management Areas (LCMAs) 1 (Gulf of Maine), 3 (federal waters), and Outer Cape Cod (OCC) were triggered based on observed changes in recruit abundance indices. Initially, these measures were to be implemented in June 2024. However, in response to concerns raised by industry and the State of Maine, the Board extended the implementation date to January 1, 2025 to allow the Gulf of Maine states the opportunity to coordinate with Canada regarding possible trade implications, and give the industry and gauge makers additional time to prepare for these changes.

In June 2024, US and Canadian lobster fishery managers and industry members met to discuss the management structures and stock assessments of the two countries. Based on these discussions, the Board determined that postponing implementation for an additional six months would allow further consideration of complementary measures by Canada, as well as offset potential impacts to the lobster industry that imports smaller lobster in the early part of the year.

Based on Addendum XXXI, the following measures will be implemented starting July 1, 2025:

- Measures under Section 3.1 of Addendum XXVII to create a common size limit and v-notch definition for state-only and federal permit holders fishing in OCC
- Increases in the LCMA 1 minimum gauge and vent sizes, and decrease to the maximum gauge size for LCMA 3 and OCC under Section 3.2 of Addendum XXVII

Addendum XXXI does not postpone regulations prohibiting the issuance of 10% additional trap tags in Areas 1 and 3 above the trap limit or allocation; this provision will become effective January 1, 2025. Addendum XXXI will be available on the Commission website, www.asmfc.org, on the American lobster webpage by next week. For more information, please contact Caitlin Starks, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at cstarks@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740.

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The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and diadromous species.