



New England  
Fishery Management  
Council



MID-ATLANTIC  
FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

April 26, 2024

Dr. Jon Hare  
Science and Research Director  
Northeast Fisheries Science Center  
166 Water Street  
Woods Hole, MA 02543

Dear Dr. Hare:

At their April 2024 Council meetings, the Mid-Atlantic and New England Fishery Management Councils (Councils) took final action on a joint framework to reduce the bycatch of Atlantic sturgeon in the monkfish and spiny dogfish gillnet fisheries. During the development of this action, the Spiny Dogfish and Monkfish Advisory Panels and Committees, as well as the Councils, identified the need to better understand the sturgeon population and fisheries interactions through increased data collection.

As such, the Councils request that the NEFSC observer program develop a sturgeon tagging program for both live discards and dead discards for all the fisheries and gear types where sturgeon interactions occur. A carcass tagging program for Atlantic sturgeon, similar to those in place for sea turtles and marine mammals, would help prevent double counting of individual observed sturgeon takes. An accurate understanding of sturgeon takes is critical to both the assessment of the sturgeon population and the development of any future mitigation measures.

Please contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Dr. Christopher M. Moore Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Dr. Cate O'Keefe Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council

cc: W. Townsend, E. Reid, K. Cisneros, J. Couture, S. Talmage