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U.S. Has Made Progress in Restoring Ocean Fish

Magnuson-Stevens Act is helping dozens of fish populations recover from overfishing, but more is needed

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act is the primary law that governs U.S. fisheries in federal ocean waters. Enacted in 1976 and strengthened by Congress in 1996 and 2006, the act has led to considerable improvements in the health of marine fish populations and has benefited coastal communities across the country.

The Magnuson-Stevens Act requires that the nation's fishery managers take several conservation actions, including:

- Preventing overfishing—when a fish population is caught at a faster rate than it can reproduce—through the use of science-based catch limits.
- Rebuilding depleted populations to healthy levels that allow for long-term economic and ecological benefits.

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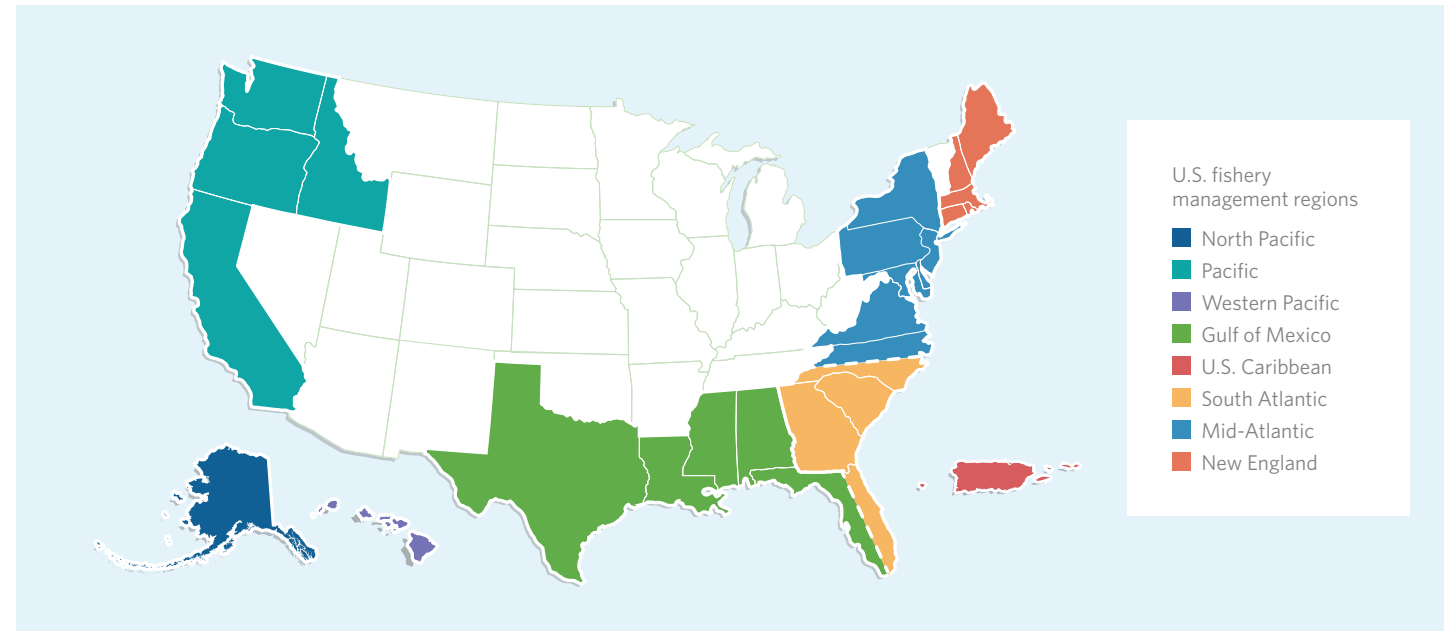
Photos:

1. Pacific lingcod populations have been restored to healthy levels using science-based management.

2. Atlantic cod stocks have failed to rebound from decades of overfishing, in part because of new challenges, including warming waters and habitat loss.

43 U.S. Ocean Fish Populations Have Been Rebuilt Since 2000, but Many Are Still Vulnerable

Marine fish species by status and region



Rebuilt fish populations

Atlantic highly migratory species*

- 2003 Blacktip shark
- 2009 Swordfish (North Atlantic)
- 2016 Albacore tuna (North Atlantic)

North Pacific

- 2007, 2012 Southern tanner crab (eastern Bering Sea)
- 2009 Blue king crab (St. Matthews Island)
- 2011 Snow crab (eastern Bering Sea)

Pacific

- 2004 Pacific whiting
- 2005 Lingcod
- 2011 Chinook salmon (Klamath River, California)

Pacific (continued)

- 2011 Coho salmon (Queets River, Washington)
- 2011 Widow rockfish
- 2012 Coho salmon (Strait of Juan de Fuca, Washington)
- 2013 Chinook salmon (Sacramento River, California)
- 2015 Canary rockfish
- 2015 Petrale sole
- 2017 Bocaccio (southern Pacific coast)
- 2017 Darkblotched rockfish

Gulf of Mexico

- 2007 Red grouper
- 2008 King mackerel
- 2014 Gag grouper

South Atlantic

- 2003 Yellowtail snapper (South Atlantic/Gulf of Mexico)
- 2012 Pink shrimp
- 2013 Black sea bass (South Atlantic)

Mid-Atlantic

- 2008 Bluefish
- 2009 Black sea bass (mid-Atlantic)
- 2009 Scup
- 2011 Summer flounder
- 2014 Butterfish
- 2014 Tilefish

Mid-Atlantic/New England

- 2008 Monkfish (Gulf of Maine/northern Georges Bank)
- 2008 Monkfish (southern Georges Bank)
- 2010 Spiny dogfish

New England

- 2001 Sea scallop
- 2002 Silver hake (Gulf of Maine/northern Georges Bank)
- 2003 Winter flounder† (Georges Bank)
- 2007 Silver hake (southern Georges Bank/mid-Atlantic)
- 2010 Haddock (Georges Bank)
- 2010 Pollock
- 2011 Haddock (Gulf of Maine)
- 2012 Acadian redfish
- 2012 Windowpane flounder (southern New England/mid-Atlantic)
- 2012 Yellowtail flounder‡ (southern New England/mid-Atlantic)
- 2016 Barndoor skate

Fish populations classified in need of management attention

🐟 Overfished (i.e., at an unsustainably low level) 🐟 Experiencing overfishing 🐟 Overfished and experiencing overfishing

Atlantic highly migratory species*

- 🐟 Bigeye tuna§
- 🐟 Blacknose shark
- 🐟 Blue marlin§
- 🐟 Bluefin tuna§ (west Atlantic)
- 🐟 Dusky shark§
- 🐟 Porbeagle shark
- 🐟 Sandbar shark
- 🐟 Scalloped hammerhead shark
- 🐟 White marlin§

North Pacific

- 🐟 Blue king crab (Pribilof Islands)

Pacific

- 🐟 Coho salmon§ (Puget Sound: Hood Canal)
- 🐟 Pacific ocean perch
- 🐟 Yelloweye rockfish

Pacific/Western Pacific

- 🐟 Pacific bluefin tuna§
- 🐟 Swordfish§

Western Pacific

- 🐟 Bigeye tuna§ (western and central Pacific)
- 🐟 Seamount groundfish complex (Hancock Seamount)
- 🐟 Striped marlin§ (western and central Pacific)

Gulf of Mexico

- 🐟 Gray triggerfish
- 🐟 Greater amberjack
- 🐟 Red snapper

U.S. Caribbean

- 🐟 Caribbean spiny lobster (Puerto Rico)
- 🐟 Goliath grouper
- 🐟 Nassau grouper
- 🐟 Puerto Rico triggerfishes and filefishes complex
- 🐟 Puerto Rico wrasses complex
- 🐟 Queen conch

South Atlantic

- 🐟 Blueline tilefish
- 🐟 Hogfish (southeast Florida)
- 🐟 Red grouper
- 🐟 Red porgy
- 🐟 Red snapper
- 🐟 Snowy grouper
- 🐟 Speckled hind
- 🐟 Tilefish
- 🐟 Warsaw grouper

Mid-Atlantic

- 🐟 Summer flounder

New England

- 🐟 Atlantic cod (Georges Bank)
- 🐟 Atlantic cod (Gulf of Maine)
- 🐟 Atlantic halibut
- 🐟 Atlantic salmon
- 🐟 Atlantic wolffish
- 🐟 Ocean pout
- 🐟 Thorny skate
- 🐟 Windowpane flounder (Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank)
- 🐟 Winter flounder‡ (Georges Bank)
- 🐟 Winter flounder (southern New England)
- 🐟 Witch flounder
- 🐟 Yellowtail flounder (Cape Cod/Gulf of Maine)
- 🐟 Yellowtail flounder (Georges Bank)
- 🐟 Yellowtail flounder‡ (southern New England/mid-Atlantic)

* Highly migratory species regularly cross domestic and international boundaries, so they are managed by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in cooperation with an advisory panel rather than by a regional fishery management council.

† Species was declared rebuilt, became overfished again, and was back in a rebuilding plan as of 2010.

‡ Species was declared rebuilt, became overfished again, and was back in a rebuilding plan as of 2015.

§ Fished by U.S. and international fleets.

Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, "Stock Status Updates," accessed July 17, 2017, http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/fisheries_eco/status_of_fisheries/status_updates.html

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For further information, please visit:

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