

2015 Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 303

BY REPRESENTATIVE GISCLAIR

Prefiled pursuant to Article III, Section 2(A)(4)(b)(i) of the Constitution of Louisiana.

FISHING/FINFISH: Provides relative to the method of determination of a stock assessment for black drum, sheepshead, and flounder

1 AN ACT

2 To amend and reenact R.S. 56:325.4(D), relative to stock assessments of certain finfish; to  
3 remove the requirement that the assessments for black drum, sheepshead, and  
4 flounder contain certain information for each species; and to provide for related  
5 matters.

6 Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana:

7 Section 1. R.S. 56:325.4(D) is hereby amended and reenacted to read as follows:

8 §325.4. Commercial taking of other saltwater finfish; exceptions; mesh size

9 \* \* \*

10 D.(1) The commission shall monitor and evaluate the condition of the black  
11 drum, sheepshead, and flounder species in Louisiana waters and establish  
12 management targets to ensure a sustainable population. A ~~peer reviewed~~ report of  
13 ~~the findings of the evaluation~~ status of each stock and an evaluation of management  
14 measures shall be submitted every five years to the legislature no later than March  
15 first of ~~each that~~ year. ~~The report shall contain the following information for each~~  
16 ~~species:~~

17 (a) ~~The spawning potential ratio.~~

18 (b) ~~A biological condition and profile of the species and a stock assessment.~~

19 (2) If data indicate that ~~the spawning potential ratio is below thirty percent~~  
20 a fishery is not meeting or is likely to not meet the established targets, the

1 department shall, ~~within two weeks after such finding is confirmed, close the season~~  
2 ~~for a period of at least one year, or shall provide, for the commission's consideration,~~  
3 management options derived from data that indicate that the spawning potential ratio  
4 is estimated to have at least a fifty percent chance of recovery to a thirty percent ratio  
5 ~~within ten years or some other appropriate recovery period based on the biology of~~  
6 ~~the stock of the fish, environmental conditions, and the needs of the fishing~~  
7 ~~communities.~~ to ensure that the species can meet the management targets established  
8 for that species.

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#### DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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HB 303 Engrossed

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Gisclair

**Abstract:** Requires Wildlife and Fisheries to use management targets rather than spawning potential ratios for assessment of certain finfish species.

Present law requires the Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries monitor and evaluate the health of the black drum, sheepshead, and flounder fish species in La. waters. Further requires a peer reviewed report of the findings be submitted to the legislature every five years. Requires the report contain the spawning potential ratio (SPR) and a biological condition and profile of the species and a stock assessment.

If the data indicate the SPR is below 30%, present law further requires the department to close the season for at least one year and submit to the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission management options that have a 50% chance to recover the stock to a 30% SPR within 10 years.

Proposed law retains the requirement for the commission to monitor and evaluate the fish stocks but requires the commission to establish management targets to ensure a sustainable population. Retains the requirement for submission of a stock assessment report every five years but removes the requirement for use of a spawning potential ratio. Further removes the requirement for closing the season but requires that if the fishery is not meeting the adopted targets, the department must submit management options to the commission to ensure the species meets the management targets established for that fishery.

(Amends R.S. 56:325.4(D))