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North Atlantic Region

## Cross-Line Team Continues Collaboration on Habitat Modeling



School of scup. Image courtesy of Michael Eversmier

Marine habitats are dynamic and the fisheries habitats in the Northeast U.S. continental shelf are rapidly changing. As fish distribution changes in response, it is critical to understand where the animals are moving and how that may affect fisheries in the northeast. NOAA's North Atlantic Regional Team brought together habitat modelers from NOAA as well as external partners to engage in a multi-year effort to coordinate their efforts. A 2019 NART Habitat workshop resulted in building new collaborations and leveraging of science across NOAA to advance habitat and species modeling efforts

"Habitat modeling will be a critical tool for the Council as it transitions from single-species management to a more comprehensive, ecosystem-based approaches under its Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management policies," said Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council Habitat Coordinator Jessica Coakley. "Our Council's goals to improve habitat conservation and better describe what fish habitat is essential can only advance at a rate commensurate with the availability of habitat science to support it."

This coordination will lead to better understanding how changes in habitat are affecting fish distribution and productivity. Model products, manuscripts, and results are included in **Northeast Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA)**.



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