

the vessels at all times when the survey is conducted.

To facilitate the collection of data during periods with the greatest potential for fishing success, the research vessels would be exempt from the summer flounder closures at 50 CFR 648.101(a) and (b); summer flounder gear restrictions at § 648.104; scup trimester quota closures at § 648.121(a); scup gear restricted area provisions at § 648.122(a) and (b); scup trawl gear restrictions at § 648.123; black sea bass trip limits at § 648.140(b)(2); black sea bass quarterly quota closures at § 648.141; black sea bass gear restrictions at § 648.144(1),(2),(3), and (4); *Loligo* squid, *Illex* squid, and mackerel closures at § 648.22(a) and (c); and bluefish closures at § 648.161(a) and (b). In order to collect individual fish

sizes and other data, the research vessels would also be exempt from: Minimum size requirements for summer flounder at § 648.103(a),(b), and (c); for scup at § 648.124(a); for black sea bass at § 648.143; for monkfish at § 648.93; for spiny dogfish at § 648.233; for yellowtail flounder and winter flounder at § 648.83; and for lobster at § 697.20(b); from spiny dogfish closures at § 648.231; and from Northeast multispecies regulated mesh requirements, and restrictions on gear and methods of fishing at § 648.80.

The 1 to 15 vessels that would be used to harvest the RSA allocations would be exempt only from the summer flounder closures at § 648.101(a) and (b); summer flounder gear restrictions at § 648.104; scup trimester quota closures at § 648.121(a); black sea bass trip limits

at § 648.140(b)(2); black sea bass closures at § 648.140 and § 648.141; *Loligo* squid, *Illex* squid, and Atlantic mackerel closures at § 648.22(a) and (c); and bluefish closures at § 648.161(a) and (b).

Any landings that would occur from research or compensation fishing would be reported in the Vessel Trip Reports, as required. All landings would be landed in compliance with applicable state landing laws.

**Authority:** 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

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