

# NOAA reports show strong economic gains from fishing, continued improvement in fish stocks

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U.S. commercial and recreational saltwater fishing generated more than \$199 billion in sales in 2012, a gain of seven percent over the previous year, with the economic impact of fishing jobs increasing three percent from 2011 to 2012, according to a new NOAA Fisheries economics report.

Further, two more [fish](#) stocks were rebuilt to target levels in 2013, bringing the number of rebuilt U.S. marine fish stocks to 34 since 2000, according to another NOAA Fisheries report also released today.

Taken together, the two reports, Fisheries Economics of the United States 2012 and the Status of U.S. Fisheries 2013, show positive trends in the steady rebuilding of the country's federally managed [fisheries](#) off our coasts, and the important role fisheries contribute to the United State economy.

"These two reports highlight the steady rebuilding of U.S. fisheries and the broad and positive economic impact of commercial and [recreational fishing](#) to the nation's economy. These reports are an excellent example of the environmental intelligence NOAA uses and provides every day," said Eileen Sobeck, assistant NOAA administrator for fisheries. "Fishing is big business and culturally important in our country. On top of that, it supports a lot of jobs."

According to the economics report, commercial and recreational fishing supported approximately 1.7 million jobs in 2012, the most recent year for which data are available, a gain over 2011's 1.6 million. The commercial fishing industry—harvesters, processors and dealers, and wholesalers and retailers—generated \$141 billion in sales, \$39 billion in income, and supported 1.3 million jobs in 2012 in fishing and across the broader economy. Recreational fishing generated \$58 billion in sales, \$19 billion in income, and supported 381,000 jobs in 2012 in fishing and across the broader economy.

The annual economics report also breaks down the sales, income and job figures for each coastal state. The five states that generated the most commercial fishing jobs in 2012 were California, Massachusetts, Florida, Washington and Alaska. The five states that generated the most recreational fishing jobs were Florida, North Carolina, Louisiana, Texas and New Jersey.

The other new report, Status of U.S. Fisheries 2013, also shows improvement as U.S. fisheries continue to rebuild. The two stocks rebuilt in 2013 are Southern Atlantic Coast [black sea bass](#) and Sacramento River fall Chinook salmon.

As an example of the benefits from sustainable management, Southern Atlantic Coast black sea bass is a popular fish prized by recreational anglers, charter boat captains, and commercial fishermen alike. The stock ranges from Cape Hatteras to the Florida Keys and is managed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. It was declared overfished in 2005 and NOAA Fisheries instituted a rebuilding plan in 2006. Management measures for both the commercial and recreational fisheries led to an early recovery of the stock. As a result of rebuilding, annual catch limits have more than doubled.

"Sustainable management of our [fish stocks](#) is critically important to the

nation's economy. These results demonstrate the strength of the U.S. science-based management model under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act," Sobeck said. "The positive impacts we see in these two reports continue a long-term trend in improving the stock status and rebuilding in U.S. fisheries using [sustainable management](#) practices. The percent of assessed stocks that are not overfished or subject to overfishing continues to improve, with 91 percent of those stocks not subject to overfishing and 83 percent not overfished."

**More information:** The Status of Fisheries 2013 report: [www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/fisherie ... /status\\_of\\_fisheries](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/fisherie.../status_of_fisheries)

Provided by NOAA Headquarters

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