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5/25/2016 16:50:09	Tim Lemieux	timcantfish@gmail.com	Melbourne, FL 32935	Private Recreational Angler	Atlantic non Red Snapper Season	I have seen in one of your last email's you would be willing to let Florida have federal jurisdiction regarding certain species of snapper that aren't common in our waters. My question is if you are willing to do this with fish that aren't abundant in our area, why won't you do it with a fish that is abundant. The red snapper population isn't in quite the peril that the SAMFC makes it out to be. Another question would be you claim that the catches from the 2014 and 2015 fishing seasons is the reason that it won't open because the quota had been exceeded, you do realize that there was no 2015 red snapper season? So how doe's this get included? The government has made a mockery out of this closure, personally I believe you are selling out a public resource to private entitie's. Pretty soon the Atlantic will be following the gulf's blueprint for upcoming catch shares.
5/25/2016 20:01:29	Roddy Corr	Rodzilla913@gmail.com	32931	Private Recreational Angler	Red Snapper closure	Something needs to be done about the continued closure of red snapper in Atlantic waters. The science is flawed and every angler you ask will tell you there are more red snapper then ever. It is difficult to catch much of anything else bottom fishing. In fact they are often caught live baiting in 90' of water on the surface! You work for the public and the public outcry is loud and clear! Two yrs in a row of ZERO season is a joke...stop the madness.
5/25/2016 20:24:23	William fazio	Williamjfazio@gmail.co	Rockledge, florida 32955	Private Recreational Angler, Charter/Headboat/For	Red snapper	I am sure nobody really cares what we write here. Just use some common sense and real science and not your flawed data collection methods. I was on a trip were we took you guys out to survey the red snapper populations and you showed up with gps numbers that were nowhere near any kind of structure that a red snapper actually live on. Red snapper live on structure not in the sand. This oalone tells me your data is flawed. Its equivalent to me going to a desert and counting penguins. Just doesnt work like that. Please we are begging you to do the right thing and use actual captains and let them show you the fish.
5/26/2016 10:16:33	Jonathan French	french60wasp@gmail.co	Falls Church, VA 22042	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	Dr. Duval, As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," we, the undersigned collaborative of cobia stakeholders, strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions: 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia geneticshttp://agrifilecdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf . The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time.
5/26/2016 15:08:08	jeff emery	jse360@aol.com	daytona beach fl 32118	Commercial Fisherman	triggerfish	why is the fork length of a triggerfish 14 here in florida and 12 in ga sc and nc??? why are they allowed to keep small fish??? shouldn't the size limit be universal?? thanks

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5/27/2016 15:06:41	Robert D Straney	Cuda141@yahoo.com	Merritt Island, Fl 32953	Private Recreational Angler	American Red Snapper	We are the tax paying citizens, paying the salaries of the people and organizations responsible for the ARS research. That means they are supposed to be working for us. If that's the case, which it is, our employees in a sense, should be guided by the experts (our captains, private & commercial) on where to do the research, no where special, just EXACTLY where they are expected to be. If you, the organization and its research team agree to do this and then you can truly show us that the ARS population is in trouble with legitimate numbers and results, I'm sure all will agree that some kind of restrictions would need to be applied, as we too do not want the species to diminish or disappear all together. If you're going to do it, do it right and prove it...SIMPLE!!!!
5/29/2016 23:26:15	Ted walker	Ted1walker@gmail.com	Chuluota, fl , 32767	Private Recreational Angler	Atlantic red snapper	What is the annual catch limit for red snapper in atlantic waters for 2016? Also, does the council review the NOAA fisheries data in detail? Comparing year over year data clearly shows a 300+% increase in atlantic red snapper populations in the last 4 years. Why not acknowledge this fact as reported by NOAA?

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	Jonathan French	french60wasp@gmail.co	Falls Church, VA 22042	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval,</p> <p>Myself and the undersigned collaborative of cobia stakeholders appreciate the opportunity to discuss Cobia Management Plan Amendment 4. Amendment 20B made determinations to split cobia management at the Florida/Georgia line and the resulting allocation of cobia quota did not align with normal catch history in both states. Virginia and North Carolina have growing, strong cobia fisheries that have both localized and migratory populations of fish that come in waves early in the season and then reside in our waters all summer. This fishery is a niche, highly specialized fishery and those who make a living as result of a strong cobia fishery, including charter captains, tackle shops, and custom lure manufacturers, do not have an alternative market to facilitate their summer. North Carolina and Virginia significantly reduced daily creel limits in response to the spike in catch; however, is the correct Key West management boundary is utilized, 2015 represents a significant outlier versus the last decade. As result, our collaborative strongly urges SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (attached/linked). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. The resulting ACL should consist of the 2015 E. Florida and South Atlantic ACL's combined, which is approximately 1.5 million pounds. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Without the zone change, a 3 year average 2013-2015 would have been below the ACL. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. This aligns management in federal waters with the management utilized by North Carolina and Virginia (outside of Virginia using a 2016 boat limit of 2 fish per boat.) No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time. <p>NOAA has a responsibility to deliver fair and transparent policy that reflects the intent of the Magnuson Stevens Act. Thank You,</p> <p>Jonathan French Recreational Fisherman Falls Church VA/Kitty Hawk, NC</p>
5/30/2016 9:37:15	Jonathan French	french60wasp@gmail.co	Falls Church VA 22042	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>In addition, we ask for Virginia to have EQUAL representation on the SAFMC and the SAFMC Mackerel Committee. Rob O'Reilly of VMRC has repeatedly demonstrated a lack of understanding about the nature and economic impact of the fishery. Other states, including East Florida, have three representatives. We ask that Virginia receive 3 DIRECT representation seats, with at least one coming from the recreational/charters boat perspective.</p>

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5/30/2016 9:43:52	Jonathan French	french60wasp@gmail.co	Falls Church, VA	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>There was not enough room to hyperlink the Texas A&M study. Here is the study and a summary: http://agriflfeecd.n.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf "Cobias that were sampled from the coastal waters of Virginia, Mississippi, and Louisiana were genetically homogeneous based on assays of microsatellite genotypes and mtDNA haplotypes. This finding is consistent with observed migration patterns and tag-and-release studies of Cobias. Adult Cobias appear to overwinter primarily off the Florida Keys and then undergo seasonal migrations during the spring, moving northward along the U.S. Atlantic as well as to the north and west into the Gulf (Shaffer and Nakamura 1989; Franks et al. 1991). Limited tagging studies (Franks et al. 1991; Hammond 2001) indicate fairly regular mixing of Cobias between the Gulf and U.S. Atlantic. . The range of sample localities in our study approximates the range where Cobia aquaculture facilities occur in U.S. waters (Benetti and Orhun 2002), suggesting that broodstock from the Gulf or the U.S. Atlantic could be used for Cobia aquaculture in either region. "</p>
5/30/2016 9:48:54	Brian Travis Kemp	Kempbrian6971@gmail.	27957	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agriflfeecd.n.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Travis Kemp</p>

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5/30/2016 11:28:14	Kathy Dornblaser	K.dornblaser@hotmail.c	Manteo, NC 27954	Charter/Headboat/For-Hire, Commercial Fisherma	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last night at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrillifecdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Kathy Dornblaser Fistful Sportfishing LLC</p>

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5/30/2016 11:29:45	Karl Helmkamp	karlhelmkamp@hotmail.	Manteo, NC 27954	Charter/Headboat/For-Hire, Commercial Fisherma	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last night at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrillifecdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Karl Helmkamp Fistful Sportfishing LLC</p>

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5/30/2016 12:46:40	Jon Worthington	ncpierrat@gmail.com	Camden, NC 27921	Private Recreational Angler, Commercial Fisherma	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrilife.cdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Jon Worthington</p>

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5/30/2016 12:48:45	Jake Worthington	pelagiclayer@gmail.co	Southern Shores, NC 27949	Private Recreational Angler, Commercial Fisherma	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrilifeecd.n.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, James "Jake" Worthington</p>

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5/30/2016 12:51:45	Lori Harrell Worthington	loriandjonw@yahoo.com	Camden, NC 27921	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last night at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrilife.cdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Lori Harrell Worthington</p>

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5/30/2016 13:18:28	L Pace Mimms, Presiden	105 Weir Point Dr.	Manteo, NC 27954	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrillifecdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You,</p>

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5/30/2016 13:29:07	Joshua Nicholson	Nicholson.joshua@yahoo	Virginia Beach, VA 23453	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last night at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrillifecdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Joshua Nicholson</p>

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5/30/2016 13:36:16	Christopher M Chance	cmchance72@yahoo.co	Colonial Heights, VA 23834	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrifilecdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Chris Chance</p>
5/30/2016 13:41:43	Walter smith	tifordsmith@yahoo.com	Kill devil hills, NC 27948	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>The new laws in North Carolina just inacted are completely unjust to the recreational anger. There is no reason a charter fisherman should have any different set of guidelines than a recreational fisherman. Instead of recs only allowed to keep three days a week, rcharters should be allowed two fish seven days a week as well as recs. Unfair for the people have to work monday, wed, and saturday. Please do whats rights considering the health of the cobia fishery</p>

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5/30/2016 13:44:08	Matthew Smith	eatorrelease@yahoo.co	newport News, Va, 23601	Private Recreational Angler, Non-Governmental Or	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrillifecdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Matthew Smith</p>

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5/30/2016 13:49:23	Chris O'Brien	cobrien08@yahoo.com	Norfolk, Virginia 23518	Charter/Headboat/For-Hire	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last night at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrilife.cdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Captain Chris O'Brien</p>

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5/30/2016 13:53:44	Josh Brothers	jbrothers1590@gmail.co	Elizabeth City, NC 27909	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>"</p> <p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, ""disregard for federal law,"" I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrilifeecd.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Josh Brothers</p>

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5/30/2016 14:25:46	Laura Seitz	laura@coastanglerma	23456	Private Recreational Angler, Publisher of local fishi	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrillifecdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Laura Seitz</p>

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5/30/2016 16:21:04	Michael Pooley	Annecasse@aol.com	Manteo, NC. 27954	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agnilifecdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Mike Pooley</p>
5/30/2016 17:45:11	Kyle Berry	kmania13@gmail.com	Nags Head, NC 27959	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>I have been a recreational angler in North Carolina only about 6 years now but I have seen its positive impact on our local economy and the business its fishery generates here on the Outer Banks. I have been a believer in a vessel limit for its fishery since I started fishing for them but a complete closure is not warranted. I personally would like to see it remain open all year with a 2 fish per person limit in place but I can live with 1 per person and 4 per vessel/day seems like a happy medium for both the council and the recreational anglers in comment to Draft Action 1-1. I personally like seeing a small increase in the size limit that was applied for this season at 37" and would hope it remains there. The differentiation between rec and charter anglers did not make sense to me. I believe all should remain 4/vessel, 7 days a week. My opinions on Draft Action 2 is that there is nothing that warrants any closure throughout the season. The amount of regulations that have been put in place on vessel limits, 1/day/person will have a drastic change on the catch totals and a closure would be overkill. Action 3 has a lot of talk of regulation but zero on how this fishery can be more accurately monitored and tracked. Either a tagging program or far more accurate catch total methods need to be adopted before you can talk about closing a season based on data that only is taken from 5% of the entire fishery. I have spoken with several of the NCDMF agents that take fish data and from my talks there is no way you can estimate catch totals based on the minimal data these agents collect. In all of this I believe we need to find a more reliable way to calculate the catch totals before we get to a point of losing the right to fish for cobia altogether. The changes that have been put in place are strict for NC but this fishery is thriving and is in no way in need of a closure.</p>
5/30/2016 18:00:06	Ches Tyson	Outerbanksoutdoors@g	Kitty Hawk NC 27949	Charter/Headboat/For-Hire	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>The data being used is flawed. The new regulations any future regulations are in direct violation of the magnuson-stevens ACT.</p>

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5/30/2016 18:49:10	Brian Olszyk	stretchedoutfishing@gm	Norfolk VA 23502	Private Recreational Angler, Charter/Headboat/For	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agnilifecdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Brian Olszyk</p>

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5/30/2016 19:46:54	Michael Russell	gofish27944@gmail.com	Hertford NC 27944	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agnlifecdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Mike Russell</p>
5/30/2016 21:10:05	ted walker	ted1walker@gmail.com	Chuluota, FL 32766	Private Recreational Angler	red snapper	<p>The NOAA Fisheries data reports that red snapper catches are more than four times the annual catch limit. Estimated dead discards are double the annual catch limit. The reports issued by NOAA Fisheries indicate that red snapper populations are at an all time high and that fisherman are catching them in staggering numbers (hence the high dead discard numbers). What does the council recommend commercial and recreational anglers do to help?</p>
5/30/2016 21:13:02	Bob Houghton	Bobhoughton@bellsouth	Jacksonville FL 32225-2035	Private Recreational Angler, Non-Governmental Or	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4), Red Sn	<p>Science requires you to open your eyes, and think. This year States North of Florida lost their Cobia season because SAMFC did not do their job in 2015. Florida has a 1 fish limit in State waters. If SAMFC had taken a similar path last year the "Crisis" this year would not exist! You know your "Science", on Red Snapper is pure bunk, a nice word for B/S. Using your "Science", which calls a 90% mortality rate on snapper caught while fishing for other species is absurd. Since the Red Snapper population is increasing, using your "Science" will prohibit fishing for Red Snapper we can actually harvest, a non reachable goal, that will only worsen each year, since none were taken in the last two years. Your report that justifies closure, should be printed on toilet paper, so it would have a useful purpose!</p>

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5/31/2016 10:04:18	Ray Massengill	capray45@yahoo.com	Grantsboro NC	Private Recreational Angler, Charter/Headboat/For	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Y'all need more boots in the boat data. Not some computer model. I've been in the fishing industry for close to 35 years. You can not tell me the rec sector went 900 thousand lbs over quota. You need better data, you know it and I know it. It's like the red snapper MODEL for the south Atlantic. It said that the red snapper population in 1942 was so and so. Come on NMFS, you can do better than this. Do y'all have a model for how many dinosaurs were roaming the earth millions of years ago? Please start gathering better data before ruining our coastal communities economy's. Let the states manage our own fisheries. We all know when the Feds get involved in something, they totally mess it up. We know more about the moon than we do our oceans. And that is a sad thing.</p>
5/31/2016 10:08:16	Rick Caton	customsoundcharters@	Hatteras, NC 27943	Charter/Headboat/For-Hire, Commercial Fisherman	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>To whom it may concern, I am deeply troubled by the rapid attempt made by NOAA & SAFMC to totally shut down the Cobia Charter Fishing Industry in NC. I have been involved in Cobia Fishing commercially and charter for over 30 plus years from West Palm Beach, Fla. to Cape Charles, VA. It truly troubles me that you all are attempting to basically shut the Cobia fishery down. Catch and release Cobia fishing is nothing short of a laughable joke. You all know that your data is flawed and that the fishery is not overfished.....and yet you seem Hell Bent on shutting it down. Not to mention violating the MSA Standards 4 & 8.....totally breaking the law. This attempted fishery management goes hand and hand with your failed Red Snapper debacle. A spawning closure of any kind any time is totally unacceptable. The only acceptable solution is move the line back to Key West, Fla and give us back our 1.5 million pound quota.....nothing and I mean nothing else is acceptable. You all have already screwed us in NC out of over 1/2 of our fish as it is. Rick Caton "CUSTOM SOUND CHARTERS" Charterboats "FREE AGENT" "IRON WILL" "LITTLE CLAM" Hatteras, NC cell # 252-216-6765</p>
5/31/2016 10:57:53	Zach	fatzach88@gmail.com	27082	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Just sent this in to the public comments at SAFMC.....every damn one of you who like to Cobia fish had better do the same or you can kiss it good by. Send your comments to this website http://www.safmc.net/CommentForm_June2016Council</p> <p>To whom it may concern, I am deeply troubled by the rapid attempt made by NOAA & SAFMC to totally shut down the Cobia Charter and recreational Fishing Industry in NC. I have been involved in Cobia Fishing for 10 years now and working a full time job I only get out 4-9 times a year and with weather and other factors it makes it difficult to throw back a legal fish just because it's not the right day this-catch and release policy is BS (bullshit) and the fact that I can keep one fish 3 out of 7 days is a complete slap in the face. I know people from all sides of this debate and none are happy or believe in what is going on and its time that our voices be heard All this policy will do is make people leave the industry that pumps money in to our economy and attracts tourists into our areas where they can catch fish safely with an experienced captain Give us our quota back allow our captians And our fisherman to earn an honest living and allow guys like me to make our trip worth the gas and tackle to go! Where I can keep a legal fish to feed to family and friends It truly troubles me that you all are attempting to basically shut the Cobia fishery down. Catch and release Cobia fishing is nothing short of a laughable joke. You all know that your data is flawed and that the fishery is not overfished.....and yet you seem Hell Bent on shutting it down. Not to mention violating the MSA Standards 4 & 8.....totally breaking the law. This attempted fishery management goes hand and hand with your failed Red Snapper debacle. A spawning closure of any kind any time is totally unacceptable. The only acceptable solution is move the line back to Key West, Fla and give us back our 1.5 million pound quota.....nothing and I mean nothing else is acceptable. You all have already screwed us in NC out of over 1/2 of our fish as it is.</p>
5/31/2016 11:20:56	Troy Crane	1973bertram@gmail.co	Pirates Cove Marina, Manteo	Charter/Headboat/For-Hire	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>As a full time charter boat owner/operator, I have been Cobia fishing from the Chesapeake Bay of Va. to the outer banks of NC for 30 years. I am 100% opposed to ANY type of closure for this fisherie. There is no data that can show any type of restrictions need to be placed on this fisherie. The economic impact would be devastating to our industry and we would, in effect, be put out bussiness. I ask that more research would be put into this before making any decisions. Sencereley, Troy Crane Marauder Sport Fishing Charters</p>

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5/31/2016 11:29:03	Freddy James	Freddy@foxwatersports.	Buxton nc 27920	Private Recreational Angler, Charter/Headboat/For	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	How can you sleep at night knowing your "made up" data is putting people out of work on a daily basis. The cobia fishery is not over fished or in decline yet you want to completely shut down the fishery for NC and VA. Saying fish in Florida don't make it up to NC and VA is probably the biggest joke of it all. Restore the quota for the entire east coast and the issue of going over the quota in the MSA goes away. Shutting down healthy fisheries is not a precedent you want to start setting. It will encourage the general public to say F U and kill everything in their wake killing fish in fisheries that actually need closurers. People are tired of the BS and it's got to stop.
5/31/2016 11:35:58	Christian Harbom	C_harbom@yahoo.com		Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	It is entirely unnecessary to entirely close Cobia fishing. Where do you get your numbers that you base your Decisions on
5/31/2016 11:41:36	Anthony Nevins	anevins757@gmail.com	Raleigh, NC 27617	Private Recreational Angler, Charter/Headboat/For	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last night at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agnilife.cdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Anthony Nevins</p>

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5/31/2016 11:43:13	TODD BECK	todd.beck@vbschools.c	VIRGINIA BEACH VA 23454	Private Recreational Angler, Charter/Headboat/For	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrillifecdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, CAPT TODD BECK</p>
5/31/2016 12:02:02	Cameron Whitaker	Traditionfishingcharters	Hatteras, NC, 27943	Charter/Headboat/For-Hire	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Adjust the Florida Georgia bound Boundary back to cape Caniveral based on genetic fin clip data. Adjust the Atlantic ACL back to our previous ACL. Complete another stock assessment on the Cobia Fishery. Adjust committee to properly represent the mid Atlantic fishery. Reject MRIP falsified data.</p>

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5/31/2016 12:16:45	Patrick Link	Patricklink11@gmail.co	Williamsburg Va 23185	Private Recreational Angler, Charter/Headboat/For	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrilifeecd.n.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Patrick Link</p>
5/31/2016 12:48:38	Brian. K. Brumfield	brumfieldconst@gmail.c	Nags Head, NC 26959	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Your management has all but killed our ability to Catch a fish. Fighting Mother Nature his hard enough. Please leave us alone the weather and conditions control how we catch or don't catch!</p>

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5/31/2016 13:34:07	David Schalit	dschalit@gmail.com	NY NY	Association	SEDAR	<p>The American Bluefin Tuna Association (http://www.theabta.com/) represents handgear fishermen who fish for Atlantic bluefin, bigeye, yellowfin and albacore tunas. In 2015, 3,129 vessels were issued Commercial tunas fishing permits, 3,596 vessels were issued Charter/Headboat tunas permits and 20,157 vessels were issued Recreational tunas permits. Those fishermen who are targeting Atlantic tunas have a vested interest in the management of the dolphinfish fishery. The SAFMC manages dolphinfish stock as one management unit from FL to ME under an agreement with the MAFMC and the NEFMC and we take this opportunity to remind the SAFMC that management of this fish stock should take into account the considerations of fishermen in the Mid-Atlantic and New England as well as those of the South Atlantic, equally. We appreciate the opportunity to provide our comments to the SEDAR Committee. Dolphinfish is a highly-fecund, highly-migratory, pelagic species. It is considered a "cosmopolitan" species, not unlike Atlantic skipjack in certain significant ways. Consequently, it is possible that a dolphinfish assessment can present certain unique challenges, as does the assessment of skipjack. Dolphinfish habitat is the entire equatorial and sub-equatorial region of the Atlantic Ocean and adjacent seas and is actively harvested by many countries. Dolphinfish are carried into more temperate areas adjacent to the U.S. East Coast by the Gulf Stream. Dolphinfish has been assessed only once (Praeger 2000). According to the author, this was a "draft" assessment, based upon 5 prior years of landings. Dolphinfish is presently believed to be "not overfished" and with "overfishing not taking place". Notwithstanding its seemingly ubiquitous nature, U.S. science lacks an important baseline measurement of spawning stock biomass - either a measurement of virgin (unexploited) SSB or a measurement of SSB (exploited) - against which it can measure present SSB. Therefore, the status of this stock is only a matter of speculation. The Dolphinfish/Wahoo Committee is presently contemplating an amendment to the FMP. This is alarming in view of the fact that this stock is not only data-poor but lacks a single, complete and up-to-date assessment. In our view, it would be irresponsible in the extreme to consider an amendment to the FMP at this time without first obtaining an assessment of this stock. Recent events in 2015 that have had a negative effect on the fishery support this view. There has been much speculation surrounding the reasons for the necessity of prematurely closing the dolphinfish commercial fishery in 2015. Some mention the possibility of a successful year-class. Others mention a shift in fishing effort. Recent science would suggest that "Year" will tend to be a large component in determining dolphinfish catch, higher than many other environmental variables examined. This tends to be attributed to a high variability in year class recruitment for this shortlived, fast-growing species. Consequently, one very good fishing year would not necessarily be something out of the ordinary. However, if this trend - early realization of commercial ACL - were to continue, it might be indicative of a shift in effort. But the foregoing is speculation: all the more reason to conduct a stock assessment. The need for a dolphinfish stock assessment is not a matter of debate. Very little is known about dolphinfish population dynamics. We have been advised by Dr. Clay Porch that there is indeed a way to expedite an</p>

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						<p>assessment of a fish stock. Therefore, we urge the SEDAR committee to do its utmost to prioritize this assessment.</p> <p>Cordially, David Schalit, Vice President American Bluefin Tuna Association</p>

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5/31/2016 15:19:31	Jonathan French	french60wasp@gmail.co	Falls Church, VA 22042	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Regarding the recommendations posted in the meeting agenda, I favor the following approach: Adopt Draft Action 1-1 Alternative 2a One fish per person per day. This is consistent with measures already adopted in Virginia and North Carolina. No change should be made to these measures for a minimum of five years to determine their impact (as demonstrated by the significant spike in catch after a limit for cobia was adopted several decades ago.)</p> <p>Adopt Draft Action 1-2 Option 2d 37 inch fork length. This is consistent with size limits already used by North Carolina and Virginia.</p> <p>Adopt Draft Action 2, Option 1- No change to the fishing year. Any closed season between May 1-September 15th will be devastating to cobia stakeholders and will not produce a MAXIMUM sustainable yield.</p> <p>I do not support any of the alternatives listed for new accountability measures. As stated above, I support: 1) Redistricting the Management Zone to include E. Florida based on the genetics data and research available from Texas A&M, Virginia Institute of Marine Science Data, Tagging Data from Aaron Kelly, Jorj Head, and others, and the SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup. This should increase the ACL to 1.5 million pounds. 2) The accountability measure should be a reduction in the following year ACL ONLY after three year coverage averages of the 1.5 million pound ACL. No end of season closure should be applied, as it violates National Standard 2 -equitable distribution of the resource.</p> <p>I continue to be VEHEMENTLY opposed to Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission oversight. States are more than happy to comply with SAFMC measures if SAFMC meets the minimum standards for policy development authored in the current Magnuson Stevens Act. SAFMC violated the trust needed for cooperative management. That damage must be repaired.</p>
5/31/2016 15:32:36	Chris DeMasi	cobia4me@gmail.com	Virginia Beach, Virginia, 2346	Charter/Headboat/For-Hire	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrifecdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time. <p>Thank You, Captain Chris DeMasi, Rodfather Sportfishing COO Bay Daze Inc.</p>

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5/31/2016 19:20:10	William Tucker	formula233@comcast.n	Manassas Va 20110	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>I am very troubled by the way the cobia catch numbers are calculated. I am also troubled by the knee jerk reaction on closures and reduced catch limits based on 1 years a decent fishing. There are all kinds of variables that in most cases will reduce the amount of fish caught from year to year with every now and then getting a high catch year. Catch limits should be based over at least a 5 year sample to even 10 year before making adjustments to catch season and limits. As someone who works analyzing data and making statistical analyst based on reliable data. Meaning real hard fact data and see you all making decisions based on very unreliable data just does not sit well with me. The accuracy of you data you are making these decisions on is laughable at best and I think is very un professional. The money we are spending to pay for the SAMFC is a total waste to the tax payer. I will be voicing my concerns to the legislative branch to voice my dis pleasure over the job the SAMFC is doing and be pushing for a total re alignment of the council.</p>
5/31/2016 20:19:20	Sean Hankinson	seanhankinson@live.co	Elizabeth City NC 27909	Private Recreational Angler, Commercial Fisherma	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>he opportunity to discuss Cobia Management Plan Amendment 4. Amendment 20B made determinations to split cobia management at the Florida/Georgia line and the resulting allocation of cobia quota did not align with normal catch history in both states. Virginia and North Carolina have growing, strong cobia fisheries that have both localized and migratory populations of fish that come in waves early in the season and then reside in our waters all summer. This fishery is a niche, highly specialized fishery and those who make a living as result of a strong cobia fishery, including charter captains, tackle shops, and custom lure manufacturers, do not have an alternative market to facilitate their summer. North Carolina and Virginia significantly reduced daily creel limits in response to the spike in catch; however, is the correct Key West management boundary is utilized, 2015 represents a significant outlier versus the last decade. As result, our collaborative strongly urges SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (attached/linked). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. The resulting ACL should consist of the 2015 E. Florida and South Atlantic ACL's combined, which is approximately 1.5 million pounds. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Without the zone change, a 3 year average 2013-2015 would have been below the ACL. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. This aligns management in federal waters with the management utilized by North Carolina and Virginia (outside of Virginia using a 2016 boat limit of 2 fish per boat.) No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time. <p>NOAA has a responsibility to deliver fair and transparent policy that reflects the intent of the Magnuson Stevens Act.</p>

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6/1/2016 0:14:46	Melissa R. Lee	rea.melissa@yahoo.com	Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948	Private Recreational Angler, Charter/Headboat/For	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>"Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last night at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrillifecdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Melissa R. Lee</p>

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6/1/2016 0:17:33	Vernon W. Lee	lvw@live.com	Colerain, NC 27924	Private Recreational Angler, Charter/Headboat/For	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>"Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last night at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrilife.cdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Vernon W. Lee</p>

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6/1/2016 0:20:12	Sonny H. Lee	rea.melissa@yahoo.com	Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948	Private Recreational Angler, Charter/Headboat/For	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>"Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, ""disregard for federal law,"" I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrilife.cdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Sonny Lee Owner/Operator Southern Belle</p>

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6/1/2016 0:22:32	Noah Banks Lee	rea.melissa@yahoo.com	Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948	Private Recreational Angler, Charter/Headboat/For	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>"Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, ""disregard for federal law,"" I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrilifecon.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Noah Banks Lee Owner / Operator Southern Belle</p>
6/1/2016 2:05:06	Patrick Caton	info@litleclam.com	Hatteras, NC	Charter/Headboat/For-Hire, Commercial Fisherma	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>I am %100 against a spawning closure for cobia in May, we have never had one and the fishery is fine. Fishermen have taken a big enough hit already with recent cutbacks on creel limits and increased size requirements. A spawning closure in May would practically end the cobia charter season for Morehead, Ocracoke, and Hatteras. When the SAFMC gets involved with a fishery there is a good chance that it will turn into a mess, tile fish (both kinds), snowy grouper, red snapper, and now cobia. NO SPAWNING CLOSURE IN MAY. WE HAVE NEVER HAD ONE AND DON'T NEED ONE.</p>
6/1/2016 13:45:28	Justin Revere	Hatterasfishingadventur	Frisco NC 27936	Private Recreational Angler, Charter/Headboat/For	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Regulations on cobia should return to the ACL and parameters as they were in 2014. There should be no season closure, especially during peak migration, as the economic impact is unacceptable. We are already losing charters over the restrictions currently in place. A closure during peak migration would devastate many charter businesses, and the economic impact on the recreational side would be even worse, as tackle shops, hotels, restaurants, marinas, etc. All rely on this fishery. The percentage of anglers who would still target cobia to catch and release is extremely negligible. I don't know any. Also, they are probably the most difficult fish there is to release without damaging the fish, person, or property. Those of us who live and work on the water know that we have a thriving population of cobia that are not in danger of overfishing. Our livelihoods rely on that, so if we thought they needed saving, we would be the first to propose something, but that is simply not the case. You are creating a problem where there is not one, and trying to fix something that is not broken.</p>

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6/1/2016 15:04:48	Andrew Kumjian	andrewfishing@cox.net	Chesapeake, VA. 23320	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law." I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrillifecdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Andrew Kumjian</p>
6/1/2016 21:29:31	Renee Tomberlin	renee.tomberlin@gmail.	Burnsville, NC 28714	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>I simply want to express my concern regarding the fact that you, as an organization, seem hell bent on putting the fishing industry and it's proud tradition completely out of work. Yes..I am troubled about my own desires as a recreational fisherman, but more than that, I am concerned about my friends and family who make a living fishing the waters off Cape Hatteras both as charter boat owners and captains and as commercial fishermen. Please consider basing your decisions on science and logic!</p>

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6/2/2016 7:49:51	Sam Uhler	salmoney@me.com	Hayes, VA 23072	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last night at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrillifecdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Sam Uhler</p>
6/2/2016 7:50:04	Richard Fast	richardfast0@gmail.com	Jacksonville, FL 32224	Private Recreational Angler	Red Snapper 2016 season closure	<p>So many of us here in NE Florida have caught so many Red Snapper within 30 miles of the coast that we just don't understand why we are not getting a season in 2016. You continue to use a 39-41% discard kill rate as the rationale for season closure. Based on my experience observing the catching and releasing of 100's of Red Snapper over the past 3 years, and on the experience of many other fisherman that I have talked to, this assumed kill rate is considerably too high. Based on actual experience, and not a scientific study done in 300 feet of water, a practical kill rate that is based on experience inside 30 miles (<120 ft depth) is on the order of 20%. I am assuming that most Red Snapper caught by recreational fisherman is in much shallower water than 300 feet, but I don't have accurate figures for that.</p> <p>Because this is the most contentious issue with local fisherman here in NE Florida, please address the issue of catch and release kill rate as soon as possible, with realistic and practical studies we can understand and participate in.</p> <p>In general, SAFMC does a poor job of communicating with the recreational fishing community, which is massively larger than commercial fishing.</p>

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6/2/2016 8:10:59	Bob Rickabaugh	Lorraine242@aol.com	100 Marquis Ct Point Harbor	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agnilife.cdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You,</p>

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6/2/2016 8:21:59	Greg Grotyohann	ggrotyohann@hotmail.c	Southern Shores, NC 27949	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrilife.cdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Greg Grotyohann</p>
6/2/2016 8:23:50	Brian Forbes	omaopa43@msn.com	Kitty Hawk, NC 27949	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC:</p> <p>I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrilife.cdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. I categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. I request that SAFMC continue to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. I support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Brian Forbes</p>

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6/2/2016 9:13:28	Steve Hachtman	shachtman@gmail.com	Southern Shores, NC 27949	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last night at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrilife.cdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Steve Hachtman</p>

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6/2/2016 10:11:10	Rocco Taggio	obxphan@gmail.com	27954	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last night at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrilife.cdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Rocco Taggio</p>

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6/2/2016 10:36:01	perry freeman	nc_fisherman	Manteo NC 27954	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC,</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last night at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrillifecdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Perry Freeman</p>

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6/2/2016 10:38:34	Chris McCaffitty	freefish7@hotmail.com	NC	Commercial Fisherman	Red snapper	<p>June 2016 SAFMC Meeting Public Comments</p> <p>I am finding it hard to calmly express my discontent with this council as I write these comments since we were almost run over by a ship last trip, thanks in part to the continued mismanagement of our snapper/grouper fishery. Illegal Red Snapper and sharks were so thick inside of the shipping lanes that we needed to work further offshore in search of legal fish and had to come off anchor at 4am to avoid a terrible death in the dark. In an effort to be as nice as possible, I am just going to politely ask some questions that I hope will encourage anyone reading this to THINK about if there is a safer and more responsible way to manage our fisheries. The answer is a resounding and undeniable, YES!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why won't the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council follow Congressional mandates in the Magnuson-Stevens Act to limit waste, make efficient use of our resources, and promote the safety of fishermen at sea? 2. Why doesn't the council require fishermen to release illegal bottom fish that are too bloated to swim with descending devices that NOAA/NMFS research proves result in long-term survival rates of over 90%? 3. Wouldn't a 90+% survival rate for released Red Snapper allow fishermen and consumers to eat some of this seafood rather than requiring us to throw back every snapper we accidentally catch as our entire 800,000 lb. Total Allowable Catch is allocated to projected dead discards this year? 4. Does the council give any consideration to seafood consumers, restaurateurs, or fishermen when arbitrarily raising size limits and destroying markets for small fish such as bass and some species of snapper that used to be served whole, but will no longer fit on a plate without being filleted? 5. Why does the council put so much more effort into calculating the waste it creates/mandates than taking simple steps to avoid most of it? 6. Why did the council put so much effort into repeated attempts at violating our civil rights with unconstitutional tracking devices instead of focusing on properly managing quotas to avoid multiple extended closures and excessive regulatory discards? 7. Why didn't the council choose to enhance existing Marine Protected Areas with appropriate artificial reef habitat rather than rushing to close more traditional fishing grounds based on "fatally flawed data"? 8. Why doesn't the council focus more on enhancing our fisheries and food supply than restricting the public's freedom to access them? 9. Why won't the council set up an official online forum where stakeholders could discuss how we want to see our TACs managed within MSA guidelines and pick who represents us on the council? 10. Will the council adopt a Stop and Review policy that tables all amendments while we review existing laws in an official online forum to see what is working well and what isn't so changes can be made as necessary in compliance with all Congressional mandates? <p>I am happy to debate any of these issues with anyone or provide details about how we can manage our fisheries so they are sustainable and accessible for future generations.</p> <p>It is time to stop planning ahead to waste so much of our nation's seafood and start looking at proven solutions such as hatcheries and habitat enhancement that would create more recreational opportunity and feed more people while generating more revenue in a sustainable way.</p> <p>Sincerely, Chris McCaffitty</p>
6/2/2016 17:17:32	Mike Avery	mike@averys.net	Hampton, VA 23664	Charter/Headboat/For-Hire	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Your rationale used to create a separate zone for the state of Florida is deeply flawed and represents serious mis-management by the SAFMC to show illegal favoritism toward a single state at the expense of the rest of the Atlantic coast. There is ample evidence that Florida stocks do not represent any more a significant numbers of cobia from the gulf or atlantic. The actions taken by SAFMC to close cobia fishery in 2016 should be immediately reversed given the gross negligence as proven by your own council minutes. The Atlantic zone should be immediately returned to be managed as a single zone to not show unjustified favoritism toward Florida. I support a federal standard of 1 cobia per person and until a new stock assessment is conducted, no other changes to the amendment is needed at this time.</p>

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6/2/2016 17:30:04	Bill Gorham	Getbowedup40@gmail.c	Outer Banks NC 27949	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>It must be understood these regulations have been in the "works" since 2010, it has very little if anything to do with current fishing trends. The June 20th federal closure is the prime example of how VA and NE/NC stakeholders were not at the table during the regulatory process. That is unjust!</p> <p>No region, person, or corporation should have an unequal share of a migratory species/ public trust (fish). 630,000 to 2.2 million is unjust! The general public and state commissions should not be misled as to the justifications of the regulations nor should the regulations themselves be misleading. Genetics did not prove any boundary, we were told they did, that is unjust!</p> <p>The federal register, the official notice to the public stated BOTH migratory groups quota would INCREASE, they did not, that is unjust! No action should be taken other than returning the management line back to the FLA Keys and reallocating the 2014 ACL of 1.5 Million and an increase to min size to 37" and one fish per person.</p>
6/2/2016 20:27:11	Samantha	Bauer	Southern Shores, NC 27949	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrififecon.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, Samantha Bauer</p>
6/3/2016 8:05:04	John Richard Parker	dickparker22@gmail.co	Manteo, NC 27954	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>I request that you take appropriate action to maintain a viable Cobia season next year. I can accept the 37 inch size limit but your other proposals would, in effect, kill the season for anglers like me. Please refrain from taking these harsh actions.</p>
6/3/2016 15:17:51	Travis Hughes	hughstravis@bellsouth.	St. John's FL 32259	Private Recreational Angler, Charter/Headboat/For	Red Snapper	<p>I recently visited (memorial day weekend) seafood wholesalers in Mayport and St Augustine. I was surprised to see fresh red snapper for sale at both locations. If red snapper are closed to commercial and recreational anglers, who is able to legally harvest and sell red snapper during these closures. Are these fish coming from the gulf or are these fish being caught in the Atlantic?</p>
6/5/2016 13:22:26	Danny Gosselin	capt dangosselin@gmail.	Homestead, FI 33034	Commercial Fisherman	Mutton Snapper (SG Amendment 41)	<p>Closing mutton snapper during the spawning months[May & June] for recreational and commercial fisherman and raising the minimum size limit to 17" will help this fishery. I have seen first hand how it worked for our grouper fishing.</p>

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6/6/2016 15:01:29	D Hill	dhillthai@gmail.com	FL	Private Recreational Angler	Red Snapper	<p>My name is Dannie Hill and I and a recreational offshore fisherman. I'm very confused over the NOAA Fisheries/ Southeast Regional Office Fishery Bulletin FB16-033 May 19, 2016 NOAA Fisheries Announces Red Snapper Will Remain Closed in South Atlantic Federal Waters in 2016</p> <p>This bulletin states, " The total removals allowable for 2015 were 114,000 fish. After evaluating landings and discard information for 2015, NOAA Fisheries determined the estimates of total removals were 276,729 fish; therefore, the fishery remains closed in 2016." My confusion comes from the fact that the Red Snapper season for 2015, in Florida Federal Waters was closed all of 2015 and it will remain closed this year, 2016, according to this bulletin. Where are the Red Snapper being caught, discarded and killed? Red Snapper are alive and well in my area and all the fishermen I talked to catch and release large numbers of 20 inch plus fish in good condition. I try very hard to obey the regulations, but also want to understand how these Fishery Bulletins come about and how the numbers are processed. If these numbers are coming from fishing off the coast of N.C., S.C and GA then why are the Florida fishermen being grouped with them? We weren't allowed to take Red Snapper for an entire year and now have to suffer for another year because of the areas that were allowed to overfish. Which I believe are false numbers which claim that recreational fishermen take some 2/3 of the fish. Commercial fishing, including head boats, party boats, charter boats, and multi-hook drop liners do not follow the regulations and are given many more days of fishing to take many more fish than are reported in areas where the season is open.</p> <p>As a recreational fisherman I do not like this term, because I fish and feed my family with my catch. I spend and contribute to the local economy by maintaining my boat, buying fuel and bait, as well as telling my friends from other areas about my fishing experience, which bring them down to add to the economic growth of my community.</p> <p>Once again my question is: Where are the Red Snapper being caught, discarded and killed if the Red Snapper season was closed all of 2015? I hope to hear from you on this matter. I also know I am not the only confused fisherman on Florida's East coast.</p> <p>Thank you for your time. Dannie Hill</p>

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6/6/2016 15:03:43	Dr Mark Hollman	Fwd From Mike.collins@ FL	FL	Private Recreational Angler	Red Snapper	<p>From: Mark W. Hollmann, M.D. Date: Mon, Jun 6, 2016 7:50 AM To: WCBLAW@aol.com; Subject: Red Snapper</p> <p>Mr Brewer, John Jolley gave me your name as someone directly involved in the management of Red Snapper. I have also been in contact with Jodie Johnson. Both of them also have serious reservations about the data being used to close red snapper to recreational fishing. As a recreational fisherman in Ponce Inlet I find it very disappointing that red snapper is closed again. Having fished offshore somewhat frequently (10-12 times per year) over the last 10 years I can tell you the Red Snapper have gone from relatively abundant to now so plentiful to be essentially a nuisance fish. As you know Ponce is a difficult inlet and has very few charter boats. I fished last Saturday and can tell you that outside of the 25 boats out for a Striker tournament no one was offshore. I have some questions on how they have arrived at a No fish limit for Red Snapper.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> How do you determine how many boats actually fish a given region? We probably had 400 boats at Disappearing island this weekend with 25 -50 offshore. If you are using boat trailers or similar counts I can reassure you your data is way off. Also there are many days when the ocean does not cooperate with our plans to go offshore. How is that figured? How can an area from Boynton Beach to Brunswick GA have no representation on the committee when their decisions are significantly affecting that region? Has anyone from the committee actually gone out of Ponce or St Augustine and bottom fished? If not I would recommend it. We catch Red Snapper anywhere in an area probably extending over 180 square miles out of Ponce Inlet. Flagler to Cape Canaveral. We also know many snapper live beyond where it is practical to recreational fish. Has any of your data taken into effect the relatively large area that Snapper are not catchable for practical purposes? Many of us also have serious reservations about the data collection methodology as it sure appears that the number of older fish is significantly underrepresented in the model being used. This will skew the numbers in a very significant manner and most likely is the real reason the data does not reflect the reality. This would be similar to measuring the number of mature deer in downtown Orlando and making the statewide quota based on those numbers. <p>I have 4 sons that love to fish so I certainly have a vested interest in protecting red snapper for future generations. However the data you are using is not remotely correlating with the reality of the situation. Most of us would have no issue with a bag limit or closed season for spawning. What you have now is punitive and has no correlation to what we are actually experiencing in the field. Essentially we have regulation without local representation. I am asking John Mica to get involved as this is a federal agency. I appreciate your time and attention in this matter. Mark Hollmann, MD</p>
6/6/2016 15:39:41	Frank Timmons	ftimmons571@yahoo.co FL	FL	Charter/Headboat/For-Hire	Red Snapper	<p>I have been thinking hard on the snapper grouper debacle and I cannot believe or maybe someone has offered this solution. I have been fishing all my life, 3rd generation. I would say 95% of the fishermen that fish for grouper, use the same bait and rig if they are fishing for snapper. Gag grouper in our area are virtually nonexistent anymore inside 140 foot depth. Red Snapper on the other hand have rebounded very well as have the Goliaths that now plague every reef we have. In my opinion, if any kind of bag limit for either grouper or snapper is allowed, it should be an "either or" situation between the two. If a person is fishing for grouper here, he will have to accidentally catch and wound or eventually kill by release mortality, many red snapper to even have an opportunity to catch a grouper. Likewise, snapper fishermen will catch grouper on occasion as they snapper fish because the two feed the same on the same baits. All this made think that solution, whatever it may turn out to be, should be where if red snapper and gags reopen, a person should be allowed only one of them per day, but never both species. So, they will not continue to catch multitudes of one trying to catch the other. Just my thought, but all the fishermen I've talked to agree that they do fish exactly the same for both types, and this would stop the terrible effort to catch ratio that kills sooo many fish. Thanks for your time and tell my Cousin Rusty hello! Frank</p> <p>Captain Frank Timmons Off the Grid Fishing Charters Instructor/Trainer-Freedom Boat Club, Discover Boating</p>

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6/6/2016 15:55:33	Richard Fast	richardfast0@gmail.com	FL	Research	Red Snapper	<p>I have been shooting underwater videos of our artificial reefs off of Jacksonville for the past 9 months. I use an ROV, launched from a surface tender, that I built myself. These videos give actual conditions at the reefs with no bias involved. The fish are totally undisturbed by the ROV, unlike when divers are present. These videos clearly show the phenomenal amount of Red Snapper that inhabit our near-shore reefs, and clearly show an almost total lack of grouper, which I believe are being pushed out by the high Red Snapper population.</p> <p>I am asking you to please provide this Youtube video URL (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WGILDsXTNzI) to the upcoming council meeting members, along with this email, as my formal input comments to the council members meeting in Cocoa Beach next week. If the video could be shown to them on a large screen monitor, it would be most appreciated.</p> <p>Here is an opportunity for the council members to view the actual conditions in Red Snapper habitat inside 16 fathoms, and within 30 miles of the coast. This is ground truth, there are no science or statistics, opinions from fisherman, or anger toward government regulations, just fact of what exists at our reef and live bottom habitats.</p> <p>I apologize for not attending the meeting, but I have children visiting from Chicago for only a short visit.</p> <p>Sincerely, Richard Fast</p>

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6/6/2016 22:33:51	Ted Walker	ted1walker@gmail.com	FL	Private Recreational Angler	<p>Dear South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council, I am Florida resident and private citizen who is concerned for the wellbeing of Florida fishing resources. I agree with management of these resources. Humans are generally an opportunistic species that have dominating tendencies and not much concern for the future nor consequences of their actions. Hence, the need for laws, regulations, and enforcement of those laws with appropriate penalties. This can be seen in past fishing industries and overuse of resources. I am glad that there is a "Council" to help make decisions about the management of the resources. This would imply that not one person is deciding the fate of a resource. An organization that obtains information from multiple resources, such as, NOAA, private citizens, commercial interests, and government. Striking a balance that considers all aspects and remains open to suggestions and other perspectives is an important part of this process. You as the "council" realize that you cannot please everyone all of the time and must make decision based on facts and the best interest of the resources. Specifically, I want to point out a few facts from the NOAA fisheries assessment of the Red Snapper reports that have been published in 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015. I understand that a stock assessment report has not been completed since 2009/2010. This leaves only the "Total Removals of Red Snapper" reports prepared by the Southeast Fisheries Science Center to evaluate the health of the Red Snapper population. Using data published in the official Southeast Fisheries Science Center we see that the total removals have increased substantially in the last four years. Reaching 682K removals in 2015. This is a 330% increase since 2012. If you review the SEDAR 24 SAR Section 1 report published Oct 2010, page 15. You will see that the last time total removals were consistently at this level was in 1978. People are catching the same amount of red snapper they did 38 years ago. The only difference is that in 1978, fishermen were actually taking the red snapper home to eat. Today fisherman are forced to release them to their fate. Based on NOAA reports, 39% - 41% will not survive. That leaves 60% to reproduce and continue to build the breeding stock. Considering the amount of Red Snapper being caught in the Atlantic, there is an overabundance of this fish. How many Red Snapper will be removed in 2016? Based on recent growth rates rate, it could surpass one million fish.</p> <p>Source for 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 data. Total Removals of Red Snapper Reports published by Southeast Fisheries Science Center. 2016 estimate based on extrapolating 2014 and 2015 growth rates to 2016. Below is a chart of the historical removals reported in the SEDAR 24 report.</p> <p>Source SEDAR 24 SAR Section 1 Page 15. As you can see, Red Snapper removals are increasing at a tremendous rate. Given that fishing methods have not changed, the data suggests that Atlantic Red Snapper populations are rebounding significantly. So quickly that "by catch" is at record levels. Anglers that are targeting other bottom dwelling fish are finding that Red Snapper are now the nuisance species. As red snapper population explodes, other fish are having a hard time surviving. Juvenile fish, even young red snapper, become a food source for red snapper. Smaller snapper, such as lane and vermilion, could be decimated by larger red snapper populations. If you consider large mammal (such as black bear, white tail deer, and wild hog) management programs, as a comparable example. It places a different perspective on the current management of red snapper. Most recently, black bear populations in Florida reached a very high level. Black bear populations are so high that bears are encroaching into residential areas and being shot as a nuisance or fear. Bears are also being killed by cars more frequently too. As the bear population grows, the FWC could have continued down the path of population control by shooting more bears in residential areas and running them over with cars. Rather than allow more damage to occur. The FWC allowed a very short open season on bears until 300 bears were taken out of the population. This reduced the car accidents and residential problems with bears. Population control of Red Snapper in the South Atlantic Federal waters is non-existent. The Council falls back on regulations and amendments in defense of their decision to ignore Red Snapper populations. The NOAA 2015 Stock assessment lists Red Snapper in the categories "overfishing" and "overfished". However, a stock assessment has not been completed in 6 years. "Over fishing", at least in South Atlantic waters, is not true as the season has been closed for two years and based on current regulations will never open again. Given the facts provided by NOAA, I am recommending the Council address these three items regarding Red Snapper.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Commission a new stock assessment report of Atlantic Red Snapper populations. 2) Establish a population control trigger. Such that, if "total discards" are too high during a closed season, the Council can approve a limited Red Snapper season as a population control measure. This will allow the Council to approve a Red Snapper season if discards are too high

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						<p>and if landings are too high. This would help keep the population from becoming overpopulated and overfished. 3) Address the high amount of removals reported. Establish a group or committee to determine why total removals are so high. Thank you for your time and consideration. Ted Walker Ted1walker@gmail.com</p>
6/7/2016 10:14:18 Fish VA		ifishva@gmail.com	VA	Fishing Association	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>The Virginia Saltwater Sportfishing Association (VSSA) requests the following letter be included as a public comment for the June Council meeting regarding the proposed cobia amendment.</p> <p>Virginia recreational anglers support a federal limit of 1 cobia per person (reduction from 2 per person). We do not support boat limits until a new stock assessment is completed to justify that such drastic measures are needed. The council and committee have failed to demonstrate that cobia are overfished based on a single year of data.</p> <p>Virginia recreational anglers recommend redoing the automatic triggers to Accountability Measures (AM) that call for closures based on 1 years' worth of data. Automatic triggers to AMs is a poor way to manage stocks when based on a single year of data. And certainly a full closure is unwarranted when other management options are clearly available such reduced limits, sizes, and partial seasonal closures.</p> <p>Virginia recreational anglers strongly urge SAFMC to return the Atlantic coast to a single zone. The zone split providing the Florida Atlantic coast their own zone and higher ACL is grossly unfair and represents unprofessional favoritism to a single state. The science used to justify this action is not sound nor accepted by any respectable fisherman.</p> <p>Virginia recreational anglers do not support closed seasons. SAFMC and the committee have failed to justify the need for closed season.</p> <p>Virginia Saltwater Sportfishing Association (VSSA) email: ifishva@gmail.com ifishva.org joinvssa.org https://www.facebook.com/groups/lfishVA/</p>

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6/7/2016 10:35:19	Mike Avery (President V	ifishva@gmail.com	Hampton, VA 23664	Non-Governmental Organization	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>The Virginia Saltwater Sportfishing Association (VSSA) requests the following letter be included as a public comment for the June Council meeting regarding the proposed cobia amendment.</p> <p>Virginia recreational anglers support a federal limit of 1 cobia per person (reduction from 2 per person). We do not support boat limits until a new stock assessment is completed to justify that such drastic measures are needed. The council and committee have failed to demonstrate that cobia are overfished based on a single year of data.</p> <p>Virginia recreational anglers recommend redoing the automatic triggers to Accountability Measures (AM) that call for closures based on 1 years' worth of data. Automatic triggers to AMs is a poor way to manage stocks when based on a single year of data. And certainly a full closure is unwarranted when other management options are clearly available such reduced limits, sizes, and partial seasonal closures.</p> <p>Virginia recreational anglers strongly urge SAFMC to return the Atlantic coast to a single zone. The zone split providing the Florida Atlantic coast their own zone and higher ACL is grossly unfair and represents unprofessional favoritism to a single state. The science used to justify this action is not sound nor accepted by any respectable fisherman.</p> <p>Virginia recreational anglers do not support closed seasons. SAFMC and the committee have failed to justify the need for closed season.</p> <p>Virginia Saltwater Sportfishing Association (VSSA) email: ifishva@gmail.com ifishva.org joinvssa.org https://www.facebook.com/groups/ifishVA/</p>
6/7/2016 11:22:12	Richard Fast	richardfast0@gmail.com	Jacksonville, FL 32224	Private Recreational Angler	Red Snapper management	<p>Please view the video I took of the large Red Snapper population just 12 nm NE of the St John's jetties: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VyXIKZ5AV8g&feature=youtu.be</p> <p>Sorry for the poor quality, but it conveys why we fisherman in this area are concerned that Red Snapper population and recovery management is incorrect in saying that the Red Snapper population is not recovering in the South Atlantic.</p> <p>In many areas with 30 miles of our jetties the Red Snapper are viewed as a pest because it prevents other species from being caught. Thank you for your time, Richard Fast</p>
6/7/2016 11:44:51	Patrick link	Patricklink11@gmail.co	Williamsburg, va, 23185	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>I request the following letter be included as a public comment for the June Council meeting regarding the proposed cobia amendment.</p> <p>I support a federal limit of 1 cobia per person (reduction from 2 per person). I do not support boat limits until a new stock assessment is completed to justify that such drastic measures are needed. The council and committee have failed to demonstrate that cobia are overfished based on a single year of data.</p> <p>I recommend redoing the automatic triggers to Accountability Measures (AM) that call for closures based on 1 years' worth of data. Automatic triggers to AMs is a poor way to manage stocks when based on a single year of data. And certainly a full closure is unwarranted when other management options are clearly available such reduced limits, sizes, and partial seasonal closures.</p> <p>I strongly urge SAFMC to return the Atlantic coast to a single zone. The zone split providing the Florida Atlantic coast their own zone and higher ACL is grossly unfair and represents unprofessional favoritism to a single state. The science used to justify this action is not sound nor accepted by any respectable fisherman.</p> <p>I do not support closed seasons. SAFMC and the committee have failed to justify the need for closed season.</p> <p>Sincerely Patrick Link</p>

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6/7/2016 12:22:09	Charlie Davidson	cdavidson03@comcast.	Port Haywood , Va 23138	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>I request the following letter be included as a public comment for the June Council meeting regarding the proposed cobia amendment.</p> <p>I support a federal limit of 1 cobia per person (reduction from 2 per person). I do not support boat limits until a new stock assessment is completed to justify that such drastic measures are needed. The council and committee have failed to demonstrate that cobia are overfished based on a single year of data.</p> <p>I recommend redoing the automatic triggers to Accountability Measures (AM) that call for closures based on 1 years' worth of data. Automatic triggers to AMs is a poor way to manage stocks when based on a single year of data. And certainly a full closure is unwarranted when other management options are clearly available such reduced limits, sizes, and partial seasonal closures.</p> <p>I strongly urge SAFMC to return the Atlantic coast to a single zone. The zone split providing the Florida Atlantic coast their own zone and higher ACL is grossly unfair and represents unprofessional favoritism to a single state. The science used to justify this action is not sound nor accepted by any respectable fisherman.</p> <p>I do not support closed seasons. SAFMC and the committee have failed to justify the need for closed season.</p>
6/7/2016 12:22:56	Mark King	fsherking@comcast.net	Warrenton, Va. 20187	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>I request the following letter be included as a public comment for the June Council meeting regarding the proposed cobia amendment.</p> <p>I support a federal limit of 1 cobia per person (reduction from 2 per person). I do not support boat limits until a new stock assessment is completed to justify that such drastic measures are needed. The council and committee have failed to demonstrate that cobia are overfished based on a single year of data.</p> <p>I recommend redoing the automatic triggers to Accountability Measures (AM) that call for closures based on 1 years' worth of data. Automatic triggers to AMs is a poor way to manage stocks when based on a single year of data. And certainly a full closure is unwarranted when other management options are clearly available such reduced limits, sizes, and partial seasonal closures.</p> <p>I strongly urge SAFMC to return the Atlantic coast to a single zone. The zone split providing the Florida Atlantic coast their own zone and higher ACL is grossly unfair and represents unprofessional favoritism to a single state. The science used to justify this action is not sound nor accepted by any respectable fisherman.</p> <p>I do not support closed seasons. SAFMC and the committee have failed to justify the need for closed season.</p>
6/7/2016 12:27:53	Kris LaMontagne	kel1947@gmail.com	Onancock, VA 23417	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>I request the following letter be included as a public comment for the June Council meeting regarding the proposed cobia amendment.</p> <p>I support a federal limit of 1 cobia per person (reduction from 2 per person). I do not support boat limits until a new stock assessment is completed to justify that such drastic measures are needed. The council and committee have failed to demonstrate that cobia are overfished based on a single year of data.</p> <p>I recommend redoing the automatic triggers to Accountability Measures (AM) that call for closures based on 1 years' worth of data. Automatic triggers to AMs is a poor way to manage stocks when based on a single year of data. And certainly a full closure is unwarranted when other management options are clearly available such reduced limits, sizes, and partial seasonal closures.</p> <p>I strongly urge SAFMC to return the Atlantic coast to a single zone. The zone split providing the Florida Atlantic coast their own zone and higher ACL is grossly unfair and represents unprofessional favoritism to a single state. The science used to justify this action is not sound nor accepted by any respectable fisherman.</p> <p>I do not support closed seasons. SAFMC and the committee have failed to justify the need for closed season.</p>

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6/7/2016 14:04:33	Leda A. Dunmire	LDunmire@pewtrusts.or	Tavernier, FL 33070	Non-Governmental Organization	FEP II	<p>June 7, 2016</p> <p>Dr. Michelle Duval Chairman, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201 Charleston, SC 29405</p> <p>Re: Progress on the Fishery Ecosystem Plan II and Policy Statements</p> <p>Dear Dr. Duval,</p> <p>Please accept these comments for consideration during discussion of the Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) II at the June 13-17 Council meeting in Cocoa Beach, Florida. An FEP is an essential tool for ecosystem-based fishery management, an approach the Council is pursuing to address unique challenges facing the region. The updated FEP II is scheduled for completion in December. We recommend that the Council adopt the following timeline to ensure careful review and discussion of the new chapters and policy statements before final FEP II approval:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 13-17, 2016 Council meeting in Cocoa Beach, FL: The Council specifies steps for policy statement and overall FEP completion. • September 19-23, 2016 Council meeting in Myrtle Beach, SC: The Council reviews and discusses an overview of the new chapters and the new draft policy statements. • November 2016 meeting of the Habitat and Environmental Protection Advisory Panel (AP): The AP reviews the new draft policy statements and provides comments to the Council. • December 5-9, 2016 Council meeting in Atlantic Beach, NC: The Council reviews and approves final policy statements and discusses methods for operationalizing the policy recommendations via fishery management plan amendments or other management actions. <p>Until now, Council staff and the appointed Technical Working Groups have driven FEP II content development. They have done commendable work incorporating the best science and leading experts into the process. Because of the significance of this document to the Council's stated commitment to an ecosystem-based fishery management (EBFM) approach and its implications for management actions via the policy statements, it is time for the Council to assume leadership and guide the process to a successful finish in December. The timeline we recommend should allow sufficient time for the Council to consider the new information and discuss ways to best use it to inform management decisions going forward. After all, the FEP II must be actionable to be valuable.</p> <p>We are encouraged by the addition of two new chapters to the FEP II. The new Food Webs and Connectivity chapter will provide an important foundation to identify and understand predator-prey linkages and the role of forage fish in South Atlantic marine ecosystems. The new Climate Variability and Fisheries chapter will provide important information about current and predicted environmental changes in this region and the potential impacts of these changing conditions on managed fisheries. We are further encouraged by the plan to develop explicit policy statements associated with each of these chapters(1) and encourage the Council to carefully consider methods for operationalizing these policy statements, such as including ecosystem considerations into Fishery Management Plans, Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendments, and stock assessments.</p> <p>A well-designed FEP can be a road map and provide an overarching framework for inclusion of critical ecosystem components, such as food webs and climate variability, into management.(2) As Co-Chairman of the Lenfest Task Force Dr. Phil Levin highlighted during his December 2015 presentation to the Council, an FEP can also specify crucial indicators of ecosystem and economic health, and include goals for protecting and enhancing its functions.(3) This information can improve individual species management by allowing managers to better identify risks to populations and fisheries and to take appropriate action to protect the health of ecosystems and local economies. As Dr. Levin further noted, the FEP II should be a concise, aspirational, action-oriented implementation plan to inform management decisions.(4)</p> <p>Thank you for considering these comments. We look forward to working with you and other stakeholders to continue to advance a comprehensive, ecosystem-based approach to fishery management in the South Atlantic.</p> <p>Sincerely, Leda A. Dunmire Manager, U.S. Oceans, Southeast</p> <p>1. http://safmc.net/sites/default/files/meetings/pdf/Council/2015/06-</p>

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						<p>2015/HabEBM/Attach2_FEPIIDevPlanHabEcoJune15.pdf 2. NMFS (2016). Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management Policy; https://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/Assets/ecosystems/ebfm/Final-EBFM-Policy-PDS-Review-5.20.2016-final-for-PDS.pdf. EPAP (1998) Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management: A Report to Congress by the Ecosystem Principles Advisory Panel. 3. http://safmc.net/sites/default/files/meetings/pdf/Council/2015/12-2015/T3-HabEco/HabEcoCommLenfestBriefDec15.pdf 4. http://safmc.net/sites/default/files/meetings/pdf/Council/2015/12-2015/T3-HabEco/HabEcoCommLenfestBriefDec15.pdf</p>
6/7/2016 14:25:19	Jerry Allen Shaw	6601 South Jessu Loop	Chesterfield, VA 23832	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrifliefcdn.tamu.edu/.../2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic.</p> <p>2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds.</p> <p>3. I categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act.</p> <p>4. I support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time</p> <p>Thank You, Jerry Shaw</p>

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6/7/2016 20:13:45	Brandon Smith	apluslawncare.brandon	Portsmouth	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>While i do agree on increasing the size limit on cobia for 2016 i do not agree with not being able to use a gaff and would like to know the science behind that. Clearly whoever made the regulations have never tried to net a 70 lb green cobia in the boat. Its more dangerous than using a gaff and time will tell this season. On another note the numbers from 2015 catch to previous numbers are completely assenine. The cobia are not suffering or declining its the menhaden that need help.</p>
6/7/2016 22:10:18	James C. Wheeler	wheeler0201@charter.n	kitty hawk, nc 27949	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Dr. Duval and Members of SAFMC</p> <p>As both North Carolina and Virginia has repudiated SAFMC, the SSC, and NMFS, to quote Representatives Rob Wittman, Randy Forbes, and Scott Rigell's letter to VMRC that was shared last nigh at the VMRC cobia hearing, "disregard for federal law," I strongly urge SAFMC to take the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocation of ACL should utilize borders consistent with SEDAR 28 and Texas A&M's study on cobia genetics (http://agrilife.cdn.tamu.edu/gold/files/2012/05/Gold-et-al.-2013.pdf). The SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup clearly states that there is no genetic boundary that could be found and the Texas A&M study validates that there is one homogeneous population of cobia through the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. For the ease of management, jurisdictional management borders should return to the 2014 border. This separates the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic Management Zones at Key West. East Florida's allocation of cobia should return to the South Atlantic. 2. 2016 closures should be removed via interim final rule, as the decision to separate the zones resulted in an ACL change. Since that decision has been invalidated as result of violations of National Standard 2 (see the above failure to use the Texas A&M, SEDAR 28 genetics, and Virginia tagging data to determine the zone split) and National Standard 4 (development of an accountability measure inherently discriminatory in the final rule), no ACL change would have been required in 2015. No ACL change should mean that a three year average should have been used to trigger the accountability measure instead of a one year average. For 2013-2015 average, the E. Florida-New York zone is well under the old ACL for 1.44 million pounds. 3. We categorically oppose transferring management of cobia to ASMFC. This is a management failure by SAFMC, not an unsolvable conflict between states. We request that SAFMC continues to manage cobia without ASMFC participation, while adhering to the principles identified in the Magnuson Stevens Act. 4. We support an increase of the minimum size limit to 37 inches fork length and a decrease to one fish per person creel limit in federal waters. No other amendments are needed to the FMP at this time <p>Thank You, James C. Wheeler</p>

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6/7/2016 22:13:24	Douglas J. Michalowski	douglas13@cox.net	Chesapeake, Va 23320	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>I request the following letter be included as a public comment for the June Council meeting regarding the proposed cobia amendment.</p> <p>I support a federal limit of 1 cobia per person (reduction from 2 per person). I do not support boat limits until a new stock assessment is completed to justify that such drastic measures are needed. The council and committee have failed to demonstrate that cobia are overfished based on a single year of data.</p> <p>I recommend redoing the automatic triggers to Accountability Measures (AM) that call for closures based on 1 years' worth of data. Automatic triggers to AMs is a poor way to manage stocks when based on a single year of data. And certainly a full closure is unwarranted when other management options are clearly available such reduced limits, sizes, and partial seasonal closures.</p> <p>I strongly urge SAFMC to return the Atlantic coast to a single zone. The zone split providing the Florida Atlantic coast their own zone and higher ACL is grossly unfair and represents unprofessional favoritism to a single state. The science used to justify this action is not sound nor accepted by any respectable fisherman.</p> <p>I do not support closed seasons. SAFMC and the committee have failed to justify the need for closed season.</p>
6/8/2016 8:03:36	Stephen R Bowers	steve.bowers@vafb.com	Melfa Va 23410	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	None
6/8/2016 9:11:34	Craig Freeman	gradingscalesportfishin	Poquoson, VA 23662	Private Recreational Angler, Charter/Headboat/For	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Instead of punishing states with closures, the following should be adopted by the SAMFC.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a limit of one fish per person in federal waters. This would cut the catch in half based on existing limits. 2. Change the zones to reflect the entire east coast. It is not right that Florida gets special treatment in regards to cobia. They should be included in the group. 3. Appoint a representative from the state of VA to be on the committee. I may be wrong here, but from what I understand Virginia does not have a voting member on the SAMFC. The fact SAMFC policies affect VA without representation is just ridiculous and if history serves me correctly I remember something about taxation without representation caused a war back in the 1700's. Virginia needs a voting member on the SAMFC! 4. Change the triggers for the accountability measures. One years worth of data should not cause a shutdown of a fishery. <p>These are the changes I wish to see the SAMFC make.</p> <p>On a separate note, you will probably receive a letter from an organization called the Virginian Saltwater Sportfishing Association (VSSA). they do not represent all VA anglers as they say in the their letter. They only represent members of the VSSA. However, in this case most Virginia Anglers will probably agree with the VSSA's stance.</p> <p>Sincerely, Capt. Craig Freeman Grading Scales Sportfishing</p>

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6/8/2016 9:46:50	Justin Kelly	rjustink@yahoo.com		Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>I believe the SAFMC data is flawed and your catch extrapolations are skewed. I have been fishing the lower Chesapeake Bay for a decade and have never been questioned about my catch and i fish out of Lynnhaven Inlet, one of the busiest in Virginia. What has failed to be shown is the science behind the determination of the 2015 landings. Until that is done, the argument for action hold no basis. Regardless of my position, action is being taken so proposals must be weighted and decided on.</p> <p>I support a federal limit of 1 cobia per person (reduction from 2 per person). I do not support boat limits until a new stock assessment is completed to justify that such drastic measures are needed. The council and committee have failed to demonstrate that cobia are overfished based on a single year of data.</p> <p>I recommend redoing the automatic triggers to Accountability Measures (AM) that call for closures based on 1 years' worth of data. Automatic triggers to AMs is a poor way to manage stocks when based on a single year of data. And certainly a full closure is unwarranted when other management options are clearly available such reduced limits, sizes, and partial seasonal closures.</p> <p>I strongly urge SAFMC to return the Atlantic coast to a single zone. The zone split providing the Florida Atlantic coast their own zone and higher ACL is grossly unfair and represents unprofessional favoritism to a single state. The science used to justify this action is not sound nor accepted by any respectable fisherman.</p> <p>I do not support closed seasons. SAFMC and the committee have failed to justify the need for closed season.</p>
6/8/2016 10:11:21	Lewis W. Brothers	lewisbrothers5@gmail.c	Heathsville Virginia 22473	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>I want the following comment to be included as a public comment for the June Council meeting regarding the proposed cobia amendment. I support a federal limit of 1 cobia per person. I do not support boat limits until a new stock assessment is completed to justify that drastic measures are needed. The Counsel and committee have failed to demonstrate that cobia are overfished based on a single year of data. It is felt using one year of data to call for closure or reduction of limits is wrong, uncalled for and not justified. Finally, I strongly urge SAFMC to return the Atlantic Coast to a single zone which includes the Atlantic Coast of Florida. Giving Florida a separate zone is unfair and incorrect favoritism to a single state. Also I do not support closed seasons unless need is justified and SAFMC has not justified the need to close the cobia season in my state (Virginia)</p>
6/8/2016 10:24:01	Scott King	kingfish69@ec.rr.com	Newport, NC 28570	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Cobia fishing is weather and opportunity dependent and should be averaged out between multiple years, instead of using one year to severely limit fishing for them. The ACL is very low in the first place and if only one state has enough fish to break the ACL, your numbers are out to lunch! The fact that two states broke the ACL in the same year suggest you might be so off base that you need to reevaluate your entire method of doing business. Either it's way to low, your estimates are way off, or the fishery is doing so well that it doesn't need your intervention. (Or all three of the above, but none of the above suggests that we need stricter limits on cobia.) There is a very cyclic nature to the cobia landing you estimate, but you management tends ignores that in every single fishery that you manage?!?!? Do nothing and let the natural cycle average out the over-estimated landing numbers.</p>

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6/8/2016 16:40:48	Nancy Fish	nancy.fish@ncdenr.gov	Morehead City, NC 28557	NC Marine Fisheries Commission	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>June 8, 2016</p> <p>Dr. Roy Crabtree, Regional Administrator NOAA Fisheries Service Southeast Regional Office 263 13th Avenue South St. Petersburg, Florida 33701</p> <p>Dear Dr. Crabtree:</p> <p>The North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission wishes to express its gratitude for your agency's efforts in working with our state and with Virginia to seek ways to prolong the 2016 recreational fishing season for cobia while still staying consistent with recreational accountability measures outlined in the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Coastal Migratory Pelagics Fishery Management Plan. As you know, cobia is an important recreational fishery for both states, and we are seeking alternatives to limit harvest other than the recommended June 20 season closure.</p> <p>At its May business meeting, our commission considered the analysis your staff prepared that included various combinations of size and vessel limits and resulting closure dates in order to extend the fishing season. Our commission deliberated on this issue at length and ultimately passed the following conservation measures for the recreational harvest of cobia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a May 23-Sept. 30, 2016 season. • A 37-inch fork length (measured from the tip of the snout to the fork in the tail) minimum size limit for all recreational fisheries. • Anglers fishing from private boats may only fish on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays under daily possession limit of two fish per vessel or one fish per person if only one person is on board. • Those fishing from the shore or shore-based structures (pier or surf) may fish seven days a week with a daily possession limit of one fish per person. • Those fishing on a for-hire boat (charter or guide) may fish seven days a week with a daily possession limit of four fish per vessel or one fish per person if fewer than four people are on board. • Those practicing catch-and-release may fish seven days a week. <p>While these measures do not specifically match any of the size/vessel limit combinations your agency prepared, we did attempt to achieve similar reductions in harvest with this suite of restrictions. We feel that our plan will be equal to, or more restrictive, than your agency's measures and therefore, feel we are consistent with the goals of the federal fishery management plan. We hope you will find that these measures will assist in constraining recreational landings to the annual catch target; therefore, allowing North Carolina to stay consistent with the recreational accountability measures for cobia in the federal fishery management plan.</p> <p>Again, we appreciate your willingness to work with us on this important issue and look forward to your response on the actions our commission has taken.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Sammy Corbett, Chairman N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission</p>

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6/8/2016 21:20:05	Capt. Bill Kelly	FKCFA1@hotmail.com	Marathon, FL 33050	Commercial Fishing Representative	Yellowtail Snapper ACLs	<p>May 31, 2016</p> <p>Dr. Michelle Duval, Chair & Council Members South Atlantic Fishery Management Council 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201 N. Charleston, SC 29405</p> <p>Re: Yellowtail Snapper Quotas in the South Atlantic</p> <p>Dear Dr. Duval & Council Members,</p> <p>In 2015 the commercial yellowtail snapper fishery closed on November 1st because the quota had been reached. At the same time the recreational sector had harvested only 45% of their quota leaving nearly 500,000 pounds of yellowtails unharvested. This closure could not have occurred at a more inopportune time during the height of our tourism season and the approach of the traditional holiday period.</p> <p>The issue was further exacerbated by the early closure on July 1st of the dolphin fishery in the South Atlantic. This occurred in spite of the fact the recreational sector has been fishing only half of their allocation and leaving upwards of 7 MP annually unharvested. Without dolphin fish on restaurant menus, demand for yellowtail snapper skyrocketed.</p> <p>Since then and at industry's request, the Council has taken action to change the fishing year from January 1st through December 31st to August 1st through July 31st. In this fashion should a closure become warranted, it would most likely occur during the height of the spawning season and when prices and demand are traditionally at their lowest.</p> <p>We would like to propose either of the following actions to prevent any additional, unwarranted closures in the yellowtail snapper fishery:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reallocate/loan from the recreational to the commercial sector. The recreational sector is only harvesting 45-65% of their allocation in recent years, leaving as much as 500,000 pounds of unused quota annually. We endorse the so-called Bosarge Plan, named after GMFMC Vice-Chair Leann Bosarge, with some modification. The Bosarge Plan would reallocate/loan fish from one sector to another in annual adjustments of 5-10-15-20%. Similarly sector caps would be agreed upon in percentage increments of 75-80-85-90%. Rather than revert to status-quo, hitting any of these pre-selected triggers would initiate reallocation back to the 'loaning' sector. Since each fishery would be examined annually based on landings, there would be ample opportunity to make the necessary adjustments without causing significant, negative impacts to participants in either sector. (Preferred) 2. Combine the commercial and recreational ACLs in the South Atlantic as is done in the Gulf of Mexico. This action would make all 3 MP available for harvest by both sectors. <p>Quotas recommended by the SSC provide for buffers and uncertainty and are harvestable amounts that will not adversely impact the fishery. We feel it is incumbent on the Council to adjust allocations, as needed, to allow for appropriate harvest levels and allow all sectors to achieve Optimum Yield.</p> <p>Dr. Duval and Council members, please give these approaches every consideration in managing yellowtail snapper in the South Atlantic.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>s/Bill Kelly</p> <p>Capt. Bill Kelly Executive Director</p> <p>C: Mr. Gregg Waugh Ms. Leann Bosarge Ms. Myra Brouwer</p>

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6/9/2016 10:27:24	Dannie Hill	dhillthai@gmail.com	Port St. Lucie, FL 34986	Private Recreational Angler	Red snapper	<p>Dear Ms Jessica R. McCawley Director, FL Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission,</p> <p>My name is Dannie Hill and I am a recreational offshore fisherman. I'm very confused over the NOAA Fisheries/ Southeast Regional Office Fishery Bulletin FB16-033 May 19, 2016 NOAA Fisheries Announces Red Snapper Will Remain Closed in South Atlantic Federal Waters in 2016</p> <p>This bulletin states, " The total removals allowable for 2015 were 114,000 fish. After evaluating landings and discard information for 2015, NOAA Fisheries determined the estimates of total removals were 276,729 fish; therefore, the fishery remains closed in 2016."</p> <p>My confusion comes from the fact that the Red Snapper season for 2015, in Florida Federal Waters was closed all of 2015 and it will remain closed this year, 2016, according to this bulletin. Where are the Red Snapper being caught, discarded and killed?</p> <p>Red Snapper are alive and well in my area and all the fishermen I talked to catch and release large numbers of 20 inch plus fish in good condition. I try very hard to obey the regulations, but also want to understand how these Fishery Bulletins come about and how the numbers are processed. If these numbers are coming from fishing off the coast of N.C., S.C and GA then why are the Florida fishermen being grouped with them? We weren't allowed to take Red Snapper for an entire year and now have to suffer for another year because of the areas that were allowed to overfish. Which I believe are false numbers which claim that recreational fishermen take some 2/3 of the fish. Commercial fishing, including head boats, party boats, charter boats, and multi-hook drop liners do not follow the regulations and are given many more days of fishing to take many more fish than are reported in areas where the season is open.</p> <p>As a recreational fisherman I do not like this term, because I fish and feed my family with my catch. I spend and contribute to the local economy by maintaining my boat, buying fuel and bait, as well as telling my friends from other areas about my fishing experience, which bring them down to add to the economic growth of my community. Once again my question is: Where are the Red Snapper being caught, discarded and killed if the Red Snapper season was closed all of 2015? I hope to hear from you on this matter. I also know I am not the only confused fisherman on Florida's East coast.</p> <p>Thank you for your time. Dannie Hill 5488 NW Cambo Court Port St Lucie, FL 34986 Dhillthai@gmail.com 772-333-8614</p> <p>{NOTE: RESPONSE WAS PROVIDED ON 6/8/16 by McCawley}</p> <p>Additional Comment from Dannie Hill: Dear Jessica,</p> <p>You may add my comments to the official record. I have talked to Chester Brewer, another member, and it's seems that by the calculations that are provide to the members there will never be another open season in our region for red snapper. If the quota is exceeded during a closed season, which I find very hard to believe, then the only red snapper that will be available will be from foreign waters and a few from other regions.</p> <p>I can tell you that the fish I release, including red snapper, are treated well and in good health. I have seen very few taken by predators like barracudas and sharks, which are now being protected. The system seems to be broken or there other factions at work. I don't mean to imply anything from this statement except that the formula used in the calculations is very old and very wrong.</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time to read my email.</p> <p>Dannie Hill</p>

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6/9/2016 17:06:41	Brandon Ashton	bcashton@gmail.com	Hampstead, NC 28443	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4), General	<p>I have the following comments regarding the Coastal Migratory Pelagics Framework Amendment 4, Management Measures for Atlantic Cobia: (1) Firstly, I support a federal limit of 1 cobia per person (reduction from 2 per person). I do not support boat limits until a new stock assessment is completed to justify that such drastic measures are needed. (2) I urge SAFMC to consider returning the Atlantic coast to a single management zone. The current zone approach, providing the Florida Atlantic coast their own zone and higher ACL, appears unfair and represents seemingly unprecedented favoritism to a single state. The science used to justify this action does not appear to be thoroughly supported by a standard scientific peer review process.</p> <p>I would also like to offer a general comment regarding the lack of a 2016 American Red Snapper (ARS) season for the Atlantic coast: I am an avid recreational bottom fisherman from SE North Carolina. I commonly fish with over a few dozen other avid bottom fisherman. Over the past few years, all of us have witnessed an explosion in the local ARS population. All of us utilize forced descent equipment for releasing ARS. I find it very concerning that nobody in my circle has ever been interviewed by NOAA/SAFMC in the past 5+ years (regarding landings, fishing techniques/equipment, release techniques/equipment). How are recreational landing estimates generated if the majority of the fishing community has never assisted with the data collection process? As a comparison, I believe all of us have been polled during recent election years. The [unpublished] range of error associated with NOAA's/SAFMC's recreational landing estimates must be disturbingly huge in this case. Regulatory actions based on studies/conclusions using poorly distrusted data collection procedures (e.g., the 2016 ARS closure) is not acceptable. As a Professional Engineer in North Carolina, I could never make engineering judgements based on a similar lack of representative data. I expect our government officials and scientist to live up to this same standard.</p>
6/9/2016 21:47:07	Mike Wills	mwill98@yahoo.com	23455	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The VA catch data is garbage. 2. The east coast boundary should be reset to the Florida Keys and the ACL reallocated as such. 3. All recreational fisherman should be treated equally. Unlike the unjust, discriminatory rules NC set up for 2016 which unfairly restricts private fishing boats' access to the fishery. 4. I am for conservation to prevent overfishing and support one fish per person up to a vessel limit of three fish with only one over 50".
6/9/2016 21:56:05	Kenny Alphin	kcalphin3@gmail.com	New Bern, NC 28560	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>The following rule is just absurd in North Carolina</p> <p>"Cobia, minimum 37 inches FL, private boat harvest allowed Mon/Wed/Sat of two fish per vessel or one per person per day if only one person is on board. Charter vessel harvest allowed 7 days/week, 4 fish per vessel per day or one fish per person per day if fewer than four people are on board. Shore and pier anglers allowed 1 fish per person per day."</p> <p>Lets say I can only get off work on Friday to fish for cobia, and I own my own boat. According to this rule, unless I am rich and can afford to pay a charter boat or want to waste my time and sit on a pier I can't keep a cobia. That's not right. Maybe it is me, but it seems like money is talking here.</p> <p>Second, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council states that</p> <p>"Recreational cobia landings for the Atlantic migratory group (Georgia to New York1) in 2015 exceeded the recreational annual catch limit of 630,000 lbs."</p> <p>These numbers are bogus, where is the science to figuring these numbers. How can anyone even know what fishermen bring in. Even so, the cobia bite is strong in North Carolina. Even when I wasn't trying to catch cobia last week, they wouldn't stop biting.</p> <p>I went fishing last Friday while on vacation, only good day to go out. The cobia were all under the boat all we could do is look at them while charter boats were bringing them home. This is wrong.</p>
6/9/2016 23:06:15	William Hunt JR.	bill.fishing2@hotmail.co	Virginia Beach, VA. 23452	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	Yes
6/10/2016 8:48:19	Paul Park	Paulpark1988@yahoo.c	Winterville, NC 28590	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	This Cobia closure reeks of corruption and scandal all over it. You now have politicians looking into the case. This has to be exposed for what it is.
6/10/2016 9:01:55	Zachary Duke	dukezb@yahoo.com	Norfolk, va, 23518	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	1 fish per angler. no change in fishing season. Let's keep things consistent. let's keep the fish abundant, but keys also keep the sport alive and the SE VA anglers fishing and supporting the local bait shops, fabrication shops, gas docks, etc. Thank you, Zac Duke

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6/10/2016 9:49:02	Laurie Brothers	Ldelano0749@gmail.co	Elizabeth City NC 27909	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>**PLEASE SUBMIT BEFORE MONDAY**</p> <p>Here are the amendments to the cobia management plan that SAFMC is weighing at a meeting in Florida next week: http://blog.safmc.net/.../Att6a_DraftCMPFrameworkAm4...</p> <p>We STRONGLY encourage you to read the proposals and submit public comments on what approach you would like them to take. You can submit comments here: http://www.safmc.net/CommentForm_June2016Council Here are the comments I submitted.....</p> <p>"Regarding the recommendations posted in the meeting agenda, I favor the following approach: Adopt Draft Action 1-1 Alternative 2a One fish per person per day. This is consistent with measures already adopted in Virginia and North Carolina. No change should be made to these measures for a minimum of five years to determine their impact (as demonstrated by the significant spike in catch after a limit for cobia was adopted several decades ago.)</p> <p>Adopt Draft Action 1-2 Option 2d 37 inch fork length. This is consistent with size limits already used by North Carolina and Virginia.</p> <p>Adopt Draft Action 2, Option 1- No change to the fishing year. Any closed season between May 1-September 15th will be devastating to cobia stakeholders and will not produce a MAXIMUM sustainable yield.</p> <p>I do not support any of the alternatives listed for new accountability measures. As stated above, I support: 1) Redistricting the Management Zone to include E. Florida based on the genetics data and research available from Texas A&M, Virginia Institute of Marine Science Data, Tagging Data from Aaron Kelly, Jorj Head, and others, and the SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup. This should increase the ACL to 1.5 million pounds. 2) The accountability measure should be a reduction in the following year ACL ONLY after three year overage averages of the 1.5 million pound ACL. No end of season closure should be applied, as it violates National Standard 2 -equitable distribution of the resource.</p> <p>I continue to be VEHEMENTLY opposed to Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission oversight. States are more than happy to comply with SAFMC measures if SAFMC meets the minimum standards for policy development authored in the current Magnuson Stevens Act. SAFMC violated the trust needed for cooperative management. That damage must be repaired."</p> <p>Laurie Brothers Elizabeth City, NC</p>

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6/10/2016 9:52:46	Landon Brothers	Jbrothers1590@gmail.c	Elizabeth City NC 27909	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>Here are the amendments to the cobia management plan that SAFMC is weighing at a meeting in Florida next week: http://blog.safmc.net/.../Att6a_DraftCMPFrameworkAm4...</p> <p>We STRONGLY encourage you to read the proposals and submit public comments on what approach you would like them to take. You can submit comments here: http://www.safmc.net/CommentForm_June2016Council Here are the comments I submitted.....</p> <p>"Regarding the recommendations posted in the meeting agenda, I favor the following approach: Adopt Draft Action 1-1 Alternative 2a One fish per person per day. This is consistent with measures already adopted in Virginia and North Carolina. No change should be made to these measures for a minimum of five years to determine their impact (as demonstrated by the significant spike in catch after a limit for cobia was adopted several decades ago.)</p> <p>Adopt Draft Action 1-2 Option 2d 37 inch fork length. This is consistent with size limits already used by North Carolina and Virginia.</p> <p>Adopt Draft Action 2, Option 1- No change to the fishing year. Any closed season between May 1-September 15th will be devastating to cobia stakeholders and will not produce a MAXIMUM sustainable yield.</p> <p>I do not support any of the alternatives listed for new accountability measures. As stated above, I support: 1) Redistricting the Management Zone to include E. Florida based on the genetics data and research available from Texas A&M, Virginia Institute of Marine Science Data, Tagging Data from Aaron Kelly, Jorj Head, and others, and the SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup. This should increase the ACL to 1.5 million pounds. 2) The accountability measure should be a reduction in the following year ACL ONLY after three year overage averages of the 1.5 million pound ACL. No end of season closure should be applied, as it violates National Standard 2 -equitable distribution of the resource.</p> <p>I continue to be VEHEMENTLY opposed to Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission oversight. States are more than happy to comply with SAFMC measures if SAFMC meets the minimum standards for policy development authored in the current Magnuson Stevens Act. SAFMC violated the trust needed for cooperative management. That damage must be repaired."</p> <p>Landon Brothers Elizabeth City, NC</p>
6/10/2016 10:12:43	Gregory Ritter	gritter1989@gmail.com	Elizabeth city	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>I find it absolutely ridiculous on how these numbers for the acl were obtained and believe that there should be more research on the quotas of cobia fished. Making recreational fishers only able to keep 1 cobia per person on Mondays Wednesdays and Saturdays is absurd fore most recreational fishers only have time to fish on the weekends. They need more time to obtain how many fish are being caught to be able to really say that they are being over fished. Or at least allow recreational fisherman to keep 1 per per person per day or a 2 vessel limit per day.</p>
6/10/2016 12:22:00	Governor william carter	Governor18@gmail.com	Maysville nc 28555	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	<p>I don't see why there is a separation of fishing days for Recreation fishermen and commercial fishermen we all pay to fish the same yet a recreational fisherman is limited to three days a week if weather is bad on two of the days we only get to fish one day make it the same for rec. And commercial fishermen</p>
6/10/2016 12:47:08	Captain Ken Kennickell	KenObsession@aol.com	Savannah, GA 31410	Charter/Headboat/For-Hire	Control Date for Limited Entry For Hire	<p>Dear Council Members, My name is Captain Ken Kennickell, owner/operator of Obsession charters out of Savannah Ga. I have been in the for hire/charter business for 18 years. I have spoken to most of you on the phone about my concerns of a retroactive date for for the limited entry for hire amendment.</p> <p>For those of you I have not spoken to, I purchased a boat (still in progress) in October 2014 to charter as an inspected vessel. I have also purchased my federal permits for this boat dated May 3, 2016. My concern is that if the council were to establish a retroactive date, I would have no permit for this boat which would be devastating.</p> <p>Thank you, Ken Kennickell</p>

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6/12/2016 10:37:39	Richard Gomez	captainconch12@yahoo.	Key West, Fl. 33040	Charter/Headboat/For-Hire	Mutton Snapper (SG Amendment 41), Atlantic Fo	In reference to the verbage used to explain possible actions I want to say, it sure is hard to understand. Bearing that in mind let me just tell you what I feel on each subject. I am the former president of the key west charter boat assoc. and an active board member. In regards to the mutton snapper the ch boat assoc. and most local charter boats that I have spoken with, feel that we can live with a smaller bag limit, whether it is 2, 3, or 4. The main thing that we do not want to see is any more closures of fishing grounds for any amount of time. Nor do we want to have a closed season on mutton snapper. We believe that making a smaller bag limit for both commercial and for hire vessels will be enough protection for a fishery that is not under duress at this time. As far as any reporting device we are strongly against it, we feel that it is unnecessary for this area. And at best you will be given much false data. As far as dolphin and to a smaller extent wahoo, We were robbed of the right to sell our by catch many years ago, and in the meantime a huge commercial market along the n.e. coast, has all but robbed us of our summertime dolphin fishery. This is our third year of virtually a non existent summer dolphin fishery. So now not only can we not sell our by catch, we also can not catch them.
6/12/2016 19:37:19	Nathan Henry	nathanhenry86@yahoo.	powhatan va 23139	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	Hello, I am not nearly as much a man of words as Billy Gorham but I support everything he has proposed, so I would like to second his comment. "Regarding the recommendations posted in the meeting agenda, I favor the following approach: Adopt Draft Action 1-1 Alternative 2a One fish per person per day. This is consistent with measures already adopted in Virginia and North Carolina. No change should be made to these measures for a minimum of five years to determine their impact (as demonstrated by the significant spike in catch after a limit for cobia was adopted several decades ago.) Adopt Draft Action 1-2 Option 2d 37 inch fork length. This is consistent with size limits already used by North Carolina and Virginia. Adopt Draft Action 2, Option 1- No change to the fishing year. Any closed season between May 1-September 15th will be devastating to cobia stakeholders and will not produce a MAXIMUM sustainable yield. I do not support any of the alternatives listed for new accountability measures. As stated above, I support: 1) Redistricting the Management Zone to include E. Florida based on the genetics data and research available from Texas A&M, Virginia Institute of Marine Science Data, Tagging Data from Aaron Kelly, Jorj Head, and others, and the SEDAR28 Genetics Workgroup. This should increase the ACL to 1.5 million pounds. 2) The accountability measure should be a reduction in the following year ACL ONLY after three year overage averages of the 1.5 million pound ACL. No end of season closure should be applied, as it violates National Standard 2 -equitable distribution of the resource. I continue to be VEHEMENTLY opposed to Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission oversight. States are more than happy to comply with SAFMC measures if SAFMC meets the minimum standards for policy development authored in the current Magnuson Stevens Act. SAFMC violated the trust needed for cooperative management. That damage must be repaired."
6/13/2016 6:46:00	David Boehnlein	73ss383@comcast.net	Chesterfield VA 23838	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	I feel that the cobia population is not in trouble based on the amount of fish I encounter as a angler and their quick growth and ample reproduction I feel that this fishery should be kept open all year with the previous regulations of 2 fish per person over 33 inches no closure and no restrictions on gaffing and no boat limits. In addition I feel that the acl needs to be re evaluated after a serious study of cobia stocks and a mandatory tagging process so there are hard numbers instead of catch estimates.
6/13/2016 9:44:56	Beth Synowiec	Thesynowiecs@verizon.	Virginia Beach VA 23464	Private Recreational Angler	Cobia (CMP Framework Amendment 4)	I am a recreational angler requesting that the 1 fish per person be implemented in the year 2017 as federal regulation. Previous data over a one year period should not mandate such drastic measures as threats of closures and I am not in favor of boat limits. I find them unwarranted in this situation as they are based on inconsistent and questionable surveys and data. The state of Virginia voluntarily reduced their Cobia limit years ago as a conservative measure from two fish per person to one fish per person. With all under this regulation of 1 fish per person we will achieve a more fair and balanced approach while being able to gather further and more complete data concerning this fishery and allow charter captains, tackle shops, and other recreational business industries a fair chance of keeping their businesses open. I also think all the states by law should be granted equal representation by the year 2017. I am also in favor of recreational mandatory reporting for Cobia and Cobia permits (free and accessible online) as I feel if properly enforced will produce better data concerning the catch rate of this species.

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6/13/2016 15:21:27	David Schalit	dschalit@gmail.com	New York NY 10013	American Bluefin Tuna Assn.	Dolphinfish	<p>10 June 2016</p> <p>176 Mulberry Street New York NY 10013</p> <p>South Atlantic Fishery Management Council 4055 Faber Place, DR 201 North Charleston SC 29406</p> <p>Attention: Dolphinfish/Wahoo Committee</p> <p>Re: Dolphinfish – Amendment Scoping Process</p> <p>Dear Colleagues,</p> <p>The American Bluefin Tuna Association (http://www.theabta.com) represents handgear fishermen who fish for Atlantic bluefin, bigeye, yellowfin and albacore tunas. In 2015, 3,129 vessels were issued Commercial tunas fishing permits, 3,596 vessels were issued Charter/Headboat tunas permits and 20,157 vessels were issued Recreational tunas permits.</p> <p>All fishermen who are targeting Atlantic tunas have a vested interest in the management of the Dolphinfish fishery.</p> <p>ABTA appreciates the opportunity to provide comment to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council and to the Dolphinfish/Wahoo Committee.</p> <p>History of Dolphinfish Management</p> <p>The history of Dolphinfish management since 2000 has been largely dominated by an ongoing discourse engaged in exploring various ways to contain the catch and the potential for growth in the commercial sector, notwithstanding the fact that commercial landings have never exceeded approximately 7% of all landings in any given year. One example: there have been no less than 4 separate attempts over this period – 2001, 2003, 2011 and, most recently, in 2014 – to impose commercial trip limits. Further, during this entire time, the Council has neglected to address the mandate for optimum yield as required by National Standard One. The perspective of Council management of the dolphinfish fishery can be characterized as largely geocentric i.e. primarily focused upon the concerns of recreational stakeholders in the South Atlantic.</p> <p>What is the Council contemplating now?</p> <p>The SAFMC is contemplating an amendment to the Dolphinfish/Wahoo FMP, but without benefit of the "best available science". This places the Council in conflict with the Magnuson Stevens Act.</p> <p>It is very likely that less is known about the state of dolphinfish stock than any other stock managed by the SAFMC at present. Why is this? It is clear that the Council has long neglected to secure a bona fide, peer reviewed scientific analysis of the state of dolphinfish stock. The only stock assessment in existence for Dolphinfish, Praeger 2000, was, in actual fact, not a stock assessment at all. It is likely that it was not peer reviewed, as it was more an exploratory discussion on how dolphinfish could be assessed, citing the relevant scientific literature. This was not the fault of the author. In fact, it was all that could have been accomplished in the year 2000 with the scant data at hand.</p> <p>One must assume that very few people on the Council have bothered to read this assessment. If they had, they would have quickly realized the inadequacy of this assessment.</p> <p>At this juncture, absent a proper stock assessment for so many years, it would be irresponsible for the Council to consider an amendment to the FMP without having in hand an up-to-date and bona fide, peer-reviewed stock assessment of dolphinfish. In our view, the appropriate action to take would be to table any further discussion of scoping or of a future amendment pending the publishing of a new stock assessment. In actual fact, when taking into consideration that there is now a plan in place that imposes commercial trip limits, should the need arise, and given the fact that recently the commercial sector ACL has been increased, there should not be any overt concern for problems such as those that arose in June 2015. Therefore, there is no pressing need for further steps to be taken at this time and the Council is in a position to wait for a new stock assessment, no matter how long it takes. This, in our view, would be the responsible approach to management of this fishery. This step would allow for the fishery to be managed in accordance with the Magnuson Stevens Act.</p> <p>What is problematic about the stock assessment from the year 2000?</p> <p>1. The 2000 assessment was based on 5 years of pelagic longline</p>

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					<p>landings only</p> <p>The assessment was based entirely on this fishery dependent data and did not reflect abundance in areas in which recreational fishermen or commercial hook and line fishermen typically fish. It is also important to keep in mind that three large PLL gear restricted areas (GRA) have been put in place since the year 2000: Florida East Coast Closure (2001 – closed all year), Charleston Bump Closure (2001 – closed 1 Feb/30 April) and the Hatteras Closure (2015 – closed all year with exceptions). Only one PLL GRA existed prior to publishing of Praeger 2000: the Northeast US Closure (1999 – closed in June). All these closures exist in areas that are important for commercial hook and line and recreational fishing for dolphinfish. Consequently, a new assessment will not be able to depend on PLL catch data only.</p> <p>2. Significant advances have been made in VPA modeling</p> <p>Significant advances have been made in VPA modeling for pelagic species by ICCAT, certainly since the year 2000. One of many important advances is in species distribution modeling (SDM), a process that will definitely enhance our understanding of dolphinfish population dynamics. The Standing Committee for Research and Statistics (SCRS), the scientific authority of ICCAT, is widely considered the preeminent body for assessing pelagic fish stocks in the Atlantic, yet our understanding of dolphinfish stock has not kept pace with the numerous advancements in pelagic population science developed by the SCRS and separately by academia and by NOAA's scientists.</p> <p>3. Accurate understanding and prediction of stock distribution and abundance is critical to assessment and management of pelagic species</p> <p>Fleet distribution is a poor indication of stock distribution with a highly migratory species, particularly when using data from the PLL fleet, a fleet that does not typically target the stock.</p> <p>4. There have been major advances in fishery independent data collection on dolphinfish stock since 2000.</p> <p>The Dolphinfish Research Program (DRP) has administered a conventional tagging program since 2002. In 2007 alone, 2,199 dolphinfish were tagged. This will provide growth and start/endpoint data. Satellite archival tagging of dolphinfish has also been conducted on dolphinfish and cobia (Hammond 2008, Kleisner 2009). None of the foregoing has ever been incorporated in a stock assessment for the U.S. dolphinfish fishery.</p> <p>5. Evidence of the affinity dolphinfish have for aggregating under sargassum is an important finding</p> <p>Research since 2000 (Casazza and Ross, 2008, Rooker et al, 2006 and Ross, 2004) has revealed the importance of sargassum in any assessment of dolphinfish. This phenomenon will likely have an affect on stock abundance and distribution (some scientists say, a positive affect), particularly in the Mid and South Atlantic.</p> <p>Most of the discussion items intended for scoping would be directly impacted by data from a new stock assessment.</p> <p>1. The desire to maintain tight control on the commercial sector has recently yielded discussion items such as limited access in the commercial fishery, limited access in the CHB fishery, catch limits, allocation shifts, separate ACL's for PLL and hook and line, commercial bag limit sales, the question of allowing for a "directed" commercial fishery, common pool allocations, permanent or temporary allocation shifts between commercial sectors, a single ACL for the entire fishery and the ongoing question of optimum yield. All the foregoing are issues that cannot and should not be addressed without benefit of a new stock assessment.</p> <p>2. Much of the discussion is motivated by the recreational sector's desire to protect what they refer to as "paper fish" i.e. the unused portion of the recreational ACL that occurs each year. The working assumption is that the recreational sector must maintain this excess, unused quota to ensure that there is sufficient abundance, thereby theoretically maintaining a higher CPUE for the recreational sector. This argument has no scientific support for a highly migratory, highly fecund and fast growing species such as dolphinfish. In actual fact, Praeger 2000 takes the inverse position: "...targeting, especially on a schooling species, can cause catchability to increase with declining abundance."</p> <p>Some scoping discussion items just simply don't make sense.</p> <p>1. A limited access commercial fishery: most commercial landings are attributed to PLL vessels. The PLL fleet is already a limited access fishery. The only fishermen who would be negatively affected by</p>

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						<p>converting the open access commercial fishery to a limited access fishery would be the hook and line fishermen who are responsible for a very small percentage of commercial landings.</p> <p>2. A circle hook requirement: The PLL fleet is already required to use the 16/0 circle hook and this ruling has been in place since 1999. The circle hook rule was implemented in the PLL fishery to address bycatch of turtles. A 2012 study (Curran and Beverly 2012) found that the use of circle hooks by PLL vessels in the Pacific significantly reduced catch of dolphinfish. However, a circle hook ruling for commercial hook and line vessels would be completely inappropriate.</p> <p>3. Rollover mechanism: It has been stated in the March meeting that the "rollover concept" has been a failure at ICCAT. This is absolutely incorrect. The rollover mechanism has been very successful at ICCAT. It is used for bluefin and for swordfish. The percentage of allowed rollover for bluefin is low and this is because bluefin is presently in a stock rebuilding program. However, with a stock such as dolphinfish that is not presently in a stock rebuilding program, a 100% rollover is appropriate. This alternative will cost the recreational sector nothing, yet there is opposition to this idea. Most likely, this is because the mechanism is not well understood. Rollover mechanisms are an appropriate way to smooth over variations in landings as a result of occasional swings in abundance due to variability in recruitment and other environmental causes for a highly migratory species. The Council should implement a rollover mechanism in the commercial sector without delay as the benefits are obvious and as there can be no valid reason for not doing so. It is perhaps the only present discussion item that can be implemented without benefit of a new stock assessment. If a new stock assessment should indicate that the stock requires rebuilding, the percentage of annual rollover can be reduced according to scientific advice, as is done by ICCAT.</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration of the foregoing.</p> <p>Cordially, David Schalit, Vice President American Bluefin Tuna Association</p>

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