



Presentation V of V

Coastal Migratory Pelagics (CMP) Framework Amendment 4

Changes in Management Measures for Atlantic Cobia

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Cobia Q&A Meeting: May 9, 2016

Process for CMP Framework Amendment 4

- ☑ **March 2016-** South Atlantic Council directs staff to develop amendment
- **May 2016-** Public provides input on potential actions and alternatives
- **June 2016-** South Atlantic Council reviews public input, makes changes to the amendment, and approves for public hearings
- **August 2016-** Public hearings
- **September 2016-** South Atlantic Council reviews public input, selects preferred alternatives, and approves for formal review by the Secretary of Commerce
- **Spring 2017-** Changes implemented



CMP Framework Amendment 4- Background (1)

- CMP Amendment 18 established the accountability measure (AM) for Atlantic cobia if the commercial and/or recreational annual catch limit (ACL) was exceeded. The SAFMC was mandated by law to establish AMs to prevent overfishing.
- The current AM (established in Amendment 18) for the recreational sector of the Atlantic cobia fishery is that if recreational landings exceed the recreational ACL, NMFS will shorten the subsequent season to prevent landings from exceeding the next year's ACL.
- Stock assessment for Gulf and Atlantic cobia (SEDAR 28) was completed in 2013. Using tagging data and genetic information, the stock assessment identified the boundary between Gulf and Atlantic cobia to be at the Georgia/Florida boundary.
- The Gulf and South Atlantic Councils had to update the stock boundary to align with SEDAR 28, and also update catch limits based on the results of the stock assessment in CMP Amendment 20B.
- New stock boundary → Atlantic cobia ACL applied only to Georgia through New York; the cobia caught off the east coast of Florida counted against the Florida East Coast allocation of the Gulf cobia ACL.



CMP Framework Amendment 4- Background (2)

- In 2015, recreational landings of Atlantic cobia were 1,540,776 lbs— but the recreational annual catch limit (ACL) was only 630,000 lbs.
- As required, NMFS reduced the 2016 recreational season to ensure recreational landings would not again exceed the recreational ACL. The season closure is June 20, 2016.
- The early closure will have negative social and economic impacts on recreational fishermen, especially in North Carolina and Virginia.
- The South Atlantic Council is considering changes to management measures to try to ensure longer future recreational seasons.

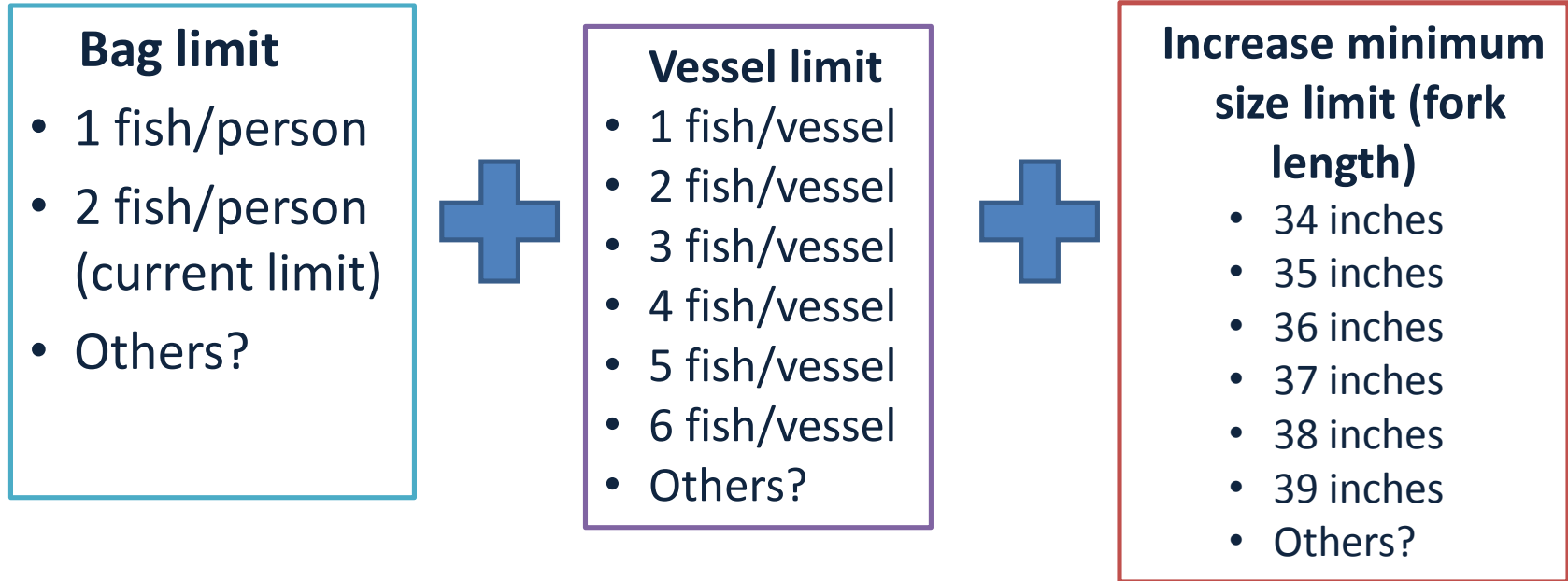


Current Management (GA-NY)

- Minimum size limit – 33 inches fork length
 - VA state waters- 37 inches total length
- Possession limit – 2 fish/person/day
 - VA and NC state waters – 1 fish/person/day
- Minimum size limit and possession limit of 2 fish applies to commercial also; no federal commercial permit requirement.
- Recreational ACL = 620,000 lbs for 2016+
- Commercial ACL = 50,000 lbs for 2016+



CMP Framework Amendment 4- Potential Actions (1)



The SAFMC could select one, two or all three of these management measures to increase the length of the recreational season.



CMP Framework Amendment 4- Potential Actions (2)

Change Recreational Fishing Year

- January 1- December 31 (current)
- May 1 through April 30
- June 1 through May 31
- Others?

Commercial Trip Limit & Step-down

- 2 fish/person/day; reduced to 1 fish when 75% of the commercial ACL is met
- Vessel limit that is reduced when 75% of the commercial ACL is met.
- Others?



CMP Framework Amendment 4- Potential Actions (2)

Modify Recreational Accountability Measures (AMs)

Current AMs: reduce season length if rec landings exceed the rec ACL and the total ACL. Evaluation is based on a rolling average. Reduce the ACL by the amount of the overage *if overfished*.

Possible changes to AMs:

- Season length based on previous year's overage only (no rolling average)
- AMs only when total ACL is exceeded and stock is designated "overfished"
- In-season closure?
- Others?

What are your recommendations for management of Atlantic cobia?



What Can the Public Do?

ATTEND PUBLIC MEETINGS:

A **Public Presentation and Q&A** will be held on **May 9, 2016**, at 6 p.m.:

Hilton Garden Inn Outer Banks/Kitty Hawk

5353 N. Virginia Dare Trail, Kitty Hawk, NC

Or you can join via webinar: http://safmc.net/CobiaQandAMeeting_05092016

You can also attend the next **SAFMC meeting** in **June 13-17, 2016**, to speak on the record during the public comment session. Check www.safmc.net for the final agenda later:

Hilton Cocoa Beach Oceanfront

1550 N. Atlantic Avenue ; Cocoa Beach, FL

YOU CAN SUBMIT COMMENTS VIA MAIL AND EMAIL TO:

Mail: Gregg Waugh, Executive Director, SAFMC
4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201
North Charleston, SC 29405

E-mail: mike.collins@safmc.net Subject line: Cobia Framework

DEADLINE FOR COMMENTS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE JUNE BRIEFING BOOK: MAY 20, 2016



Need more Information? Want to Get Involved in the Process?



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CMP Framework Amendment 4

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