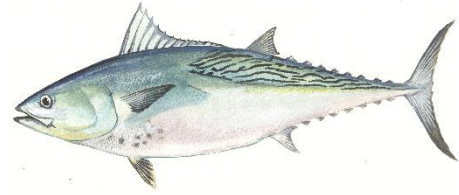


Mini-Fishery Performance Report

False Albacore

Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel
October 2022



On September 19, 2022, the Council received a letter from the American Saltwater Guides Association (ASGA) requesting the consider re-adding false albacore to the CMP FMP. In response to the letter, the Council directed staff to develop a white paper examining if false albacore (also know as little tunny) meet the Magnuson Stevens Act criteria for a stock in need of conservation and management. The criteria, listed in 50 C.F.R §600.305(c)(1) are as follows:

- (i) The stock is an important component of the marine environment.
- (ii) The stock is caught by the fishery.
- (iii) Whether an FMP can improve or maintain the condition of the stock.
- (iv) The stock is a target of a fishery.
- (v) The stock is important to commercial, recreational, or subsistence users.
- (vi) The fishery is important to the Nation or to the regional economy.
- (vii) The need to resolve competing interests and conflicts among user groups and whether an FMP can further that resolution.
- (viii) The economic condition of a fishery and whether an FMP can produce more efficient utilization.
- (ix) The needs of a developing fishery, and whether an FMP can foster orderly growth.
- (x) The extent to which the fishery is already adequately managed by states, by state/Federal programs, or by Federal regulations pursuant to other FMPs or international commissions, or by industry self-regulation, consistent with the requirements of the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and other applicable law.

In addition to develop of the white paper, that Council requested staff discuss the false albacore fishery with the Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel (AP). Information provided by AP members in this slimmed down version of a fishery performance report (FPR) will be provided to the Council for use in future discussions on false albacore, scheduled to occur at their December 2022 Council meeting.

Since 2000, total landings of false albacore have averaged 3,141,490 pounds per year along the east coast (**Figure 1**). Recreational landings have averaged 2,680,257 pounds per year and commercial landings around 461,233 pounds per year. Landings have stayed relatively consistent, with the exception on an increase in both commercial and recreational between 2012 and 2019. Commercial and recreational landings have historically and continue to primarily occur in the South Atlantic region (North Carolina through Florida), when compared to the Mid-Atlantic (New York through Virginia) and North Atlantic (Maine through Connecticut) regions (**Figure 2** and **Figure 3**).

The AP is asked to provide the following information about false albacore based on their expertise, as appropriate:

1. Have there been substantial changes in fishing behavior and catch levels for false albacore over the last five years?
2. How have social and economic influences (ex. price and demand, infrastructure, community dependance) affected the false albacore fishery?
3. What factors should the Council consider when determining whether or not false albacore are in need of conservation and management?
4. What else is important for the Council to know about false albacore?

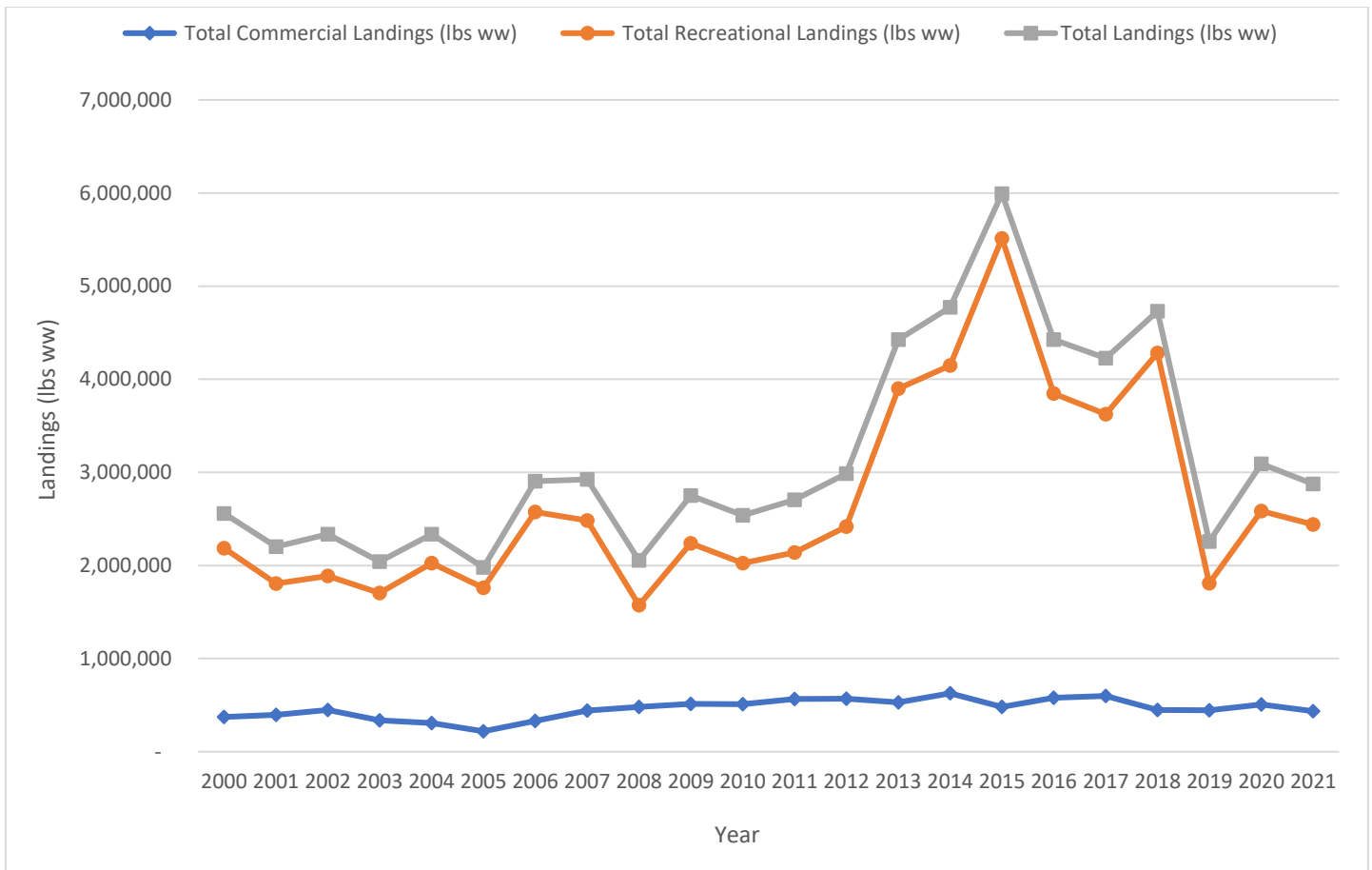


Figure 1. Total false albacore landings along the Atlantic coast (2000 through 2021).

Source: ACCSP Data Warehouse query and the MRIP query, accessed September 20, 2022.

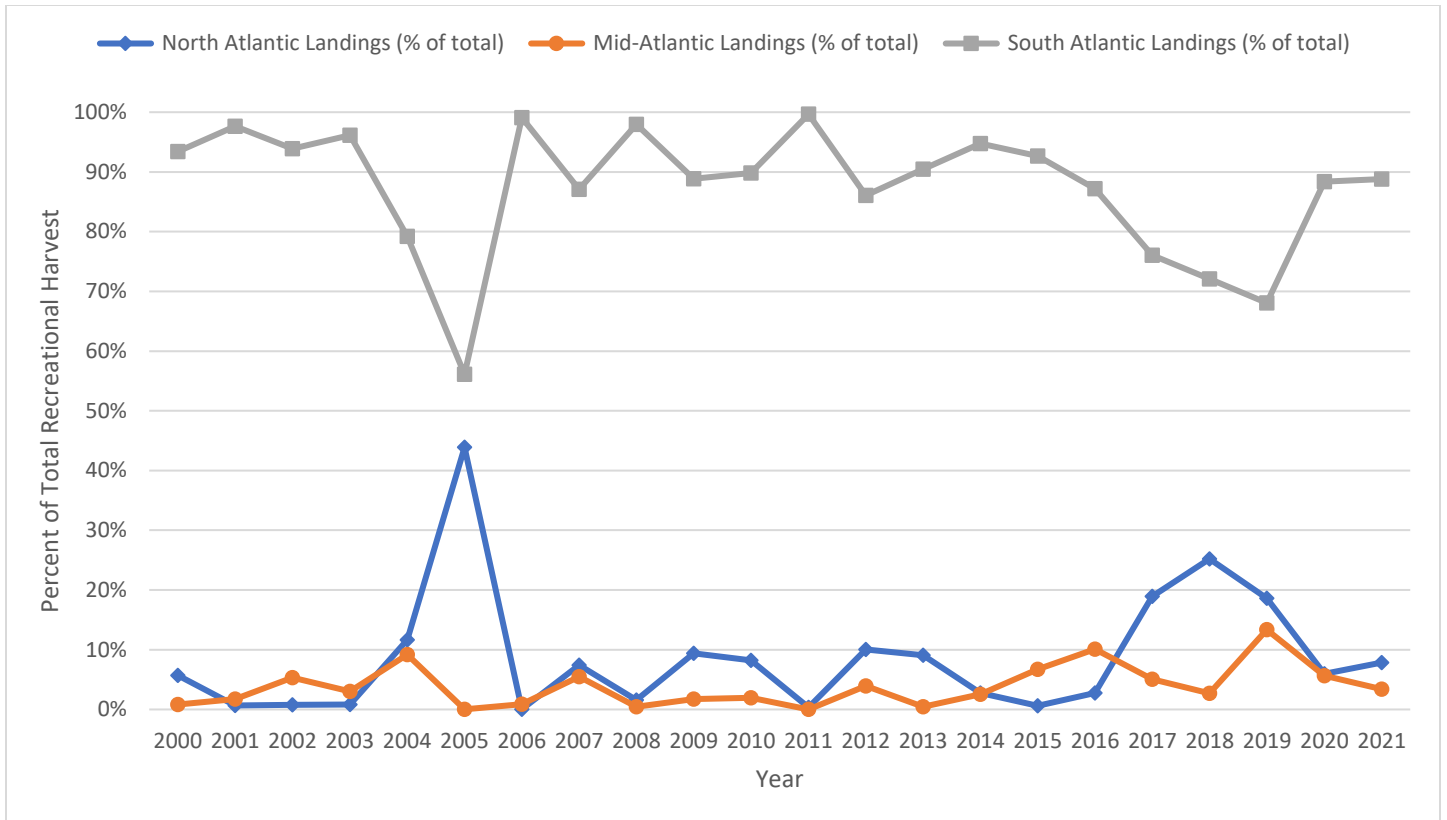


Figure 2. Percent of total recreational landings of false albacore from the North Atlantic, Mid-Atlantic, and South Atlantic regions (2000-2021).

Source: MRIP query, accessed September 20, 2022.

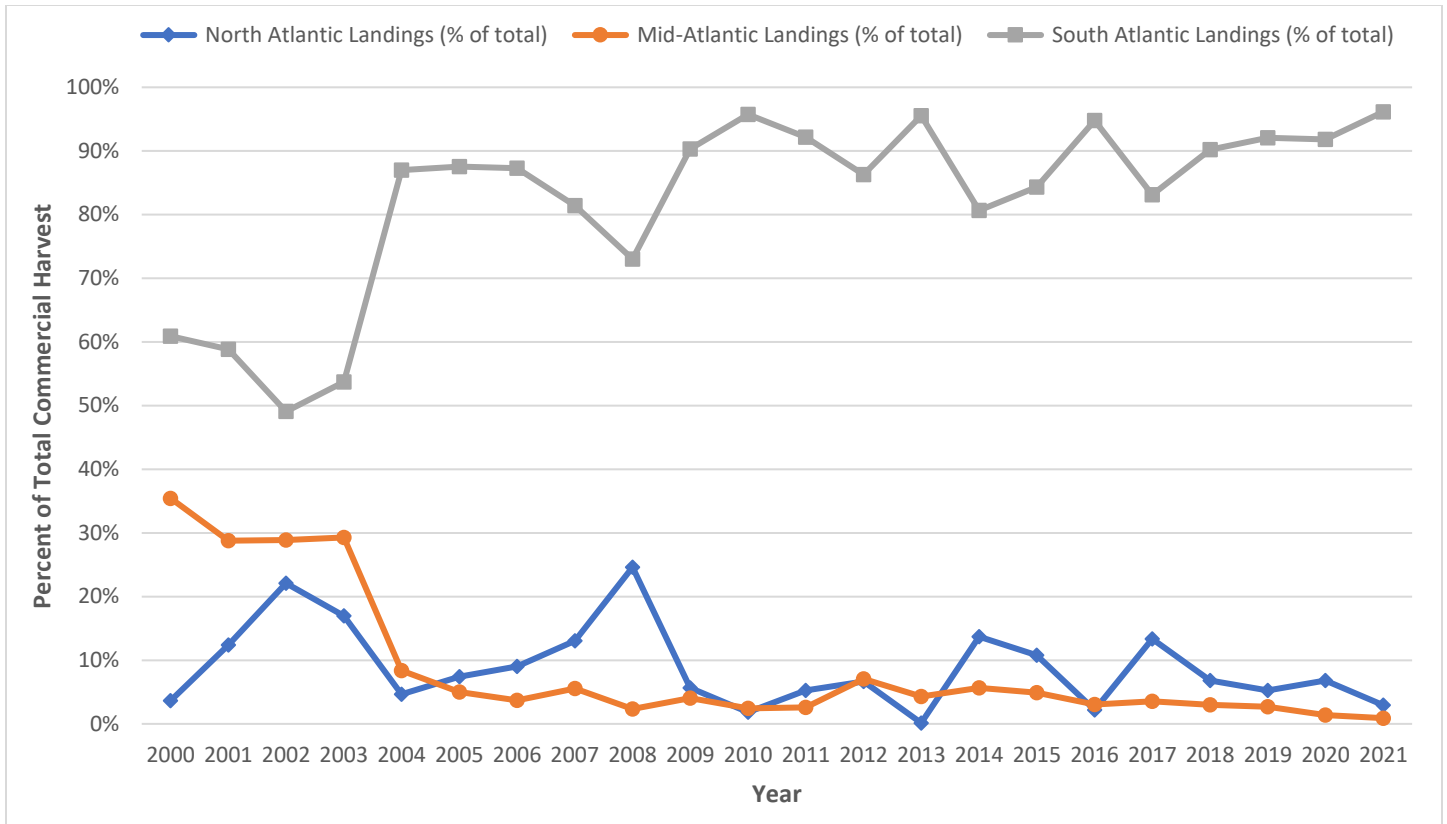


Figure 3. Percent of total commercial landings of false albacore from the North Atlantic, Mid-Atlantic, and South Atlantic regions (2000-2021).

Source: ACCSP Data Warehouse query, accessed September 20, 2022.