

Framework Amendment 10

to the Fishery Management Plan for
Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources in
the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Region



(Atlantic king mackerel catch levels)

Advisory Panel Summary

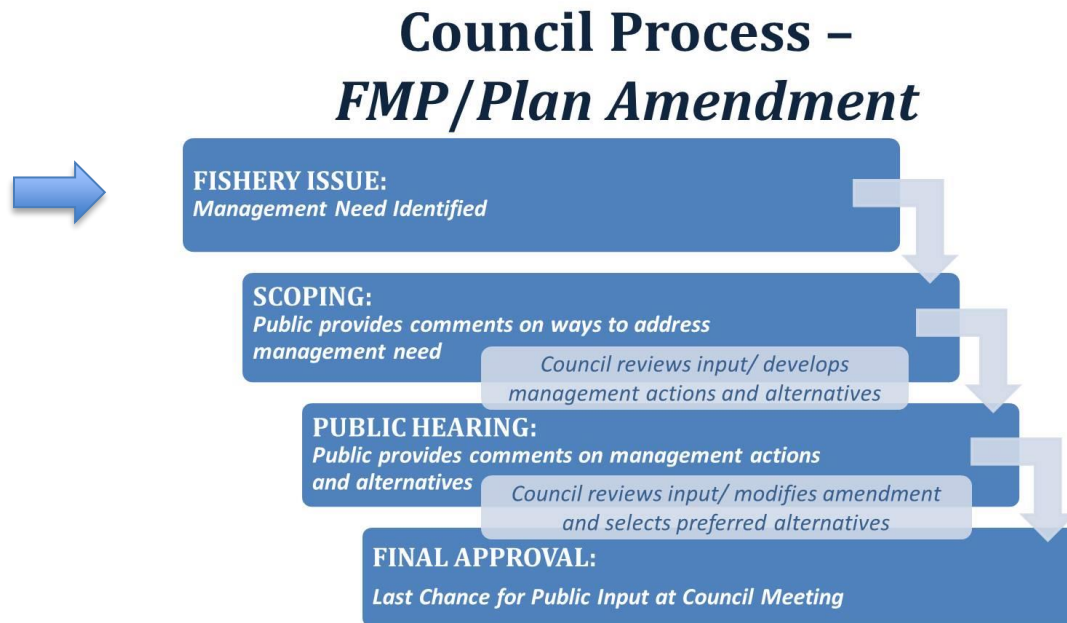
November 2020



Framework Amendment 10 to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Coastal Migratory Pelagic (CMP) Resources in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Region (Framework Amendment 10) addresses updates to catch levels and management measures based on the result of the updated SEDAR 38 stock assessment.

Where are we in the amendment development process?

Based results from the updated SEDAR 38 assessment and recommendations from their Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC), the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (South Atlantic Council) directed staff to begin work on a framework amendment that would consider sector allocations and catch level adjustments. The South Atlantic Council will review comments from the Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel (AP) and an options paper at their December 2020 meeting.



Why is the South Atlantic Council considering action?

In 2014, a stock assessment of both Gulf and Atlantic migratory groups of king mackerel was completed (SEDAR 38) and indicated that neither migratory group was overfished or experiencing overfishing. In addition to revised yield streams, the stock assessment redefined the spatial and temporal extent of the mixing zone between the migratory groups to be south of the Florida Keys during winter months. The stock assessment and subsequent amendment to the CMP FMP (Amendment 26) also redefined the geographic boundary between the migratory groups to be at the Dade/Monroe County, Florida line.

An update to SEDAR 38 was completed in April 2020 (SEDAR 38 Update 2020) and indicated, consistent with the original stock status determined by SEDAR 38, that Atlantic migratory group king mackerel (Atlantic king mackerel) was not overfished or undergoing overfishing. Additionally, all fishery indicators showed an increasing trend, including both recreational and commercial landings, and catch per unit effort. Based on the assessment, the SSC has made new catch level recommendations for the South Atlantic Council to consider. The assessment and SSC catch level recommendations incorporate revised recreational catch estimates based on the new Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) survey design.

Tentative Timing for CMP Framework Amendment 10

	Process Step	Date
✓	Council directs staff to start work on a framework amendment.	June 2020
	Council reviews options paper and approves amendment for scoping.	December 2020
	Council reviews scoping comments and approves action/alternatives to be analyzed.	March 2021
	Council reviews draft amendment, selects preferred alternative, and approves for public hearings.	June 2021
	Public Hearings	Summer 2021
	Council reviews the draft amendment, modifies the document as necessary, and approves for formal review.	September 2021
	CMP Framework Amendment 10 transmitted for Secretarial Review.	Fall 2021

Opportunities to provide public comment in-person include the scoping webinar, South Atlantic Council meetings, and public hearings. There will also be opportunities to submit written comments via the online comment form throughout the process.

What actions may be considered in CMP Framework Amendment 10?

Revisions to the Atlantic King Mackerel Annual Catch Limit

The update to SEDAR 38 was completed in April 2020 and included assessments for Gulf and Atlantic king mackerel. In April 2020, the SSC reviewed the results of the SEDAR 38 Update 2020 and provided new values for the acceptable biological catch (ABC) for Atlantic king mackerel (**Table 1**). The South Atlantic Council may consider setting the Atlantic king mackerel annual catch limit (ACL) at the same level as the ABCs recommended by the SSC in the table above or may consider including a buffer between the two values.

Table 1. South Atlantic SSC recommendations for acceptable biological catch for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel, using data resultant from SEDAR 38 update (2020).

Criteria	Deterministic	Probabilistic
Overfished evaluation (SSB/SSB _{30%SPR})	1.7	N/A
Overfishing evaluation	0.29	N/A
MFMT (F _{30%SPR})	0.14	N/A
SSB _{MSY} (Units)	2,439 (millions of eggs)	N/A
MSST (Units)	2,049 (millions of eggs)	N/A
MSY (million pounds)	18.3	N/A
Y at 75% F _{30%SPR} (1,000 pounds)	-	N/A
ABC Control Rule Adjustment	7.5%	N/A
P*	42.5%	N/A
M	0.16	N/A
Year	OFL Recommendations	ABC Recommendations
2021	34,300,000	33,300,000
2022	29,500,000	28,500,000
2023	26,300,000	25,400,000
2024	24,200,000	23,300,000
2025+	22,700,000	21,800,000

Questions for the Advisory Panel

- Should the South Atlantic Council place a buffer between the acceptable biological catch (ABC) and the annual catch limit (ACL) to account for management uncertainty?
 - If yes, what buffer is appropriate? 5%, 10%, 15%?

Modifications to Sector and/or Area Allocations

The Fisheries Allocation Review Policy (NMFS Policy Directive 01-119) and the associated Procedural Directive on allocation review triggers (NMFS Procedural Directive 01-119-01) established the responsibility for the Regional Fishery Management Councils to set allocation review triggers and consider three types of trigger criteria: indicator, public interest, and time. Councils were directed to establish triggers for consideration of allocation reviews. The South Atlantic Council chose several indicator-based criteria as triggers, including after a stock assessment is approved by the SSC. The South Atlantic Council will determine and document whether modifications to allocations are necessary. If it is determined that allocation revisions are necessary, they will be included in this framework amendment.

Current sector allocations for king mackerel were established in Amendment 1 to the CMP FMP (1985) which was the first amendment to recognize separate migratory groups of king mackerel (Gulf and South Atlantic). Catch was allocated based on the largest number of years, beginning in 1979, for which concurrent recreational and commercial catch data were available. Catch data was used to calculate the average percent distribution of catch between commercial and recreational fishermen, resulting in the current allocation of **37.1% to the commercial sector and 62.9% to the recreational sector.**

In addition to sector allocations, the CMP FMP contains regional allocations for Atlantic king mackerel. **The Northern Zone (the New York/Connecticut/Rhode Island line south to the North Carolina/South Carolina state line) is allocated 23.04% of the ACL. The Southern Zone (the North Carolina/South Carolina line south to the Miami-Dade/Monroe County boundary, Florida) is allocated 76.96% of the ACL.** These allocations were initially set in Amendment 20B to the CMP FMP (2014) using the proportion of landings in that zone from the 2002/2003 fishing season through the 2011/2012 fishing season. For Amendment 26 to the CMP FMP, the expected percentage of the quota for each zone was re-calculated using the same time period as specified in Amendment 20B, but with landings that would be counted as Atlantic king mackerel using the stock boundary and mixing zone from SEDAR 38.

Questions for the Advisory Panel

- Do the current sector allocations for king mackerel need to be revised? Why?
 - If yes, what factors should the South Atlantic Council consider when reallocating?
- Do the current regional allocations for king mackerel need to be revised? Why?
 - If yes, what factors should the South Atlantic Council consider when reallocating?

Modifications to Current Management Measures

In recent years, Atlantic king mackerel landings have been well below the ACL. Fishing mortality rates are well below target and the recent stock assessment (SEDAR 38 update) suggests that the ACL can be raised further. The South Atlantic Council would like to consider regulatory changes directed towards increasing commercial and recreational harvest.

Questions for the Advisory Panel

- What management measures could be modified to increase commercial harvest?
- What management measures could be modified to increase recreational harvest?
- Stock status is good, but are there market or demand issues keeping commercial and/or recreational landings low?