

DECISION DOCUMENT

for

AMENDMENT 20B

to the joint Fishery Management Plan for
Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources

of the

Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic
(zones and boundaries)



Committee Meeting
Savannah, GA
March 2014

Actions in Amendment 20B

1. Modify the Commercial Hook-and-Line Trip Limits for Gulf Migratory Group King Mackerel
2. Change the Fishing Season for Migratory Gulf Group King Mackerel for the Eastern and Western Zone
3. Establish a Transit Provision for Travel Through Areas that are Closed to King Mackerel Fishing
4. Establish Regional Commercial Annual Catch Limits (ACLs) for Atlantic Migratory Group King Mackerel and Spanish Mackerel
5. Modify the Framework Procedure
6. Modify the Gulf and Atlantic Migratory Group Cobia Annual Catch Limits (ACLs) and Annual Catch Targets (ACTs).

Expected Schedule

February 2014 - Gulf Council final action; done.

March 2014 - South Atlantic final action

The current management objectives in the joint mackerel FMP as amended are:

1. The primary objective of this FMP is to stabilize yield at MSY, allow recovery of overfished populations, and maintain population levels sufficient to ensure adequate recruitment.
2. To provide a flexible management system for the resource which minimizes regulatory delay while retaining substantial Council and public input in management decisions and which can rapidly adapt to changes in resource abundance, new scientific information, and changes in fishing patterns among user groups or by areas.
3. To provide necessary information for effective management and establish a mandatory reporting system for monitoring catch.
4. To minimize gear and user group conflicts.
5. To distribute the TAC of Atlantic migratory group Spanish mackerel between recreational and commercial user groups based on the catches that occurred during the early to mid-1970s, which is prior to the development of the deep water run-around gillnet fishery and when the resource was not overfished.
6. To minimize waste and bycatch in the fishery.
7. To provide appropriate management to address specific migratory groups of king mackerel.

Migratory group boundaries are shown in Figures S-1 through S-4.

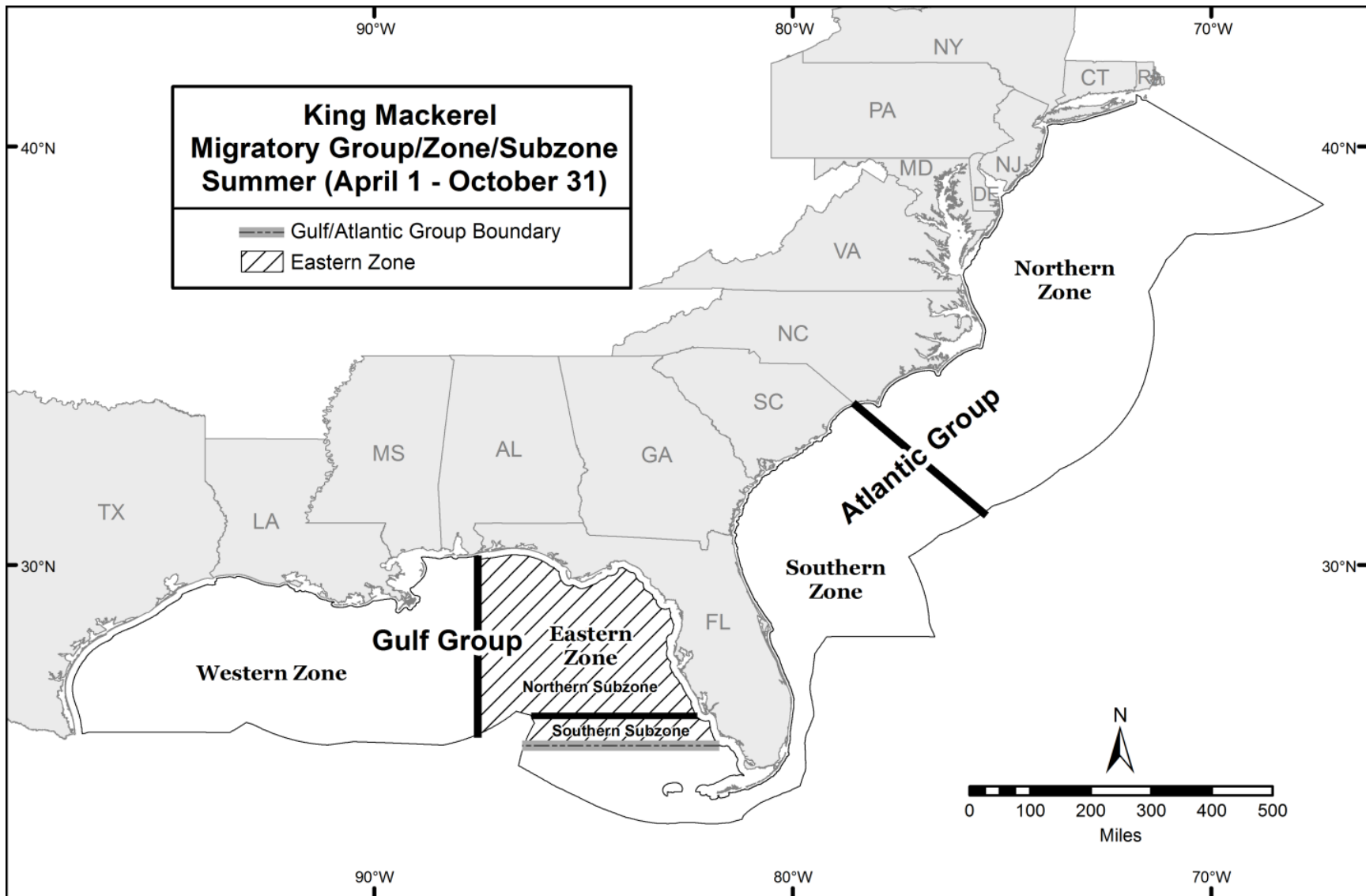


Figure S-1. King mackerel seasonal boundaries April 1-October 31, with the proposed Northern and Southern Zones in the Atlantic Group (pending submission and approval of CMP Amendment 20B).

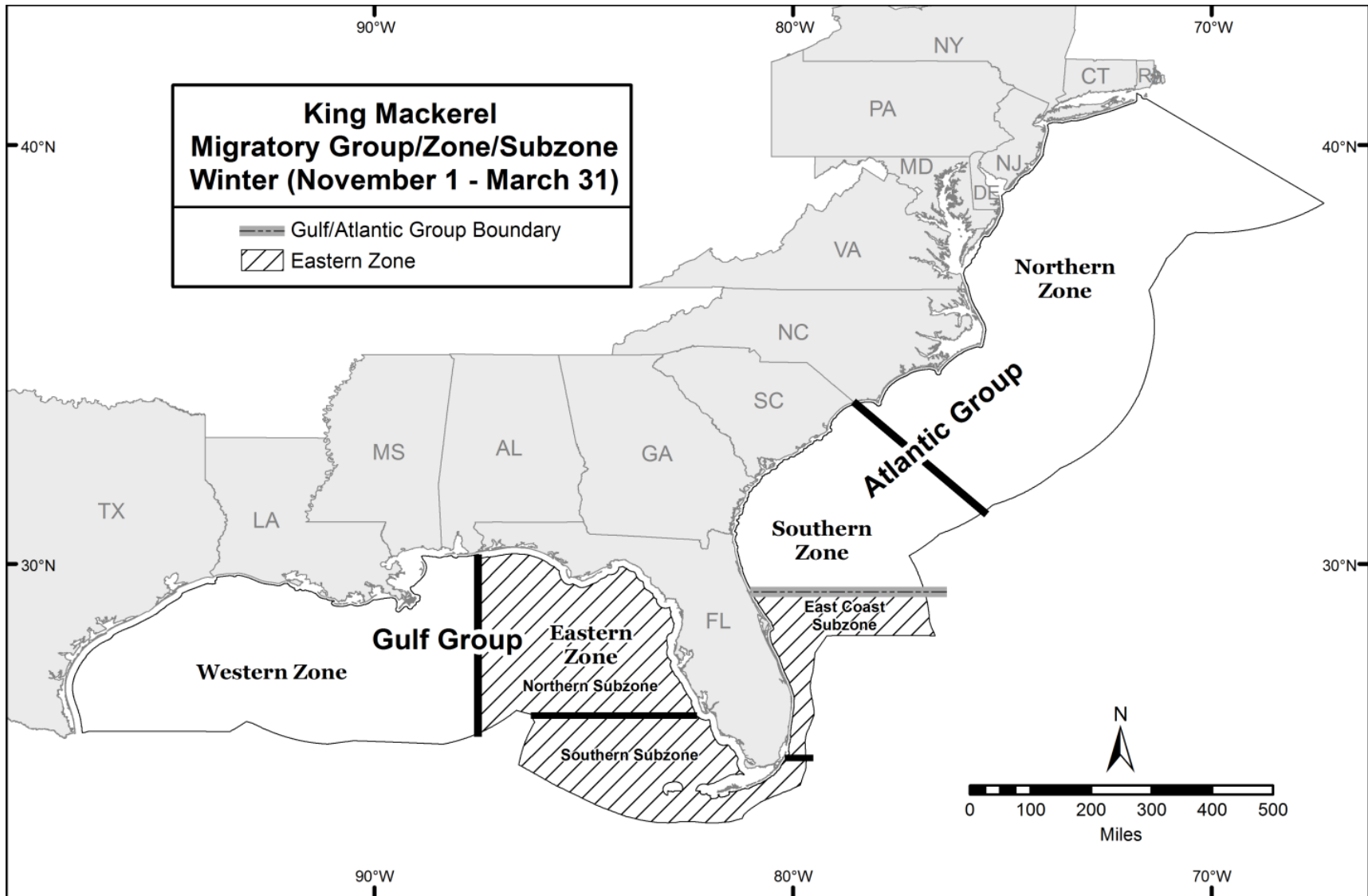


Figure S-2. King mackerel seasonal boundaries November 1- March 31, with the proposed Northern and Southern Zones in the Atlantic Group (pending submission and approval of CMP Amendment 20B).

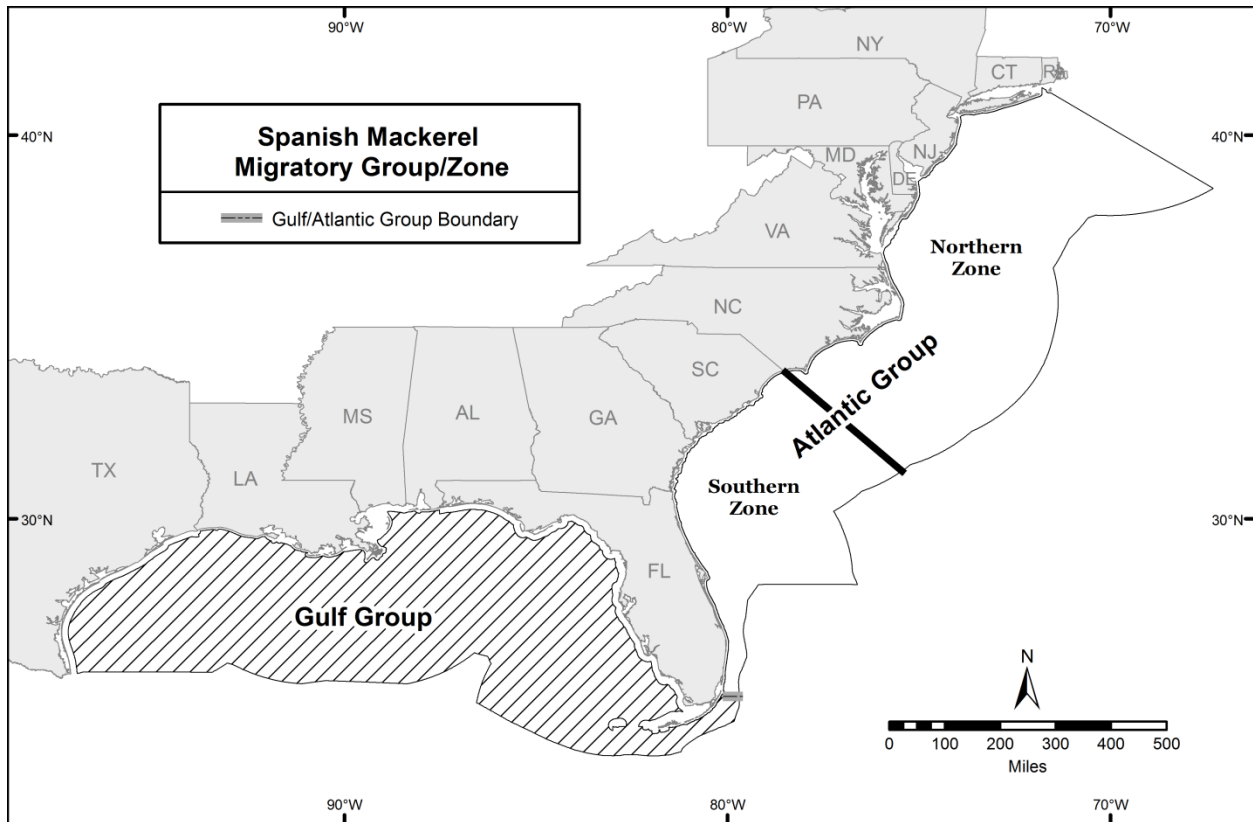


Figure S-3. Fixed boundary between Atlantic and Gulf migratory groups of Spanish mackerel, with the proposed Northern and Southern Zones in the Atlantic Group (pending submission and approval of CMP Amendment 20B).

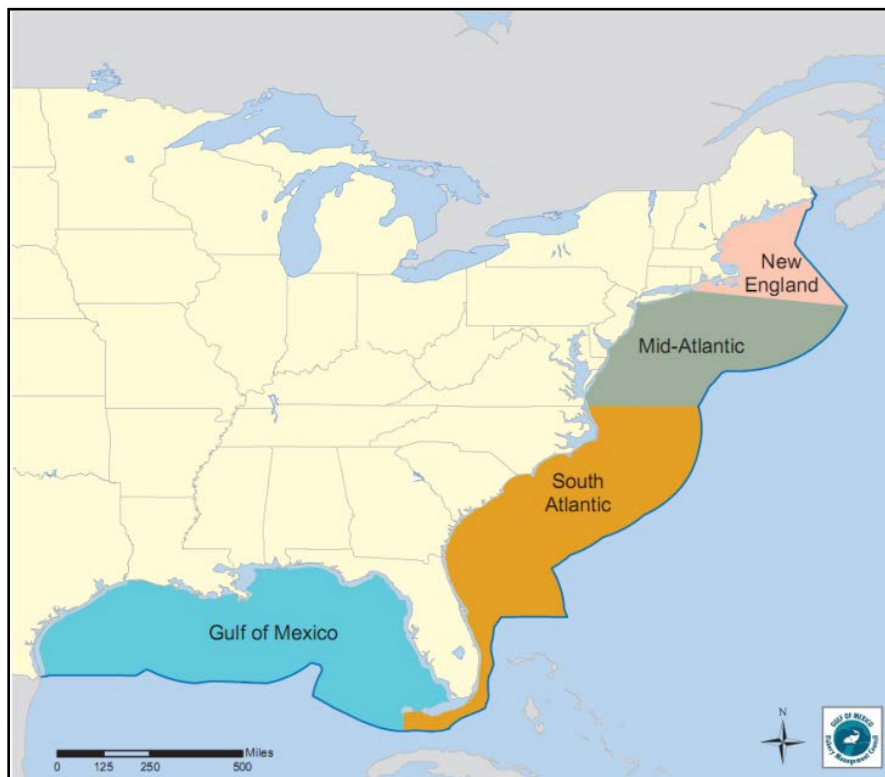


Figure S-4. Jurisdictional boundaries of the Gulf (blue), South Atlantic (orange), Mid-Atlantic (green), and New England (peach) Fishery Management Councils. The South Atlantic Council manages cobia for the South Atlantic and Mid-Atlantic regions.

Action 1. Modify the Commercial Hook-and-Line Trip Limits for Gulf Migratory Group King Mackerel.

Alternative 1: No Action – Retain the existing commercial hook-and-line trip limits.

Western Zone: 3,000 lbs with no reduction

Eastern Zone Northern Subzone: 1,250 lbs until 75% of the quota is taken, at which time the trip limit decreases to 500 lbs

Eastern Zone Southern Subzone: 1,250 lbs until 75% of the quota is taken, at which time the trip limit decreases to 500 lbs

Alternative 2: Set the commercial hook-and-line trip limit at 2,000 lbs with no reduction.

Option a: For the Western zone

Option b: For the Eastern Zone Northern Subzone

Option c: For the Eastern Zone Southern Subzone

Alternative 3: Set the commercial hook-and-line trip limit at 3,000 lbs with no reduction.

Preferred Option a: For the Western zone

Option b: For the Eastern Zone Northern Subzone

Option c: For the Eastern Zone Southern Subzone

Alternative 4: Set the commercial hook-and-line trip limit at 1,250 lbs with no reduction.

Option a: For the Western zone

Preferred Option b: For the Eastern Zone Northern Subzone

Preferred Option c: For the Eastern Zone Southern Subzone

Gulf Council Actions- February 2014
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None.

Action 2. Change the Fishing Season for Gulf Migratory Group King Mackerel for the Eastern and Western Zone.

Alternative 1: No Action - the fishing year remains July 1 – June 30.

Alternative 2: Change the fishing year for Gulf group king mackerel season to September 1 – August 31.

- Gulf Preferred Option a:** For the Western Zone
- Option b:** For the Eastern Zone Northern Subzone
- Option c:** For the Eastern Zone Southern Subzone

Alternative 3: Change the fishing year for Gulf group king mackerel season to October 1 – September 30.

- Option a:** For the Western Zone
- (Gulf) Preferred Option b:** For the Eastern Zone Northern Subzone
- Option c:** For the Eastern Zone Southern Subzone

South Atlantic Council Actions—December 2013
Deselected Alternative 2 Option a as a Preferred. Therefore, the South Atlantic Council’s preferred alternative is Alternative 1. No Action.

Gulf Council Actions- February 2014
Did not deselect Alternative, 2 Option a as a Preferred. Therefore, the Gulf Council’s preferred alternative remains Alternative 2, Option a.

Table S-1. Current preferred alternatives/options

	July 1 - June 30 (Alt 1)	Sept 1 - Aug 31 (Alt 2)	Oct 1 - Sept 1 (Alt 3)
Western Zone	SA Preferred	Gulf Preferred	
Eastern Zone/Northern Subzone			Gulf Preferred
Eastern Zone/Southern Subzone	Gulf/SA Preferred by not selecting Alt 2 or 3		

COMMITTEE ACTIONS:

1) Address and correct options under Alternatives 2 and 3.

From Decision Document at the December 2013 meeting:

Alternative 2: Change the fishing season for Gulf migratory group king mackerel to September 1 – August 31.

Gulf Preferred Option a: For the Western Zone

Option b: For the Eastern Zone

Alternative 3: Change the fishing season for Gulf migratory group king mackerel to October 1 – September 30.

Option a: For the Western Zone

South Atlantic Preferred / Gulf Preferred Option b: For the Eastern Zone

In the amendment:

Alternative 2: Change the fishing year for Gulf group king mackerel season to September 1 – August 31.

Gulf Preferred Option a: For the Western Zone

Option b: For the Eastern Zone Northern Subzone

Option c: For the Eastern Zone Southern Subzone

Alternative 3: Change the fishing year for Gulf group king mackerel season to October 1 – September 30.

Option a: For the Western Zone

Gulf Preferred Option b: For the Eastern Zone Northern Subzone

Option c: For the Eastern Zone Southern Subzone

The South Atlantic needs add Options a-c under Alternatives 2 and 3, and clarify if the South Atlantic Preferred is Option b under Alternative 3 (Northern Subzone only).

- Approve Options a-c under Alternatives 2 and 3.
- Select a Preferred option(s).

2) What's next:

The South Atlantic Council may:

1) Select **Alternative 2 Option a** as preferred and take final action on the amendment. The document would be finalized and submitted to the Secretary of Commerce.

2) Continue with no preferred alternative for the Western Zone. In this case the two Councils would be in disagreement. As a next step the South Atlantic Council may:

- a) Meet with the Gulf Council at a joint meeting to try to resolve differences. This would be at one of the June meetings, at the earliest.
- b) Remove the Western Zone from Action 2 and then take final action on the amendment. The amendment would need to go back to the Gulf Council in April for their approval and final action.
- c) Take final action and submit the amendment with no agreement. NMFS would need to disapprove the Western Zone portion of Action 2, in which case the fishing year would not change for the Western Zone.

Action 3. Establish Transit Provisions for Travel Through Areas That are Closed to King Mackerel Fishing

Alternative 1: No Action – do not establish a transit provision.

Alternative 2: Establish a provision allowing transit through the Florida west coast Northern and Southern Subzones when those zones are closed for vessels possessing Atlantic migratory group king mackerel that were legally harvested in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) off Monroe County.

Preferred Alternative 3: Establish a provision allowing transit through areas closed to king mackerel fishing for vessels possessing king mackerel that were legally harvested in the EEZ off areas open to king mackerel fishing.

Alternative 4: Establish a provision allowing transit through the Eastern Zone, Northern Subzone when that area is closed for vessels possessing king mackerel that were legally harvested in the EEZ off Collier County.

Note: For Alternatives 2-4, the following conditions apply:

Only for vessels in direct and continuous transit and with gear stowed

Only for fishermen holding a federal commercial king mackerel permit

Gulf Council Actions- February 2014
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No changes.

Action 4. Establish Regional Commercial Annual Catch Limits (ACLs) for Atlantic Migratory Group King Mackerel and Spanish Mackerel

NOTE: IPT recommends changing “ACL” to “quota” throughout Actions 4.1 and 4.2.

The reason the language should be changed is that changing the “ACL” (through a transfer between zones) requires Council action, and changing the “quota” is something that can be done on an annual basis through the closed framework procedure (similar to other inseason actions). Also, transferring some quota from one zone to the other would allow the receiving zone to exceed its ACL. Therefore, a total ACL for the Atlantic migratory group should be retained with quotas for each zone. This is consistent with how the Gulf migratory group zones and subzones are managed.

Action 4.1 – Establish Commercial ACLs for Atlantic Migratory Group King Mackerel

Alternative 1: No Action - retain one commercial ACL for the Atlantic migratory group king mackerel.

Alternative 2: Establish a separate commercial ACL of Atlantic migratory group king mackerel for North Carolina based on **Options a-d** below. Monitoring and implementation would be based on **Options e-g** below.

- Option a:** The North Carolina ACL would be the Atlantic migratory group ACL times the average of the proportion of landings in North Carolina from 2007/2008 through 2011/2012.
- Option b:** The North Carolina ACL would be the Atlantic migratory group ACL times the average of the proportion of landings in North Carolina from 2002/2003 through 2011/2012.
- Option c:** The North Carolina ACL would be the Atlantic migratory group ACL times (50% of the proportion of landings in North Carolina 2002/2003 through 2011/2012 and 50% of the proportion of landings in North Carolina 2007/2008 through 2011/2012).
- Option d:** The North Carolina ACL would be the Atlantic migratory group ACL times the average of the proportion of landings in North Carolina from 1997/1998 through 2011/2012.
- Option e:** NMFS would monitor landings in both North Carolina and the rest of the states and close the EEZ of each area when the respective ACL is met or expected to be met.
- Option f:** North Carolina would monitor landings in North Carolina and prohibit landings in North Carolina when the North Carolina ACL is met or projected to be met. NMFS would monitor landings in the rest of the states and close the entire EEZ when the general Atlantic ACL is reached.
- Option g:** North Carolina would monitor landings in North Carolina and inform NMFS when the North Carolina ACL is met or expected to be met; NMFS would then close the EEZ off North Carolina. NMFS would monitor landings in the rest of the states and close the EEZ off those states when the ACL is reached.

Note: One option from Options a-d and one option from Option e-g should be selected if this alternative is preferred.

Alternative 3: Establish ACLs for Northern and Southern Zones for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel based on **Options a-d** below. The Northern Zone would include the EEZ off states from North Carolina north through New York. The Southern Zone would include the EEZ off South Carolina, Georgia, and the east coast of Florida. NMFS would monitor landings in both zones and close the EEZ of each zone when the respective ACL is reached.

Option a: Each zone ACL would be the Atlantic migratory group ACL times the average of the proportion of landings in that zone from 2007/2008 through 2011/2012.

Preferred Option b: Each zone ACL would be the Atlantic migratory group ACL times the average of the proportion of landings in that zone from 2002/03 through 2011/2012.

Option c: Each zone ACL would be the Atlantic migratory group ACL times the average (50% of the proportion of landings from that zone 2002/2003 through 2011/2012 and 50% of the proportion of landings from that zone 2007/2008 through 2011/2012).

Option d: Each zone ACL would be the Atlantic migratory group ACL times the average of the proportion of landings in that zone from 1997/1998 through 2011/2012.

Preferred Alternative 4: Allow for transfer of ACL between regions. North Carolina and Florida would be designated as the coordinating states for any transfer request, in consultation with other states.

The zones created by Action 4.1 are shown in Figures S-5 and S-6. Note that the Northern Zone does not change seasonally, only the Southern Zone changes seasonally.

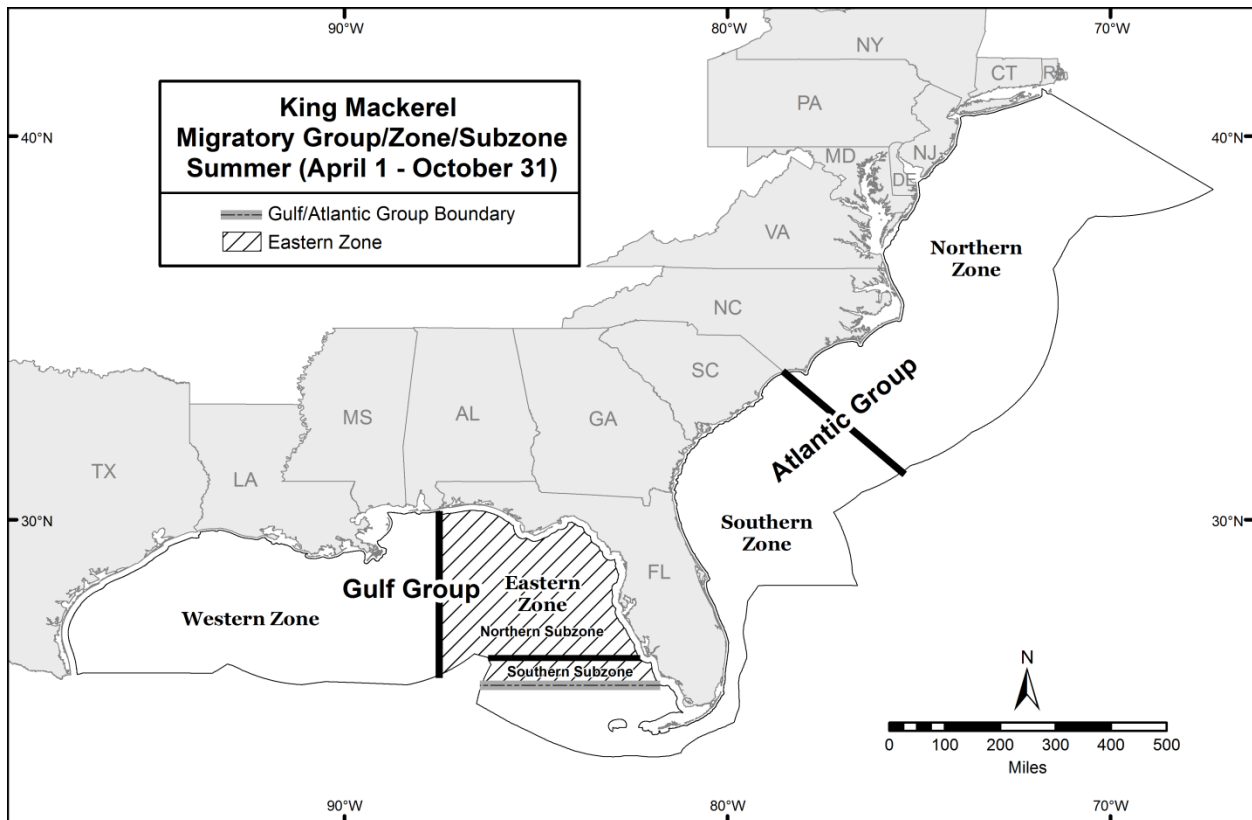


Figure S-5. Designation of the Northern Zone and Southern Zone (**Alternative 3**) for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel for Apr 1- October 31.

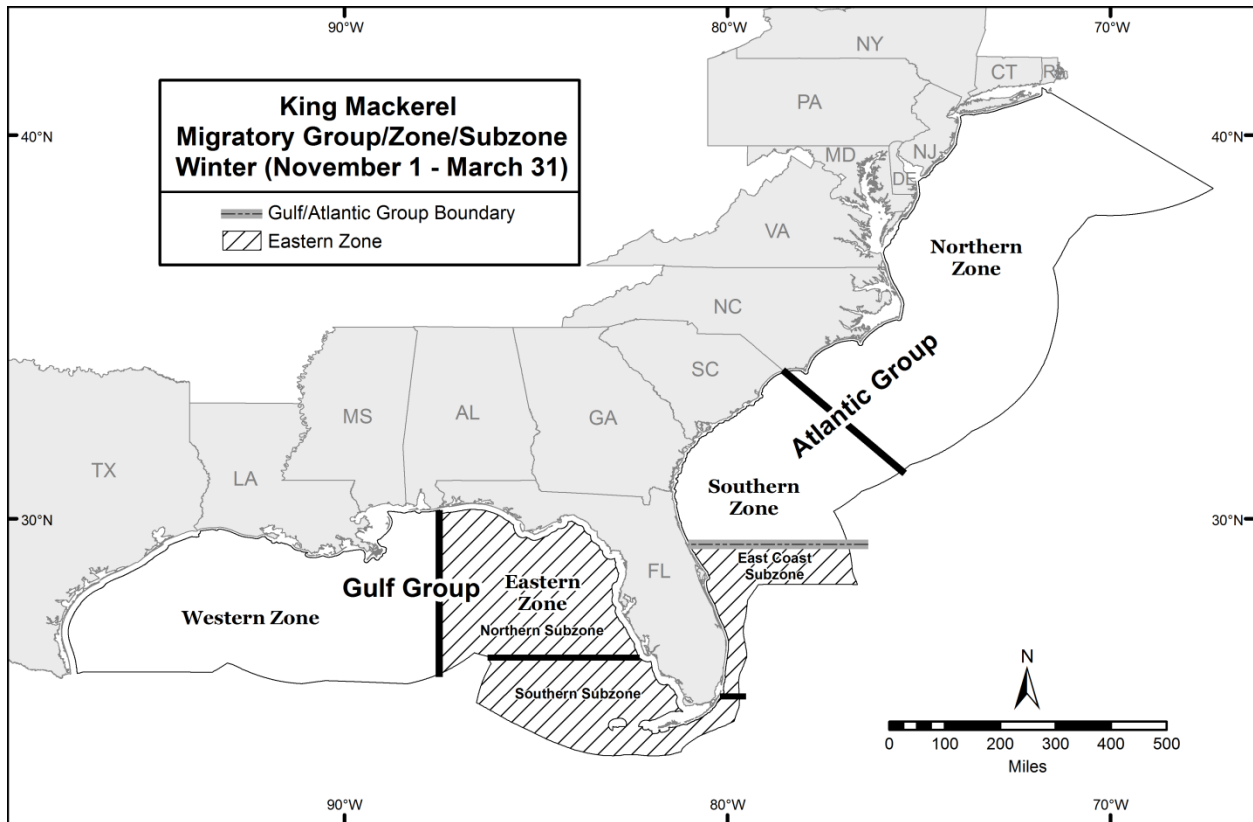


Figure S-6. Designation of the Northern Zone and Southern Zone (**Alternative 3**) for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel for Nov 1- March 31.

Action 4.2 – Establish Regional Commercial ACLs for Atlantic Migratory Group Spanish Mackerel.

Alternative 1: No Action - retain one commercial ACL for the Atlantic migratory group Spanish mackerel.

Alternative 2: Establish a separate commercial ACL for Atlantic migratory group Spanish mackerel for North Carolina based on Options a-d below. Monitoring and implementation would be based on Options e-g below.

Option a: The North Carolina ACL would be the Atlantic migratory group ACL times the average of the proportion of landings in North Carolina from 2007/08 through 2011/12.

Option b: The North Carolina ACL would be the Atlantic migratory group ACL times the average of the proportion of landings in North Carolina from 2002/03 through 2011/2012.

Option c: The North Carolina ACL would be the Atlantic migratory group ACL times (50% of the proportion of landings in North Carolina 2002/03 through 2011/2012 and 50% of the proportion of landings in North Carolina 2007/08 through 2011/12).

Option d: The North Carolina ACL would be the Atlantic migratory group ACL times the average of the proportion of landings in North Carolina from 1997/98 through 2011/12.

Option e: NMFS would monitor landings in both North Carolina and the rest of the states and close the EEZ of each area when the respective ACL is met or expected to be met.

Option f: North Carolina would monitor landings in North Carolina and prohibit landings in North Carolina when the North Carolina ACL is met or projected to be met. NMFS would monitor landings in the rest of the states and close the entire EEZ when the General Atlantic ACL is reached.

Option g: North Carolina would monitor landings in North Carolina and inform NMFS when the North Carolina ACL is met or expected to be met; NMFS would then close the EEZ off North Carolina. NMFS would monitor landings in the rest of the states and close the EEZ off those states when the ACL is reached.

Note: One option from Options a-d and one option from Option e-g should be selected if this alternative is preferred.

Alternative 3: Establish ACLs for Northern and Southern Zones for Atlantic migratory group Spanish mackerel based on Options a-d below. The Northern Zone would include the EEZ off states from North Carolina north through New York. The Southern Zone would include the EEZ off South Carolina, Georgia, and the east coast of Florida. NMFS would monitor landings in both zones and close the EEZ of each zone when the respective ACL is reached.

Option a: Each zone ACL would be the Atlantic migratory group ACL times the average of the proportion of landings in that zone from 2007/08 through 2011/2012.

Preferred Option b: Each zone ACL would be the Atlantic migratory group ACL times the average of the proportion of landings in that zone from 2002/2003 through 2011/2012.

Option c: Each zone ACL would be the Atlantic migratory group ACL times the average (50% of the proportion of landings from that zone 2002/2003 through 2011/2012 and 50% of the proportion of landings from that zone 2007/2008 through 2011/2012).

Option d: Each zone ACL would be the Atlantic migratory group ACL times the average of the proportion of landings in that zone from 1997/1998 through 2011/2012.

Preferred Alternative 4: Allow for transfer of ACL between regions. North Carolina and Florida would be designated as the coordinating states for any transfer request, in consultation with other states.

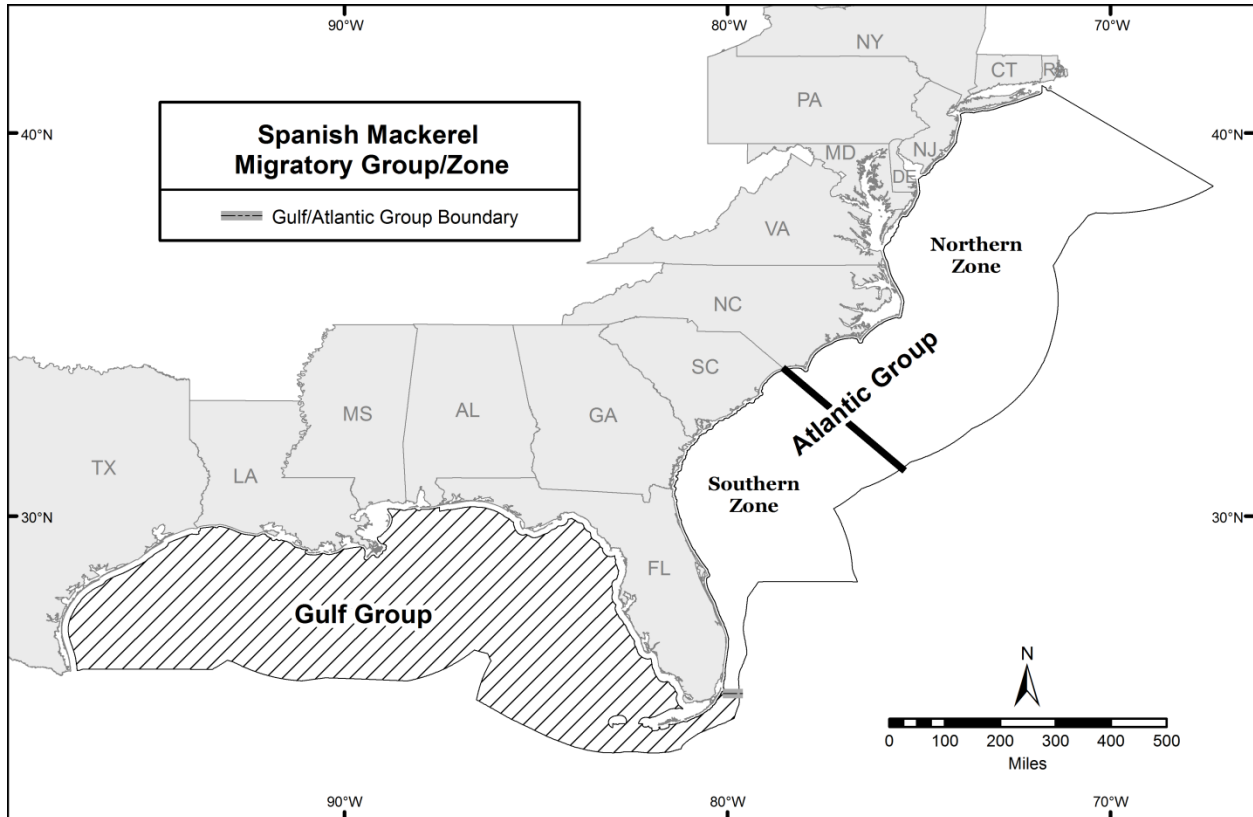


Figure S-7. Designation of the Northern Zone and Southern Zone (**Alternative 3**) for Atlantic migratory group Spanish mackerel.

Gulf Council Actions- February 2014

Adopted the recommended language for Actions 4.1 and 4.2.

COMMITTEE ACTION:

- 1) Approve the IPT-recommended language changing ACL to quota throughout Actions 4.1 and 4.2.

Action 5. Modify the Framework Procedure.

Alternative 1: No Action – Do not modify the framework procedure adopted through Amendment 18.

Preferred Alternative 2: Modify the framework procedure to include changes to acceptable biological catches (ABCs), ABC/annual catch limit (ACL) control rules, and accountability measures (AMs) under the standard documentation process for open framework actions. Accountability measures that could be changed would include:

In-season AMs

- Closures and closure procedures
- Trip limit reductions or increases
- Designation of an individual fishing quota (IFQ) program as the AM for species in the IFQ program
- Implementation of gear restrictions

Post-season AMs

- Adjustment of season length
- Implementation of a closed season
- Adjustment or implementation of bag, trip, or possession limit
- Reduction of the ACL to account for the previous year overage
- Revoking a scheduled increase in the ACL if the ACL was exceeded in the previous year
- Implementation of gear restrictions
- Reporting and monitoring requirements

Alternative 3: Modify the framework procedure to include changes to accountability measures (AMs) under the standard documentation process for open framework actions. Accountability measures that could be changed would include:

In-season AMs

- Closure procedures
- Trip limit reductions or increases

Post-season AMs

- Adjustment of season length
- Adjustment of bag, trip, or possession limit

Preferred Alternative 4: Modify the framework procedure to include designation of responsibility to each Council for setting regulations for the migratory groups of each species.

This pertains to:

Responsibilities of each Council:

1. Recommendations with respect to the Atlantic migratory groups of king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, and cobia will be the responsibility of the South Atlantic Council, and those for the Gulf migratory groups of king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, and cobia will be the responsibility of the Gulf Council, with the following exceptions:
 - a. The South Atlantic Council will have responsibility to set vessel trip limits, closed seasons or areas, or gear restrictions for 1) the Eastern Zone - East Coast Subzone for Gulf migratory group king mackerel and 2) the east coast of Florida including the

Atlantic side of the Florida Keys for Gulf migratory group cobia.

2. For stocks where a stock assessment indicates a different boundary between the Gulf and Atlantic migratory groups than the management boundary, a portion of the ACL for one migratory group may be apportioned to the appropriate zone, but management measures for that zone will be the responsibility of the Council within whose management area that zone is located.
3. Both Councils must concur on recommendations that affect both migratory groups.

Preferred Alternative 5: Make editorial changes to the framework procedure to reflect changes to the names of the Council advisory committees and panels.

Gulf Council Actions- February 2014
No change.

Action 6. Modify the Gulf and Atlantic Migratory Group Cobia Annual Catch Limits (ACLs) and Annual Catch Targets (ACTs).

Alternative 1: No Action. The entire Gulf migratory group cobia ACL applies to the Gulf Council jurisdictional area and the entire Atlantic migratory group cobia ACL applies to the South Atlantic jurisdictional area. The ACLs and ACTs established by Amendment 18 are as follows:

Gulf Migratory Group	Atlantic Migratory Group
ACL = ABC = 1,460,000 lbs	ACL = ABC = OY = 1,571,399 lbs Commercial ACL (8% ACL) = 125,712 lbs Recreational ACL (92% ACL) = 1,445,687 lbs
Stock ACT = 1,310,000 lbs	Recreational ACT = 1,184,688 lbs

Alternative 2: The ACL equals the ABC as determined by the SSCs for each migratory group. The entire Gulf migratory group cobia ACL applies to the Gulf Council jurisdictional area and the entire Atlantic migratory group cobia ACL applies to the South Atlantic jurisdictional area. The ACLs and ACTs would be as follows:

Gulf Migratory Group	Atlantic Migratory Group
(See Table 2.6.1 for values)	
ACL = ABC	ACL = ABC = OY Commercial ACL = 8% ACL Recreational ACL = 92% ACL
Stock ACT = 90% ACL	Recreational ACT = ACL [(1-PSE) or 0.5, whichever is greater]

Alternative 3: The ACL for each jurisdictional area would be determined as follows:

- The Gulf migratory group cobia ABC (as determined by the SSCs) would be divided into a Gulf Zone ACL and a Florida East Coast Zone ACL (Florida/Georgia border to the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils jurisdictional boundary) based on the options below.
 - Option a:** Use 2003-2012 (10 years) landings to establish the percentage split for the Gulf ABC.
 - Option b:** Use 2008-2012 (5 years) landings to establish the percentage split for the Gulf ABC.
 - Option c:** Use 50% of landings from 2003-2012 + 50% of landings from 2008-2012 to establish the percentage split for the Gulf ABC.
 - Preferred Option d:** Use 1998-2012 (15 years) landings to establish the percentage split for the Gulf ABC.
 - Option e:** Based on yellowtail snapper: 50% of average landings from 1993-2008 + 50% of average landings from 2006-2008 to establish the percentage split for the Gulf ABC.
 - Option f:** Based on mutton snapper: 50% of average landings from 1990-2008 + 50% of average landings from 2006-2008 to establish the percentage split for the Gulf ABC.
- The Atlantic migratory group ACL would be equal to the ABC for the Atlantic migratory group cobia (as determined by the SSCs).

- Management measures set by the South Atlantic Council for the Atlantic migratory group would also apply to the Gulf migratory group Florida East Coast Zone.

The ACLs and ACTs would be as follows:

Gulf Migratory Group		Atlantic Migratory Group
(see Table 2.6.3 in CMP 20B for values for each Option)		
Gulf Zone	FL East Coast Zone	
ACL = x% ABC	ACL = x% ABC Commercial ACL = 8% ACL Recreational ACL = 92% ACL	ACL = ABC = OY Commercial ACL = 8% ACL Recreational ACL = 92% ACL
Stock ACT = 90% ACL	Recreational ACT = ACL [(1-PSE) or 0.5, whichever is greater]	Recreational ACT = ACL [(1-PSE) or 0.5, whichever is greater]

Table S-1. OFLs and ABCs for Atlantic group cobia (as recommended by the SSC, based on results from SEDAR 28), and ACLs and ACTs for the **Preferred Option d** under **Alternative 3**. All values are in whole weight.

Year	Atlantic Migratory Group		Atlantic Zone ACL		Atlantic Zone ACT
	OFL	ABC	Commercial	Recreational	Recreational
2014	810,000	730,000	60,000	670,000	550,000
2015	760,000	690,000	60,000	630,000	520,000
2016	730,000	670,000	50,000	620,000	500,000

Table S-2. OFLs and ABCs for Gulf group cobia (as recommended by the SSC, based on results from SEDAR 28), and ACLs and ACTs for the **Preferred Option d** under **Alternative 3**. All values are in whole weight.

Year	Gulf Migratory Group		Gulf Zone		FL East Coast		
	OFL	ABC=ACL	Stock ACL	Stock ACT	Commercial ACL	Recreational ACL	Recreational ACT
2014	2,560,000	2,460,000	1,570,000	1,420,000	70,000	810,000	670,000
2015	2,590,000	2,520,000	1,610,000	1,450,000	70,000	830,000	680,000
2016	2,660,000	2,600,000	1,660,000	1,500,000	70,000	860,000	710,000

	Gulf Migratory Group	Atlantic Migratory Group
Current ACLs and ACTs	ACL = ABC = 1,460,000 lbs	ACL = ABC = OY = 1,571,399 lbs Commercial ACL (8% ACL) = 125,712 lbs Recreational ACL (92% ACL) = 1,445,687 lbs
	Stock ACT = 1,310,000 lbs	Recreational ACT = 1,184,688 lbs

Gulf Council Actions- February 2014
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No change.

Approve for Secretarial Review

1) Does the Committee approve the amendment for submission for Secretarial review and deem the codified text as necessary and appropriate?

DRAFT MOTION: APPROVE COASTAL MIGRATORY PELAGICS AMENDMENT 20B FOR SECRETARIAL REVIEW, AND DEEM THE REVISED CODIFIED TEXT AS NECESSARY AND APPROPRIATE. GIVE STAFF EDITORIAL LICENSE TO MAKE ANY NECESSARY EDITORIAL CHANGES TO THE DOCUMENT/CODIFIED TEXT AND GIVE THE COUNCIL CHAIR AUTHORITY TO APPROVE THE REVISIONS AND RE-DEEM THE CODIFIED TEXT.