Comments Summary for South Atlantic Scoping for CMP Amendment 26
January 2014

General topics from public input (including recorded testimony, written comments, and informal discussion):

- support for separating permits, primarily at the Cocoa Beach meeting so that the Councils could address specific problems in their region without impacting the other region.
- some opposition to separate permits (Key West and Jacksonville) because of fishermen harvesting in both regions, and impact on new entrants who want to work both regions
- some meeting attendees supported removal of king mackerel permits with no or low landings so that full-time mackerel fishermen could have access to the ACL (primarily in Cocoa Beach)
- some opposition to any action that would take away king mackerel permits with no or low landings (NC, Jacksonville, Key West) because the Councils should not take away any more permits. It was also noted in Key West that a higher trip limit would increase the number of active permits, so the Councils should consider increasing trip limits before any action to address latent permits.
- some opposition to a two-for-one requirement on king mackerel permits because of impact on new entrants and increased capital required to enter the fishery
- some support for a two-for-one requirement (Cocoa Beach)
- some support for an endorsement for the king mackerel mixing zone
- if permits are split, support for qualifying for both permits if the permit holder has landings in both areas, and use a very recent control date
- South Atlantic staff plans to meet with the Cocoa Beach/Canaveral mackerel fishermen to discuss options for specific actions to address king mackerel effort in the mixing zone.

Atlantic Beach, NC (2 commenters):
- One commenter supported separate permits for both king mackerel and Spanish mackerel.
- One commenter was opposed to any kind of reduction in permits, as it would put people out of business.

Key West, FL (1 commenter):
- One commenter (FKCFA representative) did not support separate permits and opposed a two-for-one requirement and any action to remove king mackerel permits with no or low landings. The commenter noted that the low trip limit affected the decision to fish, and a higher trip limit should be considered before action to remove latent permits.

Cocoa Beach, FL (1 commenter):
- One commenter (SFA representative) supported separate permits, and permit holders with landings in both regions should qualify for both regional permits. The commenter recommended a more recent control date.

Jacksonville, FL (2 commenters):
- One commenter opposed removing permits with low or no landings, but supported action to help the professional mackerel fishermen in the mixing zone.

- One commenter supported a two-for-one requirement for king mackerel permits, and suggested a system in which all existing permits would be designated “A” permits. Two A permits would be necessary for new entrants, and that permit would be designated a “B” permit. B permits would not fall under the two-for-one requirement. This would reduce the number of permits but only for a limited time.

Written comments (2):

- One letter (representing SFA) supported separate permits for each region by a simple system of splitting the region. The letter also supported limited access permit system for Spanish mackerel and recommended that fishermen with any fishing history in the regions should be issued a limited access permit for the region and stock into the future. Additionally, SFA supports the possible change in king mackerel mixing zone designation through SEDAR 38.
- One commenter supported separate permits or a requirement to declare which king mackerel zone the vessel will fish in, which would be fairer for fishermen harvesting in those areas. The commenter did not recommend allowing permits for both regions to be held, but noted that a one-time trade-in clause could be used to allow fishermen to move between the regions. The letter included support for an endorsement for the mixing zone, but only for that area. Lastly the commenter did not support any type of income requirement for permit holders.