



THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Atlantic King and Spanish Mackerel Port Meetings: Next Steps

Discussion Document

June 2025

Background

The South Atlantic Council manages important recreational and commercial fisheries, including king and Spanish mackerel via the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Coastal Migratory Pelagic (CMP) Resources of the Gulf and Atlantic Regions (CMP FMP). Members of the Council's Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel (AP) requested the Council hold a series of port meetings to gather more information on the Atlantic king and Spanish mackerel fisheries. AP members felt that a focused look into these fisheries was needed, especially as changing environmental conditions alter fishery dynamics.

As a result of the AP's recommendation, the Council hosted a series of port meetings along the Atlantic coast throughout 2024. Port meetings were more than a public comment opportunity. Attendees had the chance to actively discuss their perspectives with other fishery participants and local Council members. The South Atlantic Council recognizes that stakeholder input is essential in achieving effective management. These port meetings provided a unique opportunity for stakeholders in the king and Spanish mackerel fisheries to share their insights and ultimately define the future for these changing fisheries.

At their March 2025 meeting, Council staff reviewed a draft report summarizing the high-level themes from the port meetings effort. The Council requested detailed information from port meetings on a suite of management options be brought to the June 2025 meeting.

Goals and objectives for the port meetings and the final report can be found on the Council's website: <https://safmc.net/king-and-spanish-mackerel-port-meetings/>

Objectives for this Meeting

- Receive an update on the CMP FMP Goals and Objectives and SEDAR 78.
- Determine which topics staff should develop actions and alternatives for consideration.
- Select the preferred timeline for amendment(s) development.

Coastal Migratory Pelagics Fishery Management Plan Goals and Objectives

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) national standard guidelines require fishery management councils to establish objectives in each FMP and propose management measures that will achieve the objectives. In establishing the objectives, the councils should balance the biological needs of the fish stock(s) with human need, reconcile both present and future costs and benefits, integrate both private and public interests, and provide for a comprehensive approach to addressing problems within the fishery. Also, as the needs of a fishery change over time, fishery management councils are encouraged to regularly reassess the FMP objectives (50 C.F.R. § 600.305(b)). Amendment 6 (1992) was the last amendment to list and modify the objectives for the CMP FMP.

The CMP FMP is jointly managed by the South Atlantic Council and the Gulf Fishery Management Council. As such, changes to the goals and objectives must be approved by both management bodies. The South Atlantic and Gulf Council's began updating the goals and objectives in 2023, but they ultimately paused discussions until port meetings had been completed. The objectives listed below are where the councils left off in the updating process:

- The primary objective of this FMP is to achieve and maintain optimum yield, to allow recovery of overfished populations, and maintain population levels sufficient to ensure adequate recruitment.
- 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 area.
- To minimize gear and user group conflicts.
- To distribute the total allowable catch of Atlantic migratory group Spanish mackerel between the recreational and commercial user groups based on the catches that occurred

Objective language modified and approved by Gulf Council and South Atlantic Council.

Objective recommended for removal by the Gulf Council

Objective added by the Gulf Council and South Atlantic Council.

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.

- To minimize waste and bycatch in the fishery.
- To provide appropriate management to address specific migratory groups of king mackerel.
- To optimize the social and economic benefits of the coastal migratory pelagic fisheries.
- To achieve robust fishery reporting and data collection systems across all sectors for monitoring the coastal migratory pelagics fishery which minimizes scientific management and risk uncertainty.

SEDAR 78 and Atlantic Spanish Mackerel Catch Levels

A Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR) stock assessment for Atlantic Spanish mackerel was completed in June 2022 (SEDAR 78) with a data terminal year of 2020. In August 2022, the South Atlantic Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) reviewed the results of SEDAR 78 and recommended that additional work be completed. Based on the SSC recommendations, the Council requested, at their September 2022 meeting, that the Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) rerun the SEDAR 78 assessment model with new landings to address uncertainty with Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) estimates in the terminal year. The SSC reviewed the changes at their October 2022 meeting and determined that additional revisions to the assessment were still necessary. However, due to the extensive rework requested, SSC recommended revisions would not be available for this assessment (SEDAR 78) but could be considered in future assessments. The SEFSC recommended that the SSC develop allowable biological catch (ABC) advice based on the current assessment and analysis completed to date. The SSC met again in April 2023 and determined that SEDAR 78 was sufficient for providing stock status and for providing catch level recommendations using model output but not projections.

The SEDAR 78 indicated, consistent with the original stock status determined by SEDAR 28, that Atlantic Spanish mackerel are not overfished or undergoing overfishing. Based on the results of SEDAR 78, the SSC made new Atlantic Spanish mackerel catch level recommendations for the Council to consider (Table 1). The SEDAR 78 update includes revised recreational landings that are based on the Marine Recreational Information Program's (MRIP) newer Fishing Effort Survey (FES) method. Current catch levels, using MRIP's Coastal Household Telephone Survey (CHTS) are included in Table 2.

NOTE: SEDAR 78 included revised recreational landings based on the newer Fishing Effort Survey (FES) method. As such, the current acceptable biological catch level (Table 2) and the acceptable biological catch recommended by the SSC based on the SEDAR 78 (Table 1) are not directly comparable.

Table 1. South Atlantic Scientific and Statistical Committee catch level recommendations for Atlantic migratory group Spanish mackerel, using data resultant from SEDAR 78 (2022).

Criteria		Deterministic		
Overfished evaluation (SSB ₂₀₂₀ /MSST)		1.40		
Overfishing Evaluation (F ₂₀₁₈₋₂₀₂₀ /F _{MSY})		0.77		
MFMT (F _{MSY} proxy)		0.516		
SSB _{MSY} (metric tons)		6,406		
MSST (metric tons)		4,804		
MSY (1000 lbs.)		8,210		
Y at 75% F _{MSY} (1000 lbs.)		8,024		
ABC Control Rule Adjustment		10%		
P-Star		40%		
M		0.35		
OFL RECOMMENDATIONS				
Year	Landed (lbs ww)	Discard (lbs ww)	Landed (number)	Discard (number)
2023	8,210,000	581,000	5,413,000	1,147,000
2024	8,210,000	581,000	5,413,000	1,147,000
2025	8,210,000	581,000	5,413,000	1,147,000
2026	8,210,000	581,000	5,413,000	1,147,000
2027	8,210,000	581,000	5,413,000	1,147,000
ABC RECOMMENDATIONS				
Year	Landed (lbs ww)	Discard (lbs ww)	Landed (number)	Discard (number)
2023	8,024,000	469,000	4,977,000	916,000
2024	8,024,000	469,000	4,977,000	916,000
2025	8,024,000	469,000	4,977,000	916,000
2026	8,024,000	469,000	4,977,000	916,000
2027	8,024,000	469,000	4,977,000	916,000

Table 2. South Atlantic Scientific and Statistical Committee catch level recommendations for Atlantic migratory group Spanish mackerel, using data resultant from SEDAR 28 (2022).

Current ABC: 6,075,000 pounds		Recommended ABC: 8,024,000 pounds	
Commercial ACL: 3,330,000 pounds (55%)			
<i>Northern Zone: 662,670 pounds (20%)</i>			
<i>Southern Zone: 2,667,330 pounds (80%)</i>			
Recreational ACL: 2,727,000 pounds (45%)			

Port Meeting Management Discussions

In the document below there are summary tables for each of the major management brought up by stakeholders during the Mackerel Port Meetings series.

Committee Action: for each management topic, decide if staff should move forward with development of actions and alternatives.

Fishing Year and Season for **Atlantic Spanish Mackerel**

Region	Input	Overall Takeaway
Mid-Atlantic	Seasons are not practical management tool for Atlantic Spanish mackerel because of the migratory nature of the fishery. The peak season varies from year to year. It is important for the recreational fishery not to experience any closures because the timing of the fishery can be volatile.	All areas expressed the importance of keeping the fishery open when the fish are available. North Carolina discussed modification of fishing year but <i>not</i> implementing a season.
North Carolina	Consider a November fishing year start to facilitate seasonal transfer of allocation between the Northern and Southern Zones. Concern about what would happen if the 500-pound bycatch exceeded the catch limit.	
South Carolina/Georgia	No specific input on fishing year for Atlantic Spanish mackerel.	
Florida	No specific input on fishing year for Atlantic Spanish mackerel.	

Sector Allocations for **Atlantic Spanish Mackerel**

Region	Input	Overall Takeaway
Mid-Atlantic	No specific input on sector allocations for Atlantic Spanish mackerel, the focus was on regional allocations (detailed below).	Sector allocations for Atlantic Spanish mackerel will be controversial, especially in a scenario where both sectors could experience catch restrictions, discussions during port meeting focused on regional allocations more than sector allocations.
North Carolina	Recommendation to consider revising the commercial and recreational allocation for Atlantic Spanish mackerel, prioritizing the American consumer.	
South Carolina/Georgia	No specific input on sector allocations for Atlantic Spanish mackerel.	
Florida	No specific input on sector allocations for Atlantic Spanish mackerel	

Commercial Zones for **Atlantic Spanish Mackerel**

Region	Input	Overall Takeaway
Mid-Atlantic	The Council could consider changes to the current break between the Northern Zone and Southern Zone (NC/SC state line) or even a new zone. Maybe a new break at Ocean City, Maryland or Cape May, New Jersey.	Mid-Atlantic and North Carolina port meeting attendees felt that the Council should have some discussion on commercial zones for Atlantic Spanish mackerel given the highly regional nature of the fishery.
North Carolina	<p>Recommendation to take a more regional approach to management, even more so than the current northern and southern zone system.</p> <p>King and Spanish mackerel management needs more regional consideration. Even in North Carolina there are three distinct regions with different fishing behaviors and priorities.</p>	
South Carolina/Georgia	No specific input on commercial zones for Atlantic Spanish mackerel.	
Florida	No specific input on commercial zones for Atlantic Spanish mackerel.	

Regional Commercial Allocations for Atlantic Spanish Mackerel

Region	Input	Overall Takeaway
Mid-Atlantic	<p>Addressing regional allocations is the most pressing management need. There should be a shift of quota to the Northern Zone, as landings have been increasing recently and will continue to increase. The years used for regional allocations are not reflective of the current fishery, and it is important to look and where and when fish are being caught now.</p> <p>In Maryland, there was a recommendation to consider multiple levels of allocation between the Northern and Southern Zones, such as some of the quota being allocated based on landings history and some being allocated using an even split.</p>	<p>Revising the current regional commercial allocations was a priority for states located in the Northern Zone, who have been experiencing early closures to their fishery. It was not discussed at length by the states in the Southern Zone.</p>
North Carolina	<p>There needs to be an increase in the commercial quota allocated to the northern zone for Atlantic Spanish mackerel. Every year for the past few years the Northern Zone has hit their commercial quota and increasing occurrences of Spanish mackerel and harvest up north is cutting an already small quota into smaller and smaller pieces.</p> <p>All Atlantic states are fishing on the same biomass, but Florida (the Southern Zone) receives a much larger allocation than North Carolina (the Northern Zone).</p> <p>The years used to set allocations between the Northern Zone and the Southern Zone were low landings years in the Northern Zone due to hurricanes.</p>	
South Carolina/Georgia	No specific input on regional commercial allocations for Atlantic Spanish mackerel.	
Florida	No specific input on regional commercial allocations for Atlantic Spanish mackerel.	

Recreational Bag Limit and Size Limit for **Atlantic Spanish Mackerel**

Region	Input	Overall Takeaway
Mid-Atlantic	<p>The current recreational limits for Atlantic Spanish mackerel on private recreational and for-hire trips are not often being met. Recreational fishermen are only keeping 10 Atlantic Spanish mackerel per vessel. There is often no reason to keep many fish, clients just want dinner or not even to keep fish because they are staying at a hotel.</p> <p>It is important for the recreational fishery not to experience any closures because the timing of the fishery can be volatile. 10-Atlantic Spanish mackerel per person is as low as the bag limit could go and sustain fishing businesses.</p> <p>No recommended changes to the size limit, if it was any higher there would be some days that fishermen wouldn't be able keep any Atlantic Spanish mackerel and releases often don't survive.</p>	<p>Along the entire coast it was noted that Atlantic Spanish mackerel were important for the for-hire industry. Fishermen would prefer a lower bag limit as opposed to a shorter season (within reason).</p>
North Carolina	<p>No changes needed to recreational management, though the 15-fish per person bag limit may be a little high. Fishermen could handle a 10-fish per person bag limit if absolutely necessary. The bag limit should not be decreased too much; it is important for the charter industry.</p> <p>Recommendations to remove the size limit for Atlantic Spanish mackerel and to increase the size limit for Spanish mackerel as smaller fish are often thrown back dead. Fishermen don't target smaller Atlantic Spanish mackerel but those that are caught are fragile.</p>	
South Carolina/Georgia	<p>Recommendation to keep Atlantic Spanish mackerel regulations the same. If a lower recreational bag limit is needed to avoid a shorter Atlantic Spanish mackerel season, it could be reduced to 10 per person or 30-45 fish per vessel.</p>	
Florida	<p>A lower recreational bag limit of Atlantic Spanish mackerel may need to be considered as recreational effort in the fishery increases.</p>	

Commercial Trip Limits for Atlantic Spanish Mackerel

Region	Input	Overall Takeaway
Mid-Atlantic	<p>By the time Atlantic Spanish mackerel get to Mid-Atlantic region, federal waters have already closed. Recommendation to consider lowering the commercial trip limit in order to extend the season. Suggestions ranged from a trip limit step down system to spread catch among states, lower overall trip limits, and switching to a weekly trip limit.</p> <p>The 500-pound by-catch limit in state waters is very important. It is needed for the fishery to remain open under federal closure.</p>	<p>In the Mid-Atlantic, fishermen would prefer a lower trip limit and more days to fish. However, in Florida there was disagreement on whether the trip limit should be raised, to allow fishermen to harvest more when they are able to get out on the water, or be lowered, to help stabilize the market.</p>
North Carolina	No specific input on commercial trip limits for Atlantic Spanish mackerel.	
South Carolina/Georgia	No specific input on commercial trip limits for Atlantic Spanish mackerel.	
Florida	<p>It is becoming challenging to get out on the water due to bad weather and space launches. In Cocoa, fishermen felt a higher trip limit would help commercial fishermen bring in a larger catch on the few days they are able to fish. Concern about inequities between the Atlantic Spanish mackerel gill net fishery (federal waters) and cast net fishery (state waters). Gill net fishermen are not able to benefit from the 500-pound bycatch limit like cast net fishermen and feel it could be removed.</p> <p>In Stuart and Lake Worth, the limit could be lowered. It might stabilize the fishery and still allow for sufficient harvest. Fish are worth more money when the trip limit is lower and a consistent price would be beneficial. The 500-pounds bycatch limit after a closure in federal waters for commercial Atlantic Spanish mackerel is absolutely critical. It is not enough to make a trip worthwhile, but it is important to keep this limit in place in the event federal waters close to harvest.</p>	

Limited Entry for the Commercial **Spanish Mackerel** Permit

Region	Input	Overall Takeaway
Mid-Atlantic	Limited entry for the commercial Spanish mackerel permit would not be ideal for fishermen in the Mid-Atlantic. Some fishermen are new to the fishery as the stock has shifted or gave up permits due to federal waters closures. Fishermen can't give up any components of their business and stay in business. Additionally, the current fleet is small, and people are not getting into the fishery. It is important to help younger fishermen.	Fishermen in the Mid-Atlantic and North Carolina region did not express interest in limited access for the Spanish mackerel permits whereas fishermen in Florida felt limited access was needed in the commercial Spanish mackerel fishery.
North Carolina	Limited entry for the commercial Atlantic Spanish mackerel permit won't impact the fishery because it primarily occurs in state waters and economics manages participation. Though an expensive fishery to enter, Atlantic Spanish mackerel is a steppingstone fishery because it is easy to get a permit when beginning.	
South Carolina/Georgia	No specific input on limited entry for the commercial Spanish mackerel permit.	
Florida	<p>Limited entry is needed for the commercial Spanish mackerel permit and/or an endorsement for the gill net component of the fishery (noted in Stuart). There are vessels fishing illegally (unpermitted) in federal waters. The open access commercial permit is a doorway for people to show up when fishing is good.</p> <p>The permit needs to be required in state and federal waters. There should be some eligibility requirement, such as income (from commercial fishing) or catch over multiple years. The Council could consider an apprentice system program could allow younger fishermen entry into the fishery.</p> <p>There are only three to five gillnet boats left, it is a very regulated fishery. Need state water boats (cast nets) to meet the same regulations.</p>	

Recreational Bag Limit and Size Limit for **Atlantic King Mackerel**

Region	Input	Overall Takeaway
Mid-Atlantic	The current recreational limits for Atlantic king mackerel are good.	The current recreational bag limit and size limit for Atlantic king mackerel are sufficient, but there may be room for some slight adjustments to both.
North Carolina	<p>The recreational size limit and bag limit of three-fish per person should remain status quo. The abundance of the species is high, so there is no need to lower bag limits. Some fishermen felt the bag limit could be raised to five-fish per person.</p> <p>Support for the current 24-inch fork length minimum size limit. But also, a recommendation for a decrease in the size limit for Atlantic king mackerel due to discards of smaller fish.</p>	
South Carolina/Georgia	Recommendation to keep Atlantic king mackerel and Spanish mackerel regulations the same.	
Florida	It wasn't thought that a decrease in the recreational bag limit was needed, currently, but a lower recreational bag limit of Atlantic king mackerel and Atlantic Spanish mackerel may need to be considered in the future as recreational effort in the fishery increases. Charter vessels would be okay with a two-fish per person bag limit.	

Commercial Trip Limits for Atlantic King Mackerel

Region	Input	Overall Takeaway
Mid-Atlantic	No specific input on commercial trip limits for Atlantic king mackerel.	Commercial trip limits for Atlantic king mackerel are satisfactory everywhere but Florida, where fishermen recommended keep limits status quo (but switching to a poundage limit) or simplifying the current system.
North Carolina	Recommendation to allow fishermen with a commercial king mackerel permit to get a snapper grouper 225-permit. Or allow a bycatch limit for snapper grouper species, similar to Flounder regulations in North Carolina.	
South Carolina/Georgia	Recommendation to keep Atlantic king mackerel regulations the same.	
Florida	<p>Atlantic king mackerel commercial trip limits should stay status quo but move back to a weight limit instead of a number of fish limit, with some leeway with weight. Fishermen need to be able to fish when the weather is good. The environment is the main driver of changes in landings and changing regulations won't help fishermen. The current 100-fish limit in the winter is very important from Sebastian and northward.</p> <p>There was some debate among fishermen regarding what was better for the commercial fishery, a per trip limit vs. daily limit with a higher poundage and whether a year-round trip limit would help to stabilize the market.</p> <p>There was concern expressed about the amount of king mackerel harvest from roller-rigs that operate in the Florida Keys (Gulf migratory group king mackerel).</p>	

Limited Entry for the Commercial **King Mackerel** Permit

Region	Input	Overall Takeaway
Mid-Atlantic	Atlantic King mackerel are not as common in Maryland, but fishermen would be interested in the removal of limited entry or an exception by area.	Fishermen in the Mid-Atlantic would like more access to commercial king mackerel permits as species distribution shifts, fishermen along the remainder of the coast felt that limited entry should remain and that latent permits did not need to be addressed.
North Carolina	The commercial king mackerel permit should remain limited entry.	
South Carolina/Georgia	<p>The commercial Atlantic king mackerel permit can be a challenge to purchase due to limited entry.</p> <p>If latent permits were removed, fishermen would target Atlantic king mackerel just to hold onto the permit. The Council could separate the Gulf and South Atlantic commercial king mackerel permit but would need to consider fishermen who travel between both areas.</p>	
Florida	<p>Fishermen felt that it was not necessary to pull latent permits as it ultimately would not achieve any goals of the fishery. It is important to help younger generations get into the fishery and to keep permit value.</p> <p>When asked how they felt about combining the commercial king mackerel and Spanish mackerel permits or alternatively splitting the permits by migratory group, fishermen were not immediately against the idea but did express concerns about possible permit speculation.</p> <p>Fishermen in Stuart thought the Council should consider a 2-for-1 system, whereas fishermen in Lake Worth did not feel it was necessary to put the permit under a two-for-one requirement as not all current permits are even fishing.</p>	

Sale Of Tournament Caught **Atlantic King** and **Atlantic Spanish** Mackerel

Region	Input	Overall Takeaway
Mid-Atlantic	No specific input on sale of tournament caught Atlantic king and Spanish mackerel.	<p>Opinions on the sale of Atlantic king mackerel caught during state-permitted tournaments were split between sectors. Commercial fishermen expressed concern about flooding of the market during tournaments (and pre-fishing), illegal behaviors, and poorly handled fish. Recreational fishermen discussed the importance of tournaments to communities both in terms of the sale of fish supporting local charities but in introducing community members to a family fishery.</p>
North Carolina	<p>There is concern about accounting for the sale of tournament caught Atlantic king mackerel, especially if allocations and quota become tight in the future. It is important to ensure that trip tickets accurately capture tournament catch.</p> <p>Some fishermen recommended stopping tournament sales of Atlantic king mackerel because it floods the market and drops the price (including during practice days), there is illegal sale of tournament caught fish with proceeds not going to state-approved charities, tournament caught fish are not handled according to HAACP guidelines (not iced, gutted, etc.), and they remove the large (and more fecund) Atlantic king mackerel.</p> <p>Alternatively, some fishermen expressed the importance of Atlantic king mackerel tournaments to local communities and charities: economy boost (fuel, food, hotels, boat builders), charities rely on tournament sales of donations, tournaments are how a lot of individuals get their start in the Atlantic king mackerel fishery.</p>	
South Carolina/Georgia	<p>Atlantic king mackerel fishing tournaments are important in South Carolina; examples include this Johns Island Yacht Club Fall Classic and the US Open. The economy is a big driver in tournament participation.</p> <p>Atlantic king mackerel tournaments in Georgia and in Florida are important to communities. Stakeholders value the competition in Atlantic king mackerel tournaments; they bring the community together. It is important to have fish at the dock for experience. However, the loss of tournament sales would not have a huge impact because fewer boats are participating.</p>	

	Though, charities need all the money they can get, including from the tournament sales.	
Florida	<p>Atlantic king mackerel tournaments are still a big part of recreational fishing in Florida. It is an easy and accessible fishery, and you can use small boats (large boats do not have an advantage). It is a family event for the community. Tournaments will land a range of sizes, both large and small (aggregate poundage awards). Loss of tournament sales would not negatively impact tournaments. Being able to donate to a charity is a plus but not a necessity for the tournament. However, tournament fish can serve as an important source of data for researchers.</p> <p>It is important to ensure that Atlantic king mackerel sold as a part of a state-permitted tournament are removed from the recreational annual catch limit.</p> <p>If tournament sales were removed, it would be important to ensure that fish are not wasted.</p>	

Private Recreational Permitting and Reporting for Atlantic King and Spanish Mackerel

Region	Input	Overall Takeaway
Mid-Atlantic	No specific input on private recreational permitting and reporting.	Fishermen in both North Carolina and Florida agreed that better information on private recreational fishing was needed to improve management. Permitting and reporting as well as a tag program for mackerel species were discussed.
North Carolina	There needs to be better recreational reporting requirements. MRIP does not provide sufficient or accurate landings information and should not be used for management. The recreational sector is only increasing in size and needs to be reporting for all species. This should be a top priority for the South Atlantic Council.	
	The commercial sector has all of their landings accounted for and the private recreational sector needs to report just like the commercial sector. Additionally, commercial fishermen have consequences for non-reporting. Some fishermen had concerns about issues with commercial permits occurring in the recreational fishery. All agreed that there needed to be a way for the younger generation to get into fisheries, both recreational and commercial.	
South Carolina/Georgia	No specific input on private recreational permitting and reporting.	
Florida	There needs to be better recreational reporting requirements. It is important for the South Atlantic Council to hold recreational fishermen accountable and get accurate data.	
	A tag system for recreational reporting could work for Atlantic king and Spanish mackerel if there is no support for private recreational permitting right now, as long as there were plenty of tags.	

Port Meetings Follow-Up Amendment Timeline Options

There are two options for development of management actions for Atlantic king and Spanish mackerel described below. The timelines presented represent the fastest possible development of management actions. The timeline may need to be extended for a variety of factors including controversial topics that need more discussion and staff availability for needed analysis and amendment development.

Committee Action: Provide guidance on development of an amendment(s) addressing CMP FMP goals and objectives, SEDAR 78, and input received during Mackerel Port Meetings.

Option A: Two Amendments

	CMP Framework Amendment 13: Atlantic Spanish Mackerel Catch Levels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimum Yield • Acceptable Biological Catch • Annual Catch Limit • Annual Catch Target • Accountability Measures 	CMP Amendment 38: Mackerel Port Meetings Response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CMP FMP Goals and Objectives • Other Port Meeting Actions
June 2025	Council directs staff to restart work on Framework Amendment 13.	South Atlantic Council directs staff to start work on an amendment.
August 2025		Port meetings presentation to Gulf Council (<i>if requested</i>).
September 2025	Council reviews and approves actions and alternatives to be analyzed.	
December 2025	Council reviews draft amendment, selects preferred alternatives, and approves for public hearings.	South Atlantic Council reviews actions and alternatives to be analyzed.
Winter 2026		Mackerel Cobia AP meets via webinar to discuss actions and alternatives.
March 2026	Council reviews the draft amendment, conducts public hearings, and approves for formal review.	South Atlantic Council approves actions and alternatives to be analyzed.
April 2026		Gulf Council approves actions and alternatives to be analyzed.
June 2026		South Atlantic Council reviews draft amendment.
September 2026		South Atlantic Council reviews draft amendment, selects preferred alternatives, and approves for public hearings.

Fall 2026		Mackerel Cobia AP meetings to discuss preferred alternatives.
October 2026	Catch levels and accountability measures implemented (?)	Gulf Council reviews draft amendment, selects preferred alternatives, and approves for public hearings.
Winter 2026/27		Public Hearings
March 2027		South Atlantic Council reviews the draft amendment and input from public hearings.
April 2027		Gulf Council reviews the draft amendment and input from public hearings.
June 2027		South Atlantic Council and Gulf Council approve for formal review.

Option B: One Amendment

	CMP Amendment 38: Mackerel Port Meetings Response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spanish Mackerel Catch Levels and Accountability Measures CMP FMP Goals and Objectives Other Port Meeting Actions
June 2025	South Atlantic Council directs staff to start work on an amendment.
August 2025	Port meetings presentation to Gulf Council (<i>if requested</i>).
September 2025	South Atlantic Council reviews actions and alternatives to be analyzed.
Fall 2025	Mackerel Cobia AP meets via webinar to discuss actions and alternatives.
December 2026	South Atlantic Council approves actions and alternatives to be analyzed.
January 2026	Gulf Council approves actions and alternatives to be analyzed.
March 2026	South Atlantic Council reviews draft amendment.
June 2026	South Atlantic Council reviews draft amendment, selects preferred alternatives, and approves for public hearings.
August 2026	Gulf Council reviews draft amendment, selects preferred alternatives, and approves for public hearings.
Fall 2026	Mackerel Cobia AP meetings to discuss preferred alternatives.
Winter 2026/27	Public Hearings
December 2027	South Atlantic Council reviews the draft amendment and input from public hearings.
January 2027	Gulf Council reviews the draft amendment and input from public hearings.
March 2027	South Atlantic Council and Gulf Council approve for formal review.