

FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT
FULL COUNCIL II
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
DECEMBER 2020

(MEETING HELD VIA WEBINAR)

The Council met via webinar on December 7, 2020.

ABC Control Rule Amendment

Council staff gave a presentation describing development of the Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) Control Rule Amendment, including actions and alternatives considered to this point. Amendment development was paused awaiting guidance from NMFS, which was issued in July 2020. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) also further discussed their recommendations on the amendment at their October 2020 meeting. Genny Nesslage, SSC Chair, presented the SSC's recommendations, including the formation of an SSC Work Group to investigate current literature on Only Reliable Catch Stocks (ORCS) and adjust application of the ABC control rule to ORCS as appropriate through this amendment.

The Council asked about whether development of this amendment has been with consultation of other Councils to help align language and application principles, where possible. Control rules from other regions were referenced and parts were considered during development of the amendment, but there has not been direct interaction with other Councils or SSCs. The Council directed staff to coordinate with other Councils as the amendment is further developed. The Council also supported the formation of the ORCS Working Group to further develop that aspect of the ABC control rule. The Council did note that the amendment's timeline may need to be adjusted to account for the Working Group's needs. The Council discussed problematic mixing of scientific uncertainty assessment with the Council's management risk decisions and directed further consideration of how these processes could be separated within the ABC control rule. The SSC agrees with this approach, and a potential method used by the Caribbean Council (detailed in Ralston et al.) was suggested.

Draft Amendment 14 to the HMS FMP

Guy` DuBeck, NOAA Fisheries Highly Migratory Species Management Division staff, delivered a presentation to the Council on Draft Amendment 14 to the 2006 Consolidated Highly Migratory (HMS) Species Fishery Management Plan (FMP). The amendment will create a new framework for the establishment of ABCs and annual catch limits (ACLs) for Atlantic shark fisheries, consistent with the National Standard 1 guidelines. Specifically, the preferred management options in Amendment 14 for Atlantic sharks will create a tiered ABC control rule, allow consideration of phase-in ABC control rules, actively manage all sector ACLs, establish an ACL for each Atlantic shark management group without commercial ACL quota linkages, allow carry-over for underharvest of commercial quotas, and compare a three-year average of fishing mortality estimates to the overfishing limit to determine overfishing status. The Council provided feedback on the amendment in addition to expressing ongoing concerns over the effects that increased shark predation is having on Council-managed fisheries.

Timing and Tasks:

MOTION: DIRECT STAFF TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Prepare ABC Control Rule Amendment options language for the Council to consider during the March 2021 meeting.
- Coordinate the ORCS Working Group to develop recommendations for consideration in the ABC Control Rule Amendment.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL