

MEETING REPORT

Mackerel Advisory Panel

April 22, 2013
North Charleston, SC

The King Mackerel and Spanish Mackerel Advisory Panel (AP) will met to discuss (A) Coastal Migratory Pelagics (CMP) Joint Amendment 19, (B) CMP Joint Amendment 20, and (C) the South Atlantic CMP Framework Action. The AP reviewed each amendment and provided recommendations for the Council to consider at their June 2013 meeting.

Advisory Panel Members

Robert Pelosi, AP Chair- *FL/Recreational*
Zack Bowen- *GA/Charter*
Dick Brame- *NC/Recreational/NGO Seat*
Jodie Gay- *NC/Commercial*
Bill Hickman- *NC/Commercial*
Andy High- *NC/Commercial*
Edward Holder- *SC/Recreational*
Bill Kelly- *FL/Commercial*
Tom Ogle- *SC/Recreational*
Stephen Swann- *FL/Recreational*
Bill Wickers- *FL/Charter*

David Cupka, Council Chair
Ben Hartig, Mackerel Committee Chair
Anna Beckwith

Council Staff

Kari MacLauchlin
Bob Mahood
Julie O'Dell
Gregg Waugh

General Public

Rusty Hudson

AP Members not in attendance

Ronnie Houck, Jr., AP Vice-Chair-
FL/Commercial
Tim Adams- *FL/Commercial*
Charles Amory- *Mid-Atlantic Liaison*
Richard Diaz- *FL/Commercial*
John Stewart- *GA/*

Council Members

Joint Gulf/South Atlantic Amendment 19

Action 1- bag limit sales of king mackerel and Spanish mackerel

There was a range of opinions among AP members in regard to bag limit sales. After consideration of support for each alternative, the majority supported the rationale that the stock is not overfished and no overfishing is occurring, and there could be a way to track recreational sales through modifications in reporting. The AP passed the following motion:

MOTION: Support Alternative 1 (No Action) as the Preferred.

Approved by AP (6 in favor, 3 opposed).

Action 2- eliminate inactive king mackerel commercial permits

During discussion of Action 2, the general sentiment was that the king mackerel stock can support any latent effort if the permits became active, and that there is not sufficient reason to eliminate or restrict any king mackerel permits.

MOTION: Support Alternative 1 (No Action) as the Preferred.

Approved by AP (8 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 abstention).

Action 3- income requirements for commercial king mackerel and Spanish mackerel permits

Several AP members noted that commercial fishermen may take opportunities to work in other industries for a few years, such as construction/home repair after a hurricane. Additionally the current system that only requires an affidavit when applying or renewing a permit is not effective in ensuring only commercial fishermen can obtain and keep a king mackerel or Spanish mackerel commercial permit.

MOTION: Support Alternative 3 as the Preferred.

Approved by AP (8 in favor, 2 opposed).

Gulf Preferred Alternative 3 2: Eliminate income requirements for commercial king and Spanish mackerel permits.

NOTE: This alternative has been changed to Alternative 2 in the current version of the amendment.

Joint Gulf/South Atlantic Amendment 20

Action 1- zones and boundaries for Gulf group king mackerel

The AP did not review this action because the Gulf Council voted to remove the action from the amendment.

Action 2- Gulf group king mackerel commercial hook and line trip limits

AP members felt that the South Atlantic should track Gulf decisions for Action 2 because the changes would affect Gulf fishermen.

MOTION: Support the Gulf's recommendation.

Approved by AP (9 in favor, 1 abstention)

Alternative 5: Set the commercial hook-and-line trip limit at 3,000 pounds with no reduction.

Option a: For the Western zone

Option c: For the Eastern Zone Southern Subzone

Alternative 6: Set the commercial hook-and-line trip limit at 1,250 with no reduction.

Option b. For the Eastern Zone Northern Subzone

Action 3- Gulf king mackerel fishing season

The AP felt that changing the fishing season would negatively affect market dynamics in the current system and it was mentioned that many fishermen do not support a change in the season dates.

MOTION: Support Alternative 1 (No Action).

Approved by AP. (8 opposed, 2 abstentions)

Action 4- transit provision through king mackerel closed areas

The AP supported the rationale that transit provisions would reduce costs of having to land in open areas only and improve safety if a vessel needed to go to shore quickly.

MOTION: Support Alternative 5 as the Preferred.

Approved by AP. (9 in favor, 1 abstention)

Gulf Preferred Alternative 5: 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.

Action 5- North Carolina allocation of commercial king mackerel and Spanish mackerel ACLs

The AP first discussed if they supported consideration of allocations to North Carolina. The two members opposed felt that this could be unfair to Florida, but the majority supported further consideration of this action.

MOTION: Support NC having king mackerel and Spanish mackerel ACLs, and recommend the other states set up state quotas if they desire and have the ability.

Approved by AP. (7 in favor, 2 opposed, 2 abstention)

AP members in favor of Option d felt that the longest period should be used to determine allocation because it would capture highs and lows in landings.

MOTION: Under Alternative 2 and 3, recommend Option d as the Preferred.

Approved by AP. (5 in favor, 4 opposed, 2 abstention)

Alternative 2: Establish a separate commercial quota of Atlantic group king mackerel for North Carolina based on:

Option d- the average of the proportion of landings in North Carolina from 1997-98 through 2011-12. (37.2% to North Carolina)

Alternative 3: Establish a separate commercial quota of Atlantic group Spanish mackerel for North Carolina based on:

Option d- the average of the proportion of landings in North Carolina from 1997-98 through 2011-12. (18.2% to North Carolina)

MOTION: Recommend the Council approve Alternative 4.

Approved by AP. (All in favor)

Alternative 4: Allow for transfer of quota between the General Atlantic Group king mackerel and Spanish mackerel ACLs and the North Carolina king mackerel and Spanish mackerel ACLs.

Action 6- Framework procedure

MOTION: Support Alternative 4 as the Preferred.

Approved by AP. (All in favor)

South Atlantic Preferred /Gulf 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.

MOTION: Recommend approval of Alternative 2 as the Preferred.

Approved by AP. (All in favor)

South Atlantic Preferred /Gulf Preferred Alternative 2: Modify the framework procedure to include changes to ABCs, ABC/ACL control rules and, accountability measures (AMs) under the standard documentation process for open framework actions.

MOTION: Support Alternative 5 as a Preferred.

South Atlantic Preferred /Gulf Preferred Alternative 5. Make editorial changes to the framework procedure to reflect changes to the Council advisory committees and panels.

Approved by AP. (8 in favor, 2 opposed, 1 abstention)

Action 7- cobia ACL

For the cobia ACL/ACT action, the AP reviewed the outcomes of the stock assessment for cobia (SEDAR 28) and the recommendations for the ABC for Atlantic group cobia provided by the SSC at their meeting in April 9-11, 2013.

AP members felt that the ACL should be set to the highest level possible under the ABC.

MOTION: Set cobia ACL= ABC.

Approved by AP. (All in favor)

AP members felt the longest time period available should be used when considering the allocation of a portion of the Gulf ACL to the Florida East Coast so that the long-term dynamics of the stock could be captured.

MOTION: Recommend using the longest time period of landings available to allocate part of the Gulf Cobia ACL to the Florida East Coast.

Approved by AP. (All in favor)

South Atlantic CMP Framework Action

The AP discussed impacts on the stock by allowing harvest of fish that had not spawned and the marketability of smaller fish. Members felt that the current minimum size limit should not be changed.

Action 1- minimum size limit Atlantic group king mackerel

MOTION: Support Alternative 1 (No Action).

Approved by AP. (All in favor)

Action 2- allow transfer at sea in the Spanish mackerel gillnet fishery

The AP discussed alternatives such as raising the trip limit or allowing an overage to be removed from a vessel's subsequent trip limit, but the majority decided felt there was a risk of vessels taking advantage of the provision.

MOTION: Support Alternative 1 (No Action) as the Preferred.

Approved by AP. (6 in favor, 2 opposed, 3 abstentions)

Action 3- king mackerel commercial trip limit in East Coast FL subzone

The AP supported Alternative 4 because it was developed by and supported by fishermen in the Florida East Coast subzone.

MOTION: Recommend Alternative 4 as the Preferred.

Approved by AP. (All in favor)

Alternative 4. In the Florida East Coast Subzone, king mackerel in or from the EEZ may be possessed on board at any time or landed in a day from a vessel with a commercial permit for king mackerel as follows:

(A) From November 1 through the end of February--not to exceed 50 fish.

(B) Beginning on March 1 and continuing through March 31--

(1) If 70 percent or more of the [Gulf group] Florida east coast subzone quota has been taken-- not to exceed 50 fish.

(2) If less than 70 percent of the [Gulf group] Florida east coast subzone quota has been taken --not to exceed 75 fish.

The AP supported removing Alternative 5 because the proposed trip limits were low.

MOTION: Recommend that Alternative 5 be stricken and not considered.

Approved by AP. (All in favor)

Action 4- Atlantic group Spanish mackerel commercial quota and trip limit system

The AP supported removal of the unlimited trip limit provision and continuing the adjusted ACL provision.

MOTION: Support Alternative 3 as the Preferred.

Approved by AP. (All in favor)

Alternative 3. Retain the adjusted commercial ACL but remove the period of unlimited trips for the southern zone that starts December 1 each year. The southern zone trip limit would start at 3,500 pounds on March 1 of each year. When 75% of the adjusted commercial ACL has been landed or projected to be landed the trip limit would be reduced to 1,500 pounds. When 100% of the adjusted commercial ACL is reached, the trip limit is reduced to 500 pounds until the end of the fishing year or until the commercial ACL is met or projected to be met. Close commercial harvest of Atlantic migratory group Spanish mackerel when the commercial ACL is met or projected to be met.

At the June 2013 meeting, the Council may add an additional action to adjust the Atlantic Group Spanish mackerel ACL. The Mackerel AP reviewed a summary of the assessment results but the

projections and ABC recommendations were not available. The AP requested that staff notify AP members about the ABC recommendations when they are available.