

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

MACKEREL COMMITTEE

**The Beach House Hilton Head Island
Hilton Head Island, South Carolina**

September 15, 2015

SUMMARY MINUTES

Committee Members:

Ben Hartig, Chair
Mel Bell
Mark Brown
Dr. Roy Crabtree
Doug Haymans
Charlie Phillips

Anna Beckwith
Zack Bowen
Jack Cox
Dr. Michelle Duval
Jessica McCawley
Toni DiLernia

Council Members:

Chester Brewer
LTJG Pray

Chris Conklin

Council Staff:

Bob Mahood
Kim Iverson
Roger Pugliese
Dr. mike Errigo
Chip Collier
John Carmichael
Julie O'Dell

Gregg Waugh
Amber Von Harten
Myra Brouwer
Dr. Kari MacLauchlin
Dr. Brian Chevront
Mike Collins

Participants/Observers:

Dr. Jack McGovern
Rick DeVictor
Roy Williams
Dr. Bonnie Ponwith
Dr. Marcel Reichert
Dr. Nick Farmer

Nik Mehta
Monica Smit-Brunello
Dr. George Sedberry
Dr. Luiz Barbieri
Erika Burgess
Sean Meehan

Other Observers Attached

The Mackerel Committee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened in the ballroom of The Beach House Hilton Head Island, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, September 15, 2015, and was called to order at 1:15 o'clock p.m. by Chairman Ben Hartig.

MR. HARTIG: We're going to go ahead and get started with the Mackerel Committee. The first item of business is approval of the agenda. Are there any changes to the agenda? Seeing none; the agenda is approved. The next item of business is approval of the June 2015 minutes. Are there any changes or corrections to the minutes? Seeing none; the minutes are approved. That brings us to status of commercial catches versus ACLs behind Attachment 1; and that is Jack McGovern.

DR. McGOVERN: This is Tab 8, Attachment 1; and these are landings that were put together by Sue Gerhart in our office and Dr. Ponwith's staff. They are set up the way they have been in previous reports. They show cumulative landings from the 2010 fishing year through the 2014 fishing year; and then for 2015 they are shown monthly and they are cumulative landings.

They are shown for the north and south zones, which were established in 20B. This year for the north zone we are at 2 percent of the ACL; for the south zone, 26 percent. If you look at the total, they are a little bit less than they were last year at this time. These are landings through September 2nd.

Moving down to Spanish, it is set up the same way. For the northern zone at 56 percent of the ACL; for the southern zone about 8 percent; and looking at the total it is less than it was at this time last year. The last one is cobia. Cobia had, through 20B, also established an Atlantic group. That is part of – the east coast zone, rather, that is part of the Gulf Migratory Group and then an Atlantic group that is north of Florida. The Atlantic group, its ACL is at about 38 percent of the quota. The east coast zone is at about 69 percent. Then Sue added those two zones together just so you could compare it to where it is last year; and the landings are a bit less than they were at this time last year.

MR. HARTIG: Any questions about the landings? Next we have Nick Farmer giving the recreational landings' report.

DR. MacLAUHLIN: An updated version of this was sent out to you yesterday.

DR. FARMER: Yes; so we need to thank our partners down at the Southeast Fisheries Science Center. They pressed really hard to get those Wave 3 estimates to us in time for this meeting so that we could see the latest and greatest landings. They are certainly understaffed in that branch, and so we appreciate them getting that done. Dr. Michael Larkin assembled this presentation for us, so I'll take you guys through it. These landings are summarized using either MRIP data or back-calculated MRFSS data, depending on the species.

Spanish mackerel and cobia are in MRIP units and then king mackerel is in MRFSS units. It will be converted over to MRIP once you guys finish off CMP 26. The 2015 estimates are preliminary; they include headboat landings. We're receiving headboat information from the Science Center now on a wave basis instead of at the end of the year, which is awesome.

It has really helped us keep track of the recreational landings; and hopefully that will help us once the Generic AM Amendment kicks into place and we have a bit more emphasis on in-season closures. Looking at the 2013/14 landings and ACLs, you can see that none of the stocks exceeded their ACL, although we did have over a million pounds of landings with each.

It came pretty close to the ACL with everything except for king mackerel. The 2014/2015 preliminary landings, we exceeded the cobia stock ACL from New York to Georgia. Those are broken out now in a New York to Georgia group and then an east Florida group. I took some notes on those cobia landings, because I figured there might be some questions; so we're at 155 percent of the ACL.

The Wave 1 estimate was zero; Wave 2, we had 47,000 pounds and that PSE was 88 percent. Then Wave 3 was the kicker; we got 927,081 pounds with a PSE of about 40 percent. That was where that overage occurred with an ACL of just 630,000 pounds. With king mackerel, we're still pretty low relative to the ACL, only 19 percent; and with Spanish we're at 32 percent.

Keep in mind those are Wave 3 landings, so that is from January through July 1st is the information we have so far. Breaking down the landings in a bit more detail, this table provides you the charter/headboat, private, and shore-based landings and the totals for the different fishing years for the South Atlantic king mackerel; so you can see the trends through time.

Keep in mind the king mackerel management unit goes from east Florida all the way up to New York, and you've got a fishing year of March 1 through February 28. You can see a substantial decline in landings through time recreationally. Here is the South Atlantic king mackerel information presented in a visual way. Private mode is in green, charterboat is in the light blue, and then that smaller red bar that moves through there is headboat; and then you've got a little bit of shore-based landings in some of the years.

The ACLs are the black dots up on the right. Then the lines correspond to MRIP effort in red; so you can see a slight decline in that through time; and then headboat effort, which seems to be picking up in recent years. This is a similar table for South Atlantic Spanish mackerel. You can see a slight decline since the 2008/09 time period, but kind of in line with what we had seen prior to those two peak years. Then 2014/15 keep in mind those landings are preliminary.

Then that information is presented in graphical form here so you can see quite a bit more shore-based landings for Spanish mackerel than for king. The bulk of the landings are still private mode with substantially less charter-mode-based landings. The MRIP effort trend is basically identical; and you can see the headboat effort trend moving up slightly in the last few years. That concludes my presentation; do you have any questions?

DR. DUVAL: I'm sure you're not surprised I'm going to ask a question about cobia, actually. I was wondering do you know, since that goes all the way from Georgia through New York, what the geographic distribution of the recreational harvest might have been. I'm just curious how much was like sort of Georgia to North Carolina versus Mid-Atlantic through to New York.

DR. FARMER: I don't know that offhand, but we can look that up and I can e-mail that out. We will pull it straight off the MRIP website.

MR. DiLERNIA: If you could put that cobia table back up there; New York to Georgia you have the ACL of 155 percent. I have a couple of questions. First can you tell me what was the performance of this fishery in 2012/13 at this same time of the year, the same time period?

DR. FARMER: That would have to be something I would have to look up. This is the first time we've broken out cobia is for this year into the different state aggregates, so I would have to look that up and assemble it for you guys, which would be fine. I can get that to you.

MR. DiLERNIA: My second question is this is an MRIP estimate; is that correct?

DR. FARMER: For cobia, yes, it is an MRIP estimate.

MR. DiLERNIA: Can you tell me the number of intercepts that this value was derived from?

DR. FARMER: No; that would require a request from us to the NMFS Office of Science and Technology and we would get an answer back from them and could provide it to you, but that would take a while. I wouldn't be able to probably get that answer at this meeting.

MR. DiLERNIA: The reason, Mr. Chairman, I asked those two questions is because we have in the Mid-Atlantic in the past seen say for the case of black sea bass six intercepts extrapolated into the value of hundreds of thousands of pounds of black sea bass. When we see such a low number of intercepts extrapolated to that point, we become curious as to what the actual values are.

DR. PONWITH: I appreciate that observation and it is one that has not escaped the other council members; and in fact in the June meeting a presentation was given to the council discussing the impact of rare species or rare-event catches and their influence on expansion factors in MRIP. It is something that the MRIP is looking at right now in response to that request from the council.

DR. FARMER: Then just to follow up; I don't know the number of intercepts offhand, but the PSE is around 40 percent for the large estimate which is the Wave 3 landings that resulted in the overage, which compared to the prior two waves is a relatively low PSE; but certainly isn't quite what you would desire. I would imagine that it is based on more than probably six intercepts to get the PSE at least that low; but we can look into that if you're interested, and we would probably get an answer back in a week or two.

MR. DiLERNIA: Yes, I'm curious as to the performance of the fishery. I've mentioned to some council members on the side that anecdotally we're seeing more cobia as far north as New York; and so there is a general trend with many southern species moving north. As to why that ACL in that short period of time – I mean, June 30, at that point they may just be arriving in New Jersey waters. There is a lot of beach between New Jersey and Montauk where fish are caught. I'm just a big curious as to what that actual value is. I'm not so sure that is the true value.

MR. BELL: Something interesting is we've been paying close attention to cobia because of state issues and all; but we were looking at our own charterboat data going back a good ways, but it is interesting. Our charterboat landings were always heavy in the state waters and inshore waters where we have that DPS inside.

In about 2008 they crisscrossed and the offshore fishery has been doing like this and the inshore fishery is doing like that. We're seeing a lot of cobia and our cobia landings this year from the charterboat reports are higher. Data through July was higher for the entire previous year; and that was just through July. There is a lot of cobia out there and a lot of cobia being caught right now at least off South Carolina in federal waters. It is an interesting trend.

MR. HARTIG: Any other questions of Nick? Just one observation, you mentioned that king mackerel was continuing at a low level for the recreational fishery; but it is showing an uptick, which does kind of show this new year class that has entered the fishery. I am surprised the commercial numbers didn't, because we've had king mackerel the whole season in Florida. There are not a lot of us fishing, but we've been participating in a higher level than we have in the past; so I was surprised of that.

MR. BROWN: Nick, is there a payback on the cobia? What are the consequences for going over the ACL?

DR. MacLAUCHLIN: There is no in-season closure and then the payback is based on the moving average if it is overfished and the total ACL is exceeded. There is one and I don't know if it would apply this year.

MR. BOWEN: But that is for both stocks combined; just to have that on record.

DR. MacLAUCHLIN: Yes; it would be the total ACL would have to be exceeded for the recreational sector to have a payback.

MR. HARTIG: All right, any other questions of Nick? Thank you very much. The next presentation is going to be given by Nick Mehta.

MR. MEHTA: Mackerel Framework Amendment 2; this amendment modified the system of trip limits for Spanish mackerel in the southern zone, which is South Carolina, Georgia, and eastern Florida. The final rule published on July 14, 2015, and the regulations were effective on August 13, 2015.

MR. HARTIG: All right, any other questions of Nick? I'm glad you got out of the office to give us that long report, Nick. (Laughter)

MR. MEHTA: I'll be back for snapper grouper, don't worry.

MR. HARTIG: That brings us to the Gulf Council Meeting Report. Those are behind Attachments 3A and 3B; an overview by Kari and Anna.

DR. MacLAUCHLIN: Attachment 3A is the Gulf Committee Report and not a lot to report. They reviewed Amendment 26, the actions and alternatives, and they added some alternatives for their Action 7 that you guys will also approve to put in there. Then they reviewed an options paper for Amendment 28 that we included in your briefing materials as Attachment 3B just as a reference.

That is the amendment that right now the South Atlantic Council has not approved moving forward on but the Gulf Council had directed staff to put together an options paper. They reviewed that; and then if Anna wants to add anything else.

MS. BECKWITH: And if you guys remember, this Amendment 28 paper we had chosen to not move forward with this, this would be the splitting of the permits. While they had a pretty good discussion about what they were looking to do and how much they flushed out their part of the paper; Ben had sort of suggested that I mention to them that we would be more likely to consider this again if we had some indication of what their preferreds might be.

Then we would be able to shop that around to our fishermen and see how they felt about it. Their response that with advice from their General Counsel was that there was not enough analysis to be able to pick any preferreds. That analysis cannot occur until we sort of decide if we were going to move forward, and we are sort of not necessarily planning on moving forward unless we knew what their decisions might be. We are caught in this roundabout where we'll just have to decide if we want to move forward with it or not without any indication of what direction they would be considering.

MR. HARTIG: Thanks. Anna, I appreciate that. One thing I was wondering, yes, on 26 when it went through, since they didn't address their actions and chose preferreds in 26; we just leave those as is, right? We're not going to really comment on what they want to do without their preferreds, correct?

DR. MacLAUHLIN: Okay.

MR. HARTIG: No; I think we're not going to delve into what they want to do until at least they've shown us where they're going. I think 28 we're not going to really discuss today any more, but I think we ought to take it out to the AP and let them mull it over the next time the AP meets and maybe even have a meeting down south and let the fishermen look at it and see what our fishermen have to say about it, anyway. Any other questions about the Gulf Council meeting? Seeing none; we'll move right into CMP Amendment 26. That is Attachments 4A and 4B.

DR. MacLAUHLIN: Okay, we're going to walk through this with Attachment 4B. You received a revised Attachment 4B yesterday. There was an error in one of the tables and it was a small difference but it required some recalculation. The one that you received yesterday has the updated tables in there.

What the IPT is looking for is we're going to go through this. We don't have the very detailed analysis of the alternatives that are in there. At this time we just finished our first round of the IPT of the more qualitative analyses to put into the effect sections of the document so that it can go to the Gulf Council at their October meeting. We have enough time to get that ready for them, because they are going to approve that for public hearing at their October meeting.

What we are looking for here is we're going through the actions and alternatives – this may be quick for some or all of the actions; but to make sure that everything that you want analyzed is in there, and anything that you are not interested in you can remove. This is going to be a complex

analysis for all the South Atlantic actions just because of the way our ABC and ACL actions are set up.

We want to be sure, once we really start getting into that complex analysis, that it is everything that you guys want in there and we get rid of anything that you think you may not be interested in. This one has eight actions in here. This is all based on the results of the last stock assessment, so we're updating the ABCs and ACLs for Gulf and Atlantic king mackerel.

Then we also have an action to modify the stock boundary based on the approach that was used in the stock assessment. We have an action for an incidental catch allowance of king mackerel for the shark gillnet fishery and then an action from the Florida East Coast Subzone. With modifying the stock boundary, we need to kind of create a new Florida East Coast Subzone and some management measures to go there.

Then we have several Gulf actions to review. We are reviewing this and then in October the Gulf will review and approve for public hearings. You guys will review and approve for public hearings in December; and if that goes well, then we will be doing our public hearings in January and February.

I think that is when the Gulf is also planning to do their public hearings is after the New Year, and then in March the council will review and take final action and in April the Gulf will review and take final action; and then we'll submit that in April or May. That is the tentative plan for now. You approved a purpose and need in June 2015; and if there are no changes for that, then we'll continue.

The first action adjusts the management boundary for Gulf and Atlantic king mackerel. We have the maps in here, Alternative 1, no action. This would keep the shifting boundary and everything for the king mackerel. Alternative 2 establishes the year-round boundary at the Gulf and South Atlantic boundary; so this would give the South Atlantic Council jurisdiction over – they would be responsible for management in the mixing zone, which is the small area in the Keys.

Alternative 3 would establish a year-round boundary at the Miami-Dade/Monroe County Line, and then the Gulf Council would be responsible for the management measures in the mixing zone and all of the Keys. You can see that in Figure 3. All we have here is if you would like to add or remove any alternatives or select a preferred alternative.

MR. HARTIG: Given the level of analysis we have, how appropriate is it to select a preferred? That was what I was getting at. I know there was some discussion at the Gulf meeting about not choosing preferreds because there wasn't any analysis. Do you have any input on that, Roy or Monica?

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I guess we could have a discussion of the analyses in the document at this time; and if you feel comfortable that you have enough to select a preferred. If you don't feel you have enough, then I would urge you not to; and you have more than what I believe you did before, but we could still discuss that. That would be a good discussion on the record, actually.

MR. HARTIG: Yes; and we've got the input from the APs as well about this. The alternatives are fine as they are. We don't need to, I don't think, remove any of them. There are only three of them. As far as preferred goes, both APs suggested Alternative 3; but what is your pleasure?

MR. BOWEN: Do we have reasoning behind the Gulf and the Atlantic APs picking Alternative 3?

DR. MacLAUCHLIN: Well, our Mackerel AP, Alternative 3 would give the Gulf Council all of the Florida Keys; and in some ways this would be good, because then they wouldn't be shifting. Alternative 2 could possibly have different management measures in the Atlantic side and the Gulf side of the Florida Keys.

This way it is all the same all the way from the Miami-Dade/Monroe County Line. There were a few AP members who expressed concern about the Gulf being responsible for the management measures all the way through the Keys; but in general everyone was a little more on board with it just because it would be more consistent for the folks in the Keys.

MR. HARTIG: The main reason, Zack, that I supported this particular alternative was that there is a gillnet fishery that occurs in the Keys. Some of those catches probably occur in our jurisdiction at different times. A net fishery is not allowable gear in the South Atlantic for king mackerel, so you would be impacting those trips based on their inability to fish in that area.

What it does is, yes, that was our jurisdiction during a certain time of the year in previous management. Now we're drawing it at the Dade/Monroe County Line just like we have for Spanish to allow the Gulf to manage that stock. That was the main reason, basically, was unforeseen possible difficulties in the gillnet fishery based on us handling management in that area; and like Kari said, more management in one small particular area based on two councils at different times of the year.

MR. BELL: I would think kind of addressing that last point would make 3 a little more appealing from an enforceability standpoint and that is important, I think. If it is confusing for fishermen, it is confusing for everybody, including enforcement. That would probably be easier to enforce, Alternative 3.

MR. BOWEN: Well, in light of the information that has just been told, I would move to make a motion that Action 1, Alternative 3, be our preferred; if the timing for that is now.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: In taking a closer look through not the decision document but the actual amendment, you've still got large gaps. Actually there is no analysis in there for like in Section 4 for the description of the physical and biological environment, the economic environment, social environment, administrative environment. That still needs to be filled in. I'm not quite sure other than what the AP has decided what additional analyses you have before you now. My advice would be not to pick a preferred or you could do what I used to say was pick a preliminary preferred but that means that you need more analyses before you pick your final preferred.

MR. BOWEN: Well, in light of the newest testimony, I withdraw my motion.

MR. HARTIG: That is why I asked Monica before; but in fairness to her she was able to go back and look and find out we didn't have enough analysis to do that; so thank you, I appreciate that. If you're all right with the alternatives and we're not going to have a preferred at this time, we'll move on to the next action.

DR. MacLAUCHLIN: The next action, Action 2, deals with the reference points, the ACL, the ACT, and this is broken up into two sub-actions; 2-1 and 2-2. The first part you approved the language for the MSY, MSST, MFMT, OFL. You already approved that language; it just goes right in there.

Then on to Action 2-1, the SSC gave you levels of the ABC based on a high, medium and low recruitment scenarios; so you have some flexibility in setting the ABC. In Action 2-2 we get into the ACL and how that goes; but this is just the ABC levels. The South Atlantic AP recommended setting them under the high recruitment scenario.

Then also when we did scoping, we heard about that there were lots of small fish. There has not been a major weather event that could affect recruitment, and so the fishermen recommended setting it under the high recruitment scenario because of the recent conditions. There are several tables that kind of outline how this would look and how the ABC would be set. Then you can add/remove any alternatives or select a preferred alternative.

MR. HARTIG: One of the things on Page 26, it is one of our last actions, it does give you some information on what the landings are. I mean basically you have been given information on landings over this past period of time based on the Atlantic stock. Now the stock has been combined.

That portion of the Gulf has been added into the Atlantic, so you've got about a million pounds of commercial and however much recreational added back into that stock. The catch levels are going to go up based on that, considering just Atlantic, but you've included that Gulf – the wintertime fishery.

Both the Atlantic and the recreational landings are going to be included in the landings now. That is one of the reasons why the numbers that were selected by the AP; they looked at the possibilities of being shut down in different scenarios. That is also under Page 26; you can see that as well. It is a little bit hard to get your head wrapped around when you talk about selecting a recruitment based on the high recruitment scenario when you're seeing landings so low; but you have to remember that those landings aren't representative of the landings that are going to be occurring in the Atlantic stock in the future in the southern zone. Is that confusing enough for you?

DR. MacLAUCHLIN: I have one more thing to add to make it more complicated. What you select in Action 2-1 is the ABC. That can be different from what you select in 2-2, because the SSC also gave you a recommendation for kind of a constant catch at this equilibrium yield; that as long as it is lower than the ABC, then it is okay. This maybe will not affect what you end up selecting for your ACL, any way. It is not a situation where it is just ACL is set at ABC or with a buffer; just so everybody remembers that. It was kind of a unique situation with the recommendations.

MR. HARTIG: Yes; I would agree with that. It took me a long time to get my head wrapped around the difference between how the SSC – I mean their charge is to give us the ABC level; and then they actually went farther in this case and they gave us an ACL level that we could consider as well.

MR. BROWN: This kind of falls in line with like the picture I sent you in talking about those smaller fish that we've been seeing a lot of over the last few years.

MR. HARTIG: Your information helps a lot, because those small fish are being caught in your area and in south Florida at the same time. That means it is a pretty good spread of fish. How much farther north, I don't know what is going on in North Carolina as far as small fish are going yet, but it is a great sign to see that it is a region-wide recruitment of that. That is critical.

MR. BROWN: Do we want to go ahead and make a motion to pick this alternative?

MR. HARTIG: Well, I would defer to Monica if she thinks we have enough information to choose it.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Well, again your information is really lacking. The analyses you have before you in the document aren't there. Now, you've had additional discussion on the record here if you want to call it a preliminary preferred or if you really feel the need to pick one; but just be advised that when all the analyses come before you, you've got to review all that again and see if it makes sense, see if your decision on your preferred makes sense with the analyses you have before you.

MR. HARTIG: I think based on your recommendations; let's not choose any preferreds today. Let's just go through this. We'll have more time to look at this again. You will be able to digest it a little better between now and the next meeting. It does take some time to wrap your head around some of this; I understand that completely.

MR. BOWEN: Two questions. The first question is down south where you are fishing on these mackerels, are you seeing this recruitment? You said the same time of the year, I'm assuming that is late fall, early winter; because that is when we're seeing them; don't you agree, Mark?

MR. BROWN: Yes, absolutely.

MR. HARTIG: Yes, but Mark was also seeing them in the middle of the summer, the same time we were seeing them.

MR. BOWEN: You're seeing yours in the summer?

MR. HARTIG: Yes, our smaller fish. They are just big enough now to enter the spawning cycle; so they showed up and spawned in July and August and a lot of fish with hydrated eggs as well at that size. Then additionally there is another group of fish that is even smaller than that. It looks like there are two year classes of fish in that population that are entering the fishery.

It is early. They are just now entering the fishery. The almost a million pounds that were caught this winter were almost all five-pound fish. That gives you an indication of how many fish in that wintertime fishery were contributing that size class to the landings.

MR. BOWEN: That is the fish that I saw this past winter as well. My second question, if you'll allow me, is we're not picking preferreds, but do you think we're at a point where we can take out some of these alternatives or do you think we're at a point where we should just leave them all in for analysis right now?

MR. HARTIG: No, I think we're at a point where we can take some out that you don't think we should consider. There are a couple in here that I think that we may – you know, based on what you think your preferred might be now, given the level of analysis you've seen and you think this is the preferred you might see; well, you may go and take out some of those analyses that are further along if you are not going to go that direction.

MR. BROWN: Are you going to make recommendations for those to take out?

MR. HARTIG: Yes; let me see, under Action 1.

DR. MacLAUCHLIN: Is 2-1 okay with everybody and we'll move to the next one?

MR. HARTIG: That one is fine, because it gives you the three recruitment scenarios that they had; that is good. When you get to the ACL level, there is an awful lot of alternatives that we may pare down to help the analysis.

DR. MacLAUCHLIN: Okay, so moving on to Action 2-2; this one there are lots of tables. We are going to go through the alternatives, but I have them listed without the tables at the end here; where we have the committee actions. But first I want to review quickly the AP recommendations.

The AP recommended setting the ACL equal to the high recruitment ABC that we just talked about that you had set in the last alternative. And then also during scoping, the same thing, the folks that attended scoping meetings felt that in general that it could be set at the highest level possible. However, some commenters supported a medium recruitment ABC and then setting the ACL equal to that.

If you scroll down to the committee actions for this one, which are on Page 15, then you just have the alternatives that are currently in there that we will be going into the detailed economic and biological analysis. This is one in particular, if there is something that you think that you may not be interested in having analyzed, that you could remove; or you can add some more if you would like.

We have no action. We have Alternative 2 that would set the ACL at the ABC based on whatever you selected in 2-1. The next one uses the deterministic equilibrium yield at F at 30 percent SPR, which is 12.7 million pounds. This is what the SSC recommended as an ACL to consider; so they gave you the ABCs with those high, medium, low recruitment; and then they also said because there is uncertainty in those models and kind of the dynamics of king mackerel;

that we will also give you a constant number for the next four years and setting it at the deterministic equilibrium yield.

Alternative 4 does the same thing, but it gives a buffer at 75 percent of that F at 30 percent SPR. Alternative 5, we have the ACL set at 90 percent of the ABC; and Alternative 6 ACL set at 80 percent of the ABC. We commonly have these in there as a buffer for the council to consider. What the IPT was looking for was to make sure that we have all the alternatives that you definitely would like to consider and have analyzed for the biological, economic and social effects and remove any that you are not interested in.

MR. HARTIG: All right, this one is one I thought we might be able to remove Alternative 5 and 6 if you wanted to; or if not, keep it in. That is up to you guys. It is the 90 and the 80 percent.

DR. DUVAL: I would definitely be inclined to remove Alternative 6 at least; that is the 80 percent ABC. I don't think we've ever selected something like that so it seems to me like that would be a good one to remove. I would look to other members of the committee for additional discussion as to whether or not they want to remove Alternative 5, which is the 90 percent ABC scenario. Obviously, that is really going to depend on what is selected in Action 2-1, because you build buffer upon buffer upon buffer.

MR. BROWN: Yes; I just wonder if we don't wait until we do 2-1 if it will cause us too much heartache. Shouldn't we leave these in here until we decide on what we're going to do with 2-1?

MR. HARTIG: I think Michelle's comment about taking the 80 percent out because we've never used it is probably a good one; and then 90 percent we could leave that one in. I think she gives a good rationale for the 80 percent since we've never used it before and probably won't use it here either.

DR. DUVAL: All right, then I move that we remove Alternative 6 under Action 2-2 to the considered but rejected appendix.

MR. HARTIG: Second by Anna.

MR. PHILLIPS: I really don't see where we're going to keep Alternative 5. We've got a step-down in 4 and I wouldn't mind getting rid of Alternative 5. I doubt very seriously that is going to be an option either; but I can live with the motion either way.

DR. DUVAL: Yes, Charlie, I think it might be worthwhile to leave in Alternative 5 only because Alternative 4, it steps it down just from that 30 percent SPR value; whereas, Alternative 5 steps them down from the various recruitment scenarios.

MR. HARTIG: If everybody is good with that, we'll move ahead. **The motion is to remove Alternative 6 under Action 2-2 to the considered but rejected appendix. Any more discussion? Any objection? Seeing none; that motion is approved.**

DR. MacLAUCHLIN: Okay, Action 3 addresses the sale of incidental catch allowance for the Atlantic king mackerel caught in the shark gillnet fishery. Prior to Amendment 20A that prohibited bag limit sales, the shark gillnetters primarily around Florida and around Cape

Canaveral would sell the bag limit of king mackerel that was caught on those shark gillnet trips. Gillnet is not an authorized gear for king mackerel so they can't sell under their king mackerel permits.

They all have federal shark permits and king mackerel permits. What this would do is create an incidental catch allowance for them to retain and sell what is the bag limit; two for Florida and three for the other areas. The IPT kind of reorganized the language that you approved in June so that it would just be the two alternatives; but they are basically the same as what you saw in June.

In Alternative 2, what this does is it sets it up so that the shark gillnet trips in the EEZ off Florida, no more than two king mackerel per crew member can be on board and sold from that trip. Then in the EEZ north of the Georgia/Florida line; that would be three king mackerel per crew that could be on board and sold on the trip. What that does is sets it up where the difference is Florida and then the rest of the region.

Alternative 3 uses the southern zone and the northern zone that we have set up now just to be consistent. That is the only difference between those. Alternative 3 would allow two king mackerel per crew member in the southern zone to be onboard and then to be sold from those shark gillnet trips. Then in the northern zone it would be three.

The AP approved a motion that would allow this; it was a former Alternative 3, Option 3A. We did have some recommendations to do it at pounds, but in June you all approved just using numbers of fish for those. I do have a table in here that I pulled from ACCSP. It is a really small number of fishermen that are shark gillnetters that were selling the king mackerel. You can see the past five years that it was 20 to 30 trips overall.

Out of all those that caught, there were gillnet trips that had shark and king mackerel that were sold in that area of Florida, and a very small number of participants, and then the average pounds of king mackerel. They were only selling the two per crew member on these trips. I think it is two to three people can be on those trips; is that right?

MR. HARTIG: I'm not sure.

DR. MacLAUHLIN: But probably these average pounds landed on the shark gillnet trips are four, five, six fish, tops. We had some information about the mesh size. In general they're using six- or seven-inch mesh for the sharks; but one of the fishermen sent this in about what size – how many pounds of those king mackerel that are generally caught in that mesh size.

You can see in general if they are using six- and seven-inch mesh in the area around Canaveral where they're doing this; then they are going to catch 12 to 17 pound king mackerel or 16 to 22 pounds. If it is two per crew member and there is two crew, then it will be about 100 pounds. That is all we have for that.

We will be doing the biological and economic analysis for these; but if you wanted to add, remove, or select a preferred, you will get more information in December if you want to wait until then.

MR. HARTIG: Yes; the alternatives are good as they are. I don't see any reason to choose a preferred right now unless there is overwhelming reason to do so from somebody on the committee.

DR. MacLAUHLIN: Okay, Action 4 is separated into three sub-actions. One deals with boundary, one is with a quota or some kind of allocation of the quota, and then the last one deals with trip limits. There is a Florida East Coast Subzone that exists now under the current management where starting November 1st the boundary shifts up the east coast of Florida.

In the winter they're fishing on what was considered Gulf king mackerel. Now after the stock assessment and we have a new mixing zone, this will all need to kind of be reorganized and there doesn't necessarily have to be a shifting boundary; but there won't be under the new one a Florida East Coast Zone because this exists as the Gulf Subzone.

What this is going to do is kind of reset this up as an Atlantic king mackerel zone. Currently I have a graphic in here that shows these are the Gulf/Florida East Coast Subzone counties that exist November 1st through the end of March. Then I also have the winter landings, because that is when the landings are the highest for this area by county in the Florida East Coast Subzone for the past five years or so.

But what I wanted to show; I have these from the north through the south so that you can see in general where the landings are coming in. It's Brevard, Indian River, and St. Lucie; I had to put those together for confidentiality. In some cases it's Martin and Palm Beach and then kind of at the smaller end there we have Broward and Dade; and at the northern end, Volusia.

Our AP, if you remember, in April they came with some very specific ideas about how they would like to see this set up and talked about those and made those recommendations. They would want to take the southern zone quota, make the first season March 1 through September 30 and allocate 60 percent of the southern zone quota to that.

Then the second season would be October 1 to the end of February, and that would get the other 40 percent; plus any unused quota from the first season. There would be no sub-quota for the area; it would just be a split-season quota. Then you could still do the quota transfers that were set up in 20B.

Then March 1st through September 30, the boundaries would be the Volusia/Brevard County Line to the Dade/Monroe Line. They recommended a trip limit with a possible step-down to 50 fish for either May or through the summer; and then a trip limit of 3,500 pounds north of the Volusia/Brevard County Line through the rest of the southern zone.

Then October 1st through the end of February, it would be the Flagler/Volusia County Line as the northern boundary to the Dade/Monroe Line. The commercial trip limit would be 50 fish with a step-up to 75 fish if a certain amount of the quota had not been met. That is kind of the system that is set up now for them.

Then north of that northern boundary at the Flagler/Volusia County Line would be 3,500 pounds; which is what it is now. We took those and in June we presented you some actions and alternatives that incorporated their recommendations and then also added a range of alternatives.

What we are looking at here is if there is anything in these that you feel that you are actually not interested in, we can take those out. We won't include those in the analysis. Action 4-1 sets up the boundaries of what will be the Florida East Coast Subzone.

We're defining this subzone. You can define it so you can attach a quota specific to the subzone like it is now and like it is in the Gulf or you can use that area just so you can define management measures for a particular area. The first alternative just sets it with year-round boundaries we have using the AP recommendations, the Flagler/Volusia Line to the Dade/Monroe Line and then Volusia/Brevard to the Dade/Monroe Line, and then Volusia/Brevard to the Council Jurisdictional Boundary; which will be determined in Action 1.

Your preliminary preferred that you kind of seemed to be indicating was that it would be at the Dade/Monroe Line. Then we have Alternative 3 and we use the same options for the boundaries. This is what was based on the AP recommendation where Alternative 3 and 4 sets them up for March 1st through September 30th and then October 1st through the end of February. This is so the council can consider kind of a shifting boundary for the Florida zone.

We included figures in here so you can see how this would work. Under Options 2A, 3A, and 4A, you would have it here at the Flagler/Volusia Line and then it would be at the Dade/Monroe Line. I am not going to go through all of these. In general it shifts between around Volusia County, the lines. I would ask if anyone would like to add, remove any alternatives or options and then hopefully not select a preferred; but if you would like to, a preferred alternative or option.

DR. DUVAL: Just to be clear, in order to carry through the AP's recommendation eventually down the road, we would need to select something from Alternative 3 and Alternative 4 in order to have that shifting boundary line.

DR. MacLAUHLIN: Yes.

MR. HARTIG: You may, based on that, be able to get rid of Alternative 2; because when you cut that subzone up, it leaves such a small percentage of the fish out of that that it doesn't have much utility to separate that out; unless you have another viewpoint.

DR. MacLAUHLIN: Do you mean with the shifting boundary around Volusia County?

MR. HARTIG: No; I was just meaning the east coast subzone, if you carve it out year round. To me, what the AP thought would make more sense was to use the management measures at 60 and 40 percent for the two different areas. The two different time slots; that is what I mean, because there is area and time in some of this.

The Area 1 doesn't get you a whole lot, because the amount of fish that are caught outside of the east coast subzone is relatively small. It doesn't do you much good to give you that specific geographic area; but it does make sense on a time-based where you are not looking – well, you are looking at a geographical zone, but it is time-based and not geographic-based, but it's both. It's both, I'm sorry. I was just wondering when you guys had your discussions at the IPT level about that Florida East Coast Subzone if you saw that level of landings was so small?

DR. MacLAUCHLIN: Well, this alternative, what the AP wanted; they're not wanting a shifting boundary that is associated with some kind of quota. They're just wanting it so the trip limit specifically, but other management measures could change for that area and it would have a name. The quota may be something that you want to consider.

But in reality, as far as analysis goes with this one, even though it looks kind of complicated, they all may be the same, so that there may be really – I don't know if this one is going to be that difficult to analyze. Now if you wanted to remove Alternative 2, if you feel like a year-round boundary is not something you're interested in; there would be in the combinations of Alternative 3 and 4 a way to create a year-round boundary as well. That will be analyzed even if you don't do it as Alternative 2.

MR. BOWEN: I am of the opinion that a year-round boundary is something that we would be interested in for the reasons that you spoke of earlier; whether it be not only management but law enforcement.

MR. HARTIG: I'd have to wrap my head around that.

DR. DUVAL: Yes; I understand that a year-round boundary is simpler. I really don't think we're going to be able to make a decision on this until we see the analyses. Then you would see – I mean even if we do remove Alternative 2; because as Kari pointed out, different combinations of Alternatives 3 and 4 as preferreds would do effectively the same thing.

If you select Option A under each of those or Option B under each of those, you have effectively done the same thing as Alternative 2. It is the combinations of the different ones that are really going to inform us in terms of really what does that shifting boundary mean in terms of differences in harvest?

We can remove it, but we still have the option to do it. I just think it is going to be difficult to make a decision without any analysis. I guess if we wanted to remove Alternative 2, we could justify it by saying that you still have this option of a year-round boundary by the different combinations that are present in Alternatives 3 and 4. I don't know what Monica might have to say about that.

MR. WILLIAMS: Ben, I don't know if it is appropriate for me to say anything here or not since this isn't a Gulf issue; but it really seems complicated the way you're doing it, and I'm wondering couldn't you just choose a boundary for this Florida subzone and then use seasonal trip limits? I guess what you're trying to do is to control the harvest rate during the season so that you don't catch it all during one season.

Couldn't you just choose Alternative 2, choose a boundary, and then say the trip limit during the six months is going to be this; and then during the other six months it's going to be that? It seems like I think that is what you're trying to do; but that might be a little easier to get your head around. This is fairly hard for me to understand, honestly.

MR. HARTIG: I understand that, Roy; but if you go back in the history and one of the reasons why we're looking at this, the history of that wintertime fishery was considered Gulf fish. Basically the wintertime fishery biologically is different than the summertime fishery; it is a

smaller fish. And as you tagged all those animals there, during that time frame it is a small fish. During the winter they become more densely packed schools.

It is easier to catch that fish at that time than at any other time of the year. That was one of the reasons. If you get outside of that time and get into the spawning season, much bigger fish. The trolling fishery doesn't much participate in that fishery much anymore. It is almost all live bait fisheries. To me, I think there is some utility in keeping this.

We may at the end of the day just go it's a 75 fish trip limit in the entire southern zone for the entire time frame; but I think what we need to do is take what the AP has given us as a suggestion, take it out to public hearing and we will see what comes out of that. In the end we may simplify it just like you said.

That would be the easiest way to do it with a 75 fish trip limit for the entire southern zone for the entire time frame. You know you may want to look at May outside of that. Where we looked at that, I can't remember, but anyway May there was a step-down to 50 fish during May, because that is when most of the biggest fish spawn.

It seems like we seem to get some higher year classes out of May than some of the other times of the year; I mean just anecdotally, observations over time. There was some utility based on your knowledge and the work you have done over the years on king mackerel. That is kind of why they're changing this; but they're also changing the dates a little bit from what it was back then.

The March; it was November and now it's September. They are mixing the dates a little bit so they can get some of that Lenten market as well to make sure that the fishery is open through then. But you may be right; we may get back after all this is said and done to a very simple trip limit.

MR. WILLIAMS: If I may follow up; the only thing I was suggesting that in Alternative 2, if you took one of those options and then you could have two seasonal trip limits, one in the wintertime and one in the warmer months, so that you didn't catch your entire quota during the winter months. I just thought it would be a little easier to get your head around. But I'm quiet; I have nothing else to say.

MR. HARTIG: Your points are well taken. Basically, as long as we keep these trip limits in effect in some manner, we'll still be able to head off most of that problem that you alluded to.

DR. MacLAUHLIN: Action 4-2 would allocate quota from the Atlantic southern zone quota; and we have either one that allocates it to a specific area, the Florida East Coast Subzone as you define it in the last action or by creating a split season, which is what the AP recommended. We have Alternative 2, which would allocate a proportion of the southern zone quota to the Florida East Coast Subzone.

We have some options in there to look at the last 5 years, the last 10 years and the last 15 years. Then we have the expected allocation to the Florida East Coast Zone. Now this will also depend on how you want to define that because it is a shifting boundary now, and so it was a little tricky. We used the boundaries that the AP was using, so around the Flagler/Volusia through Miami/Dade.

But this area represents a really large proportion of the king mackerel landings however you look at them just because it is the most productive area all the way up to the North Carolina/South Carolina Border, which is our southern zone. In Alternative 2, if you want to consider an allocation to that zone specifically, it will be 93 percent, 92.3 percent or 90.5 percent to the Florida East Coast Subzone. It is going to be really high.

Then you'll have a very small proportion that goes to north of the Flagler/Volusia Line so that little last few part of north Florida and then Georgia and South Carolina. Then we have Alternative 3; this is the one that was based on the AP recommendations to create split seasons. This would do a 60 percent of the southern zone quota was March 1st through September 30 and 40 percent for the rest of the year.

You would move any unused quota from that first season to the second season; but otherwise the first season would close when it was expected to be met, when that split season 60 percent was expected to be met and then for the second part. It is similar to how you guys have it set up for vermilion and gray triggerfish.

I have some information and tables for how this would look; but for the committee actions it would be do you want to add/remove any alternatives or options and then do you want to select any preferred alternatives or options? Monica can speak to a question about there not being a range of alternatives.

If you feel like you are not interested in an area quota, then you may want to consider removing Alternative 2. If you are interested though in split seasons, we could also add some other ways that you could split the season. Right now it's 60/40, which lines up pretty well with the landings for those parts of the years; but we could add some options under that for 60/40, 50/50 something like that. That may satisfy requirements to have a range of alternatives.

DR. DUVAL: I know that obviously the vast majority of the harvest in the southern zone is from Florida. Obviously that is reflected in the tables that you have. It seems like doing a seasonal split would allow for a little bit more flexibility outside of that Florida East Coast Subzone, and it provides a different measure of control. I'll just throw that out there.

MR. HARTIG: Yes; I think Kari had a great idea. If you wanted to get rid of Alternative 2 and then broaden Alternative 3 with some subalternatives; I think that would probably be the way to go. I don't think the fishermen are going to go for that specific subzone quota split. There was one year where there was a bunch of fish caught outside of that. There was a big area of fish that showed up around Jacksonville, maybe a little farther north. I think they still in the back of their minds would like to be able to participate in that fishery if it happened again.

MS. BURGESS: These conversations are really interesting and it is broadening how I see and how I look at this issue with the Florida East Coast Subzone, which has been a little bit difficult to wrap my head around, because we don't have any analysis or tables or numbers to look at for the alternatives in the next Action 4-3.

I could see if you include some alternatives or sub-options under Alternative 3, the council could consider different dates for when the split season occurs; because the last amendment that went through for mackerel changed the step-downs and dates for the trip limits in the Florida East

Coast Subzone with the purpose of ensuring that there were fish that went into the Lenten season. Coming up for 2016 the Lenten season begins in February.

That is the end of the fishing year for this fishery. It would be interesting to see how we could preserve fish for that time of year under a different range of alternatives. Maybe we could have one trip limit year round by using the split season. If we moved the dates around, maybe not the percentage but the dates, we could see if that allows us that flexibility.

MR. BROWN: Am I still hearing you want to remove Alternative 2?

MR. HARTIG: Yes.

MR. BROWN: Can I make a motion to do that?

MR. HARTIG: Yes, you can.

MR. BROWN: Okay, I would like to make a motion under Action 4-2 to remove Alternative 2, Option 2A, B, and C.

MR. HARTIG: A motion by Mark; second by Zack. Further discussion? Is there any objection to that motion? Seeing none; that motion is approved. Okay, implicit in that was that we take into consideration Erika's suggestions that we look at some different alternatives under Alternative 3.

MS. MacLAUCHLIN: This may be something that I would prefer to bring back to you at full council so that we can look at the landings and see what would be – because for these time periods, 60/40 fits in pretty well. It would have confined them in a few years, but in general it would cover what they were doing; but moving the date, the time periods, if you guys wouldn't mind us bringing that back as a table at full council.

MR. HARTIG: Yes, that is fine.

MS. MacLAUCHLIN: Okay 4-3, this would put in the trip limits. Alternative 1, we're still trying to work out exactly what no action would be because the Florida East Coast Subzone doesn't exist without the Gulf zone management; but for now we're just using how it works in that area primarily as our no action.

Alternative 2 sets it whatever the subzone is designated at, it is 75 fish; and then north of that it is 3,500 pounds. Alternative 3 sets it up with 75 fish with a step-down to 50 fish; and then north of the subzone – for the southern zone would be 3,500 pounds. Then we have some options. This was based on the APs recommendations, so a step-down to 50 fish in May through August; April 15 through May 15, these are spawning periods to preserve the spawning fish.

Alternative 3 under the AP recommendations would go with the Alternative 3 in Action 4-1. This would be the March through September. Then Alternative 4, which would be for the winter, is based on the system that is set up now for them. We took some of those and then we also provided a few different variations on it.

Beginning February 1st in that Florida East Coast Subzone as designated, starting February 1st if the 70 percent hasn't been met; then the 50 fish trip limit goes up to 75. 4B; that would be January 1st through the end of February. The trigger is if less than 70 percent of the quota has been met, it goes up to 75; and then we also have February 1st again, and it has to be 80 percent of the quota has not been met and then you can go up to 75 fish. Right now that Option 4A is what is in place for that area in the winter right now. This Alternative 4 would be based on – the AP recommendations would be associated with Alternative 4 in the boundary sub-action.

MR. HARTIG: Yes; the spawning step-down is relatively limited. They spawn from late April all the way through September and probably later now with the way the oceans are getting warmer in some places. The issue in May is that the largest fish in the population spawn off of our area in that time; the highly fecund largest fish. These fish come in waves.

This particular wave is about 25-pound average fish. If you cut the trip limit down some time, you could get a little bit of a bang for your buck by allowing some of those animals to go ahead and spawn during that time of the year. Some of this remains complicated because fishermen are holding over from how they've been managed for the last, golly, however many years it's been. It has been a long, long time.

Maybe by the end of this, we get to something that is a lot more simplified like the 75 fish in Alternative 2 for the whole shebang. We'll see; but I think it's worthwhile to keep the AP's suggestions in there and let the fishermen go through this and see what they think would work.

MR. BROWN: The AP recommended or they were leaning towards Alternative 4; is that what you were saying?

DR. MacLAUHLIN: Alternative 3 is for the March 1st through September and then Alternative 4 is their recommendation for the rest of the year through the winter. When we bring this back to you, I promise – I always say I promise it is going to be less complicated, but it never is.

The reason why we have these in like this sub-actions is so we can analyze them like altogether, kind of, so we can explain to you like what this is going to do. It's going to be this one, this one and this one, and it is going to create this kind of system so that you can see it the way that the AP was looking at it. Where they were like here are the boundaries, here is the quota and here is a trip limit; and that is what we're going to do with these.

MR. BROWN: Ben, I used to fish in this fishery on a regular basis back in the eighties and early nineties; but I swear it's gotten so complicated. I am doing my best to wrap my brain around it.

MR. HARTIG: Yes, I know. These step-downs and things are something that the fishery has been operating on for quite some time now. It is part of how the management has been done. It seems to be working fairly well. We haven't been able to keep the wintertime fishery open every year, but it stayed open last year at least.

They do work. Yes, they are complicated, but they work for the fishermen on trying to get a year-round fishery. As you know, when you fished in that fishery, for most of those fishermen that is all they target. That is all they fish for is king mackerel.

MS. BURGESS: Some things are becoming a little bit clearer to me in the discussion, but I think we need to make it more implicit in the document that the purpose of Alternative 3 is not to control effort for extending the season of fish. The purpose of Alternative 3, from what I hear from you, is this is an effort to protect spawning fish.

Can that say that in the document? Then Alternative 4; the purpose of that would be for extending harvest through the entire fishing year. It is hard to compare, well, do I want Alternative 3 or Alternative 4 if you think that they're for the same purpose, when now I'm thinking from what you say that it is not.

MR. HARTIG: That is a great observation. I'm sorry we're confusing you; but you're absolutely right; we do need to explain that in the document. Do you think it would be helpful to have that one separated out as an option on its own actually for spawning season considerations?

MS. BURGESS: I think so; and I think that is how people are used to looking at actions and alternatives.

DR. MacLAUCHLIN: The rest of the actions are Gulf actions. They reviewed these at their August meeting. They did not select preferreds although they added some alternatives that I will need for you to approve under Action 7. Action 5 modifies the ACL for Gulf king mackerel based on the recent stock assessment.

They have in here the three alternatives that you approved in June. Unless we have any changes or preferreds for this one, we can move on. Six revises the commercial zone quotas for Gulf group king mackerel; so because they are taking out the Florida East Coast Subzone with this new management, they will recalculate their zone quotas.

You approved these alternatives in June and there were no changes at the last Gulf meeting. Seven revises the recreational and commercial allocations of Gulf king mackerel. They are looking at changing those. They just added Alternative 4 and 5 at their August meeting, so I will need for you guys to approve those because we had not reviewed those in June.

DR. DUVAL: I move that we approve the addition of Alternatives 4 and 5 under Action 7 as approved by the Gulf.

MR. HARTIG: Second by Charlie. Any discussion? Is there any objection? Seeing none; that motion is approved.

DR. MacLAUCHLIN: The last action modifying the recreational bag limit for Gulf king mackerel; these are the alternatives that you approved in June and there were no changes at the Gulf meeting in August.

MR. HARTIG: I'm not seeing any will to change anything, we'll move ahead. In fact, that is the last action of the document. Go ahead, Doug.

MR. HAYMANS: If I might at the risk of the wrath of the rest of the committee; can we go back to Action 3 real quick? Could we move back to Action 3 for just a moment? I know I'll get daggers from everybody. It is Page 16 in the PDF document that I've got. Would it be feasible

to add another alternative or a subalternative into 2, which would limit the sale – actually not allow the sale of crew bag limits; maybe just make it recreational retention but no sale?

Georgia doesn't allow the landing of gillnet-caught fish. South Carolina doesn't allow gillnets in state waters and doesn't have any landings that they're aware of. It would just make sense just to keep any crew member sales to Florida and south. I would move to add I would say a subalternative, but we don't have it broken into subalternatives right now.

I guess I would add to – well, it needs to be a subalternative and perhaps Kari could restructure that so we could either vote on the sale or not from the Georgia/Florida line south. In other words – I don't have it structured, I apologize – but the subalternative would read something on the order of for shark gillnet trips in the EEZs north of the Georgia/Florida Line, sale of crew king mackerel bag limits would be prohibited; something along those lines.

DR. MacLAUCHLIN: Unless you feel that you want those as options yes or no to allow the bag limits or would it just be something that you would just include in the alternatives as language that those are north of Georgia/Florida? I mean we could just – if the council is not interested in weighing some pros and cons like you're sure that you're not going to let that happen in Georgia and South Carolina; then we could just add the language into the alternatives unless it is something that you would want to consider as options.

MR. HAYMANS: The rest of the council and the committee hasn't had a chance to think about that yet. I mean throwing it out there at the last moment, I understand, and you can think about it through full council and we can decide how to restructure it then if you want. Perhaps there are some ideas that can be brought forth between now and then.

MR. HARTIG: That would be my suggestion and we'll do that.

DR. MacLAUCHLIN: I don't know what happened with this motion.

MR. HARTIG: Do you want to withdraw your motion for now? We'll bring it back to you at full council with some alternatives.

MR. HAYMANS: Sure; that would be fine. I doesn't have a second yet so it will be fine.

MR. HARTIG: All right, that brings us to other business, I believe. Is there any other business to come before the Mackerel Committee?

DR. MacLAUCHLIN: Yes, HMS.

MS. BECKWITH: During the HMS meeting, I was asked to present a request that we had received from the king mackerel gillnet fishermen about retention of some non-blacknose sharks when the blacknose ACL had been reached; and we did go ahead and present that request to HMS. We suggested a consideration of a trip limit for blacknose to help that season be extended and the consideration of a small bycatch allowance of about 200 pounds or so.

HMS said that they would consider it; and they put it on their list of things that they would think about. We'll have to follow up with them, I think. If we do want to support them on that

potential consideration with a trip limit or a small bycatch allowance, I think the council will likely have to draft a letter and follow up. I think that is HMS' expectations that they will be receiving a letter from the council in support of that.

I did provide them the data that Kari had worked to put together, so they have got that. I feel like I am forgetting something, but I think that is the majority of it. It is interesting because one of the suggestions that HMS had to fix the issue is, of course, there is a linkage between the non-blacknose and the blacknose south of latitude 31, is it, 34 or 31.

The problem is if they took the linkage away, they would have to basically half the ACL for non-blacknose to take into consideration discards that they would have for the blacknose. That was not palatable to folks that last round. They said that the ACL for blacknose was really pretty small; and it was unfortunate that the fishermen could not work with the two local dealers that actually purchase those blacknose to get them to basically not purchase those blacknose, to not accept them so that ACL would not be reached and hence the linkage would not kick in.

I guess Rusty had attempted to talk to those two dealers, but there is enough of a financial incentive for them to buy those blacknose that they are purchasing them. There is no trip limit on them; so it is kicking in the linkage and shutting down the rest of the fishery. That was the information I received.

MR. HARTIG: Yes; and essentially the mackerel fishermen have a bycatch of sharks when they are targeting Spanish mackerel in that gillnet fishery. It is a short fishery occurring in the fall. All they wanted to do would be trying and land some of those animals and not make them dead discards anymore. That was the reasoning behind the request.

It seems like to me HMS would be interested in reducing dead discards. I don't know, we'll see. We'll see what happens in the long term. I appreciate Anna actually boning up on everything she needed to do, and I appreciate Kari's work in putting a lot of data together on the catches so we had a pretty darned good presentation and with a lot of data to go before HMS. I appreciate the work you all did, and I appreciate, Anna, you carrying it forward. We'll see what happens. With that; is there any other business to come before the Mackerel Committee? Seeing none; the Mackerel Committee is adjourned.

(Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 2:55 o'clock p.m., September 15, 2015.)

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
2015 COMMITTEES (continued)

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✓ Jack Cox
✓ Roy Crabtree
✓ Michelle Duval
✓ Doug Haymans
✓ Jessica McCawley
✓ Charlie Phillips
Robert Beal, ASMFC Representative
✓ Mid-Atlantic Liaison, *TONY DILERNIA*
Staff contact: Kari MacLauchlin

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Mel Bell, Chair
Chris Conklin
Jack Cox
LTJG Tara Pray
Ben Hartig
Staff contact: Myra Brouwer

PERSONNEL

Jessica McCawley, Chair
Michelle Duval – Vice Chair
Mel Bell
Ben Hartig
Charlie Phillips
Staff contact: Bob Mahood

PROTECTED RESOURCES

Wilson Laney, Chair
Anna Beckwith
Michelle Duval
LTJG Tara Pray
Ben Hartig
Jessica McCawley
Staff contact: Chip Collier

SSC SELECTION

Michelle Duval, Chair
Mel Bell
Chester Brewer
Roy Crabtree
Doug Haymans
Wilson Laney
Staff contact: John Carmichael

SEDAR

Ben Hartig, Chair
Chris Conklin, Vice-Chair
Zack Bowen
Mark Brown
Jack Cox
Michelle Duval
Charlie Phillips
Robert Beal, ASMFC Representative
Staff contact: John Carmichael

SHRIMP

Charlie Phillips, Chair
Mel Bell
Roy Crabtree
Wilson Laney
Jessica McCawley
Staff contact: Chip Collier

(Continued)

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

2015 COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

COUNCIL CHAIR

Ben Hartig
9277 Sharon Street
Hobe Sound, FL 33455
772/546-1541 (ph)
mackattackben@att.net

VICE-CHAIR

Dr. Michelle Duval
NC Division of Marine Fisheries
3441 Arendell St.
(PO Box 769)
Morehead City, NC 28557
252/808-8011 (ph);
252/726-0254 (f)
michelle.duval@ncdenr.gov

Robert E. Beal
Executive Director
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries
Commission
1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 20001
703/842-0740 (ph); 703/842-0741 (f)
rbeal@asmfc.org

Mel Bell
S.C. Dept. of Natural Resources
Marine Resources Division
P.O. Box 12559
(217 Ft. Johnson Road)
Charleston, SC 29422-2559
843/953-9007 (ph)
843/953-9159 (fax)
bellm@dnr.sc.gov

Anna Beckwith
1907 Paulette Road
Morehead City, NC 28557
252/671-3474 (ph)
AnnaBarriosBeckwith@gmail.com

Zack Bowen
P.O. Box 30825
Savannah, GA 31410
912/398-3733 (ph)
fishzack@comcast.net

W. Chester Brewer
250 Australian Ave. South
Suite 1400
West Palm Beach, FL 33408
✓ 561/655-4777 (ph)
WCBLAW@aol.com

Mark Brown
3642 Pandora Drive
Mt. Pleasant, SC 29466
843/881-9735 (ph); 843/881-4446 (f)
capt.markbrown@comcast.net

Chris Conklin
P.O. Box 972
✓ Murrells Inlet, SC 29576
843/543-3833
conklinsafmc@gmail.com

Jack Cox
2010 Bridges Street
Morehead City, NC 28557
252/728-9548
Dayboat1965@gmail.com

Dr. Roy Crabtree
Regional Administrator
NOAA Fisheries, Southeast Region
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
727/824-5301 (ph); 727/824-5320 (f)
roy.crabtree@noaa.gov

LTJG Tara Pray
U.S. Coast Guard
✓ 909 SE 1st Ave.
Miami, FL 33131
tara.c.pray@uscg.mil

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
2015 COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP (continued)

Doug Haymans
Coastal Resources Division
GA Dept. of Natural Resources
One Conservation Way, Suite 300
Brunswick, GA 31520-8687
912/264-7218 (ph); 912/262-2318 (f)
doughaymans@gmail.com

Deirdre Warner-Kramer
Office of Marine Conservation
OES/OMC
2201 C Street, N.W.
Department of State, Room 5806
Washington, DC 20520
202/647-3228 (ph); 202/736-7350 (f)
Warner-KramerDM@state.gov

Dr. Wilson Laney
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
South Atlantic Fisheries Coordinator
P.O. Box 33683
Raleigh, NC 27695-7617
(110 Brooks Ave
237 David Clark Laboratories,
NCSU Campus
Raleigh, NC 27695-7617)
919/515-5019 (ph)
919/515-4415 (f)
Wilson.Laney@fws.gov

Jessica McCawley
Florida Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Commission
2590 Executive Center Circle E.,
Suite 201
Tallahassee, FL 32301
850/487-0554 (ph); 850/487-4847 (f)
jessica.mccawley@myfwc.com

Charles Phillips
Phillips Seafood / Sapelo Sea Farms
1418 Sapelo Avenue, N.E.
Townsend, GA 31331
912/832-4423 (ph); 912/832-6228 (f)
Ga_capt@yahoo.com

JACK MCGOVERN
NICK MEHTA
RICK DEVECTOR
MONICA SMIT-BRUNELLO
ROY WILLIAMS
GEORGE SEDBERRY
BONNIE POWWETH
LUIZ BARBIERI
MARCEL REICHERT
ERIKA BURGESS
NICK FARMER
SEAN MEEHAN

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
COUNCIL STAFF

Executive Director

✓ Robert K. Mahood
robert.mahood@safmc.net

Deputy Executive Director

✓ Gregg T. Waugh
gregg.waugh@safmc.net

Public Information Officer

✓ Kim Iverson
kim.iverson@safmc.net

Fishery Outreach Specialist

✓ Amber Von Harten
amber.vonharten@safmc.net

Senior Fishery Biologist

✓ Roger Pugliese
roger.pugliese@safmc.net

Fishery Scientist

✓ Myra Brouwer
myra.brouwer@safmc.net

Fishery Biologist

✓ Dr. Mike Errigo
mike.errigo@safmc.net

Fisheries Social Scientist

✓ Dr. Kari MacLauchlin
kari.maclauchlin@safmc.net

Fishery Scientist

✓ Chip Collier
Chip.Collier@safmc.net

Staff Economist

✓ Dr. Brian Chevront
brian.chevront@safmc.net

Science and Statistics Program Manager

✓ John Carmichael
john.carmichael@safmc.net

SEDAR Coordinators

Dr. Julie Neer - julie.neer@safmc.net
Julia Byrd - julia.byrd@safmc.net

Administrative Officer

✓ Mike Collins
mike.collins@safmc.net

Financial Secretary

Debra Buscher
deb.buscher@safmc.net

Admin. Secretary /Travel Coordinator

Cindy Chaya
cindy.chaya@safmc.net

Purchasing & Grants

✓ Julie O'Dell
julie.odell@safmc.net



**South Atlantic Fishery Management Council –
September 2015 Council Meeting
Hilton Head Island, SC**

Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2015

Committee: Mackerel

PLEASE SIGN IN -

In order to have a record of your attendance at each meeting and your name included in the minutes, we ask that you sign this sheet for the meeting shown above.

Name:	Mailing Address/E-mail: <i>(If your information is currently on file, please check the box.)</i>	How do you participate in South Atlantic fisheries? <i>(Check all that apply)</i>	
Jimmy Hull	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Dave Swider	<input type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
James Krijnen	<input type="checkbox"/> On File NOAA office of Law Enforcement 144 Kingspoint Blvd. Slidell, LA 70461	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
David Bush	<input type="checkbox"/> On File david.bush@scfish.org	Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
Gretchen Martin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>
	<input type="checkbox"/> On File	Commercial <input type="checkbox"/>	NGO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Recreational <input type="checkbox"/>	Govt. <input type="checkbox"/>
		Charter/For-hire <input type="checkbox"/>	Other _____ <i>Describe</i>

TUESDAY SEPT 15, 2015

Last Name	First Name	Email Address
Bademan	Martha	martha.bademan@myfwc.com
Baker	Scott	bakers@uncw.edu
Bonura	Vincent	SailRaiser25C@aol.com
Brennan	Ken	kenneth.brennan@noaa.gov
Bresnen	Anthony	anthony.bresnen@myfwc.com
Brogan	Gib	gbrogan@oceana.org
Brouwer	Myra	myra.brouwer@safmc.net
Byrd	Julia	julia.byrd@safmc.net
Clarke	Lora	lclarke@pewtrusts.org
Craig	Kevin	kevin.craig@noaa.gov
Crosson	Scott	scott.crosson@noaa.gov
Erwin	Gwen	gwen.erwin@myfwc.com
Franco	Dawn	dawn.franco@dnr.ga.gov
Gerhart	Susan	susan.gerhart@noaa.gov
Gore	Karla	karla.gore@noaa.gov
Helies	Frank	fchelies@verizon.net
Herndon	Andrew	Andrew.Herndon@noaa.gov
Hudson	Rusty	DSF2009@aol.com
L	I	captaindrifter@bellsouth.net
Larkin	Michael	Michael.Larkin@noaa.gov
Lindh	Ryan	nativetrade@bellsouth.net
Raine	Karen	karen.raine@noaa.gov
Ralston	Kellie	kralston@asafishing.org
Siegfried	Kate	kate.siegfried@noaa.gov
Snyder	David	dave@halyardsrestaurant.com
Stump	Ken	kstump@oceanfdn.org
Takade-Heumacher	Helen	htakade@edf.org
Williams	Erik	erik.williams@noaa.gov
blough	heather	heather.blough@noaa.gov
burton	michael	michael.burton@noaa.gov
dilernia	anthony	adilernia@kbcc.cuny.edu
holiman	stephen	stephen.holiman@noaa.gov
maclauchlin	kari	kari.maclauchlin@safmc.net
sandorf	scott	scott.sandorf@noaa.gov
vara	mary	mary.vara@noaa.gov

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NACK
sh