

**FINAL**  
**SUMMARY REPORT –MACKEREL COMMITTEE**  
**March 9-10, 2016**  
**Jekyll Island, GA**

The Committee adopted the agenda and approved the minutes of the December 2015 meeting. SERO staff provided a briefing on the status of commercial and recreational landings. Council staff updated the Committee on the January 2016 Gulf Council meeting, the February 2016 Mackerel AP meeting, and the public comment summary for CMP Amendment 26. These recommendations are incorporated into the decision document for Amendment 26.

**Amendment 26 (King mackerel ACLs and stock boundary)**

Council staff reviewed the decision document for Amendment 26. The Committee and Council approved the following motions:

**MOTION #1: APPROVE THE IPT-PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE PURPOSE AND NEED. APPROVED BY COMMITTEE. APPROVED BY COUNCIL.**

**PURPOSE AND NEED**

THE PURPOSE OF THIS AMENDMENT IS TO MODIFY THE STOCK BOUNDARY AND REVISE THE ACLS FOR ATLANTIC AND GULF MIGRATORY GROUP KING MACKEREL; TO MODIFY THE COMMERCIAL ZONE QUOTAS FOR GULF MIGRATORY KING MACKEREL; TO REVIEW RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL ALLOCATIONS FOR GULF MIGRATORY KING MACKEREL; TO INCREASE THE RECREATIONAL BAG LIMIT FOR GULF MIGRATORY KING MACKEREL; TO CREATE AN INCIDENTAL CATCH ALLOWANCE OF ATLANTIC MIGRATORY KING MACKEREL FOR THE SHARK GILLNET FISHERY; AND TO REVISE OR CREATE MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR ATLANTIC MIGRATORY GROUP KING MACKEREL IN THE ~~FLORIDA EAST COAST SUBZONE.~~ **ATLANTIC SOUTHERN ZONE.**

**MOTION #2: CHANGE THE PREFERRED IN ACTION 2-2 FROM ALTERNATIVE 3 TO ALTERNATIVE 2. APPROVED BY COMMITTEE. APPROVED BY COUNCIL.**

**Action 2-2. Revise the ACLs, Commercial Quotas, and Recreational ACT for Atlantic Migratory Group King Mackerel**

**Alternative 2:** Revise the ACL and recreational ACT based on the ABC levels selected under Action 2-1. ACL = OY = ABC, recreational ACT = [0.5 or (1-PSE), whichever is greater].

**MOTION #3: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3, OPTION 3B AS THE PREFERRED IN ACTION 5. APPROVED BY COUNCIL.**

**MOTION #4: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 4/OPTION 4A AS THE PREFERRED IN ACTION 5. APPROVED BY COUNCIL.**

**Action 5. Establish trip limits for the Atlantic Southern Zone**

**Alternative 3:** In the Southern Zone, the trip limit north of the Flagler/Volusia county line is 3,500 lbs. For the area south of the Flagler/Volusia county line, establish a trip limit of 50 fish from March 1- March 31, and 75 fish for the remainder of season 1 (as designated in Action 4).

**Option 3b.** At any time during season 1, if 75% of the season 1 quota has been taken, the trip limit will be 50 fish.

**Alternative 4:** In the Southern Zone, the trip limit north of the Flagler/Volusia county line is 3,500 lbs. For the area south of the Flagler/Volusia county line, establish a trip limit of 50 fish for season 2 (as designated in Action 4).

**Option 4a.** Beginning on February 1 and continuing through the end of February--

(1) If 70 % or more of the season 2 quota has been taken, the trip limit is 50 fish.

(2) If less than 70 % of the season 2 quota has been taken, the trip limit is 75 fish.

**MOTION #5:** ADOPT ALTERNATIVE 4 AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE IN ACTION 7. APPROVED BY COMMITTEE. **APPROVED BY COUNCIL.**

**Action 7. Revise the Commercial Zone Quotas for Gulf Migratory Group King Mackerel**

**Gulf Council Preferred Alternative 4:** Revise the commercial zone quotas for Gulf migratory group king mackerel as follows: 40% for the Western Zone; 18% for the Northern Zone; 21% for the Southern Zone Handline component; and 21% for the Southern Zone Gillnet component.

**MOTION #6:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 1 AS THE PREFERRED FOR ACTION 8. APPROVED BY COMMITTEE. **APPROVED BY COUNCIL.**

**Action 8. Revise the Recreational and Commercial Allocations of Gulf Migratory Group King Mackerel**

**Gulf Council Preferred Alternative 1:** No action – Maintain the current recreational and commercial allocations for Gulf migratory group king mackerel (68% recreational, 32% commercial).

**MOTION #7:** DESELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS THE PREFERRED AND SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS THE PREFERRED IN ACTION 9. APPROVED BY COMMITTEE. **APPROVED BY COUNCIL.**

**Action 9. Modify the Recreational Bag Limit for Gulf Migratory Group King Mackerel**

**Gulf Council Preferred Alternative 2:** Increase the bag limit to three fish per person per day.

**MOTION #8:** APPROVE COASTAL MIGRATORY PELAGICS AMENDMENT 26 FOR SECRETARIAL REVIEW, AND DEEM THE CODIFIED TEXT AS NECESSARY AND APPROPRIATE. GIVE STAFF EDITORIAL LICENSE TO MAKE ANY NECESSARY EDITORIAL CHANGES TO THE DOCUMENT/CODIFIED TEXT AND GIVE THE COUNCIL CHAIR AUTHORITY TO APPROVE THE REVISIONS AND RE-DEEM THE CODIFIED TEXT. **APPROVED BY COUNCIL.**

## 2016 Recreational Season for Atlantic Cobia

MRIP estimates indicated that the recreational landings for Atlantic cobia in 2015 were 910,776 lbs, which exceeded the recreational ACL of 630,000 lbs. The recreational accountability measure for Atlantic cobia is to shorten the subsequent season based on previous years' landings, in order to avoid another overage. On March 9, 2016, NMFS published a notice that the recreational season for 2016 would close on June 20, 2016.

Dr. Mike Larkin, SERO staff, provided an overview of the analysis and process for selecting the closure date. Following, Council Deputy Director John Carmichael reviewed fishery information for Atlantic cobia to provide context for a discussion on next steps for cobia management to avoid exceeding the recreational ACL and to lengthen the recreational season in future years. The Committee reviewed a list of potential options for a framework amendment and provided direction to staff to start work on a framework amendment.

The framework amendment will include actions for vessel limits, increased minimum size limits, decreased bag limit, change of fishing year start date, modified recreational accountability measures, a step-down for the commercial sector, and a request to ASMFC to consider a joint management plan for Atlantic cobia. The Committee and Council approved the following motions for actions in the amendment that would apply to Atlantic cobia:

**MOTION #9: DIRECT STAFF TO LOOK AT VESSEL LIMITS FOR 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 AND 6 FISH. APPROVED BY COMMITTEE. APPROVED BY COUNCIL.**

**MOTION #10: LOOK AT A COMBINED RECREATIONAL VESSEL LIMIT DECREASE WITH INCREASED MINIMUM SIZE LIMIT.**

- 33-39 INCHES FORK IN 1-INCH INCREMENTS
- 1-6 FISH VESSEL LIMIT.

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE. APPROVED BY COUNCIL.**

**MOTION #11: LOOK AT A 1/PERSON BAG LIMIT FOR COBIA. APPROVED BY COMMITTEE. APPROVED BY COUNCIL.**

**MOTION #12: LOOK AT COMBINED BAG LIMIT OPTIONS WITH INCREASED MIN SIZE LIMIT.**

- 33-39 INCHES FORK IN 1-INCH INCREMENTS
- 1/PERSON BAG LIMIT
- 2/PERSON BAG LIMIT

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE. APPROVED BY COUNCIL.**

**MOTION #13: DIRECT STAFF TO LOOK AT CHANGING START OF RECREATIONAL FISHING YEAR TO MAY 1. APPROVED BY COMMITTEE. APPROVED BY COUNCIL.**

**MOTION #14: EXPLORE MODIFYING THE RECREATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES:**

If recreational landings, as estimated by the Science and Research Director, exceed the recreational ACL, then during the following fishing year, recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings.

If necessary, the Regional Administrator shall publish a notice to reduce the length of fishing season and the recreational ACL in the following fishing year by the amount of the recreational overage, only if the species, or one or more species in a species complex, is overfished and the total ACL (commercial ACL and recreational ACL) is exceeded. The length of the recreational season and recreational ACL will not be reduced if the Regional Administrator determines, using the best scientific information available, that a reduction is unnecessary.

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE. APPROVED BY COUNCIL.**

**MOTION #15:** FOR COMMERCIAL ATLANTIC COBIA SECTOR, CONTINUE TO FISH AT 2 FISH PER PERSON UNTIL 75% OF THE COMMERCIAL ACL HAS BEEN CAUGHT, THEN DECREASE TO 1 FISH PER PERSON. **APPROVED BY COUNCIL.**

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** ADD OPTIONS FOR DATES AFTER WHICH A STEP-DOWN WOULD NOT OCCUR.

**MOTION #16:** DRAFT A LETTER FROM THE COUNCIL TO THE ASMFC POLICY BOARD TO REQUEST CONSIDERATION OF JOINT MANAGEMENT OF ATLANTIC COBIA. **APPROVED BY COUNCIL.**

#### Other Business

Council member Zack Bowen made the following motion under Other Business.

**MOTION #17:** ESTABLISH MARCH 11, 2016 AS A CONTROL DATE FOR THE FOR-HIRE SECTOR (HEADBOATS AND CHARTER VESSELS) IN THE FOLLOWING FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLANS:

1. COASTAL MIGRATORY PELAGIC (KING MACKEREL, SPANISH MACKEREL, AND COBIA) FMP
2. SNAPPER GROUPER FMP
3. DOLPHIN WAHOO FMP

The Council discussed that the control date could be used if the Council wanted to consider limited entry for the charter/headboat permits for the CMP, Snapper Grouper and Dolphin Wahoo. However, a motion was passed to table the discussion at this meeting, and discuss the issue at a future meeting.

**MOTION #18:** TABLE THE DISCUSSION. **APPROVED BY COUNCIL.**

**MOTION #19:** REQUEST THAT THE COUNCIL CHAIR ADD A DISCUSSION ABOUT LIMITED ENTRY FOR THE FOR-HIRE PERMITS IN SNAPPER GROUPER, CMP AND DOLPHIN WAHOO TO A FUTURE MEETING'S AGENDA. **APPROVED BY COUNCIL.**

-----  
**MOTION #20:** ADOPT THE TIMING AND TASK ITEMS AS PRESENTED:

1. PREPARE DRAFT AMENDMENT 26 FOR GULF COUNCIL MEETING IN APRIL 2016.

2. UPON APPROVAL BY THE GULF COUNCIL, PREPARE AMENDMENT 26 FOR SUBMISSION TO THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE.
3. STAFF TO DEVELOP ACTIONS AND ALTERNATIVES FOR THE COBIA FRAMEWORK AMENDMENT FOR COMMITTEE REVIEW IN JUNE 2016.
4. DRAFT A LETTER TO THE ASMFC POLICY BOARD TO CONSIDER JOINT MANAGEMENT OF ATLANTIC COBIA.

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL.**