

FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT –MACKEREL COMMITTEE
September 15, 2015
Hilton Head Island, SC

The Committee adopted the agenda and approved the minutes of the June 2015 meeting.

NMFS staff reported on the status of commercial catch and recreational catch, in addition to updates on amendments under review. The final rule for CMP Framework Amendment 2 published on July 14, 2015, and regulations became effective on August 13, 2015.

Gulf Council Meeting Report

Council staff briefed the Committee on actions of the Gulf Mackerel Committee at their meeting in August 2015. The Gulf Council had also reviewed an options paper for CMP Amendment 28, which has not been approved for development by the South Atlantic Council. The Mackerel Advisory Panel may review the Gulf options paper at the next AP meeting.

Amendment 26 (King mackerel ACLs and stock boundary)

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

MOTION #1: REMOVE ALTERNATIVE 6 UNDER ACTION 2-2 TO THE CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED APPENDIX.
APPROVED BY COUNCIL.

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

Alternative 6. Establish $ACL = OY = 80\% \text{ ABC}$ based on the ABC levels selected under Action 2-1

MOTION #2: UNDER ACTION 4-2, REMOVE ALTERNATIVE 2 AND OPTIONS A, B AND C.
APPROVED BY COUNCIL.

Action 4-2. Allocate Quota for the Florida East Coast Subzone within the Atlantic Southern Zone for Atlantic Migratory Group King Mackerel

Alternative 2: Allocate a proportion of the Southern Zone quota to the Florida East Coast (FLEC) Subzone. Commercial harvest of king mackerel in the area designated as the FLEC Subzone in Action 4-1 will be counted towards the FLEC Subzone sub-quota. When the sub-quota for the season is met or expected to be met, commercial harvest of king mackerel in the FLEC Subzone will be prohibited for the remainder of the fishing year for the FLEC Subzone.

Option 2a: Use historic landings in the Southern Zone from the 2009/10 through the 2013/14 fishing seasons (last five years) to calculate the FLEC Subzone quota.

Expected Allocation to FLEC: 93% FLEC Subzone

Option 2b: Use historic landings in the Southern Zone from the 2004/05 through the 2013/14 fishing seasons (last ten years) to calculate the FLEC Subzone quota.

Expected: 92.3% FLEC Subzone

Option 2c: Use historic landings in the Southern Zone from the 1999/00 through the 2013/14 fishing seasons (last fifteen years) to calculate the FLEC Subzone quota.

Expected: 90.5% FLEC Subzone

MOTION #3: ADD NEW ALTERNATIVES TO NEW ACTION 4.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL.

ADD ALTERNATIVES FOR:

60% Mar-Oct and 40% Nov-Feb

50% Mar-Sept and 50% Oct-Feb

Action 4. Establish Commercial Split Seasons for Atlantic Migratory Group King Mackerel in the Southern Zone

Alternative 1 (No Action). The commercial fishing year for Atlantic king mackerel is March 1 – February 28. The Southern Zone quota is allocated for the entire fishing year.

Alternative 2. Allocate the Southern Zone quota for Atlantic king mackerel into two quotas: 60% to the period March 1 - September 30 (season 1) and 40% to the period October 1 – February 28 (season 2). Any remaining quota from season 1 would transfer to season 2. Any remaining quota from season 2 would not be carried forward. When the Southern Zone quota for the season is met or expected to be met, commercial harvest of king mackerel in the Southern Zone will be prohibited for the remainder of the season. (**South Atlantic Mackerel AP Recommended**)

NEW Alternative 3. Allocate the Southern Zone quota for Atlantic king mackerel into two quotas: 60% to the period March 1 – October 1 (season 1) and 40% to the period November 1 – February 28 (season 2). Any remaining quota from season 1 would transfer to season 2. Any remaining quota from season 2 would not be carried forward. When the Southern Zone quota for the season is met or expected to be met, commercial harvest of king mackerel in the Southern Zone will be prohibited for the remainder of the season.

NEW Alternative 4. Allocate the Southern Zone quota for Atlantic king mackerel into two quotas: 50% to the period March 1 – October 1 (season 1) and 50% to the period November 1 – February 28. Any remaining quota from season 1 would transfer to season 2. Any remaining quota from season 2 would not be carried forward. When the Southern Zone quota for the season is met or expected to be met, commercial harvest of king mackerel in the Southern Zone will be prohibited for the remainder of the season.

MOTION #4: APPROVE THE LANGUAGE CHANGES TO ACTION 5.
APPROVED BY COUNCIL.

Action 5. Establish trip limits for a Florida East Coast (FLEC) Management Zone

Action 5-1. Establish boundaries for a Florida East Coast (FLEC) Management Zone for Atlantic Migratory Group King Mackerel

Alternative 1: No action - Do not establish a Florida East Coast Management Zone.

Alternative 2: Establish a FLEC Management Zone that exists year-round with boundaries at:

Option 2a: Flagler/Volusia county line and Dade/Monroe county line.

Option 2b: Volusia/Brevard county line and Dade/Monroe county line.

Option 2c: Volusia/Brevard county line and the Council jurisdictional boundary (as designated Action 1).

Alternative 3: Establish a FLEC Management Zone that exists for season 1 (as designated in Action 4) with boundaries at:

Option 3a: Flagler/Volusia county line and Dade/Monroe county line.

Option 3b: Volusia/Brevard county line and Dade/Monroe county line. **(South Atlantic AP Recommended)**

Option 3c: Volusia/Brevard county line and the Council jurisdictional boundary (as designated in Action 1).

Alternative 4: Establish a FLEC Management Zone that exists for season 2 (as designated in Action 4) with boundaries at:

Option 4a: Flagler/Volusia county line and Dade/Monroe county line. **(South Atlantic AP Recommended)**

Option 4b: Volusia/Brevard county line and Dade/Monroe county line.

Option 4c: Volusia/Brevard county line and the Council jurisdictional boundary (as designated in Action 1).

Action 5-2. Establish a trip limit system for the Florida East Coast (FLEC) Management Zone

Alternative 1: No action. TBD

Alternative 2: Establish a year-round trip limit of 75 fish for Atlantic king mackerel in the FLEC Management Zone (designated in Action 5-1).

Alternative 3: Establish a trip limit of 75 fish for Atlantic king mackerel in the FLEC Management Zone (designated in Action 5-1) for season 1 (as designated in Action 4).

Option 3a. Reduce the trip limit to 50 fish from May 1- May 31.

Option 3b. Reduce the trip limit to 50 fish from May 1- August 31.

Option 3c. Reduce the trip limit to 50 fish from April 15- May 15.

[The step-down in Options 3a-3c was recommended to reduce harvest during spawning.]

Alternative 4: Establish a trip limit of 50 fish for Atlantic king mackerel in the FLEC Management Zone (designated in Action 5-1) 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.

Option 4b. Beginning on January 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.

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

(1) If 80 % or more of the season 2 quota has been taken, the trip limit is 50 fish.

(2) If less than 80 % of the season 2 quota has been taken, the trip limit is 75 fish.

MOTION #5: APPROVE THE ADDITION OF ALTERNATIVES 4 AND 5 UNDER ACTION 7 AS APPROVED BY THE GULF COUNCIL.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL.

ACTION 7. Revise the Recreational and Commercial Allocations of Gulf Migratory Group King Mackerel

Alternative 4: Conditionally transfer a certain percentage (*Options a-c*) of the recreational allocation to the commercial sector until such a time that recreational landings reach a predetermined threshold (*Options d-f*). If this threshold is met, the recreational and commercial allocations will revert to 68% for the recreational sector and 32% for the commercial sector.

Conditional Quota Transfer (MUST CHOOSE ONE):

Option a: Transfer 5% of the recreational allocation to the commercial sector.

Option b: Transfer 10% of the recreational allocation to the commercial sector.

Option c: Transfer 20% of the recreational allocation to the commercial sector.

Recreational ACL Threshold (MUST CHOOSE ONE):

Option d: Revert to the status quo sector allocations if 80% of the adjusted recreational sector ACL is landed.

Option e: Revert to the status quo sector allocations if 90% of the adjusted recreational sector ACL is landed.

Option f: Revert to the status quo sector allocations if 100% of the adjusted recreational sector ACL is landed.

Alternative 5: Establish a sunset provision for any change in the status quo sector allocations for Gulf migratory group king mackerel (68% for the recreational sector and 32% for the commercial sector). After the predetermined time period, any change in sector allocations would revert back to the allocations specified in the original Coastal Migratory Pelagics Fishery Management Plan for the Gulf of Mexico.

Option a: Sunset any change in sector allocations after a five year period (2016-2020).

Option b: Sunset any change in sector allocations after a ten year period (2016-2025).

Option c: Sunset any change in sector allocations after a fifteen year period (2016-2030).

Other Business: HMS Advisory Panel meeting

Anna Beckwith provided an update from the HMS Advisory Panel meeting. At the HMS meeting, Steve English (Mackerel AP member) submitted a letter to HMS to consider a trip limit or bycatch allowance for sharpnose, bonnethead and finetooth sharks when small coastal shark (SCS) close due to the blacknose ACL being met. In recent years, SCS have closed before September. This has resulted in discards of non-blacknose SCS during a productive time of the year for Spanish mackerel gillnet fishermen. HMS may consider changes to SCS management to reduce discards of non-blacknose SCS.

Task and Timing Motion:

MOTION #6: ADOPT THE TIMING AND TASK ITEMS AS PRESENTED:

1. PREPARE DRAFT AMENDMENT 26 FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS IN DECEMBER 2015.
2. ALLOW STAFF/IPT TO REORGANIZE DOCUMENT AND ACTIONS AS NECESSARY.
3. DRAFT A LETTER TO HMS IN SUPPORT OF A TRIP LIMIT AND POSSIBLE BYCATCH ALLOWANCE FOR HMS (SMALL COASTAL) SHARKS IN THE SPANISH MACKEREL GILLNET FISHERY.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL.