

# **OVERVIEW**

## **Mackerel Committee Meeting**

June 16, 2016  
Hilton Cocoa Beach Oceanfront  
1550 N. Atlantic Avenue  
Cocoa Beach, Florida

Following approval of the agenda and the March 2016 minutes, the Mackerel Committee will receive reports from SERO on (A) the status of commercial and recreational catches versus the respective ACLs/quotas for Atlantic group king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, and cobia. SERO will also provide (B) a status update on Amendment 26. Next, the Committee will be updated on (C) Gulf Council decisions at their April 2016 meeting.

This will be followed by (D) a summary report of actions and decisions by states and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) in regard to Atlantic cobia. Next, Council staff will provide (E) an overview of public input received in regard to Atlantic cobia and at the public Q&A meeting in May 2016. The Committee will next review and discuss (F) Framework Amendment 4 (Atlantic cobia management measures).

Next, the Committee will review (G) Framework Amendment 5 (modify permit restrictions), followed by an update on (H) Amendment 29 (Gulf king mackerel allocations, accountability measures and framework procedure). Lastly, the Committee will address issues under (I) Other Business if necessary.

### **A. Status of Landings for Coastal Migratory Pelagic Species (Attachments 1 and 2)**

The Committee will receive status updates on landings (commercial and recreational) for Atlantic Group king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, and cobia.

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Discuss and take action as necessary.

### **B. Status of Amendments Approved for Secretarial Review**

- CMP Amendment 26 (king mackerel ACLs, allocations, stock boundary, incidental catch)  
– currently in preparation to be submitted for formal review in June 2016

### **C. Gulf Council Report (Attachment 3)**

Council staff will provide an overview of Gulf Council decisions at their April 2016 meeting for Amendment 26, and development of Amendment 29.

### **D. Summary of State and ASMFC Decisions Regarding Atlantic Cobia (Attachment 4)**

Council staff will provide a summary of recent actions and decisions by the Virginia Marine Resources Commission, the North Carolina Marine Fisheries Commission, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (under SC Congressional ratification and approval by the governor), and the ASMFC Interstate Fisheries Management Program (ISFMP) Policy Board regarding Atlantic cobia. **Attachment 4** also includes the reports and minutes from the recent meetings, as available.

#### **E. Summary of Public Input Received Regarding Atlantic Cobia (Attachments 5a-5e)**

Council staff will review public input received in reference to Atlantic cobia and on potential actions in Framework Amendment 4. **Attachment 5a** includes a summary of public input and **Attachment 5b** includes all written correspondence received by 5pm on May 20, 2016. A public Q&A session on cobia was held in Kitty Hawk, NC, on May 9, 2016, and was also broadcast via webinar. The question log from the Q&A is in **Attachment 5c** and the recording of the meeting is **Attachment 5d** (large file). **Attachment 5e** is a summary of Atlantic cobia management that was provided to the states, ASMFC, and on [www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net) as part of the Q&A materials, and was posted on May 5, 2016. This summary document will be updated as needed to incorporate changes in state management of cobia.

#### **F. CMP Framework Amendment 4 (Attachments 6a/6b)**

In March 2016, the Council directed staff to begin work on a framework amendment (**Attachment 6a**) with actions to modify or establish management measures for Atlantic cobia, including recreational harvest limits (bag and vessel limits), increased minimum size limit, changes to the fishing year, changes to the recreational accountability measure, and a step-down for commercial harvest. Council staff will present the decision document for Framework Amendment 4 (**Attachment 6b**), which includes the expected timeline, draft actions and alternatives, and preliminary analyses.

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Review and approve actions and alternatives; modify the document as needed; select preferred alternatives; and approve for public hearings

#### **G. CMP Framework Amendment 5 (Attachments 7a/7b)**

In January 2016, the Gulf Council directed staff to develop a framework amendment to modify regulations to remove restrictions on commercial king mackerel and Spanish mackerel permits that prohibit retaining the bag limit on recreational (non-commercial and non-charter/headboat) trips on federally permitted vessels when commercial harvest is closed in that zone, for the Gulf region only (**Attachment 7a**). King mackerel and Spanish mackerel are the only two species with this restriction on federally permitted vessels.

Council staff will provide a decision document for the framework amendment (**Attachment 7b**). The Committee will consider a joint framework amendment with the Gulf Council to modify the regulations to apply to the Gulf, South Atlantic and Mid-Atlantic regions. If the South Atlantic Council does not move forward with a joint framework amendment, Framework Amendment 5 will be a Gulf framework amendment and the action will only apply for the Gulf region.

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Review and approve action and alternatives; modify the document as needed.

#### **H. CMP Amendment 29 (Attachment 8)**

The South Atlantic Council and Gulf Council approved Amendment 26 for formal review in March 2016 and April 2016, respectively. The Councils had selected the No Action alternative as the preferred alternative under the action that would change the commercial and recreational allocations of Gulf king mackerel. The Gulf Council is interested in continuing to explore options for allocations of Gulf king mackerel and directed staff to start work on Amendment 29,

which also includes an action to modify Gulf king mackerel accountability measures, and an action to modify the framework procedure. The Gulf Council is administrative lead on the amendment and is in the process of developing actions and alternatives to present to the South Atlantic Council in September. Council staff will review the expected timeline, status and potential actions for Amendment 29 (**Attachment 8**). The Committee will discuss and take action as necessary.

**I. Other Business**

The Committee will address items under Other Business as appropriate.

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Discuss and take action as necessary