



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Dr. Michelle Duval, Chair | Charlie Phillips, Vice Chair
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OVERVIEW

Mackerel Committee Meeting

March 10, 2016

Westin Jekyll Island

110 Ocean Way

Jekyll Island, Georgia

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.

Next, the Committee will be updated on (B) Gulf Council decisions at their January 2016 meeting. This will be followed by a (C) report from the Mackerel Advisory Panel meeting, and a (D) summary of public comments received at hearings in January and February 2016.

The Committee will next review the (E) decision document for Amendment 26. The Committee will select preferred alternatives, modify the amendment and necessary, and approve the amendment to be sent for Secretarial review.

SERO staff will provide a (F) report on the 2016 recreational season for Atlantic cobia. The Committee will review a (G) brief options paper on potential actions for a framework amendment addressing recreational Atlantic cobia, and direct staff on development of the framework amendment.

Lastly, the Committee will address issues under 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. Gulf Council Report (*Attachment 3*)

Council staff will provide an overview of Gulf Council decisions at their January 2016 meeting for Amendment 26 and a new Gulf framework amendment.

C. Advisory Panel Report (Attachments 4a/4b)

Council staff will present the report from the Mackerel Advisory Panel (AP) meeting on February 3, 2016 (**Attachment 4a**). The AP reviewed and provided recommendations on Amendment 26 and the For-Hire Reporting Amendment. Meeting minutes are available in **Attachment 4b**. Ira Laks, AP Chair, will be in attendance to answer questions and provide additional information about the AP recommendations.

D. Public Comments Summary (Attachment 5)

Council staff will provide a summary of public comments received during the comment period and at the public hearings for Amendment 26. **Attachment 5** includes the summary, public hearing minutes, and written comments.

E. CMP Amendment 26 (Attachments 6a-6c)

Amendment 26 (**Attachment 6a**) includes several actions for king mackerel, including updated annual catch limits (ACLs), stock boundary, allocations, incidental catch allowance in the shark fishery, and Florida East Coast management measures. Council staff will review the actions and alternatives, including recommendations from the AP and public comments, in the decision document (**Attachment 6b**). The codified text (**Attachment 6c**) will be provided at the meeting.

The amendment is scheduled to be approved for formal review by the South Atlantic Council at this meeting, and approved for formal review by the Gulf Council at their April meeting. The Councils must agree on all preferred alternatives before the amendment can be sent to NMFS for review.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Select preferred alternatives, modify the amendment as needed, deem the codified text as necessary and appropriate, and recommend approval for formal review by the Secretary of Commerce.

F. 2016 Recreational Season for Atlantic Cobia (Attachments 7a and 7b)

In December 2015, the Mackerel Committee was notified that recreational landings for Atlantic cobia were at 241% of the recreational ACL through the end of August, based on MRIP estimates. The landings through Wave 5 (end of October) were at 245% of the recreational ACL.

The accountability measure for Atlantic cobia was established in Amendment 18 and states:

If the Total ACL is exceeded, the RA shall publish a notice to reduce the length of the following fishing year by the amount necessary to ensure landings meet the ACT but do not exceed the recreational sector quota for the following fishing year. The RA may also make further adjustments to the fishing year following an ACL overage during the next fishing year. If overfished the ACL and ACT for the following season will also be reduced. Recreational landings will be evaluated relative to the ACL based on a moving multi-year average of landings, as described in the FMP.

SERO staff will review the process and analysis used to set the 2016 recreational season (**Attachment 7a**). The NMFS notice for the 2016 recreational season is expected to be published soon, and will be included as **Attachment 7b** as soon as it is available.

G. Options Paper for Framework Action on Atlantic Cobia (*Attachment 7c*)

Council staff will follow with a brief options paper on potential management measures to include in a framework action. The Committee will provide direction to staff on a timeline for the framework amendment and potential actions and alternatives to be included for review at the June 2016 meeting.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Discuss and take action as necessary; provide direction to staff on development of a new amendment.