



Gulf of Mexico Migratory Group Cobia Draft Options

CMP Amendment 32



Overview / Recent Cobia Management

Framework Amendment 7 (March 2020): increased minimum size limit for Gulf Zone cobia; retained existing possession limit.

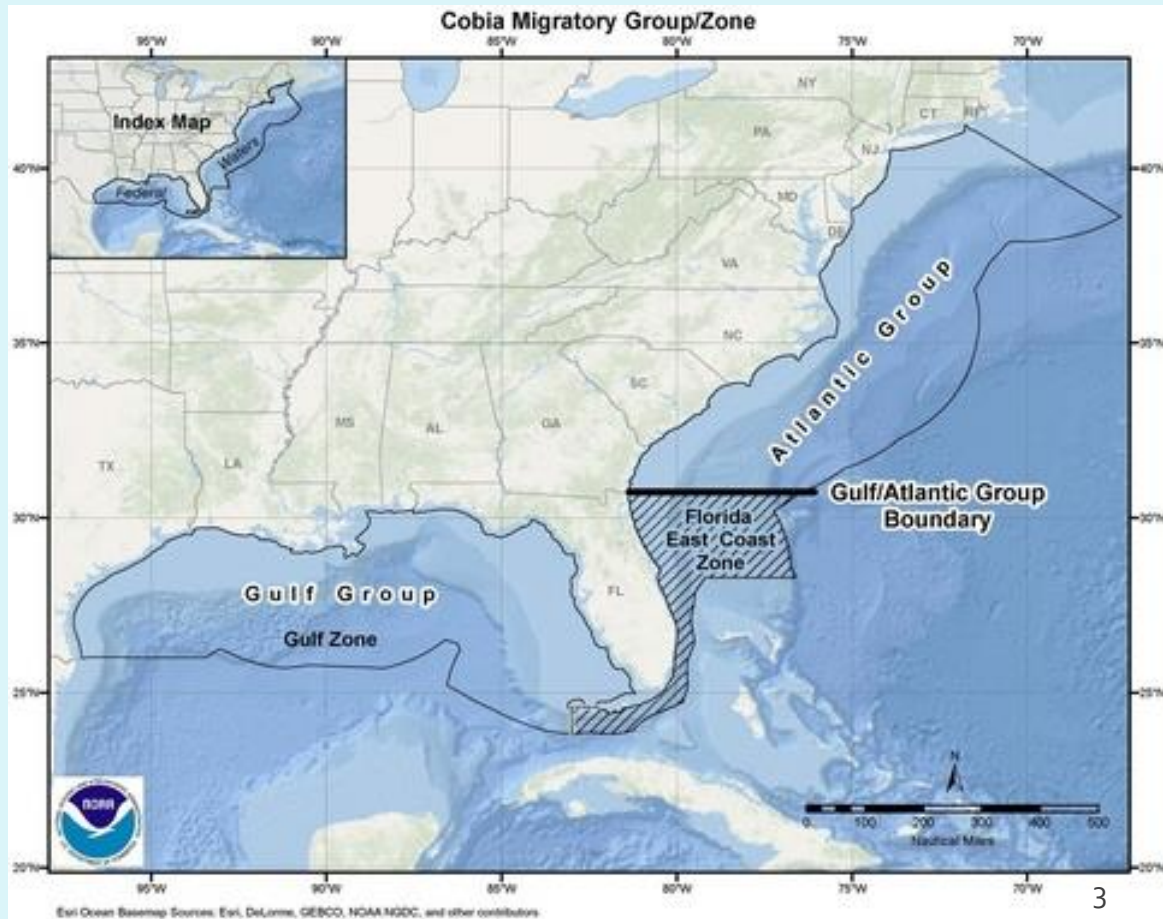
SEDAR 28 Update (June 2020): Gulf Cobia is not overfished but is undergoing overfishing.

Council motion (September 2020)

- To direct staff to start a plan amendment to reduce the fishing mortality in the commercial and recreational cobia fishery in the Gulf of Mexico, which will include bag limits, vessel limits, size limits, and catch limit options.
- Potential Actions and Alternatives for CMP 32
 - Update the CMP framework procedure

Gulf Cobia Zone Management

- Managed jointly between the South Atlantic and Gulf Council
- Divided into two zones:
 - Gulf Zone – GMFMC
 - 64% of stock ACL
 - Single stock
 - Florida East Coast Zone (FLEC) – SAFMC
 - 36% of stock ACL
 - 92% Recreational
 - 8% Commercial



Most Recent Cobia Action: Framework Amendment 7 (March 2020)

Purpose: To reduce fishing mortality of Gulf cobia in response to concerns that harvest rates have decreased in waters in the Gulf Zone.

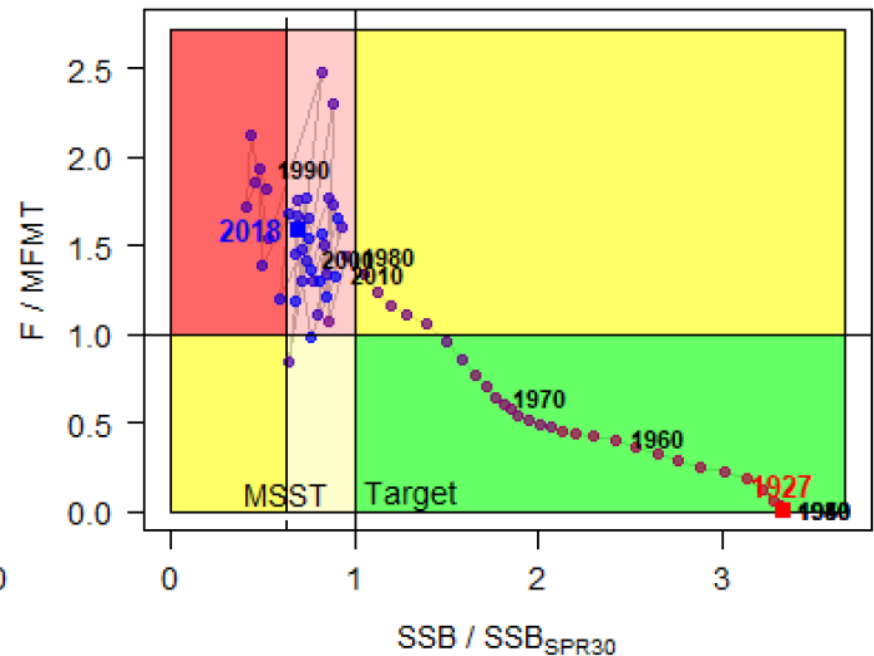
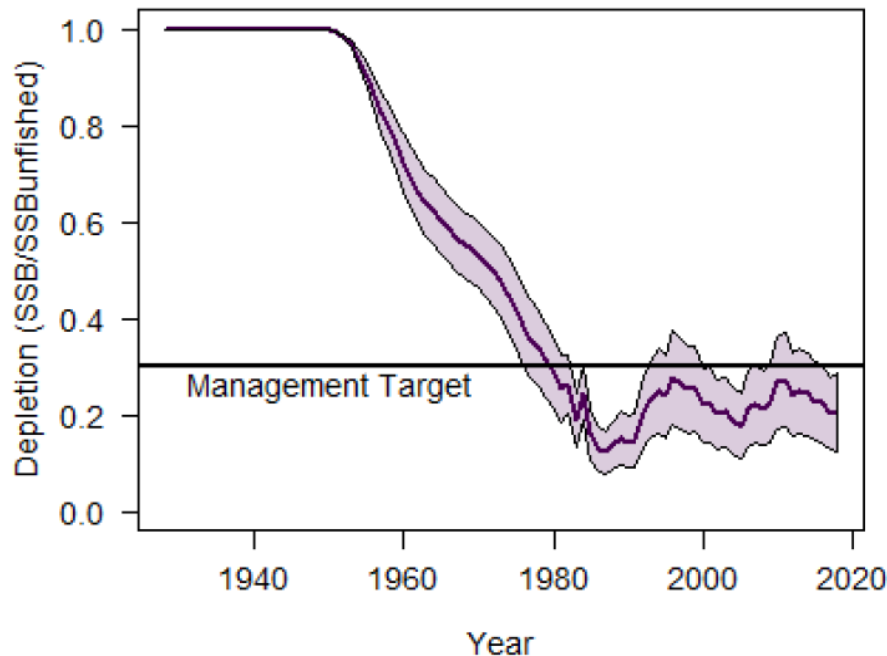
- Increased minimum size limit
- Considered changing possession limit

Increased minimum size limit - Increased from 33" FL to 36" FL for Gulf Zone cobia (Florida East Coast Zone still 33" FL in federal waters)

Possession limit – No action. Do not change the current two fish per person daily recreational and commercial possession limit for Gulf cobia, regardless of the number or duration of trips.

SEDAR 28U (2020)

- Terminal year 2018
- FES adjustments to the recreational catch and effort.
- Not overfished; undergoing overfishing
- Overfishing has occurred every year from 1975 – 2018, except in 1993 and 2009



Draft Actions for CMP 32

Action 1	Modify the Gulf migratory group cobia (Gulf cobia) OFL, ABC, and ACL
Action 2	Modify the Gulf cobia ACL apportionment between the Gulf Zone and Florida East Coast Zone
Action 3	Modify the ACT for the Gulf and FLEC Zones
Action 4	Modify the Gulf cobia possession limit
Action 5	Increase the Gulf cobia minimum size limit
Action 6	Modify the CMP Framework Procedure

Action 1 – Modify the Gulf Cobia OFL, ABC, and ACL

Alternative 1 No Action. Retain the OFL, ABC and total ACL for Gulf cobia as implemented in 2015 by CMP Amendment 20B.

MRIP-CHTS

*Hypothetical FES
(SEDAR 28U)*

Current		
Gulf Cobia (Total)		
OFL	ABC	ACL
2.66	2.60	2.60
4.87	4.5	4.5

Alternative 2 Modify the OFL, ABC and total ACL for Gulf cobia based on the recommendation of the Gulf SSC.

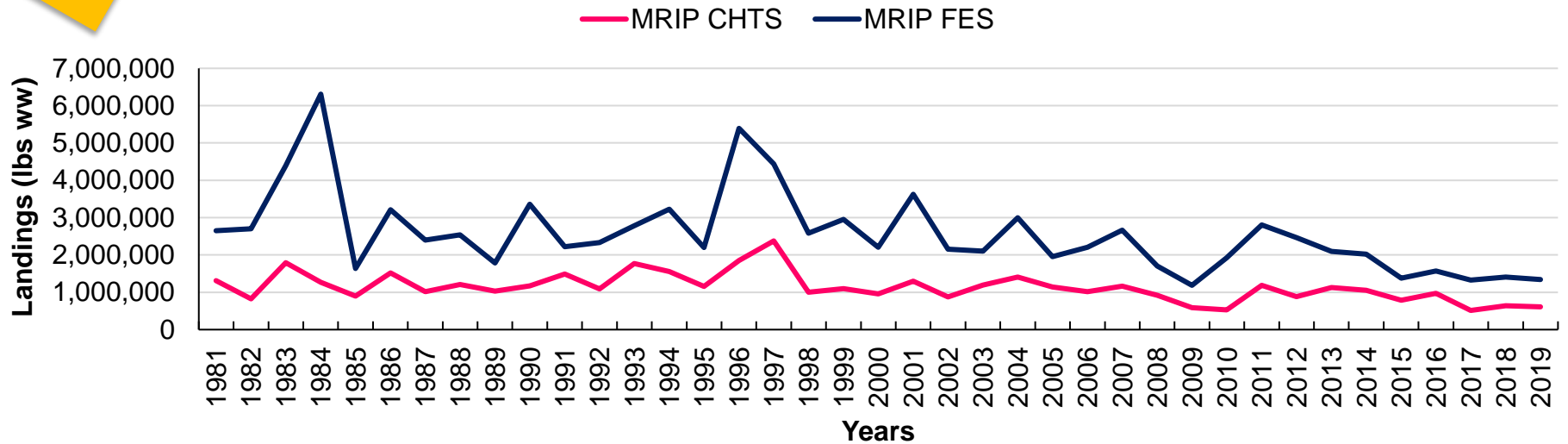
MRIP-FES

Gulf SSC Recommendation			
	Gulf Cobia (Total)		
Year	OFL	ABC	ACL
2021	3.03	2.34	2.34
2022	3.21	2.60	2.60
2023+	3.31	2.76	2.76

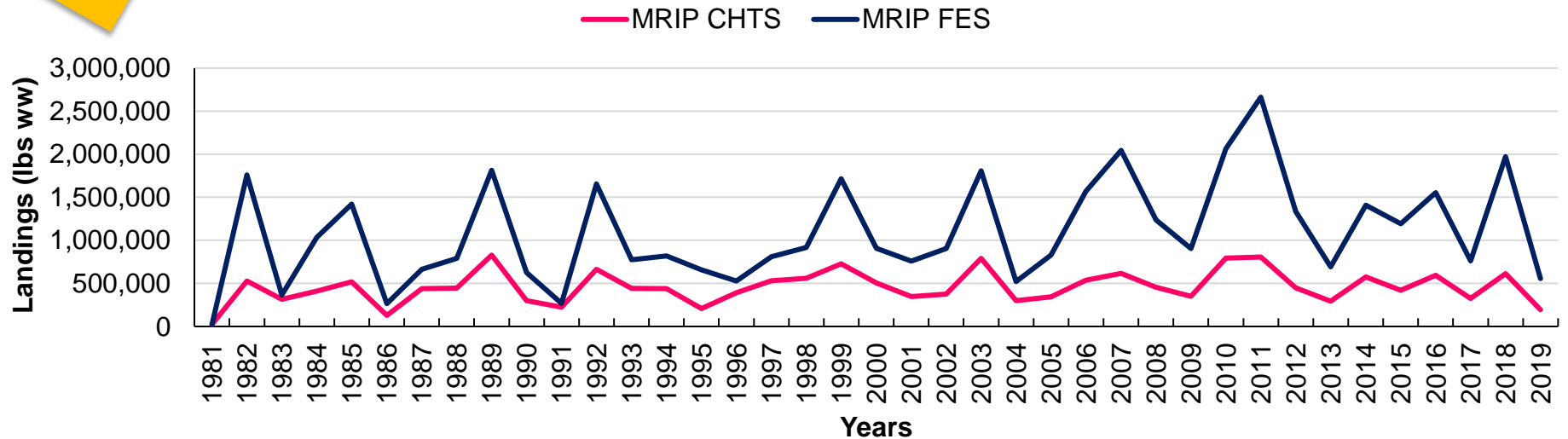
Note: All units in mp ww.



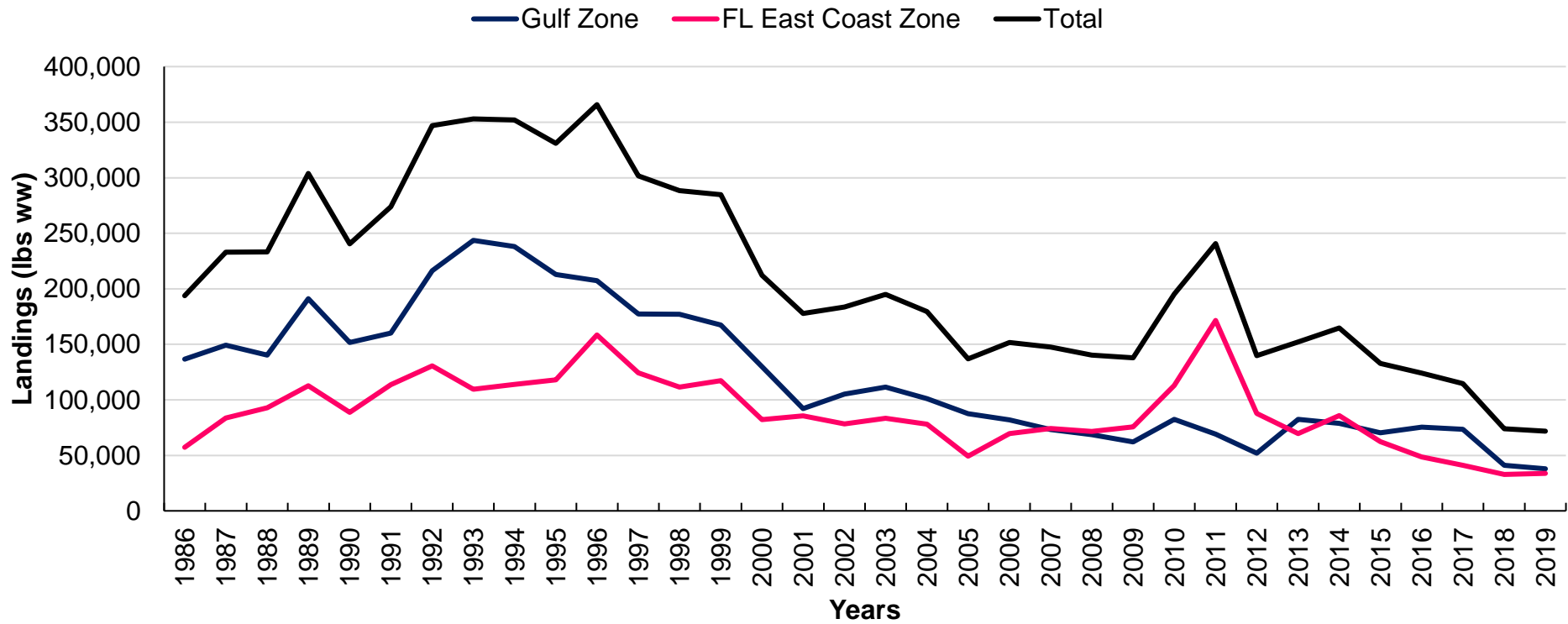
Gulf Zone Recreational Landings (1981 – 2019)



Florida East Coast Zone Recreational Landings (1981 – 2019)



Commercial landings (1986 – 2019)



Action 2 – Modify the Gulf cobia ACL apportionment between the Gulf Zone and Florida East Coast Zone

Alternative 1: No action. Retain the current apportionment of 64% Gulf Zone and **36% FLEC Zone** based on MRIP-CHTS average landings from 1998-2012. Retain the current Zone ACLs.

Gulf Zone	FL East Coast Zone
ACL = 64% of ABC	ACL = 36% ABC Commercial ACL= 8% ACL Recreational ACL= 92% ACL

Alternative 2: Retain the current apportionment of 64% Gulf Zone and **36% FLEC Zone**, BUT monitor the ACL in MRIP-FES.

Action 2 – Modify the Gulf cobia ACL apportionment between the Gulf Zone and Florida East Coast Zone

Alternative 3: Modify the ACL apportionment to be 63% Gulf Zone and **37% FLEC Zone** based on the MRIP-FES average Zone landings for 1998 – 2012.

Alternative 4: Modify the ACL apportionment to be 62% Gulf Zone and **38% FLEC Zone** based on MRIP-FES average landings from 2001 – 2015.

Alternative 5: Modify the ACL apportionment to be 59% Gulf Zone and **41% FLEC Zone** based on MRIP-FES average landings 2003 – 2019.

ACL Monitoring

Gulf Zone Cobia (lbs ww, MRIP-CHTS)

Year	Recreational Landings	Commercial Landings	Total Landings	ACT	ACT %	ACL	ACL %
2015	784,457	70,370	854,827	1,450,000	59.0	1,610,000	53.1
2016	974,015	75,559	1,049,574	1,500,000	70.0	1,660,000	63.2
2017	515,257	73,604	588,861	1,500,000	39.3	1,660,000	35.5
2018	638,909	41,069	679,978	1,500,000	45.3	1,660,000	41.0
2019	612,842	37,993	650,835	1,500,000	43.4	1,660,000	39.2

Source: SEFSC Commercial ACL data (August 2020), and SEFSC Recreational ACL data (Accessed October 2020).

ACL Monitoring

Florida East Coast Zone (lbs ww, MRIP-CHTS)

Year	Rec. Landings	Com. Landings	Total Landings	Rec. ACT	Rec. ACL	Rec. %ACT	Rec. %ACL	Com. ACL	Com. %ACL
2015	420,776	62,464	483,240	680,000	830,000	61.9	50.7	70,000	89.2
2016	592,812	48,611	641,423	710,000	860,000	83.5	68.9	70,000	69.4
2017	323,516	41,043	364,559	710,000	860,000	45.6	37.6	70,000	58.6
2018	614,607	32,839	647,446	710,000	860,000	86.6	71.5	70,000	46.9
2019*	194,126	33,874	228,000	710,000	860,000	27.3	22.6	70,000	48.4

Source: SEFSC Commercial ACL data (August 2020), and SEFSC Recreational ACL data (Accessed October 2020).

Action 3: Modify Gulf Cobia ACT for Gulf and FLEC Zones Based on Apportionment Selected in Action 2

Alternative 1: Use currently established ACT calculations of 90% of stock ACL for the Gulf Zone and [(1-PSE) or 0.5, whichever is greater] of the recreational sector ACL for the FLEC Zone to determine the ACT.

Alternative 2: Use the Gulf ACL/ACT Control Rule to calculate ACTs in the Gulf Zone and for the recreational sector in the FLEC Zone.

Alternative 3: Establish an ACT for the commercial sector in the FLEC Zone using the Gulf ACL/ACT Control Rule.

	Gulf Zone	FL East Coast Zone
	ACL = X% of ABC	ACL = X% ABC Commercial ACL= 8% ACL Recreational ACL= 92% ACL
Alt. 1	Stock ACT = 90% ACL	Rec. ACT = ACL [(1-PSE) or 0.5, whichever is greater]
Alt. 2 & 3	Stock ACL/ACT control rule	Rec and Com. ACL/ACT control rule

Action 4 – Modify the Gulf Cobia Possession Limit

Alternative 1: No action. Retain the two fish per person daily recreational and commercial possession limit, regardless of the number or duration of trips.

Alternative 2: Reduce the recreational and commercial daily possession limit to one fish per person, regardless of the number or duration of trips.

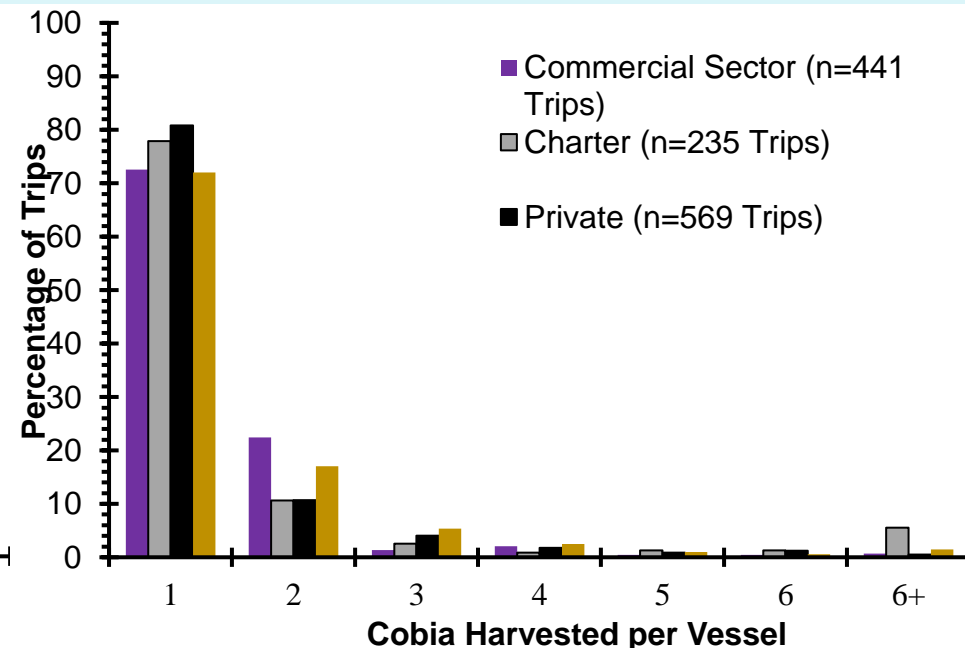
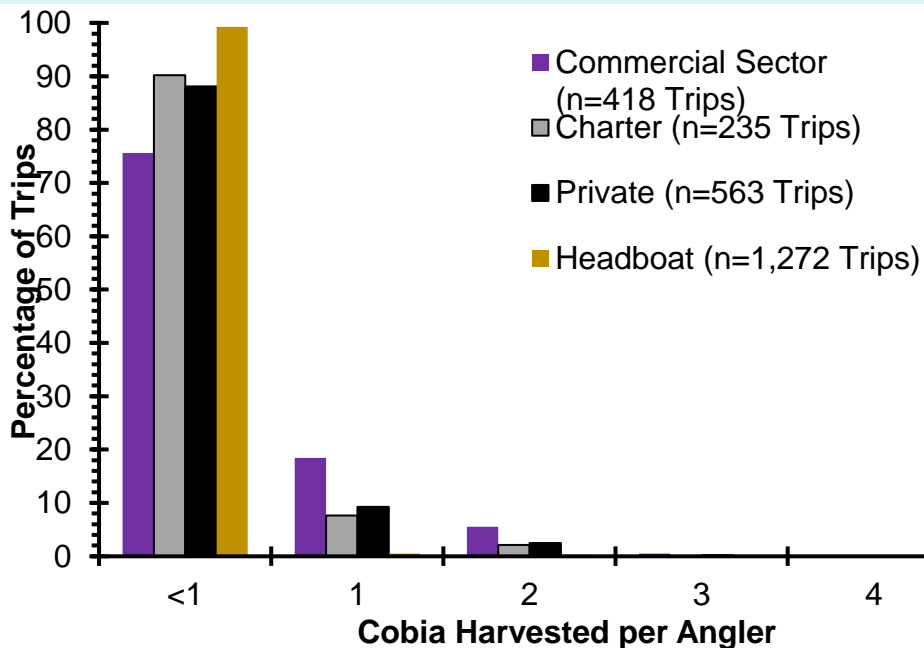
- **Option 2a:** in the Gulf Zone
- **Option 2b:** in the FLEC Zone

Alternative 3: Create a recreational and commercial daily vessel limit for Gulf cobia. Anglers may not exceed the per person possession limit.

- **Option 3a:** in the Gulf Zone
 - Suboptions: 2, 4, 6 fish per vessel
- **Option 3b:** in the FLEC Zone
 - Suboptions: 2, 4, 6 fish per vessel

Analyses from Framework Amendment 7 (2015 – 2017, Gulf Zone)

Alternative	% Reduction	
	Commercial	Recreational
Preferred Alternative 1 No Action	0.0	0.0
Alternative 2, 1 Cobia per Person	6.0	4.0
Alternative 3a, 2 Cobia per Vessel	5.0	9.1
Alternative 3b, 4 Cobia per Vessel	1.6	3.7
Alternative 3c, 6 Cobia per Vessel	0.7	1.5



Action 5 – Increase the Gulf Cobia Minimum Size Limit

Alternative 1: No action, retain current rec. and com. minimum size limit of 36" FL in Gulf Zone, and 33" FL in Florida East Coast Zone

Alternative 2: Retain the current rec. and com. minimum size limit of 36" FL in the Gulf Zone and increase the rec. and com. minimum size limit to 36" FL in the Florida East Coast Zone.

Alternative 3: Increase the rec. and com. minimum size limit to 39" FL.

- Option 3a: in the Gulf Zone
- Option 3b: in the Florida East Coast Zone

Alternative 4: Increase the rec. and com. minimum size limit to 42" FL.

- Option 4a: in the Gulf Zone
- Option 4b: in the Florida East Coast Zone

Analyses from Framework Amendment 7 (2015 – 2017, Gulf Zone)

Alternative	Size Limit (Inches FL)	% Reduction	
		Commercial	Recreational
Alternative 1 (No Action)	33	0.0	0.0
Preferred Alternative 2	36	10.3	26.1
Alternative 3	39	29.0	47.0
Alternative 4	42	55.9	61.7

Action 6 – Modify the Framework Procedure

Alternative 1: No action. Retain the current framework procedure for the responsibilities of each Council to set regulations for the Gulf migratory group cobia as adopted in Amendment 20B and revised in Amendment 26.

Recommendations with respect to the Atlantic migratory groups of king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, and cobia will be the responsibility of the South Atlantic Council, and those for the Gulf migratory groups of king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, and cobia will be the responsibility of the Gulf Council, with the following exceptions:

- a. The South Atlantic Council will have responsibility to set vessel trip limits, closed seasons or areas, or gear restrictions for the east coast of Florida including the Atlantic side of the Florida Keys for Gulf migratory group cobia.

Action 6 – Modify the Framework Procedure

Alternative 2: Modify the framework procedure to update the responsibility to each Council for setting regulations for the Gulf migratory group cobia

Recommendations with respect to the Atlantic migratory groups of king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, and cobia will be the responsibility of the South Atlantic Council, and those for the Gulf migratory groups of king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, and cobia will be the responsibility of the Gulf Council, with the following exceptions:

- a. The South Atlantic Council will have the responsibility to specify management measures that affect only the east coast of Florida including the Atlantic side of the Florida Keys for Gulf migratory group cobia.

Questions?



COURTESY: BRIAN O'HANLON