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THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

## **King and Spanish Mackerel Port Meetings**

Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel Meeting – April 2023



# Overview

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Background

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Current King and Spanish Mackerel Activities

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Coastal Migratory Pelagics FMP Goals and Objectives

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Purpose of Port Meetings

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Possible Structure of Port Meetings

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Next Steps

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Discussion Questions





# Background

- During their April 2019 meeting and their October 2022 meeting, the Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel passed motions requesting the South Atlantic Council set up a series of port meetings to gather more information on the Atlantic king and Spanish mackerel fisheries.







# Atlantic Spanish Mackerel Assessment

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- July 2022: SEDAR 78 completed.
- Fall and Winter 2022/23: SSC reviewed results recommends additional work be completed.
- December 2022: Council passes a motion requesting the SSC provide catch level recommendations by April 2023.
- March 2023: SEFSC sends a letter to the Council indicating the SSC's *“proposed revisions are exploratory in nature and require extensive rework, they cannot be accomplished in a timely fashion.”*
- April 2023: TBD.






# Other Activities

- Mackerel Cobia AP has requested the Council review the split season the Southern Zone, an area that has been subject to regular management changes.
- The American Saltwater Guides Association requested the Council consider re-adding little tunny to the CMP FMP.

# CMP FMP Objectives

<b>Objective 1</b>	The primary objective of this FMP is to achieve and maintain optimum yield, to allow recovery of overfished populations, and maintain population levels sufficient to ensure adequate recruitment.
<b>Objective 2</b>	To provide a flexible management system for the resource which minimizes regulatory delay while retaining substantial Council and public input in management decisions and which can rapidly adapt to changes in resource abundance, new scientific information, and changes in fishing patterns among user groups or by areas.
<b>Objective 3</b>	To achieve robust fishery reporting and data collection systems across all sectors for monitoring the coastal migratory pelagic fishery which minimizes scientific, management, and risk uncertainty.
<b>Objective 4</b>	To minimize gear and user group conflicts.
<b>Objective 5</b>	To distribute the total allowable catch of Atlantic migratory group Spanish mackerel between recreational and commercial user groups based on the catches that occurred during the early to mid-1970s, which is prior to the development of the deep-water run-around gillnet fishery and when the resource was not overfished.
<b>Objective 6</b>	To minimize waste and bycatch in the fishery.
<b>Objective 7</b>	To provide appropriate management to address specific migratory groups of king mackerel.
<b>Objective 8</b>	To optimize the social and economic benefits of the coastal migratory pelagic fisheries.

A photograph of several fishing boats on the ocean under a cloudy sky at sunset or sunrise. The boats are small, white, and have fishing gear visible. The water is dark blue with whitecaps. The sky is a mix of blue, orange, and white clouds.

# What is the Council hoping to achieve?

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- Review and discussion of current CMP FMP management objectives.
- Greater understanding of the complexities of the mackerel fisheries to improve management efforts:
  - Expansion/movement of the fisheries and fishermen response.
  - How the fisheries are utilized and valued by different fleets/sectors.
  - Dynamics of the commercial fleet (mobility, markets, spatial seasonality).
  - How are environmental factors (water quality, HABs, etc.) affecting the fisheries.
  - How do the fisheries interact with other important fisheries.
  - What gears are currently being used and how that has changed over time.



# Meeting Design

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- Focus on king and Spanish mackerel only but be prepared for species likely to come up during discussion (little tunny and cobia).
- Meetings should be open to all members of the public.
- Meetings should be held in key communities throughout the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Coast, up to southern Massachusetts.





# Final Product

Revised goals and objectives for the CMP FMP fishery.

Final report that includes:

Notes from all meetings held.

Thematic analysis identifying various patterns among the different meetings.

# Next Steps

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1

Have the Mackerel Cobia AP discuss their goals for the process and possible outcomes.

2


Develop a structure for how each port meeting will be facilitated, including a draft list of questions that will be used to guide discussions.

3

Begin coordinating with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission as well as the Mid-Atlantic and New England Fishery Management Councils, and state agencies, as appropriate.



# Discussion Questions



- What do AP members hope is the result of these port meetings? What should they accomplish?
- Is there additional information that should be gathered during port meetings to help illustrate the dynamics of the mackerel fishery?
- How should staff identify the key communities to hold port meetings?
- Would AP members be willing to help organize and recruit participants for port meetings?
- What can staff do to help facilitate discussion between different king and Spanish mackerel stakeholders and managers?