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THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

King and Spanish Mackerel Port Meetings

Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel – November 2023



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.





Background

- Port meetings will be open to all stakeholders interested in discussing the mackerel fisheries.
- Port meetings will be held along the Atlantic coast up to southern Massachusetts (in-person) and throughout the Gulf of Mexico (virtual).
- Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, Gulf of Mexico Council, and state agencies involved in development.



South Atlantic Council Goals and Objectives

Evaluation of current goals and objectives of the CMP FMP.

Achieving the maximum economic and social yield from the fishery.

Maintaining the long-term sustainability of stocks.

Maintaining the integrity of fishing communities under climate change.

Achieving the most equitable management structure under climate change.

Identification of underserved communities and EEJ concerns.

Consideration of interjurisdictional management and cooperation with other councils and ASMFC.

Recommended Discussion Topics

- Environmental Conditions:
 - Species movement/expansion:
 - How it may affect future management.
 - How fishermen are responding to changes.
 - How the permit structure may influence their behavior.
 - Water quality and harmful algal blooms.
- Dynamics of the commercial fleet:
 - Mobility of the fleet, market flexibility, spatial seasonality, changes in gear type over time.
 - Differences in the size of fish targeted at different times/areas.
- Dynamics of the recreational fleet:
 - Is there a big catch and release component?
 - What role do tournaments play?
- Differences in how each sector values the mackerel fisheries.
- How mackerel fisheries interact with other important fisheries.
- How can the Council better reach underserved communities?





Final Products

- Updated goals and objectives for the CMP FMP.
- Final Report:
 - Notes from all meetings.
 - Thematic analysis identifying various patterns among the different meetings.
- Plan amendment to address and management needs identified.

Timeline

1

September - December
Planning team develops a strategy for structuring and facilitating port meetings. Key locations identified.

2

January - March
Port meetings plan finalized and approved by South Atlantic Council. Mock port meeting held with the Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel

3

April - December
Port Meetings held throughout the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic regions.

Meeting Design

- Evening meetings (6p-8p) on weeknights.
- Materials provided to attendees could include:
 - Informational handout with summary information on the mackerel fisheries and room for notetaking.
 - Large printed tables and figures around the room to spur conversation during down time.



Draft Meeting Structure



Prelude: space for attendees to answer a question or two (ex. post-it notes to stick to a flipboard).

One thing you hope comes out of port meetings.

One thing the Council needs to know about king or Spanish mackerel.



Introduction: brief presentation introducing port meetings.



Breakout Groups: series of discussion groups to elicit information from attendees on various topics.

CMP FMP Goals and Objectives

Environmental Conditions (species movement, expansion, etc.)

Changes needed to current management structure.



Break: time for information conversations, more interactive flip charts.

Timeline of the fishery.

CMP FMP Goals and Objectives poll.



Sector Dynamics: break out by sector to discuss dynamics of each fleet.

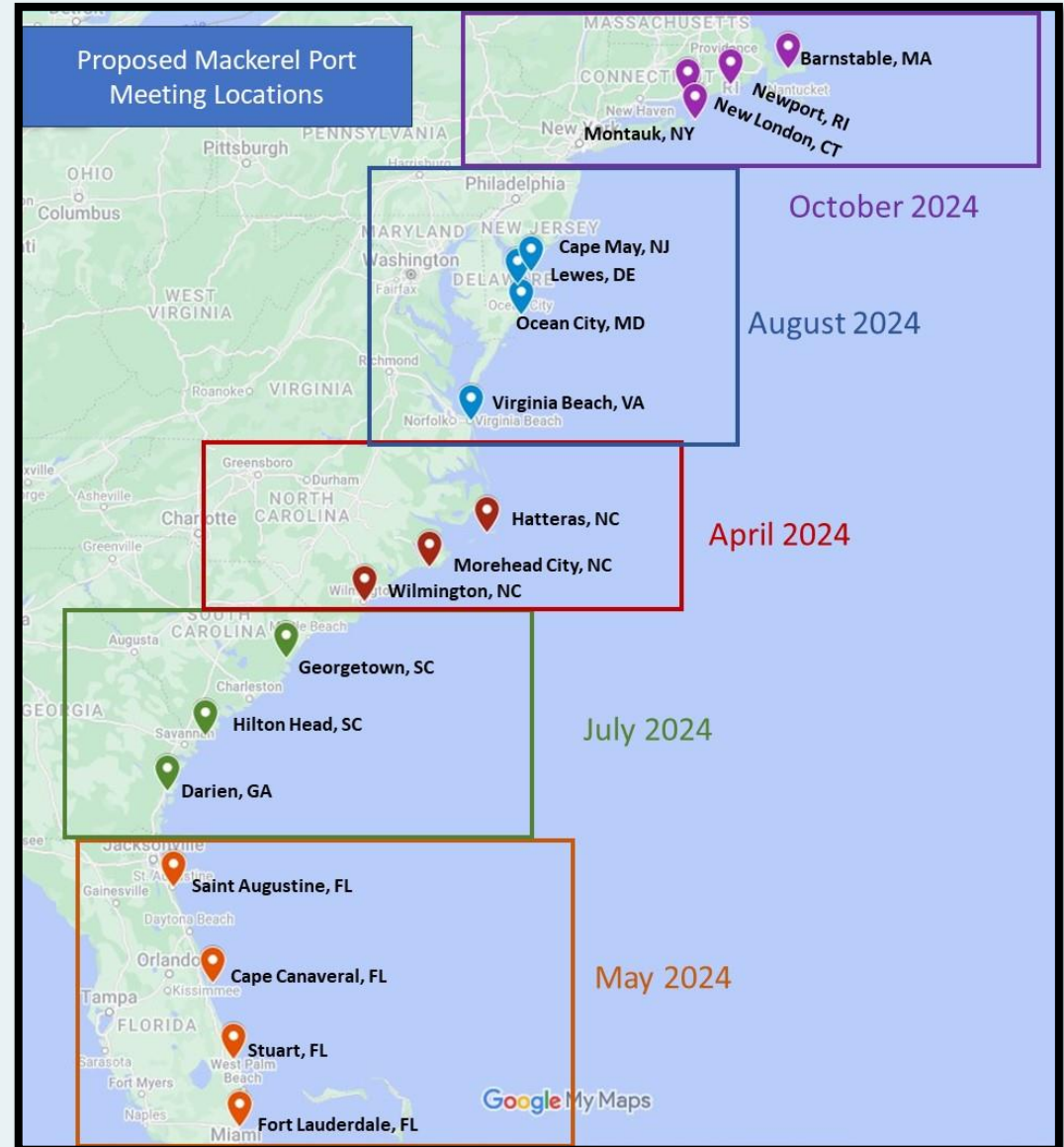


Wrap-Up: recap goals, next steps, and thank you.

Questions for the Mackerel Cobia AP

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1. Would fishermen be willing to attend a two-hour port meeting held in the evening?
 2. What information should staff provide to attendees to facilitate discussion.
 3. Are breakout groups an effective way to gather information from attendees?
 - a) Are the example breakout group categories appropriate?
 4. Approximately how many fishermen in your community might be willing to attend?
 5. Are there other meeting formats or way to encourage discussion that should be considered for port meetings?

Draft Port Meeting Locations



Questions for the Mackerel Cobia AP

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1. Do the listed communities accurately capture areas that are highly engaged in the king and Spanish mackerel fisheries?
 2. Is the tentative timing of port meetings in each state appropriate?
 3. Do you know of specific venues in your community that might be willing to host a port meeting?
 4. What can Council staff do to encourage fishermen to attend port meetings?