



THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Fishery Performance Report: Atlantic King Mackerel

Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel Discussion Questions

November 2023

Background

The Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel (AP) is being asked to provide information to update the fishery performance report (FPR) for Atlantic king mackerel. The purpose of the FPR is to assemble information from AP members' experience and observations on the water and in the marketplace to complement scientific and landings data. The FPRs for Atlantic king mackerel will be provided to the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and the Socio-Economic Panel (SEP) to complement material being used in the future stock assessments and to inform future management of these stocks.

The questions listed below are intended to provoke thoughts about the current state and changes to the Atlantic king mackerel stock and fishery. However, some questions may not be applicable at this time. The scope of the FPR is not limited to the questions listed below, as the intent is to incorporate all relevant observational information that can help with assessing and developing management measures for Atlantic king mackerel.





Past FPRs for Coastal Migratory Pelagic species can be found on the Council's [FPR Application](#). The AP is asked to review these FPRs and provide updates.

Questions for the Advisory Panel

The AP is asked to provide the following information about golden tilefish and blueline tilefish based on their expertise, as appropriate:

1. Have there been **substantial changes** in the Atlantic king mackerel fishery since the 2017/2018 fishing year (terminal year of the last assessments)? If so, describe the timing, location, and what you think caused the change.
2. **Fishing Behavior/Catch Levels:**
 - a. Have there been effort shifts to/from Atlantic king mackerel? If so, please describe, including the time frame for when these shifts occurred.
 - b. Have there been considerable changes in fishing techniques and/or gears used to target Atlantic king mackerel? If so, please describe, including the time frame for when these changes occurred.
 - c. How much fishing for Atlantic king mackerel typically occurs during the day versus at night? Has this changed?
 - d. Do you actively avoid fishing for Atlantic king mackerel in certain areas to avoid catching undersized fish or highly regulated fish to lessen bait loss?
 - e. What do you see in terms of discards in the commercial sector? In the recreational sector?
 - i. How often are Atlantic king mackerel discarded? What are the reasons they are discarded?
 - ii. Do you encounter Atlantic king mackerel as bycatch when fishing for other species? If so, what species are being targeted on these trips?
 - iii. Do you think discard mortality is a significant factor for this species? Has this changed? If so, please describe, including the time frame when the change occurred.
3. **Social and economic influences:**
 - a. For the commercial sector, how has price and demand for Atlantic king mackerel changed?
 - i. Is there increased demand for a specific size of Atlantic king mackerel?





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- b. How has demand for charter/headboat trips targeting Atlantic king mackerel changed?
- c. Among the species you target, how important is Atlantic king mackerel to your overall business (charter or commercial)?
- d. What communities are dependent on the Atlantic king mackerel fishery?
- e. Have changes in infrastructure (docks, marinas, fish houses) affected fishing opportunities for Atlantic king mackerel?
- f. How have fishermen and communities adapted to changes in the Atlantic king mackerel fishery?

4. Management measures:

- a. Are there new management measures that the Council should consider or are there existing management measures (such as size limit, trip limit, bag limit, season, etc.) that should be changed?
- b. Are the current ACL and allocations appropriate for each sector?

5. Environmental/ecological/habitat:

- a. Do you perceive that the abundance of Atlantic king mackerel has changed over the past ten years? If so, how has it changed?
- b. When/where are the fish available, and has this changed? For instance, has there been any shift in catch (annually/seasonally) inshore/offshore or north/south? If so, please describe.
- c. Has the size of the fish that you typically encounter changed? If so, could you briefly describe the trend?
- d. Have you noticed any unique effects of environmental conditions on Atlantic king mackerel? If so, please describe.
- e. What are your observations on the timing and length of the Atlantic king mackerel spawning season in your area (time periods when fish are observed with large ovaries or eggs spilling out)?
- f. What do you see now in terms of recruitment? Where are the small fish? Are large and small fish found in the same locations?
- g. Have you observed changes in catch depth or apparent bottom type fished on?
- h. How have sea conditions affected fishable days?
- i. Have you noticed any change in the species caught with Atlantic king mackerel over the years or seasonally?

6. Other:

- a. What else is important for the Council to know about Atlantic king mackerel?

