

FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT
MACKEREL COBIA COMMITTEE
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Fort Lauderdale, FL
June 14, 2018

The Committee approved minutes from the March 2018 meeting and the agenda.

Status of Commercial Catches versus Quota for Species under ACLs

The Committee received an update on commercial and recreational landings for Atlantic king mackerel, Atlantic Spanish mackerel and Atlantic and Florida east coast cobia from SERO staff.

Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel Report

The Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel (AP) and Cobia Sub-Panel met on April 16th and 17th, 2018. AP Chair Ira Laks provided a summary report of the meeting and presented the Mackerel Cobia AP and Cobia Sub-Panel recommendations to the Committee, including those for Framework Amendment 6 and Amendment 31.

CMP Amendment 31 (Atlantic Cobia Management)

In December 2017, the Committee reviewed a draft document for Coastal Migratory Pelagics Amendment 31 which contains one action with a range of alternatives for management of Atlantic migratory group cobia including: a complementary plan with ASMFC as well as removal of Atlantic cobia from the management unit. The Committee chose a preferred alternative (Alternative 2: Remove Atlantic cobia from the CMP FMP). In March 2018, the Council discussed enforcement of Atlantic cobia in federal waters under Preferred Alternative 2, and the timing for Amendment 31 relative to the upcoming Stock ID Workshop for Atlantic cobia and the amount of time the State of South Carolina may need to get regulations approved in state waters given that have to go through the S.C. Legislature. Additionally, the Council requested additional information from ASMFC on how they intend to deal with regulations in federal waters under the preferred alternative.

Council staff provided updates from the SEDAR 58 Stock ID Workshop and Review for cobia and reviewed a decision document for the actions and alternatives approved by the Council. Bob Beal, ASMFC executive director, provided updates on ASMFC actions relative to future management of Atlantic cobia in federal waters under the Atlantic Coastal Act.

The following motion was approved:

MOTION #1: APPROVE COASTAL MIGRATORY PELAGICS AMENDMENT 31 FOR FORMAL SECRETARIAL REVIEW AND DEEM THE CODIFIED TEXT AS NECESSARY AND APPROPRIATE. GIVE STAFF EDITORIAL LICENSE TO MAKE ANY NECESSARY EDITORIAL CHANGES TO THE DOCUMENT/CODIFIED TEXT AND GIVE THE COUNCIL CHAIR AUTHORITY TO APPROVE THE REVISIONS AND RE-DEEM THE CODIFIED TEXT.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

King mackerel tournament sales and MRIP estimates

The ban on the sale of king and Spanish mackerel caught under the bag limit in Amendment 20A became effective on August 7, 2014. An exception was made for king or Spanish mackerel harvested or possessed under the bag limit during a fishing tournament, which may be donated to a dealer who will sell those fish and donate the proceeds to a charity. This exception is allowed only if the tournament organizers have a permit from a state to conduct that tournament. At the March 2018 meeting, the Committee discussed Atlantic king mackerel tournament sales over the last three years relative to the commercial and recreational Atlantic king mackerel ACLs and expressed concern about double counting of landings. Council staff presented information provided by the Southeastern Fisheries Science Center relative to ACL tracking and tournaments. Catch from tournaments is identified both on commercial dealer reports and MRIP APAIS survey reports. Landings from tournaments are counted against the recreational ACL. Commercial dealer reports indicating tournament catch are removed and not counted against the commercial ACL.

CMP Framework Amendment 6 (Atlantic King Mackerel Trip Limits)

The new regulations for king mackerel established in CMP Amendment 26 became effective on May 11, 2017, including updated commercial trip limits for the Atlantic Southern zone. Stakeholders and the AP/Sub-Panel have recommended that the Council consider revising the trip limits to allow for a higher trip limit north of the Volusia/Brevard county line, which would mirror trip limits prior to Amendment 26. In September 2017, Council staff reviewed a document with options for alternatives to be included in a framework amendment addressing Atlantic king mackerel commercial trip limits. In March 2018, the Council reviewed scoping comments and approved actions and alternatives to be analyzed. Council staff presented a public hearing draft and decision document for CMP Framework Amendment 6.

The following motion was approved:

MOTION #2: APPROVE THE IPT RECOMMENDED CHANGES TO PURPOSE AND NEED

The *purpose* is to modify the commercial trip limit for Atlantic king mackerel in the Atlantic Southern Zone.

The need is to provide ~~anglers with~~ a **commercial** trip limit sufficient to support fishing activity **and revenue opportunity** while constraining harvest to the ACL and providing for year-round access.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #3: APPROVE COASTAL MIGRATORY PELAGICS FRAMEWORK AMENDMENT 6 FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Other Business

Note: Council staff drafts the timing and task motion based on Committee action. If points require clarification, they will be added to the draft motion. The Committee should review this wording carefully to be sure it accurately reflects their intent prior to making the motion.

Timing and Task(s)

MOTION #4: ADOPT THE FOLLOWING TIMING AND TASKS:

1. Prepare CMP Framework Amendment 6 for public hearings and for the September 2018 Council meeting.
2. Upon approval by the Gulf Council, prepare CMP Amendment 31 for submission to the Secretary of Commerce.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL