

FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT
MACKEREL COBIA COMMITTEE
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Stuart, FL
June 13, 2019

The Committee approved minutes from the March 2019 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 Florida east coast cobia from SERO staff.

Status of Amendments Under Formal Review

SERO staff briefed the Committee on the status of CMP Framework 6. The proposed rule published on March 26, 2019 and comments were due April 25, 2019.

Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel Report

The Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel and Cobia Sub-Panel met on April 18, 2019. Ira Laks, AP Chair, provided a summary of the Advisory Panel and Sub-Panel's discussion and recommendations. The Committee discussed the importance of taking a comprehensive look at the commercial and recreational king and Spanish mackerel fisheries.

DIRECTION TO STAFF TO ADD DISCUSSION OF PORT MEETINGS TO THE NEXT MACKEREL COMMITTEE AGENDA. INCLUDING POSSIBLE COLLABORATION WITH THE GULF COUNCIL.

Consideration of Atlantic king mackerel trip limit emergency action

During their April 2019 meeting the Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel passed a motion asking the Council to consider an emergency action to raise the commercial king mackerel trip limit south of the Flagler/Volusia County line, Florida to 75-fish for the 2019-2020 season. Staff presented information on the criteria and justification necessary for an emergency action. The following motion was passed by the Committee:

MOTION #1: REQUEST EMERGENCY ACTION FOR ATLANTIC KING MACKEREL TO RAISE THE CURRENT 50-FISH TRIP LIMIT TO A 75-FISH TRIP LIMIT SOUTH OF THE FLAGLER/VOLUSIA COUNTY LINE FOR SEASON 2 (OCTOBER 1 THROUGH THE END OF FEBRUARY) FOR THE 2019-2020 SEASON

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL (1 OPPOSED)

CMP Framework Amendment 8 (king mackerel commercial trip limits during season two)

During the March 2019 meeting the Council reviewed concerns expressed by fishermen in Florida and the Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel regarding low commercial trip limit in the Atlantic Southern Zone during season two (October to the end of February). The Committee directed staff to begin work on framework amendment to address these concerns. Staff presented

an options paper for consideration by the Committee. The following motions were passed by the Committee:

MOTION #2: APPROVE THE PROPOSED LANGUAGE FOR THE PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENT

The *purpose* is to modify the commercial trip limit for Atlantic king mackerel in the Atlantic Southern Zone during Season 2 (October 1 to the end of February).

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

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #3: APPROVE THE INCLUSION OF ACTION 1/ALTERNATIVES 1 THROUGH 4 IN CMP FRAMEWORK AMENDMENT 8:

Action. Modify the commercial trip limit for Atlantic king mackerel in the Atlantic Southern Zone:

Alternative 1 (No Action): The commercial trip limits for Atlantic king mackerel are:

North of the Flagler/Volusia line (29°25'N): 3,500 pounds year-round.

South of the Flagler/Volusia line (29°25'N) to the Miami-Dade/Monroe line (25°20'24"N):

- March 1 – March 31 (Season 1): 50-fish*
- April 1 – September 30 (Season 1): 75-fish, unless NMFS determines that 75% or more of the Season 1 quota has been landed, then, 50-fish*
- October 1 – January 31 (Season 2): 50-fish
- February 1 – end of February (Season 2): 50-fish, unless NMFS determines that less than 70% of the Season 2 quota has been landed, then, 75-fish.

Alternative 2: Adjust the commercial trip limits for Atlantic king mackerel in the Atlantic Southern Zone for Season 2:

North of the Flagler/Volusia line (29°25'N): 3,500 pounds year-round.

South of the Flagler/Volusia line (29°25'N) to the Miami-Dade/Monroe line (25°20'24"N):

- March 1 – March 31 (Season 1): 50-fish*
- April 1 – September 30 (Season 1): 75-fish, unless NMFS determines that 75% or more of the Season 1 quota has been landed, then, 50-fish*
- October 1 – January 31: 75-fish
- February 1 – end of February: 75-fish, unless NMFS determines that less than 70% of the Season 2 quota has been landed, then, 100-fish.

Alternative 3: Adjust the commercial trip limits for Atlantic king mackerel in the Atlantic Southern Zone for Season 2:

North of the Flagler/Volusia line (29°25'N): 3,500 pounds year-round.

South of the Flagler/Volusia line (29°25'N) to the Miami-Dade/Monroe line (25°20'24"N):

- March 1 – March 31 (Season 1): 50-fish*
- April 1 – September 30 (Season 1): 75-fish, unless NMFS determines that 75% or more of the Season 1 quota has been landed, then, 50-fish*
- October 1 – January 31: 100-fish
- February 1 – end of February: 100-fish, unless NMFS determines that less than 70% of the Season 2 quota has been landed, then, 150-fish.

Alternative 4: Adjust the commercial trip limits for Atlantic king mackerel in the Atlantic Southern Zone for Season 2:

North of the Flagler/Volusia line (29°25'N): 3,500 pounds year-round.

South of the Flagler/Volusia line (29°25'N) to the Miami-Dade/Monroe line (25°20'24"N):

- March 1 – March 31 (Season 1): 50-fish*
- April 1 – September 30 (Season 1): 75-fish, unless NMFS determines that 75% or more of the Season 1 quota has been landed, then, 50-fish*
- October 1 – January 31: 150-fish
- February 1 – end of February: 150-fish, unless NMFS determines that less than 70% of the Season 2 quota has been landed, then, 175-fish.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

History of Spanish mackerel management

During the March 2019 meeting the Council reviewed concerns expressed by the Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel regarding increased participation in the commercial Spanish mackerel fishery. Additionally, stakeholders have expressed concerns about early closures in the Atlantic northern zone (NY through NC) and southern zone (SC to the Miami-Dade/Monroe County line). The Committee directed staff to provide a history of postponed actions to address Spanish mackerel and to discuss possible management changes with the Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel. Council staff reviewed Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel recommendations and Spanish mackerel management options considered in postponed CMP Amendment 24 (Atlantic Spanish allocations). The following motions were passed by the Committee:

MOTION #4: DIRECT STAFF TO PREPARE A WHITE PAPER ON THE NECESSITY OF CONTROLLING EFFORT IN THE COMMERCIAL SPANISH MACKEREL FISHERY, ESPECIALLY THE GILLNET FISHERY.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE (7-0-2)

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

****MOTION #5:** MOVE TO MAKE THE CONTROL DATE **(FOR THE SPANISH MACKEREL COMMERCIAL PERMIT)** FROM THE DATE OF MARCH 2019 MACKEREL COBIA COMMITTEE MEETING **(MARCH 7, 2019)**.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**The highlighted portion of the motion was not read into the record during Committee. A new motion will need to be made to clarify the Council's intent.

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 #6: ADOPT THE FOLLOWING TIMING AND TASKS:

1. Prepare for a discussion of port meetings to gain a comprehensive look at the commercial and recreational king and Spanish mackerel fisheries.
2. Work with SERO staff on an emergency rule to raise the commercial king mackerel trip limit south of the Flagler/Volusia County line from 50-fish to 75-fish for season two of the 2019/2020 season.
3. Continue work on CMP Framework Amendment 8 and prepare a draft for the September 2019 meeting.
4. Prepare a white paper with a thorough analysis of effort in the commercial Spanish mackerel fishery and a discussion of possible avenues to control effort, including: a limited access commercial permit, a limited access gillnet endorsement in the southern zone, and collaboration with state agencies.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL