

FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT
MACKEREL COBIA COMMITTEE
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Jekyll Island, Georgia
March 8, 2022

The Committee approved minutes from the December 2021 meeting and the agenda.

Update on amendments recently submitted to NMFS

At the December 2021 meeting, the Council approved CMP Amendment 32 (Gulf cobia catch levels and management measures) for formal review. The Gulf Council approved CMP Amendment 32 for final action at their October 2021 meeting. Council staff transmitted the document to NMFS on February 18, 2022. NMFS has begun the rulemaking process.

Coastal Migratory Pelagics Amendment 34 - Updates to king mackerel management based on SEDAR 38 Update 2020

At the June 2020 meeting the Council directed staff to begin work on an options paper that would include consideration of sector allocations and catch level adjustments based on SSC recommendations and the recent stock assessment update. Public hearings for Amendment 34 were held via webinar on November 15th and 16th, 2021. Council staff reviewed a decision document, including draft Council rationale.

The Committee noted that, in addition to the draft rationale, **Alternative 2** under **Action 4** (increasing the recreational bag limit from 2-fish to 3-fish per person in federal waters off east Florida) was selected as the preferred alternative because the recreational sector has not been reaching their ACL and a higher bag limit is anticipated to help increase harvest.

Captain Scott Pearce presented feedback from the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel on Action 5 (recreational cut-off (damaged) fish regulations). The Council requested that staff develop a definition for cut-off (damaged) fish that was specific to fish that experienced depredation and were mutilated.

MOTION 1: ACCEPT THE PROPOSED DEFINITION OF A CUT-OFF (DAMAGED) FISH.

For the purposes of Action 5, damaged fish, refers to king or Spanish mackerel that are damaged only through natural predation

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION 2: APPROVE COASTAL MIGRATORY PELAGICS AMENDMENT 34 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 COUNCIL (1 ABSTENTION)

CMP Amendment 33 – Updates to Gulf king mackerel management based on SEDAR 38 Update 2020

Matt Freeman, Gulf Council staff, presented draft options to be considered in Amendment 33, which proposes modifications to catch limits and sector allocations for Gulf king mackerel based on the results of the SEDAR 38 Update stock assessment. The stock assessment found that Gulf king mackerel was not overfished or undergoing overfishing. However, recruitment has been low over the last 10 years, and the spawning stock biomass (SSB) is below the SSB at maximum sustainable yield. The Committee reviewed the proposed actions and alternatives and actions taken by the Gulf Council during their January 2022 meeting.

The following motions were approved:

MOTION 3: TO MOVE OPTION 2C AND 2D OF ALTERNATIVE 2 IN ACTION 2 TO CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED.

Action 2: Modify Sector Allocation and Commercial Zone Quotas for Gulf King Mackerel

Alternative 2: Modify the sector allocation for Gulf king mackerel by reallocating to the commercial sector a percentage of the average difference between the total landings from the 2016/2017 through 2019/2020 fishing years using MRIP-FES data and the total simulated ACL for Model 2 in Appendix B for the predicted total landings by sector and the total projected ACL.

Option 2c: 75% of the average difference

Option 2d: 100% of the average difference

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE
APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION 4: TO REMOVE ACTION 1 FROM AMENDMENT 33 AND START A NEW FRAMEWORK ACTION.

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 5: ADOPT THE FOLLOWING TIMING AND TASKS:

1. Prepare Coastal Migratory Pelagics Amendment 34 for transmittal to the Secretary of Commerce.
2. Work with Gulf Council staff, as needed, to continue work on Coastal Migratory Pelagics Amendment 33.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL