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THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

## **King and Spanish Mackerel Port Meetings**

Outreach and Communications Advisory Panel – October 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.







# Current Mackerel Activities

- Updated Atlantic Spanish mackerel stock assessment.
  - Not overfished or undergoing overfishing, but lower catch level.
- Concerns about the king mackerel stock expressed by stakeholders during Council public comment.
- AP requested review the split season the commercial king mackerel southern zone, an area that has been subject to regular management changes.





# South Atlantic Council Goals and Objectives

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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

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- 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 type.
  - 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 sectors values the mackerel fisheries.
- How mackerel fisheries interact with other important fisheries.
- How can the Council better reach underserved communities?





# Meeting Design

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- Focus on king and Spanish mackerel only
- Meetings should be open to all members of the public with knowledge of the mackerel fisheries.
- Meetings held throughout the Gulf of Mexico (virtual) and Atlantic Coast (in-person), up to southern Massachusetts.







# 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

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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.



# Discussion Questions

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- How can staff distinguish port meetings from other Council outreach efforts (public comment, visioning, MSEs)?
- What types of facilitation methods should be considered when designing port meetings?
  - How can staff encourage two-way discourse between attendees and managers?
  - How might items identified by the Council be organized and prioritized for port meeting discussions?
- Attendance at Council organized meetings can sometimes be challenging, how can staff advertise and encourage participation in port meetings outside of working with Mackerel Advisory Panel members?
- Are there other analysis/products that may be helpful to include in the final report?