

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE



SSC Meeting Report

Nov 21, 2016

Meeting via webinar

**VERSION
FINAL
December 2, 2016**

CONTENTS

| | | |
|----|--|---|
| 1. | INTRODUCTION..... | 5 |
| 2. | SPINY LOBSTER REVIEW..... | 5 |
| 3. | OTHER BUSINESS..... | 8 |
| 4. | REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS REVIEW..... | 8 |

Documents:

- Attachment 1. Spiny Lobster Review Panel Feb 2015
- Attachment 2. Spiny Lobster Review Panel Feb 2015 Background
- Attachment 3. Spiny Lobster Review Panel Mar 2016
- Attachment 4. Spiny Lobster Joint AP Report Apr 2016
- Attachment 5. Standing Socioeconomic and Spiny Lobster SSC Meeting Summary 6-2016
- Attachment 6. Final Spiny Lobster Update Assessment Review Report
- Attachment 7. Lobster Landings Summary Updated 10-10-2016
- Attachment 8. Buesa Analyses
- Attachment 9. Tringali RW Presentation 11-10
- Attachment 10. Butler WECAF 2014
- Attachment 11. Ehrhardt and Fitchett Lobster Recruitment Fisheries Oceanography 19(6) 2010
- Attachment 12. Spiny Lob Lengths
- Attachment 13. Spiny Lob Lengths with Fed Data
- Attachment 14. Spiny Length Comps 85-10
- Attachment 15. Spiny Lobster YPR

Tables:

Table 1. Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council SSC's recommended values (rounded to 2 significant figures) for OFL and ABC for the Spiny Lobster fishery. Utilizes the Gulf SSC's ABC Control Rule of average landings over a reference period (1991/92 - 2015/16 for Spiny Lobster) plus 2 standard deviations for the OFL and 1.5 standard deviations for the ABC.8

SAFMC PUBLIC COMMENT PROCESS

Written comment:

Written comment on SSC agenda topics is to be distributed to the Committee through the Council office, similar to all other Council briefing materials. Written comment to be considered by the SSC shall be provided to the Council office no later than one week prior to an SSC meeting. For this meeting, the deadline for submission of written comment is 12:00 pm Monday, November 14, 2016. Submit written comments to:

SAFMC – SSC Comments
4055 Faber Place Drive
Suite 201
North Charleston, SC 29405
Mike.collins@safmc.net

Verbal comment:

The SSC will take public comment during each agenda topic. Those wishing to comment should indicate such in the manner requested by the Chair, which may be through a show of hands or a written list if the number of interested parties is extensive, who will then recognize individuals to come forward and provide comment. All comments are part of the record of the meeting.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Documents

Agenda

1.2. Action

- Introductions
- Review and Approve Agenda

2. SPINY LOBSTER REVIEW

2.1. Documents

- Attachment 1. Spiny Lobster Review Panel Feb 2015
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2.2. Overview

At their October 2016 meeting, the Committee was tasked with reviewing the available information for Spiny Lobster and recommending an OFL and ABC. During the October review, the Committee felt that there was not enough information provided and not enough time to fully review the available data and make an informed recommendation on catch levels for Spiny Lobster. This webinar was organized in response to a request from the Committee to meet and discuss Spiny Lobster at a later date when more information could be provided and more time could be spent reviewing that information.

Amendment 10 to the Spiny Lobster FMP (2011) established the ACL for spiny lobster at 7.32 million pounds (mp, ACL=ABC) and an annual catch target (ACT) at 6.59 mp. The overfishing threshold was specified as the overfishing level (OFL) and was designated at 7.9 mp.

When the SSCs reviewed spiny lobster to make recommendations to the Councils for the OFL and ABC for Amendment 10, the MSY was unknown. The Gulf Council proposed using the Gulf SSC recommendations for the overfishing limit in Amendment 10. The MSY proxy, also designated as the OFL recommended by the Gulf SSC (at their January 2010 meeting), was derived in the following manner: Using Tier 3a of the Gulf ABC Control Rule, the Gulf SSC recommended an OFL be set as the mean of the most recent landings in the last 10 years (i.e., fishing years 2000/2001-2009/2010) plus two standard deviations from the mean. These years were selected because they represented a period of at least ten years that reflected the most recent conditions of the fishery, and were also relatively stable. Both Councils approved the OFL and ABC recommended by the Gulf SSC in Spiny Lobster Amendment 10.

Following notification of the 2013/2014 landings, the Spiny Lobster Review Panel was convened in February 2015 (Attachments 1&2). The Review Panel made the following recommendations:

- The Panel does not recommend that a new stock assessment be conducted.
- The Panel discussed and concluded that the ACL is the wrong methodology to manage this fishery. It recommended that spiny lobster be considered as having a unique life history to be exempted from having an ACL.
- The Panel recommends that the OFL be redefined as MFMT.

The audio files from this meeting can be accessed at <http://gulfcouncil.org/about/ftp.php>. The username and password are both "gulfguest." Once you log in, click on the "File Station" folder, then the "Library" folder. From there, simply select the Lobster folder. There you will find the folder for the Feb 2015 meeting, which includes the audio recordings. To download, right click on the folders or files to be downloaded, and then click "Download."

Following notification of the 2014/2015 overage, the Councils convened the Spiny Lobster Review Panel via webinar in January 2016. The 2016 Review Panel reviewed landings and other factors that may affect Spiny Lobster catch, and viewed possible catch limits based on different time periods using a tool developed by Gulf Council staff (available here: <http://portal.gulfcouncil.org/SpinyLobster/>).

The 2016 Review Panel made the following recommendations (Attachment 3):

- Calculate the ABC/ACL based on the landings from 1991 through the most recent landings (2015-2016).
- Examine setting the annual catch limit based on a rolling average.
- Examine setting the ACL trigger based on landings and the landings to effort index.

Additionally, the South Atlantic and Gulf Spiny Lobster Advisory Panels met jointly on April 25, 2016. The Joint APs recommended the following relevant to the ABC/ACL (Attachment 4):

- To recommend that the Council accept the recommendation of the review panel "to calculate the ACL based on landings from 1991 through the most recent landings (2015-2016)"
- To recommend that there be a lower landing trigger based on the average of the three low landings years (2001-2002, 2002-2003, 2003-2004) that would initiate a review panel, if below this average for two consecutive years (5.3 mp total catch)

The Gulf Council's Spiny Lobster SSC met in June 2016, and made a recommendation to use the time series of 1991-2015/2016 for an ABC/OFL calculation for Spiny Lobster (Attachment 5).

The South Atlantic Council will review the recommendations from the SSC webinar meeting at their December 2016 meeting and provide guidance to staff. The Gulf Council will review the options paper for a regulatory amendment to revise the OFL, ABC and ACL for spiny lobster at their January 2017 meeting. The timing and actions/alternatives will be decided by the Councils in early 2017.

2.3. Public Comment

2.4. Action

- Review the available information for Spiny Lobster and provide recommendations for ABC and OFL for Spiny Lobster fishery.
 - *Because a large portion of the recruitment to the US Spiny Lobster fishery comes from outside the US EEZ, catches by the US fishery probably have little, if any, effect on the productivity or sustainability of the resource in US waters. Trends in US catches reflect market conditions and changes in recruitment emanating from outside the system.*
 - *Self-recruitment may not be sufficient to sustain productivity of the Spiny Lobster population.*
 - *Self-recruitment is when the local population is responsible for the production (through reproduction and retention mechanisms) of young individuals that recruit into the populations' adult age classes. Comparatively, populations that show external recruitment depend on the influx of young individuals (i.e., recruits) from sources other than the local population.*
 - *However, there is considerable uncertainty regarding the degree of self-recruitment and the actual productivity of the Spiny Lobster stock.*
 - *The primary biological constraints on harvest are ensuring that catch levels do not negatively affect local recruitment or the spiny lobster's role in local ecosystems.*
 - ***Given the information above, the SAFMC SSC endorses the Gulf SSC's ABC Control Rule and recommendation to extend the reference period to include the fishing years 1991/92 – 2015/16 in determining OFL and ABC values for the US Spiny Lobster fishery (see Table 1).***
 - *More research is needed to better assess recruitment dynamics in the US Spiny Lobster population.*
 - *Better metrics for quantifying fishing effort and CPUE should be developed for the Spiny Lobster fishery.*
 - *This OFL/ABC recommendation should be re-evaluated in several years.*

Table 1. Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council SSC's recommended values (rounded to 2 significant figures) for OFL and ABC for the Spiny Lobster fishery. Utilizes the Gulf SSC's ABC Control Rule of average landings over a reference period (1991/92 - 2015/16 for Spiny Lobster) plus 2 standard deviations for the OFL and 1.5 standard deviations for the ABC.

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>OFL</i> | <i>10.46 million lbs.</i> |
| <i>ABC</i> | <i>9.60 million lbs.</i> |

3. OTHER BUSINESS

4. REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS REVIEW

The Committee is provided an opportunity to review its report and final recommendations.

The Final SSC report will be available for the Council at the December Council meeting.

ADJOURN