

Public Hearing Overview: Coastal Migratory Pelagics Amendment 34

(Atlantic king mackerel catch levels and Atlantic king and Spanish mackerel management measures)

November 2021

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Public Hearing Agenda

King Mackerel Management
Background

Why the Councils are
Considering Action

Actions and Alternatives

Amendment Timeline

Upcoming Comment
Opportunities



Photo: John Carmichael

Where are we in the amendment development process?

Fishery Issue:

Management need identified.

Scoping:

Public provides comments on ways to address management need.

Council reviews input and develops management actions and alternatives.

Council reviews analysis and selects preferred alternatives.

Public Hearings:

Public provides comments on management actions and alternatives.

Council reviews input/modifies amendment management actions and alternatives.

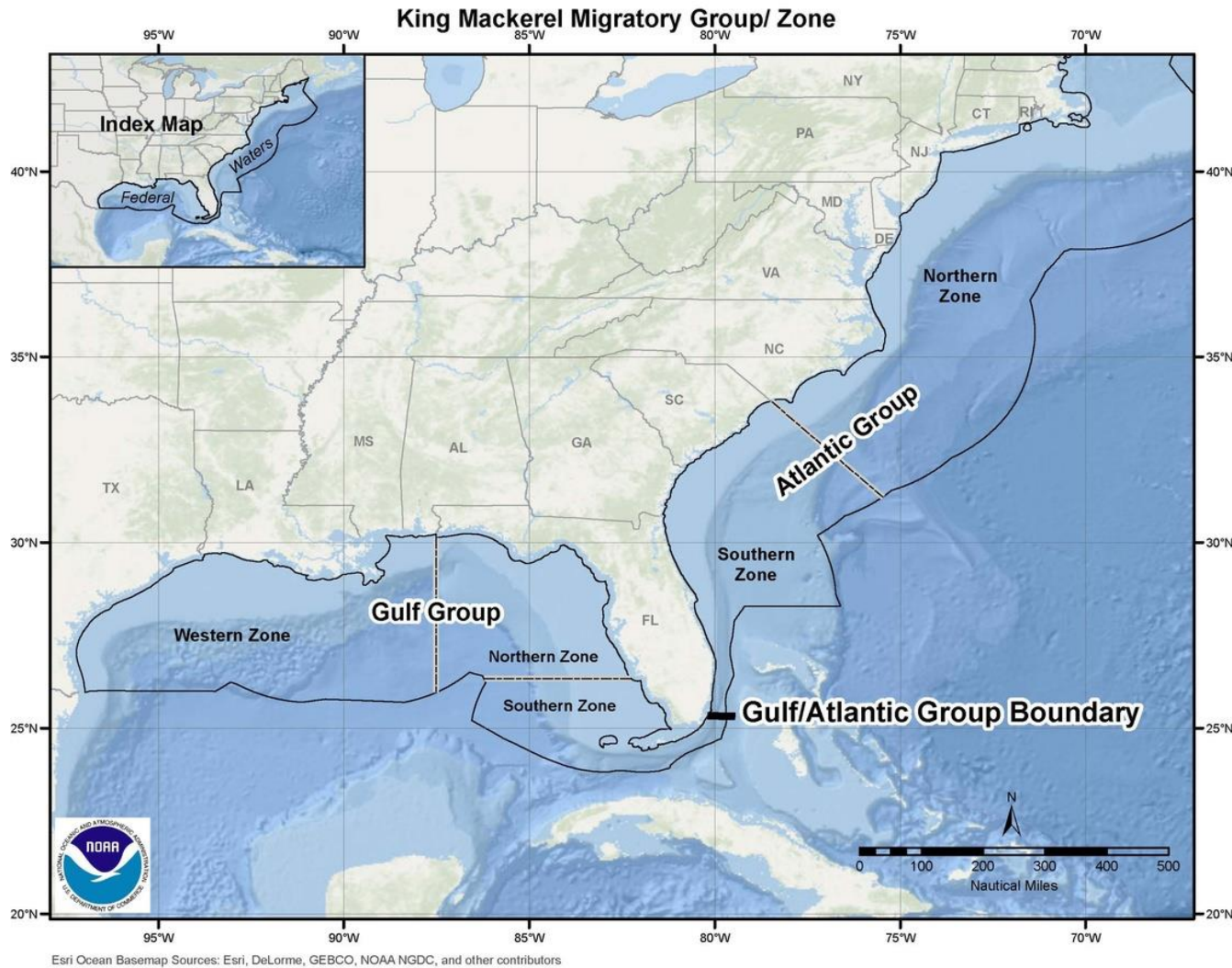
Final Approval:

Last chance for public input at a Council meeting (additional comment accepted during the federal review process).

Amendment transmitted to NMFS.

YOU ARE HERE





Background

Multiple migratory groups of king mackerels and Spanish mackerels are managed by the Gulf and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils:

- Gulf migratory group king mackerel and Spanish mackerel: Miami-Dade/Monroe County line, Florida through the Gulf of Mexico.
- Atlantic migratory group king mackerel and Spanish mackerel: Miami-Dade/Monroe County line, Florida north to the New York/Connecticut/Rhode Island line.

This amendment addresses catch levels and management measures for Atlantic migratory groups only.

Why are the Councils Considering Action?

- Stock Assessment - SEDAR 38 Update: 2020
 - Terminal data year: 2017
- Updated recreational catch data (MRIP-FES)
 - Adjusts estimates back in time.
 - Recreational landings are greater than previously estimated.
- *Stock Status*: consistent with the original stock status determined by SEDAR 38, that Atlantic migratory group king mackerel (Atlantic king mackerel) was not overfished or undergoing overfishing.



Why are the Councils Considering Action?

- Modifications to Management Measures:
 - Based on input from the South Atlantic Council's Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel.
- 1. Consider *raising the bag limit in federal waters off the east coast of Florida* to three fish per person to allow all fishermen the same opportunity to harvest king mackerel.
- 2. Consider *decreasing the recreational minimum size limit* for Atlantic king mackerel because many smaller king mackerel are often caught when fishing recreationally for other species, such as Spanish mackerel, and are released as dead discards.
- 3. Allowed recreational fishermen to *keep cut/damaged king and Spanish mackerel that meet minimum size limits* due to increased shark depredation.



Amendment Purpose and Need

The purpose of this amendment is to revise the annual catch limits and annual optimum yield for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel; to revise recreational and commercial allocations for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel; and to revise or establish management measures for Atlantic migratory group king and Spanish mackerel.

The need for this amendment is to ensure annual catch limits are based on the best scientific information available and to ensure overfishing does not occur in the Atlantic migratory group king and Spanish mackerel fisheries, while increasing social and economic benefits through sustainable and profitable harvest of Atlantic migratory group king and Spanish mackerel.





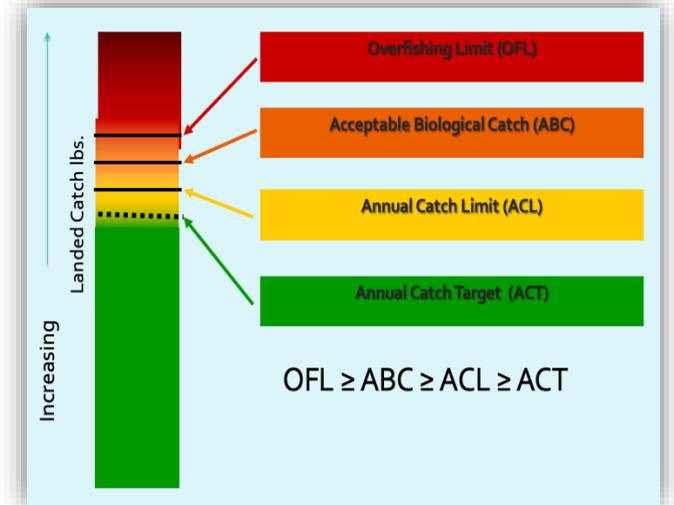
Amendment 34 **Actions and** **Alternatives**

Photo: NOAA NMFS SEFSC PCB Laboratory

Action I: Modify Atlantic King Mackerel Stock ACL and OY.

The Councils must consider adjusting the Atlantic king mackerel ACLs and OY to be consistent with SSC recommendations.

Year	OFL Recommendations (lbs)	ABC Recommendations (lbs)
2022/2023	33,900,000	32,800,000
2023/2024	29,400,000	28,400,000
2024/2025	26,300,000	25,400,000
2025/2026	24,200,000	23,300,000
2026/2027+	22,800,000	21,800,000



Action 1: Modify Atlantic King Mackerel Stock ACL and OY.

Alternative 1 (No Action). The total ACL and annual OY for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel is set equal to the current ABC.

This is not a legally viable alternative because it is not based on the best scientific information available.

Alternative 2. The total ACL and annual OY for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel is equal to the updated ABC.

Preferred Alternative 3. The total ACL and annual OY for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel is equal to 95% of the updated ABC.

Alternative 4. The total ACL and annual OY for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel is equal to 90% of the updated ABC.

Alternative 5. The total ACL and annual OY for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel is equal to the updated ABC level of 21,800,000 pounds. This is a constant catch value for 2022/2023 and subsequent fishing years or until changed by a future management action.



Action 1: Modify Atlantic King Mackerel Stock ACL and OY.

*Annual Catch Limit levels based on revised MRIP estimates for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel under **Action 1** proposed alternatives.*

Fishing Year	Annual Catch Limits (lbs.)				
	Alternative 1 (No Action)	Alternative 2 (ACL=ABC)	Preferred Alternative 3 (ACL=95% ABC)	Alternative 4 (ACL=90% ABC)	Alternative 5 (Constant Catch)
2021/22	Not BSIA, not a viable alternative.	33,300,000	31,635,000	29,970,000	21,800,000
2022/23		28,500,000	27,075,000	25,650,000	21,800,000
2023/24		25,400,000	24,130,000	22,860,000	21,800,000
2024/25		23,300,000	22,135,000	20,970,000	21,800,000
2025/26+		21,800,000	20,710,000	19,620,000	21,800,000



Action 2. Revise sector allocations for Atlantic king mackerel.

- Current sector allocations for king mackerel were established in Amendment 1 to the CMP FMP (1985). Catch was allocated based on the largest number of years, beginning in 1979 using the average percent distribution of catch between commercial and recreational fishermen.
- The SEDAR 38 update includes revised recreational landings that are based on MRIP's newer FES method, the Council may want to consider revising current sector allocations.
- The revised total annual catch limit in this action reflect the preferred alternative in Action 1 (Preferred Alternative 3).



Action 2. Revise sector allocations for Atlantic king mackerel.

Preferred Alternative 1 (No Action). Retain the current recreational sector and commercial sector allocations of 62.9% and 37.1%, respectively, of the revised total annual catch limit for Atlantic king mackerel.

Alternative 2. Allocate 77.3% of the revised total ACL for Atlantic king mackerel to the recreational sector and 22.7% of the revised total ACL for Atlantic king mackerel to the commercial sector.

This allocation is based on approximately maintaining the current commercial ACL beginning in the 2026/2027 fishing season and allocating the remaining revised total ACL to the recreational sector.

Alternative 3. Allocate 68.9% of the revised total ACL for Atlantic king mackerel to the recreational sector and 31.1% of the revised total ACL for Atlantic king mackerel to the commercial sector.

This allocation is based on average landings for Atlantic king mackerel for the years 2014-2019.



Action 2. Revise sector allocations for Atlantic king mackerel.

Current and revised sector ACLs (lbs) for Atlantic king mackerel based on the revised total ACL from Alternative 2 in Action 1.

Fishing Year	Preferred Alternative 1 (No Action)			Alternative 2			Alternative 3		
	Commercial (37.1%)		Recreational (62.9%)	Commercial (22.7%)		Recreational (77.3%)	Commercial (31.1%)		Recreational (68.9%)
	Northern	Southern		Northern	Southern		Northern	Southern	
2022/23	2,704,109	9,032,476	19,898,415	1,654,536	5,526,609	24,453,855	2,266,787	7,571,698	21,796,515
2023/24	2,314,328	7,730,497	17,030,175	1,416,044	4,729,981	20,928,975	1,940,043	6,480,282	18,654,675
2024/25	2,062,594	6,889,636	15,177,770	1,262,018	4,215,492	18,652,490	1,729,021	5,775,409	16,625,570
2025/26	1,892,064	6,320,021	13,922,915	1,157,678	3,866,967	17,110,355	1,586,070	5,297,915	15,251,015
2026/27+	1,770,258	5,913,152	13,026,590	1,083,150	3,618,020	16,008,830	1,483,963	4,956,847	14,269,190



Action 3. Revise recreational ACT for Atlantic king mackerel.

- The recreational ACT is currently codified and utilized in the post-season recreational accountability measure for Atlantic king mackerel.*

Alternative 1 (No Action). Retain the current recreational ACT for Atlantic king mackerel of 7,400,000 pounds.

Preferred Alternative 2. Revise the recreational ACT to reflect the updated ABC level.
Recreational ACL multiplied by $[(1 - \text{Proportional Standard Error [PSE] of the recreational landings}) \text{ or } 0.5, \text{ whichever is greater}]$.

Alternative 3. Revise the recreational ACT to reflect the updated ABC level.
Recreational ACT equals 90% sector ACL.

Alternative 4. Revise the recreational ACT to reflect the updated ABC level.
Recreational ACT equals 85% sector ACL.



Action 4. Increase the bag limit for Atlantic king mackerel off FL.

The current bag limit for Atlantic king mackerel and Gulf king mackerel is three fish per person except for the east coast of Florida to the Miami-Dade/Monroe County line where the bag limit is set to match the daily bag limit specified for Florida state waters (currently two fish per person).

Fishermen and Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel members have requested to raise the east coast of Florida bag limit in federal waters to three fish per person to match the rest of the CMP FMP management area.



Action 4. Increase the bag limit for Atlantic king mackerel off FL.

Alternative 1 (No Action). The daily bag limit for Atlantic king mackerel in the exclusive economic zone off Florida is two fish per person. The daily bag limit specified by Florida for its waters is two fish per person.

Preferred Alternative 2. Increase the daily bag limit for Atlantic king mackerel to three fish per person in the exclusive economic zone off Florida.



Action 5. Reduce the minimum size for recreational harvest of Atlantic king mackerel.

- In recent years, Atlantic king mackerel landings have been below the total ACL, fishing mortality rates are well below target, and the recent stock assessment suggests that the total ACL can be increased.
 - The South Atlantic Council is considering regulatory changes directed towards increasing harvest.
 - *Note: commercial trip limits were increased via CMP Framework Amendment 6 and Amendment 8.*
- The AP has suggested revising the minimum size limit for Atlantic king mackerel to account for smaller king mackerel sometimes landed when targeting other species.
- For the recreational sector, the discarded Atlantic king mackerel length data shows that majority (about 44%) of the recreational discards at 23 inches fork length.
 - Discards were also seen down to 22 (19% of discard lengths) and 20 inches fork length (17% of discard lengths).



Action 5. Reduce the minimum size for recreational harvest of Atlantic king mackerel.

Gulf Council Preferred Alternative 1 (No Action). The minimum size limit for recreational harvest of Atlantic king mackerel is 24-inches fork length.

South Atlantic Council Preferred Alternative 2. Reduce the minimum size limit for recreational harvest of Atlantic king mackerel to 22-inches fork length.

Alternative 3. Reduce the minimum size limit for recreational harvest of Atlantic king mackerel to 20-inches fork length.

Alternative 4. Remove the minimum size limit for recreational harvest of Atlantic king mackerel.



Action 6. Reduce the minimum size for commercial harvest of Atlantic king mackerel.

- In recent years, Atlantic king mackerel landings have been below the total ACL, fishing mortality rates are well below target, and the recent stock assessment suggests that the total ACL can be increased.
 - The South Atlantic Council is considering regulatory changes directed towards increasing harvest.
 - *Note: commercial trip limits were increased via CMP Framework Amendment 6 and Amendment 8.*
- Commercial AP members have expressed concerns from dealers that smaller king mackerel would result in more fish of lower value entering the market.
- For the commercial sector, the majority of the discarded fish were about 29 inches fork length (FL) suggesting a larger percentage of legal sized fish are discarded.
- Commercial fishermen are currently allowed to possess undersized king mackerel in quantities that do not exceed five percent, by weight, of the king mackerel on board.



Action 6. Reduce the minimum size for commercial harvest of Atlantic king mackerel.

Gulf Council Preferred Alternative 1 (No Action). The minimum size limit for commercial harvest of Atlantic king mackerel is 24-inches fork length.

South Atlantic Council Preferred Alternative 2. Reduce the minimum size limit for commercial harvest of Atlantic king mackerel to 22-inches fork length.

Alternative 3. Reduce the minimum size limit for commercial harvest of Atlantic king mackerel to 20-inches fork length.

Alternative 4. Remove the minimum size limit for commercial harvest of Atlantic king mackerel.



Action 7. Modify the recreational requirement for Atlantic king and Spanish mackerel to be landed with heads and fins intact.

- *Commercial fishermen are allowed to keep cut/damaged king and Spanish mackerel that meet minimum size limits. Given the increase in shark depredation, the AP has requested the Councils considered a similar provision for the recreational sector.*

Alternative 1 (No Action). Cut-off (damaged) Atlantic migratory group king mackerel or Atlantic migratory group Spanish mackerel caught under the recreational bag limit may not be possessed.

Alternative 2. Cut-off (damaged) fish caught under the recreational bag limit, that comply with the minimum size limits, may be possessed, and offloaded ashore.

- Sub-alternative 2a. Atlantic migratory group king mackerel
- Sub-alternative 2b. Atlantic migratory group Spanish mackerel



Amendment Development Timeline

	Process Step	Date
✓	South Atlantic Council directs staff to start work on an amendment.	June 2020
✓	Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel reviews assessment and makes recommendations for actions to include in amendment.	November 2020
✓	South Atlantic Council reviews options paper and approves amendment for scoping.	December 2020
✓	South Atlantic Council reviews scoping comments and approves action/alternatives to be analyzed.	March 2021
✓	Gulf Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel reviews amendment	March 2021
✓	South Atlantic Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel reviews amendment	Spring 2021
✓	South Atlantic Council reviews draft amendment, selects preferred alternatives.	June 2021
✓	Gulf Council reviews document and provides direction to staff.	June 2021
✓	South Atlantic Council reviews draft amendment, selects preferred alternatives, and approves for public hearings.	September 2021
✓	Gulf Council reviews draft amendment, selects preferred alternatives, and approves for public hearings.	October 2021
	Public Hearings	Fall 2021
	South Atlantic Council reviews the draft amendment, modifies the document as necessary.	December 2021
	Gulf Council reviews the draft amendment, modifies the document as necessary.	January 2022
	South Atlantic Council approves for formal review.	March 2022
	Gulf Council approves for formal review.	April 2022
	CMP Amendment 34 transmitted for Secretarial Review.	Spring 2022



Opportunities to Provide Your Comments

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Staff presentation and Q&A followed by an opportunity to provide your comments on the record.

All public hearings begin at 6pm EST

Registration Required

November 15th

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/1882212592778472972>

November 16th

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/8543261841543146764>

WRITTEN COMMENTS

Comments online:

<https://safmc.wufoo.com/forms/m16smnat058oaf0/>

Comments by mail:

John Carmichael, Executive Director, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North Charleston, SC 29405


Comments by fax: 843/769-4520

DEADLINE FOR WRITTEN COMMENTS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE COMMENT OVERVIEW FOR THE DECEMBER 2021 SAFMC MEETING: November 17, 2021, at 5:00 P.M.






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THANK YOU

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