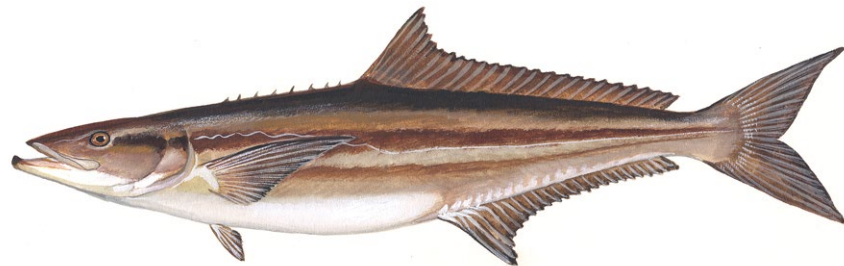




Cobia Technical Committee Report Quota Block Recommendation



May 2, 2022

Overview



- History of Current Harvest Specifications
 - Amendment 1
 - Addendum I
- Quota Block Options & Data Considered
- TC Recommendation to the Board

Harvest Specification Process



Amendment 1 (August 2019)

Section 4.1

The coastwide total harvest quota, vessel limits, possession or bag limits, minimum size limits, and commercial closure triggering mechanism may be specified through Board action for **up to three years**. New specified harvest measures may be implemented after **expiration of previously specified measures or following a completed stock assessment**.

In years when harvest specifications are made, they will occur no later than the Fall Board meeting, and resulting measures will be implemented in the following year.

Current Quota Block 2020-2022



- Board set the total harvest quota for the 2020-2022 fishing seasons at 80,112 fish (2.4 million pounds)
 - 92% allocated to recreational and 8% to commercial per Amendment 1
- The selected quota was recommended by the TC as the maximum harvest level for consideration
- Memo 20-012 includes details on TC discussion and projections

Projection	Total Harvest Quota (fish)
F _{current}	53,467*
25% F _{40%}	57,526*
Harvest = 2 mil lb	65,819*
Harvest = 2.4 mil lb	80,112

*Preferred by TC

Addendum I Changes



- In 2021, the allocation of the total quota changed through Addendum I
 - 96% to recreational and 4% to commercial
- Using the previously approved total quota of 80,112 fish:
 - Recreational quota of 76,908 fish
 - Commercial quota of 3,204 fish (73,116 pounds)
- Effective January 1, 2021

2021 Regulation Changes



- Board approved changes to Virginia's and North Carolina's 2021 cobia recreational measures
 - Virginia: reduce recreational harvest by 42%
 - North Carolina: liberalized regulations for rec private anglers only
- Changed based on evaluation of previous landings against the new soft target RHL for each state (Addendum I)
- Some *de minimis* states also adjusted their 2021 recreational measures based on the updated *de minimis* requirement in Addendum I

Options Considered



Option 1: Maintain the 2020-2022 Quota Block (set new specifications for 2023)

- The TC would develop specification options (new total quota) for 2023-2025 during summer 2022.
- The Board would consider setting new specifications for 2023-2025 at the Fall 2022 Board meeting.

Option 2: Change to 2021-2023 Quota Block

- The current total quota of 80,112 fish would remain the same for 2023 (shifts the current quota block to 2021-2023).
- This shift would align with the new sector allocations and new regulations implemented by some states in 2021.
- The TC would develop specification options (total quota) for 2024-2026 during next summer (2023)

Projections and Assessments



- SEDAR 58 had a terminal year of 2017 and was accepted for management use in 2020.
- Next SEDAR assessment (operational/update) tentatively scheduled for 2025.
 - Terminal year would be 2023 or 2024
 - Likely available to inform 2026 management
- In March 2022, the SEFSC indicated they would advise against extending projections past 2024 given the expanding uncertainty
 - TC could request updated projections if there are particular concerns (e.g. perceived changes in abundance, more recent landings/discards information)

Realized Harvest



- Board's selected total harvest quota for 2020-2022 was based on projections of constant annual harvest for 2019-2024 at 2,410,848 pounds (80,112 fish)

Year	Harvest used in projections (lbs)	Realized Commercial Harvest (lbs)	Realized Recreational Harvest (lbs)	Realized Total Harvest (lbs)
2019	2,410,848	60,592	1,895,017	1,948,876
2020	2,410,848	74,960	2,282,088	2,355,453
2021	2,410,848	<i>Not yet available</i>	2,603,633 <i>Final MRIP query 4-21-22</i>	<i>2,603,633</i> <i>prelim/incomplete</i>

2021 data are preliminary/incomplete

TC Recommendation



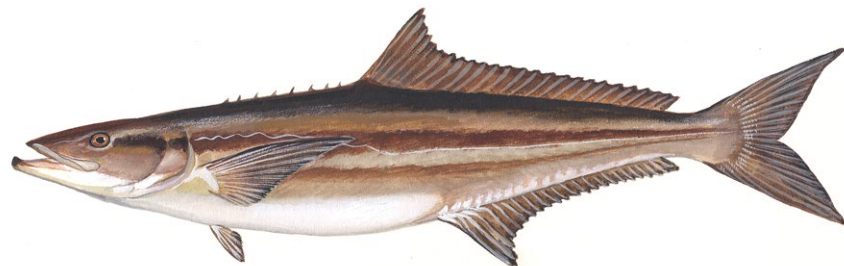
- **Recommendation to change the quota block to 2021-2023**
 - Aligns with new sector allocation & new regulations implemented in 2021
 - Would have 2 years of data under current regulations when 2024 specifications are considered
 - Current quota set conservatively
 - Projected maximum probability of being overfished = 0.25
 - Low risk to maintain this quota level in 2023
 - Projections based on constant harvest \approx 2.4 million lbs
 - Avg harvest 2019-2021 was likely slightly below that level

TC Recommendation



- **If Board chooses to adopt the 2021-2023 quota block:**
 - TC would meet in 2023 to develop quota options
 - Would monitor 2022 landings to determine if there is a need to update the projections through 2024
 - Proposed quota specification options would be presented to the Board & quota specification would be decided no later than the Fall 2023 meeting
- **General recommendations for future specifications and assessments**
 - Monitor year-to-year changes & variability in state landings
 - Continue to evaluate new data on overlap of Atlantic and Gulf Stocks

Questions?



Spanish Mackerel Updates: Stock Assessment and Federal Waters Management



May 2, 2022

Overview



- Spanish Mackerel Updates from SAFMC and SEDAR
 - Stock Assessment: SEDAR 78 Timeline
 - Federal Waters Management: CMP Amendment 34

Update on Stock Assessment



- SEDAR 78 report for South Atlantic Spanish mackerel (operational assessment) is now available
- SAFMC's Scientific and Statistical Committee will review SEDAR 78 results and provide recommendations in Summer 2022
- SAFMC will review the assessment and SSC recommendations during the September 2022 Council meeting

Update on Federal Waters Management



- Amendment 34 to the federal Coastal Migratory Pelagic (CMP) FMP was approved by SAFMC and GMFMC in March and April 2022, respectively
- Council staff are currently working on finalizing the amendment to be transmitted to NMFS for rulemaking
- CMP Amendment 34 would allow cut-off (damaged) Atlantic Spanish mackerel caught under the recreational bag limit, which comply with the minimum size limits, to be possessed, and offloaded ashore
- Damaged refers to Spanish mackerel that are damaged only through natural predation

Questions

for follow up with SAFMC and SEDAR staff

