



Public Hearing Draft: Reef Fish Amendment 54

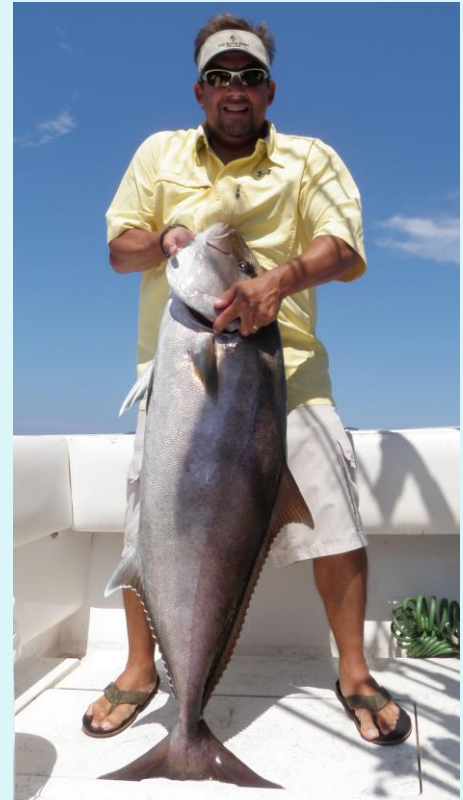
# Greater Amberjack Catch Limits and Allocations



# Background

## The most recent greater amberjack stock assessment (SEDAR 70) resulted in updated catch advice

- Reduces the OFL and ABC
  - The stock is overfished and experiencing overfishing
    - This is the 6<sup>th</sup> time this determination has been made since 2000
    - Despite recent management measures to constrain catch and reduce mortality of juveniles
- Converts to new recreational landings estimates
  - Recreational landings are greater than previous thought
    - Impacts allocations and catch levels



# Background

## **The Council is obligated to end overfishing**

- Catch limits must be reduced to meet the current 2027 rebuilding goal
- The Council's SSC recommended a significant decrease to the OFL and ABC

## **Changes to the recreational data collection program must be addressed**

- Catch limits need to be updated to the new 'data currency' (MRIP-FES)
- Allocations between commercial and recreational sectors can be reconsidered to align them with new estimates of recreational harvest



# Purpose and Need

**Purpose:** To modify the rebuilding plan and catch levels to end overfishing, rebuild greater amberjack by 2027, and modify the allocation between the commercial and recreational sectors using the best scientific information available based on the results from the SEDAR 70 stock assessment and subsequent OFL and ABC recommendations from the SSC.

**Need:** To end overfishing and rebuild the greater amberjack stock as required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, update existing catch limits and allocations to be consistent with best scientific information available, FMP objectives, and contemporary data collection methods.



# What is Being Considered?

**Action 1:** Modify Sector Allocations, OFL, ABC, and ACLs

**Action 2:** Modify Annual Catch Targets



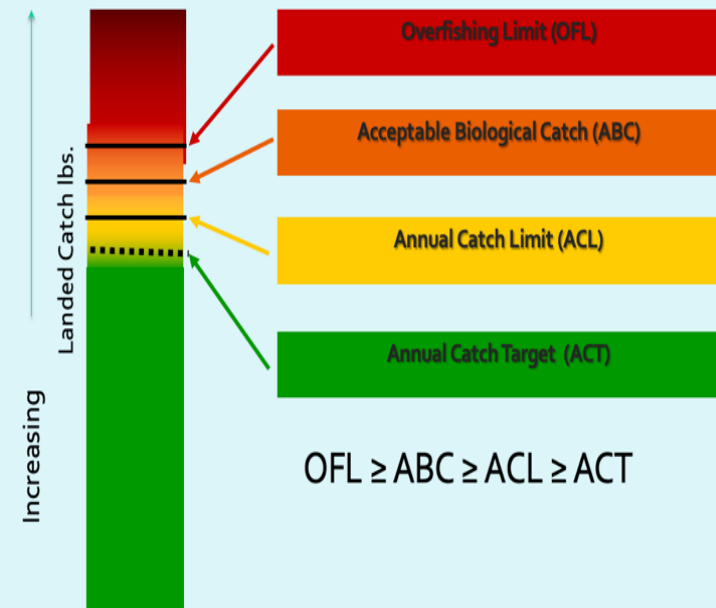


# Action 1:

## Sector Allocations, OFL, ABC, & ACLs

Results of the latest stock assessment prompted the Council's SSC to reduce OFL and ABC recommendations to meet the 2027 rebuilding timeline and end overfishing.

- The Council can set the ACL equal to or less than the ABC
- Since current catch limits were set using old recreational landings estimates (MRIP-CHTS) the Council needs to update catch limits in the new 'data currency' (MRIP-FES)



# Action 1:

## Sector Allocations, OFL, ABC, & ACLs

The latest stock assessment used new recreational catch estimates (MRIP-FES) which indicate that historical recreational catch and effort are greater than previously thought.

- Current allocations were set using older recreational landings (MRFSS)
- The Council is considering updating allocations to ensure they're aligned with the best scientific information available
- The allocation selected affects the total allowable harvest because the discard rate and average size/age of harvest varies between sectors



# Action 1:

## Sector Allocations, OFL, ABC, & ACLs

**Alternative 1: No Action** – Maintain the 73% recreational and 27% commercial sector allocations derived from average landings using MRFSS data from 1981-2004. Maintain the current OFL, ABC, and ACLs. Maintain the recreational sector ACL in MRIP-CHTS units.

***This is not a legally viable alternative because it is not based on the best scientific information available, and it would retain catch levels that are above those recommended by the SSC.***

Year	Rec Fishing Year	OFL	ABC	Total ACL	Rec ACL	Com ACL
2020+	2019/2020+	2,167,000	1,794,000	1,794,000	1,309,620	484,380
MRIP FES Equivalent		3,480,000	2,930,000	2,930,000		

Note: Expressed in pounds whole weight. The recreational portion of the 2020+ OFL, ABC, total ACL are based on MRIP-CHTS data



# Action 1:

## Sector Allocations, OFL, ABC, & ACLs

**Alternative 2:** Maintain the 73% recreational and 27% commercial sector allocations. Revise the OFL and ABC as recommended by the SSC and set the stock ACL equal to the ABC. The reduction in the stock ACL would be approximately 78% for 2023 relative to the current stock ACL.

Year	Rec Fishing Year	OFL	ABC	Total ACL	Rec ACL	Com ACL
2023	2022/2023	2,236,000	649,000	649,000	473,770	175,230
2024	2023/2024	2,343,000	770,000	770,000	562,100	207,900
2025	2024/2025	2,419,000	875,000	875,000	638,750	236,250
2026	2025/2026	2,472,000	964,000	964,000	703,720	260,280
2027	2026/2027	2,507,000	1,035,000	1,035,000	755,550	279,450

Note: Values are in pounds whole weight. The recreational portion of the OFL, ABC, total ACL and ACL are based on MRIP-FES data.



# Action 1:

## Sector Allocations, OFL, ABC, & ACLs

**Alternative 3:** Revise the sector allocations using MRIP-FES adjusted average landings during 1981-2004. The allocations are 84% recreational and 16% commercial. Revise the OFL and ABC as recommended by the SSC and set the stock ACL equal to the ABC. The reduction in the stock ACL would be approximately 79% for 2023 relative to the current stock ACL.

Year	Rec Fishing Year	OFL	ABC	Total ACL	Rec ACL	Com ACL
2023	2022/2023	2,130,000	621,000	621,000	521,640	99,360
2024	2023/2024	2,234,000	739,000	739,000	620,760	118,240
2025	2024/2025	2,305,000	842,000	842,000	707,280	134,720
2026	2025/2026	2,354,000	929,000	929,000	780,360	148,640
2027	2026/2027	2,387,000	999,000	999,000	839,160	159,840

Note: Values are in pounds whole weight. The recreational portion of the OFL, ABC, total ACL and ACL are based on MRIP-FES data.

# Action 1:

## Sector Allocations, OFL, ABC, & ACLs

**Alternative 4:** Revise the sector allocations using MRIP-FES adjusted average landings during 1993-2007. The allocations are 78% recreational and 22% commercial. Revise the OFL and ABC as recommended by the SSC and set the stock ACL equal to the ABC. The reduction in the stock ACL would be approximately 78% for 2023 relative to the current stock ACL.

Year	Rec Fishing Year	OFL	ABC	Total ACL	Rec ACL	Com ACL
2023	2022/2023	2,186,000	636,000	636,000	496,080	139,920
2024	2023/2024	2,292,000	756,000	756,000	589,680	166,320
2025	2024/2025	2,365,000	860,000	860,000	670,800	189,200
2026	2025/2026	2,417,000	947,000	947,000	738,660	208,340
2027	2026/2027	2,451,000	1,018,000	1,018,000	794,040	223,960

Note: Values are in pounds whole weight. The recreational portion of the OFL, ABC, total ACL and ACL are based on MRIP-FES data.

# Action 1:

## Sector Allocations, OFL, ABC, & ACLs

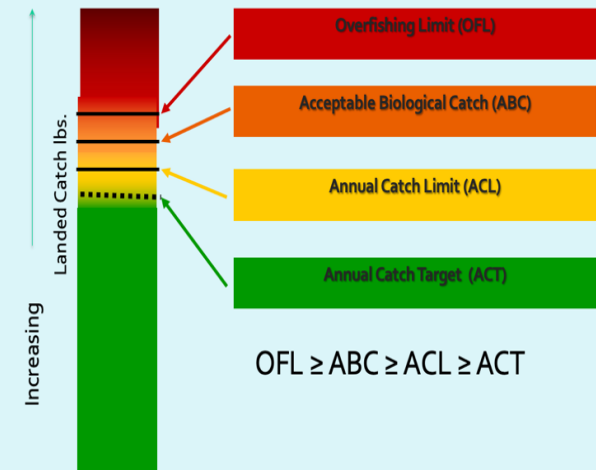
**Alternative 5:** Revise the sector allocations using MRIP-FES adjusted average landings during 1993-2019. The allocations are 80% recreational and 20% commercial. Revise the OFL and ABC as recommended by the SSC and set the stock ACL equal to the ABC. The reduction in the stock ACL would be approximately 79% for 2023 relative to the current stock ACL.

Year	Rec Fishing Year	OFL	ABC	Total ACL	Rec ACL	Com ACL
2023	2022/2023	2,167,000	631,000	631,000	504,800	126,200
2024	2023/2024	2,272,000	750,000	750,000	600,000	150,000
2025	2024/2025	2,345,000	854,000	854,000	683,200	170,800
2026	2025/2026	2,395,000	941,000	941,000	752,800	188,200
2027	2026/2027	2,429,000	1,012,000	1,012,000	809,600	202,400

Note: Values are in pounds whole weight. The recreational portion of the OFL, ABC, total ACL and ACL are based on MRIP-FES data.

# Action 2: Greater Amberjack ACTs

ACTs are a catch target set lower than the ACL to account for management uncertainty. They reduce the likelihood that the annual catch limit is exceeded and accountably measures are triggered.



Currently, there is a 13% commercial buffer and a 17% recreational buffer between the ACL and ACT. These buffers are set using the Council's ACL/ACT Control Rule

- The ACT is used to project in-season closures for both sectors
- Landings used to calculate ACTs are available through 2020 however, landings from 2020 may not be representative due to COVID-19.



## Action 2: Alternatives

- **Alternative 1: No Action** – Maintain the current buffer between the ACL and ACT for each sector. The recreational buffer is 17% and the commercial buffer is 13%.
- **Alternative 2:** Apply the ACL/ACT Control Rule using the most recent time series of 2017-2020 to revise the buffer between ACL and ACT for each sector. The recreational buffer is 13% and the commercial buffer is 7%.
- ***Preferred Alternative 3:*** Apply the ACL/ACT Control Rule using the years 2016-2019 to revise the buffer between ACL and ACT for each sector. The recreational buffer is 17% and the commercial buffer is 7%.

# Next Steps and Questions

- Council is scheduled to take final action at its October 2022 meeting
  - Recommendations from the this AP and a public comment received will be considered as part of Council deliberations
- Implementation of Amendment 54 is expected in 2023
- The Council will be developing another document to consider changes to recreational and commercial management measures (e.g., seasons, size limits, trip limits)

