

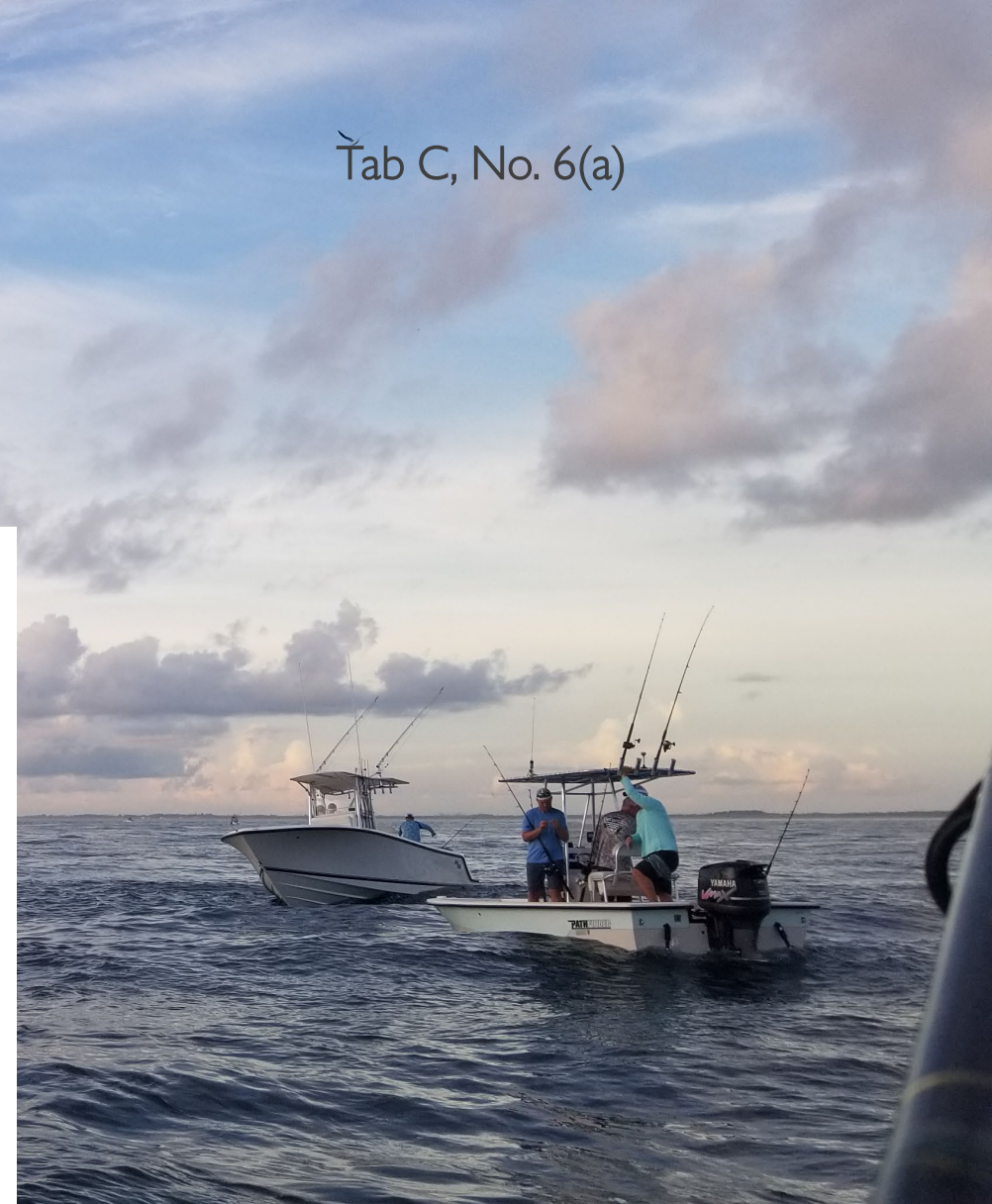
Tab C, No. 6(a)

# Coastal Migratory Pelagics Amendment 34

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

January 2022

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# Amendment Background

- Stock Assessment - SEDAR 38 Update: 2020
  - Updated recreational catch data (MRIP-FES)
  - *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.
- Modifications to management measures based on input from the South Atlantic Council's Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel.



Photo: NOAA NMFS SEFSC PCB Laboratory

# Amendment Purpose and Need

The *purpose* of this amendment is to revise the catch limits 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 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.



## **Action 1: Revise the acceptable biological catch, total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel.**

*Preferred Alternative 3.* Revise the acceptable biological catch, total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel, based on the acceptable biological catch recommendation from the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee. The total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield are ~~is~~ equal to 95% of the **recommended** acceptable biological catch level. The recommended acceptable biological catch level is inclusive of recreational estimates from the Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey.



## **Action 1: Revise the acceptable biological catch, total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel.**

**Rationale:** The South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Councils selected **Preferred Alternative 3**, which places a smaller buffer in between the ABC and ACL than the other alternatives considered, based on a recommendation from the Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel to be precautionary due to uncertainty with the new MRIP FES numbers. The Council felt that a buffer was appropriate for this stock because of the substantial increase in the recommended ABC from the SSC and analysis that showed it was unlikely for the proposed ACL to be met, resulting in a closure to the fishery.



## Action 2. Revise sector allocations and sector annual catch limits for Atlantic migratory group 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 migratory group king mackerel. Apply these percentages to the revised total annual catch limit.

**Rationale:** The South Atlantic and Gulf Councils selected **Preferred Alternative 1 (No Action)** because Atlantic king mackerel is a management success story, and it would be beneficial to preserve the historic makeup of the fishery. Additionally, in recent years the commercial sector has come close to meeting its ACL, while the recreational sector as remained well below their ACL. Maintaining the allocation percentages set in the 1980s would shift poundage toward the commercial sector. However, even with maintaining current percentage allocations neither sector is anticipated to experience a closure due to their respective ACL being met.



## **Action 3. Revise the recreational annual catch target for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel.**

*Preferred Alternative 1 (No Action).* Revise the recreational annual catch target to reflect the updated recreational annual catch limit level. The recreational annual catch target equals sector  $ACL[(1-PSE) \text{ or } 0.5]$ , whichever is greater].

**Rationale:** The South Atlantic and Gulf Councils selected Preferred **Alternative 1 (No Action)** because it maintains the current method for setting the ACT and updates based on the new catch levels selected in previous actions.



## **Action 4. Increase the recreational bag and possession limit for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel in the exclusive economic zone off Florida.**

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

**Rationale:** The South Atlantic and Gulf Councils selected **Preferred Alternative 2** in order to create consistency in the recreational bag limit in federal waters and to provide the same opportunity for harvest throughout the entirety of the king mackerel management area. Additionally, the recreational sector has not been reaching their ACL and a higher bag limit is anticipated to help increase harvest.



## **Action 5. Modify the recreational requirement for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel and Spanish mackerel to be landed with heads and fins intact.**

*Preferred 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.

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

*For the purposes of Action 5, damaged fish, refers to king or Spanish mackerel that are damaged only through natural predation.*

**Rationale:** The South Atlantic and Gulf Councils selected **Preferred Alternative 2a** and **Preferred Alternative 2b** to create consistency between commercial and recreational management measures related to the possession and offloading of cut-off (damaged) fish. Additionally, the selected preferred alternatives address the increase in shark and barracuda depredation reported by stakeholders.




# 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
	<b>Gulf Council approves for formal review.</b>	<b>April 2022</b>
	CMP Amendment 34 transmitted for Secretarial Review.	Spring 2022

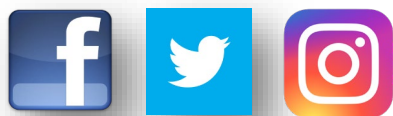




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# THANK YOU

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