

Mackerel Committee
Action Guide and Next Steps for Tab C

Agenda Item IV: Presentation from Gulf Stakeholder Coastal Migratory Pelagic (CMP) engagement meetings summary

Timeline Status: Information and discussion

Council input and next steps: Council staff held three public virtual seminars in the fall of 2024 which specifically addressed issues related to federally managed CMP species (Spanish mackerel, king mackerel, and cobia). These same engagement questions were also asked during the February 2024 CMP and December 2024 Reef Fish advisory panel meetings. The purpose of these engagement sessions was to gather feedback from industry stakeholders on the health status of CMP stocks. Questions posed to participants during the seminars ranged from possible biological, environmental, economic, and social drivers of observed recent declines in CMP landings. Council staff will provide a summary report of the stakeholder feedback collected during these sessions. The Committee is encouraged to read through the report, ask questions of staff regarding the findings from the engagement sessions and utilize these findings as appropriate to inform management decisions and next steps for Spanish and king mackerel agenda items.

Agenda Item IV: Discussion on Spanish Mackerel Framework Action and Next Steps

Timeline Status: Presentation, discussion, and feedback

Council input and next steps: During the June 2024 Council meeting, the Committee reviewed a framework action that considered modifying catch levels, accountability measures (AM), and recreational bag limits for Spanish mackerel. Preferred alternatives have been selected for Actions 1 and 2 but the Council passed a motion to delay action until after the completion of the Gulf CMP stakeholder engagements before developing a final draft of the document. The Committee should review the framework action considering the CMP stakeholder engagement report and ask questions of staff. The Committee should provide feedback to staff on the next steps for the framework action, including direction on developing a final draft of the document.

Agenda Item IV: Discussion on King Mackerel; Document and Next Steps

Timeline Status: Presentation, discussion, and feedback

Council input and next steps: At the June 2024 Council meeting, the Committee was presented draft options which would consider reducing total and sector-specific catch levels and modify the recreational bag limit for king mackerel. During these discussions the Committee acknowledged that lack of basic biological and environmental information makes selection of management measures for king mackerel arduous, particularly between stock assessments. Before taking any next steps, the Committee requested additional information on king mackerel from Southeast

Fishery Science Center (SEFSC) staff and to review the results of the CMP stakeholder engagement sessions.

A SEFSC king mackerel working group was assigned the task of identifying available data sources for king mackerel, exploring possible socially driven changes in the fishery in recent years, and researching any potential environmental effects that may be influencing stock dynamics. The SEFSC king mackerel working group will present their findings for the consideration of the Committee. Additionally, Council staff will provide a review of the framework action and make available the schedule and terms of reference for the upcoming king mackerel assessment (SEDAR 99). The Committee should review the agenda materials, ask questions of staff, and provide guidance direction to on next steps for the framework action document on king mackerel management measures.