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Gulf of America Greater Amberjack Interim Analysis

Gulf Branch SFD
NOAA Fisheries - SEFSC

SSC Meeting • February 2026

Overview

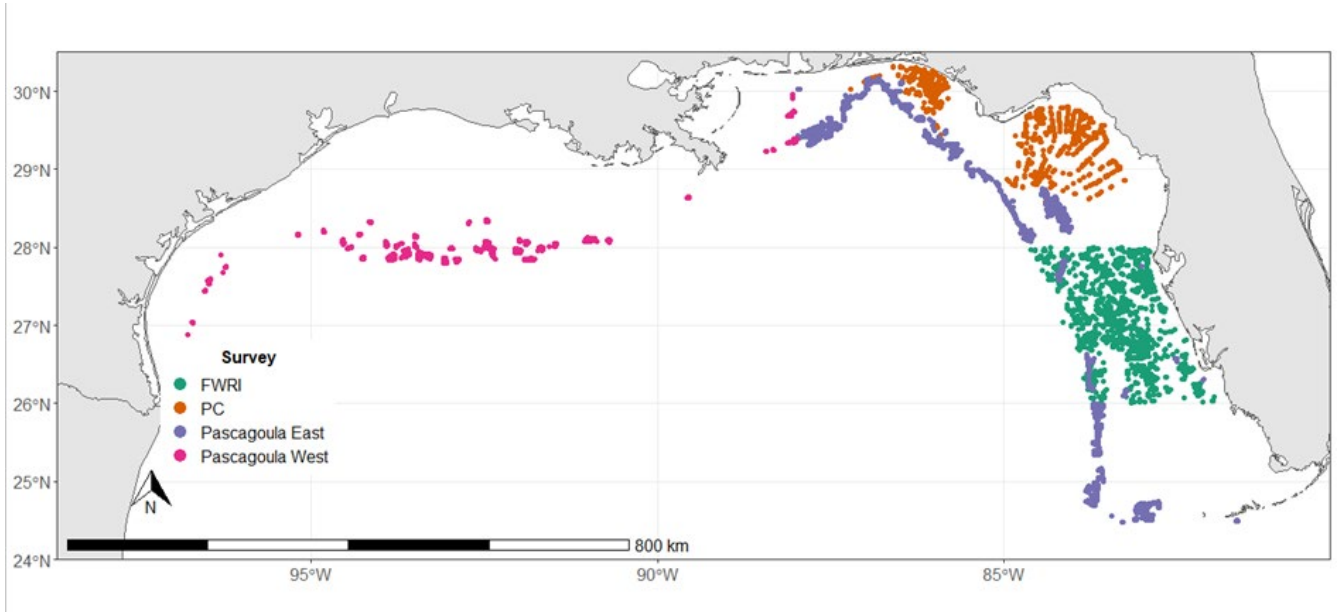
- Greater Amberjack was last assessed in 2020
  - Terminal year 2018
- Greater Amberjack is in a rebuilding plan, and this IA can serve as a health check on the condition of the stock if the catch limits are not adjusted.
- Next full assessment for Greater Amberjack begins later this year.

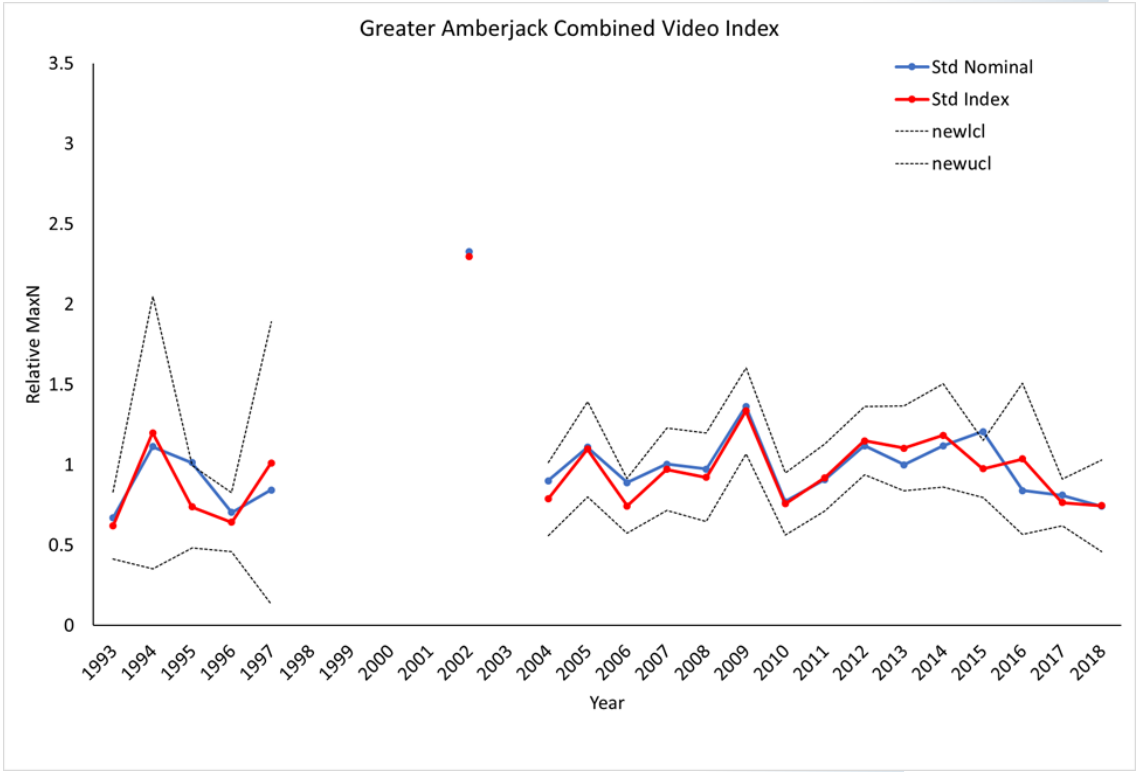
Recent Landings

- Commercial landings exceeded the quota in 2023 (135%), resulting in a payback in 2024, and landings near quota in 2025 (108%) (https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/southeast/commercial-fishing/gulf-america-historical-commercial-landings-and-annual-catch-limit)
- Recreational ACL exceeded in 2023 (237%) and 2024 (272% ACL) (https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/southeast/recreational-fishing/2024-and-2025-gulf-america-recreational-landings-and-annual-catch)

Stereo Baited Remote Underwater Video Surveys

For SEDAR 70 – Combined Video Index included: SRFV-NMFS Pascagoula, NMFS Panama City, and FWRI





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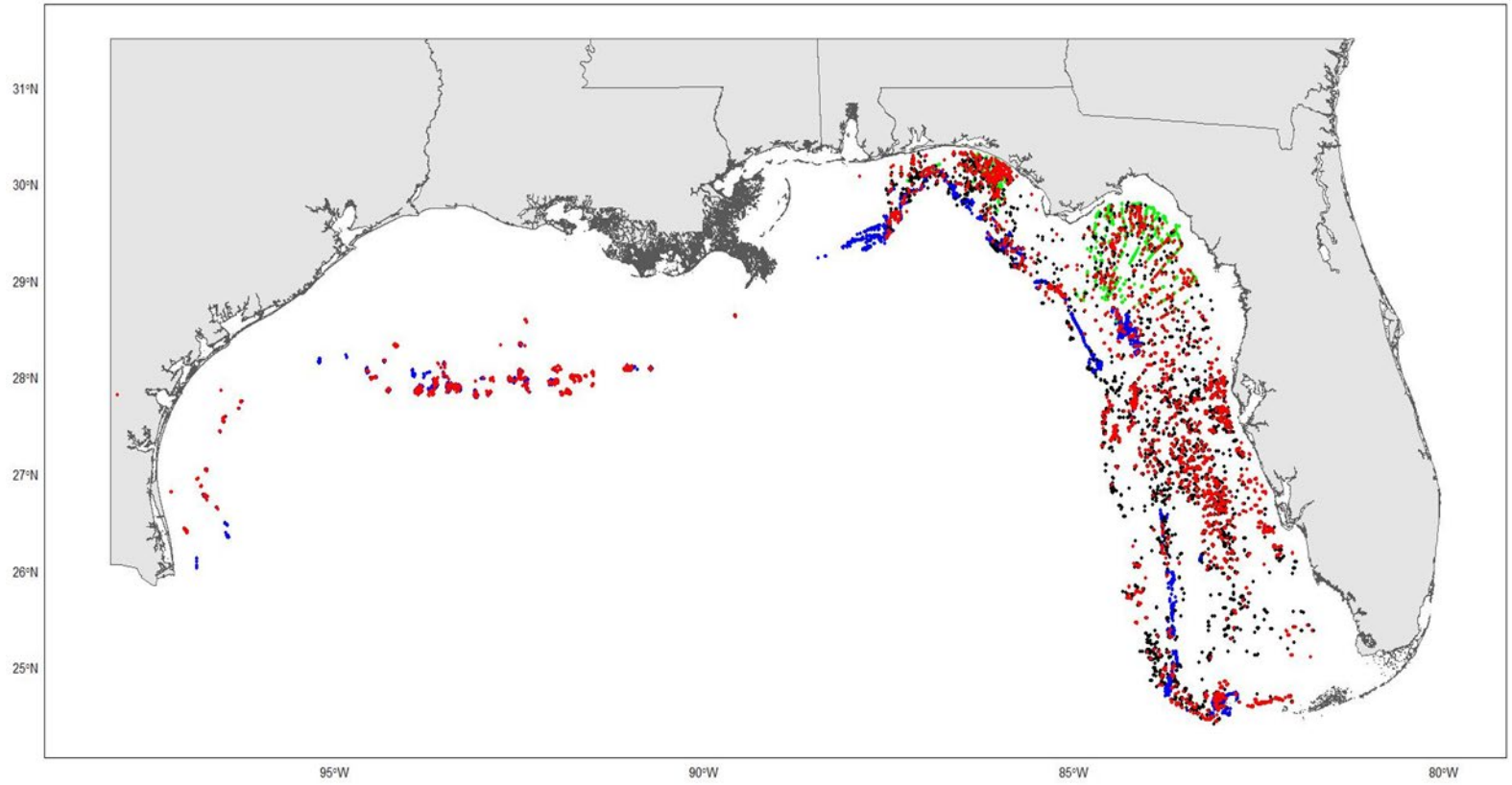
Survey Expansion

- Time series variation
  - **SFRV-NMFS Pascagoula (1993- 2019)**
  - **NMFS Panama City (2006-2019)**
  - **FWRI (zones 4/5: 2010-2019)**
  - **FWRI NFWF expansion (2016-2019)**
  - **G-FISHER (2020-2024)**
- SRFV: High relief, deep sites, soundings, multibeam data
- FWRI/PC: Sample locations determined from side-scan mapping efforts
- G-FISHER: unifies the three surveys, modifications to habitat targeting
- Follow methods from SEDAR100 to produce Gulf-wide index of abundance for combined video survey



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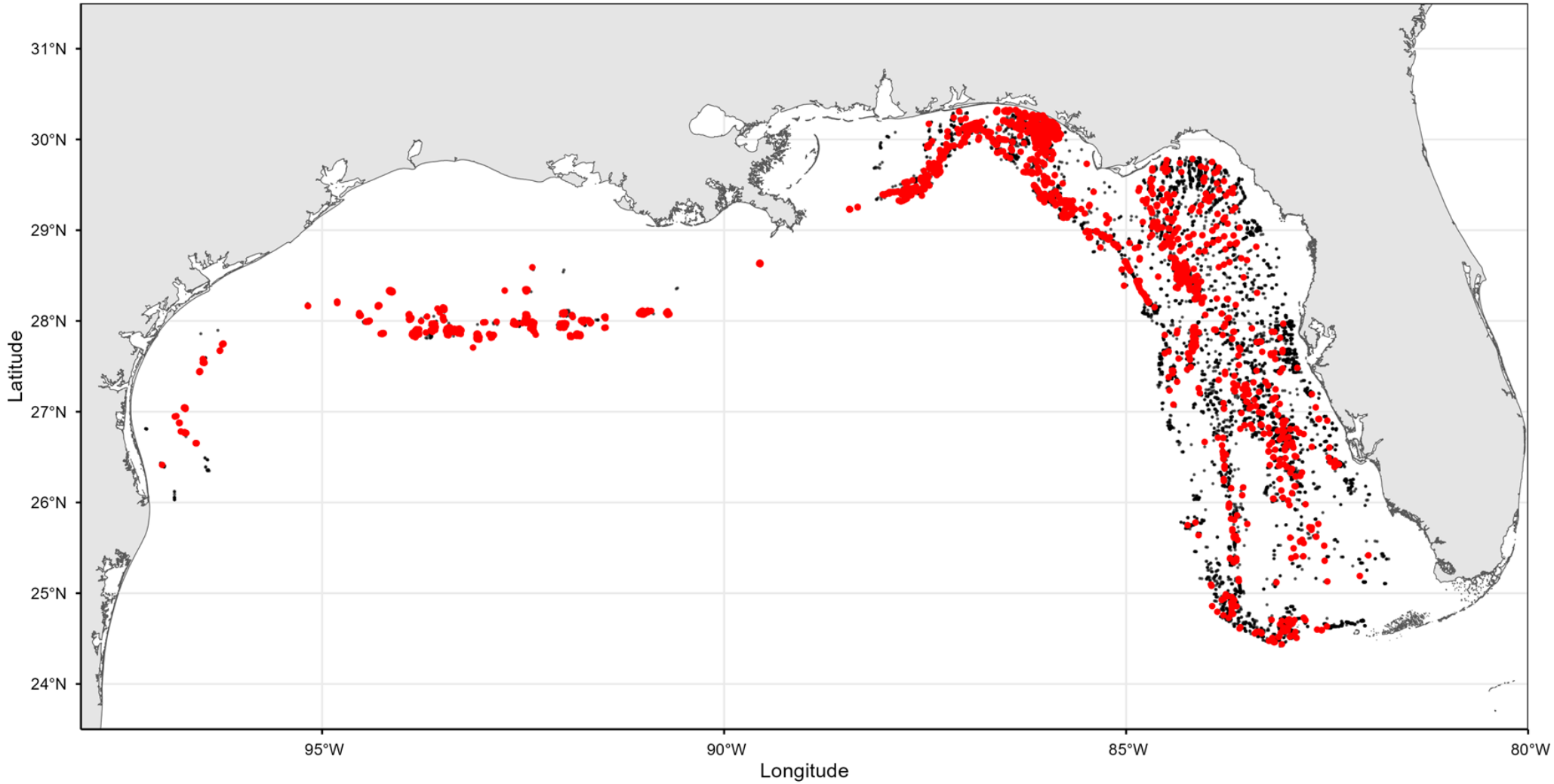
Seriola dumerili presence/absence



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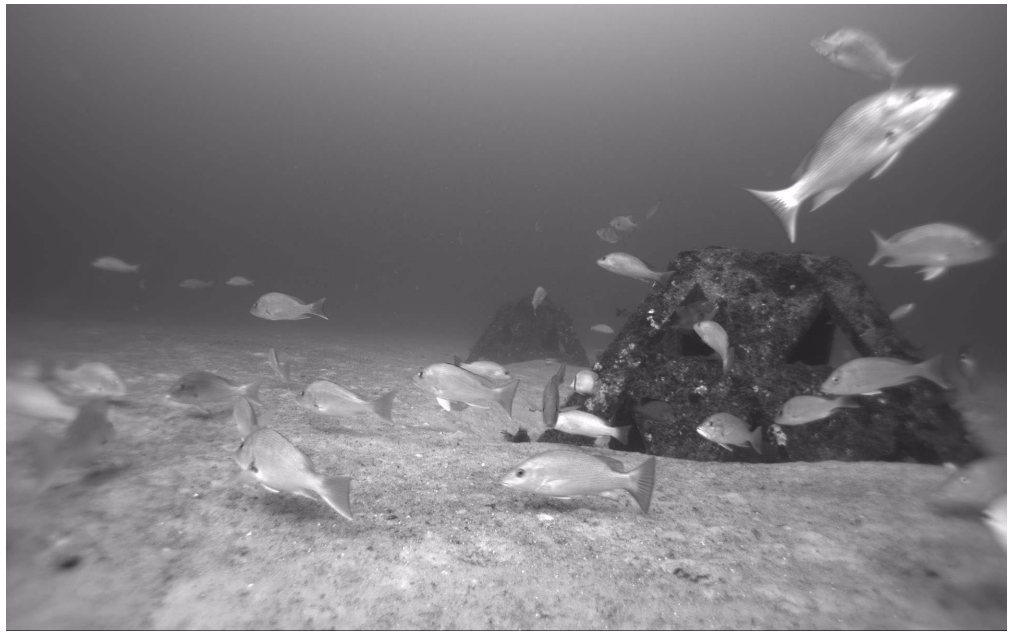
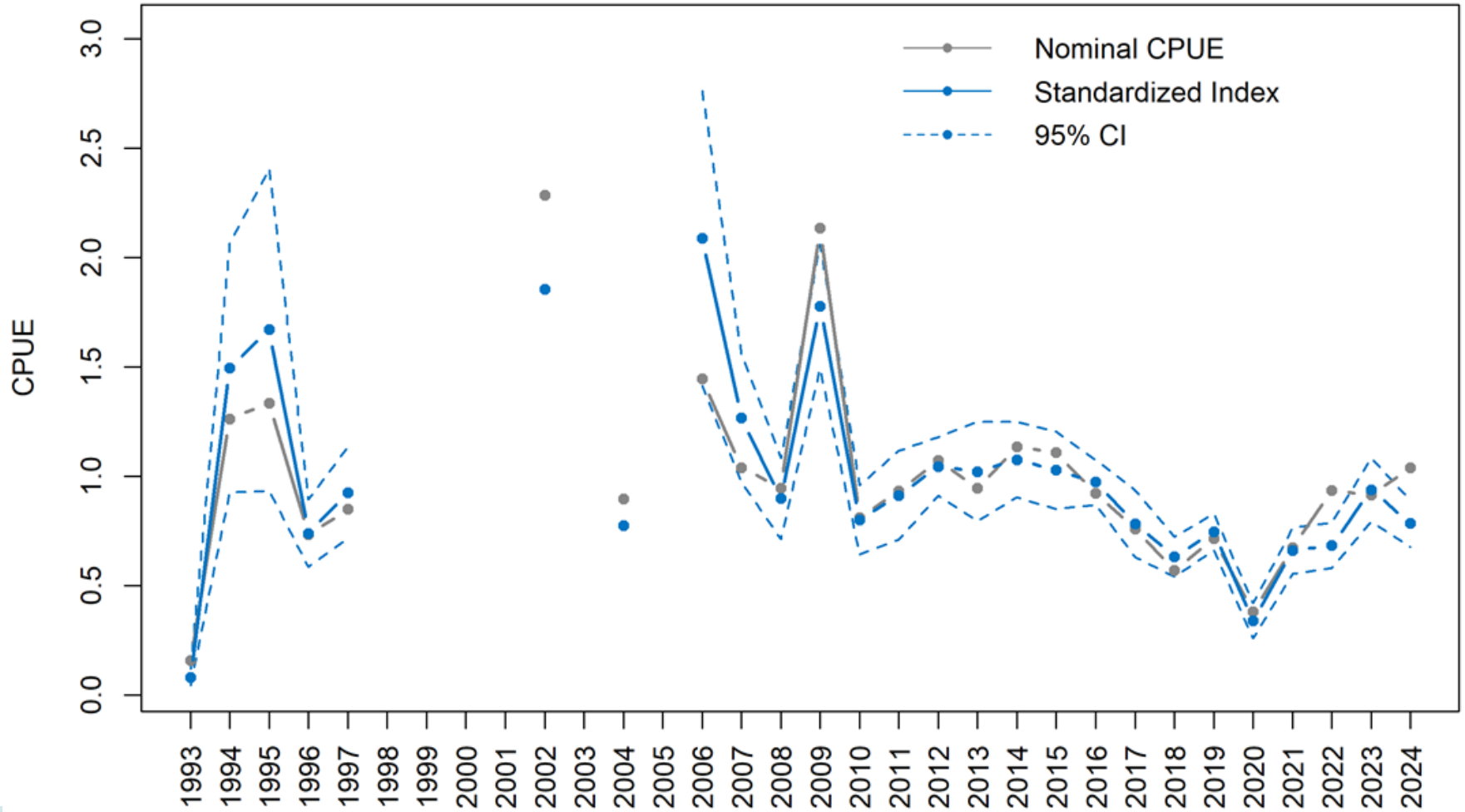
Analytical Methods-Habitat Model

- *Thompson et al. 2022-Fisheries Research*
- Describe sites with High, Medium, Low proportion positive
  - Strata * Year * Species
  - MacCall 1990
- Classification and Regression Trees (CART)
  - MaxN reduced to binary (P/A)
  - R package: Party (Hothorn et al.)



MaxN~ Year + Depth + Latitude + Longitude + Habitat Strata + Max Vertical Relief + Algae + Hard coral + Soft coral + Seagrass + Sponge + Unknown sessile + Rock + Sediment + Relief + Artificial

G-FISHER index through 2024



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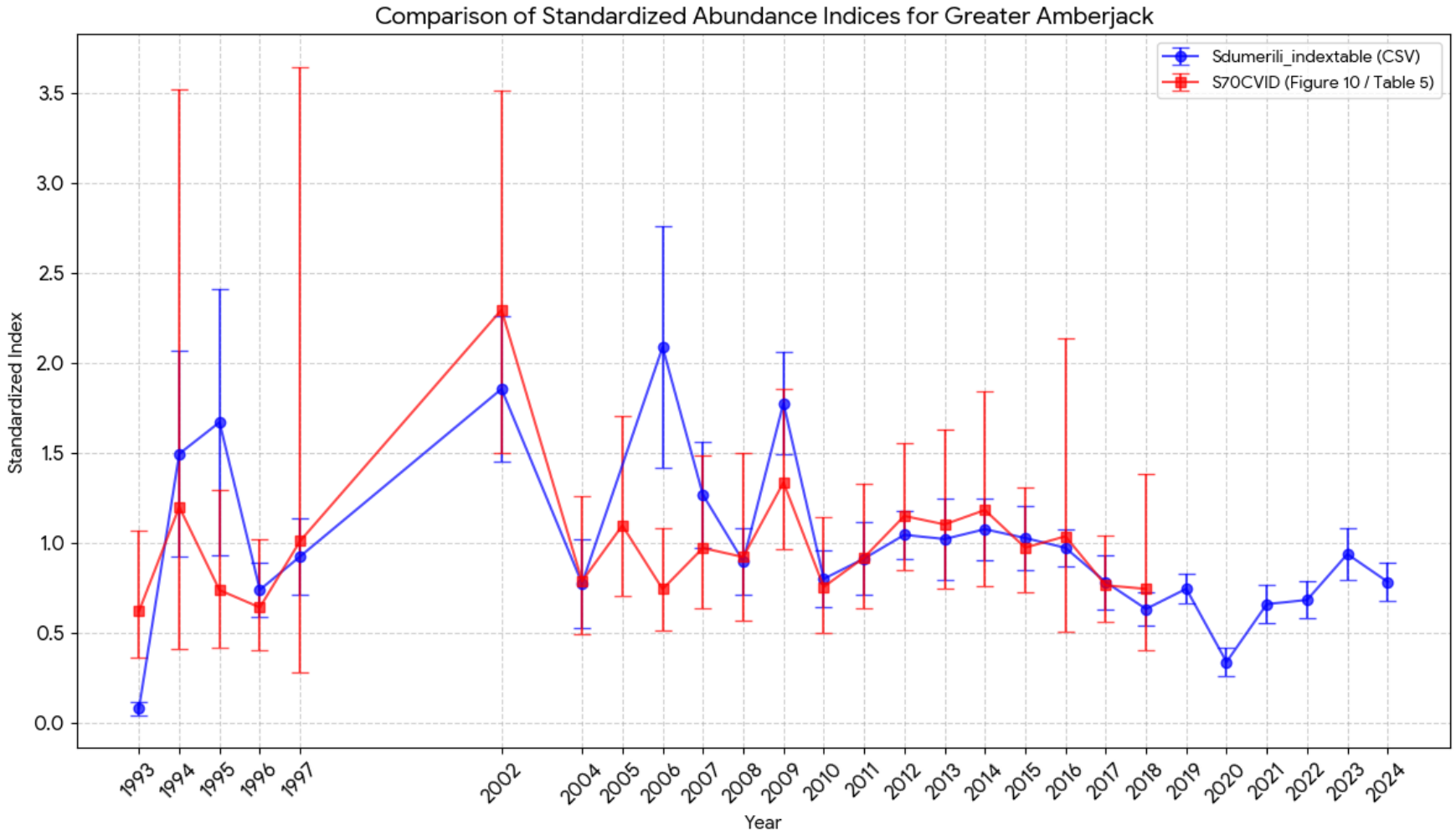
Length compositions

Year	Sample Size (N)	Mean Length (cm)
1995	60	58
1996	79	69
1997	69	60
2002	538	69
2004	316	54
2006	276	63
2007	322	69
2008	24	66
2009	143	74
2010	56	61
2011	107	67
2012	192	67
2013	101	52
2014	113	57
2015	198	57
2016	233	63
2017	162	69
2018	272	62
2019	345	54
2021	245	63
2022	360	58
2023	350	55
2024	308	62

- No strong indication of recent changes in mean length

Stock Trends



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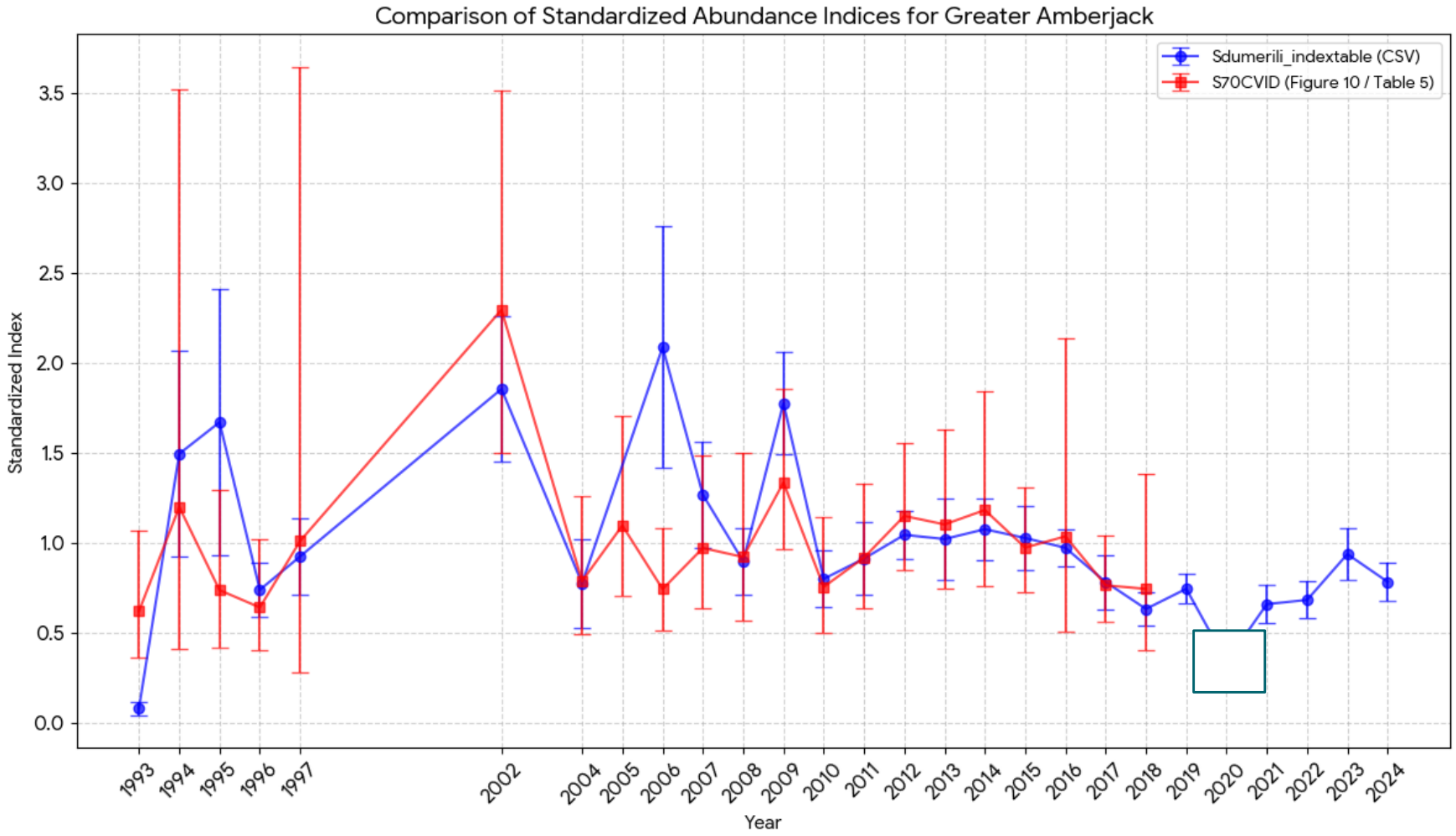
Stock Trends – excluding 2020



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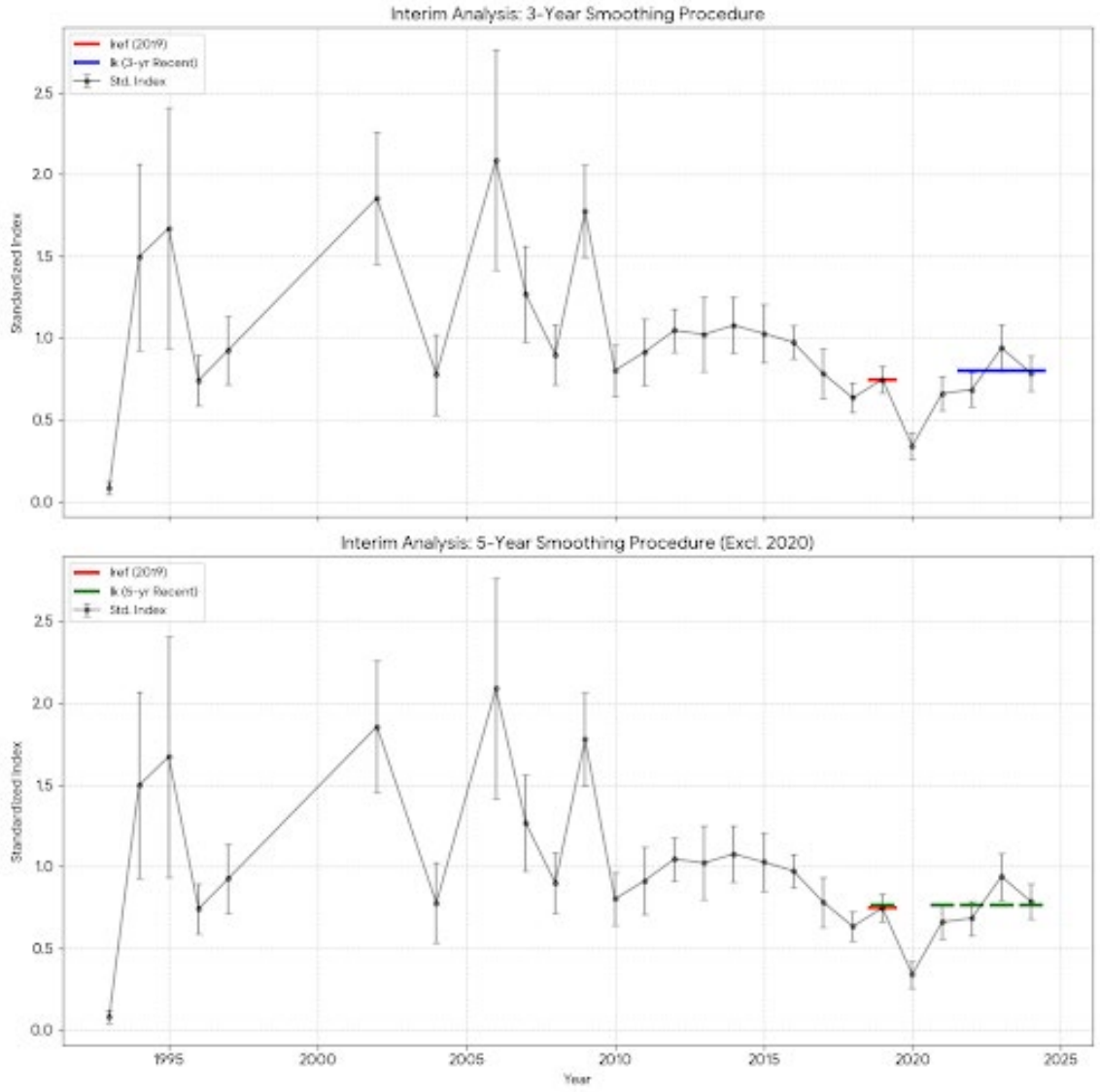
Interim results



Highly dependent on choice of years

	3-year	5-year
• I_{ref}	0.69	0.78
• I_k	0.80	0.77
• I_{ratio}	1.16	0.98

- RefYears_3 2018 & 2019 (2020 dropped)
- RecYears_3 2022-2024
- RefYears_5 2016-2019 (2020 dropped)
- RecYears_3 2021-2024 (2020 dropped)

Wrap up

- The G-FISHER index remained largely flat for the last 7 years (excluding 2020) with the highest point in 2023. Qualitatively, we would expect an index of a rebuilding stock to increase.
- The interim is not used to determine progress towards rebuilding.
- A new assessment is planned for later this year, after the greater amberjack count project has completed CIE review.
- The assessment will provide a complete depiction of stock status and rebuilding progress.

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Questions?

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Extra slides

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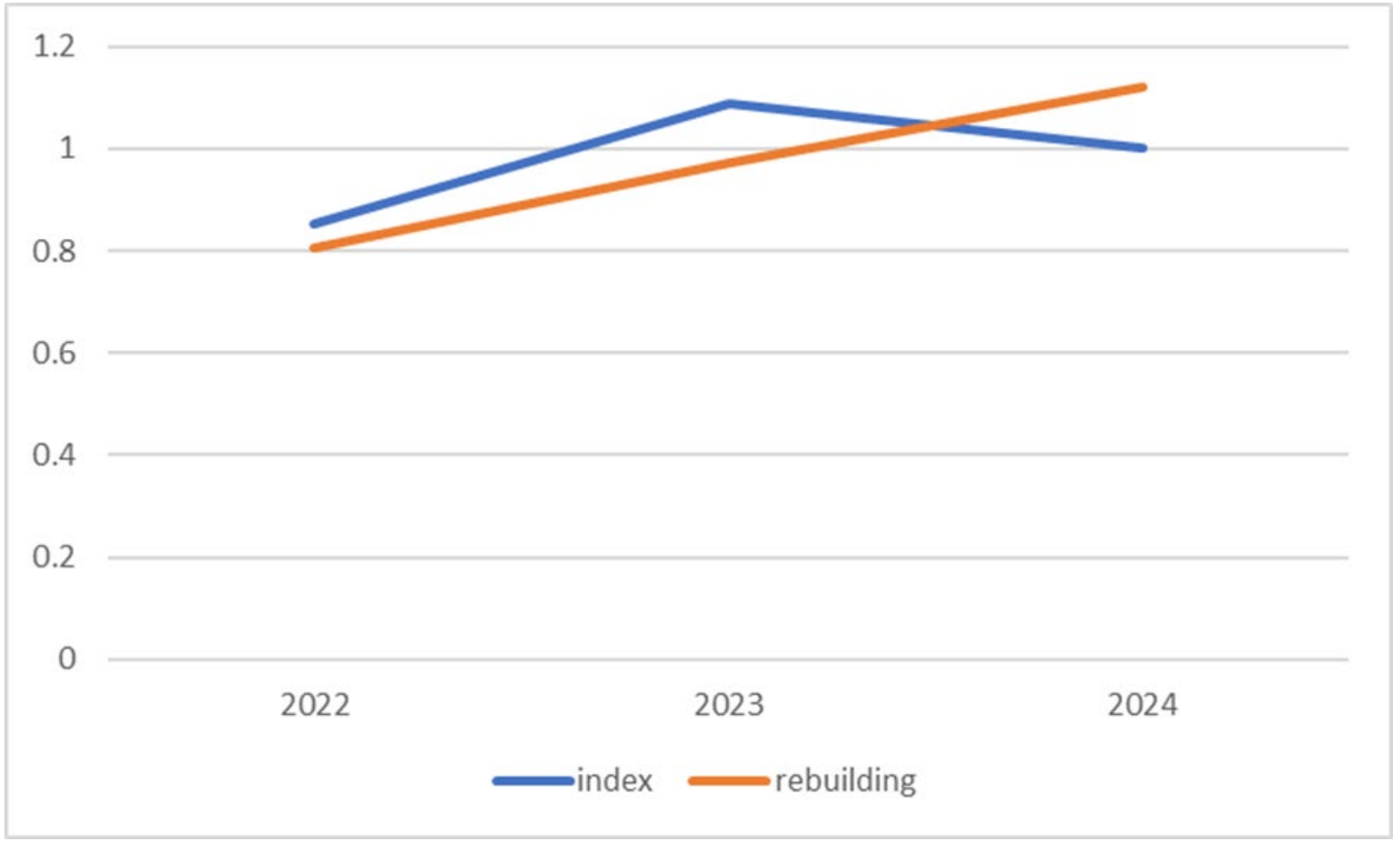
Model biomass*q(G-FISHER)



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