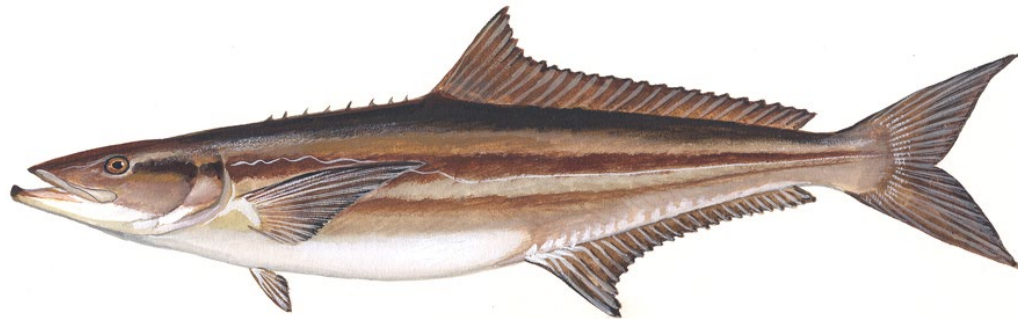




Atlantic Cobia

Draft Addendum II to Amendment 1 for Public Comment



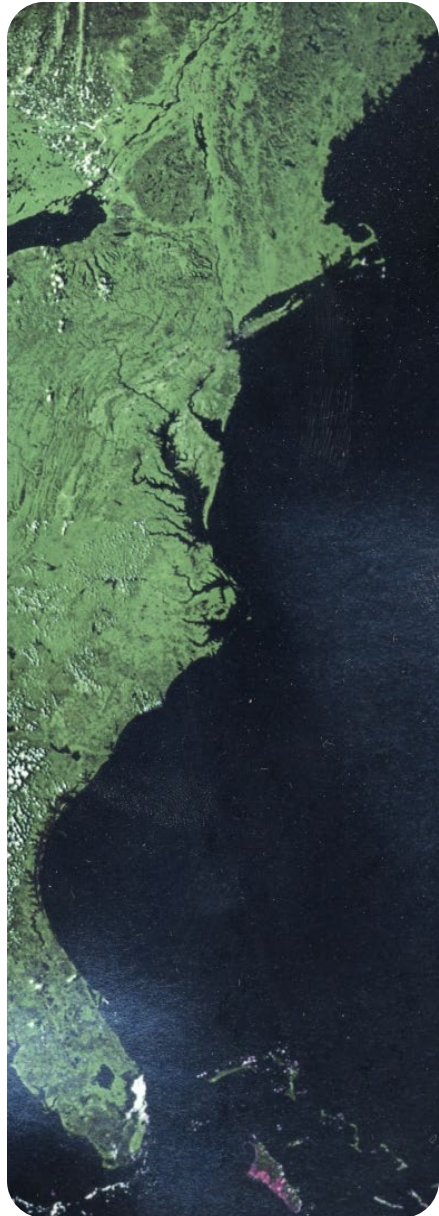
Public Hearings
June 2024

Outline



- Overview of ASMFC
- Current Recreational Management
- Draft Addendum II
 - Statement of the Problem and Timeline
 - Management Options
- How to Provide Public Comment

ASMFC Overview



- Formed in 1942 – Interstate Compact
- 15 Atlantic coast states: ME – FL
- 0 – 3 miles from shore
- Deliberative forum for states
- 3 Commissioners from each state
- Each state has one vote

ASMFC Overview



Coastal Pelagics Management Board:

- Rhode Island through Florida (except Connecticut)
- Potomac River Fisheries Commission
- National Marine Fisheries Service
- South Atlantic Fishery Management Council



ASMFC Overview



Coastal Pelagics Management Board:

- Rhode Island through Florida (except Connecticut)
- Potomac River Fisheries Commission
- National Marine Fisheries Service
- South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Note: ASMFC manages the Atlantic migratory group cobia occurring from Georgia north.





Current Recreational Management

Current Management



- GA, SC, NC, VA (*non-de minimis*)
 - Minimum size 40" TL / 36" FL
 - Seasons and vessel limits determined by each state, but may not exceed 6 fish per vessel
 - State-specific harvest target
 - Evaluate harvest against target to determine changes to seasons and vessel limits
- MD northward (*de minimis*)
 - Each state harvests <1% of coast total in most years
 - Minimum size 37" TL / 33" FL and vessel limit of 1 fish, or implement same measures as Virginia
 - Quota set-aside; no evaluation against target

Current Management



Harvest quota set for up to three years

1% of rec harvest quota set aside for *de minimis*

99% of rec harvest quota allocated to GA, SC, NC, VA based on landings from 2006-2015

Allocation percentages determine state harvest targets (number of fish)

GA, SC, NC, VA evaluate average harvest of up to last 3 years:

- If average harvest exceeds target, state must adjust measures to reduce to target
- If average harvest is less than target for two consecutive years, state can liberalize measures to target

Current Management



- Total harvest quota and state recreational measures have been status quo from 2021-2024
- Recreational measures could change in 2025
 - This addendum to determine allocation framework, state harvest targets, and evaluations for 2025 rec measures
- Recreational measures could change again in 2026 or 2027
 - Upcoming stock assessment (SEDAR 95) available to inform 2026 or 2027 total harvest quota and rec measures



Draft Addendum II on Recreational Allocation, Harvest Target Evaluation, and Timeline for Setting Measures

Statement of the Problem



- Current state-by-state allocations based on harvest data from 2006-2015
- Distribution of landings has changed since 2015
 - Increased in some Mid-Atlantic states and relatively stable in southern states → range expansion
 - RI and NY declared into the fishery due to increasing presence of cobia
- Updating the allocation data timeframe would account for changes in landings

Harvest by State

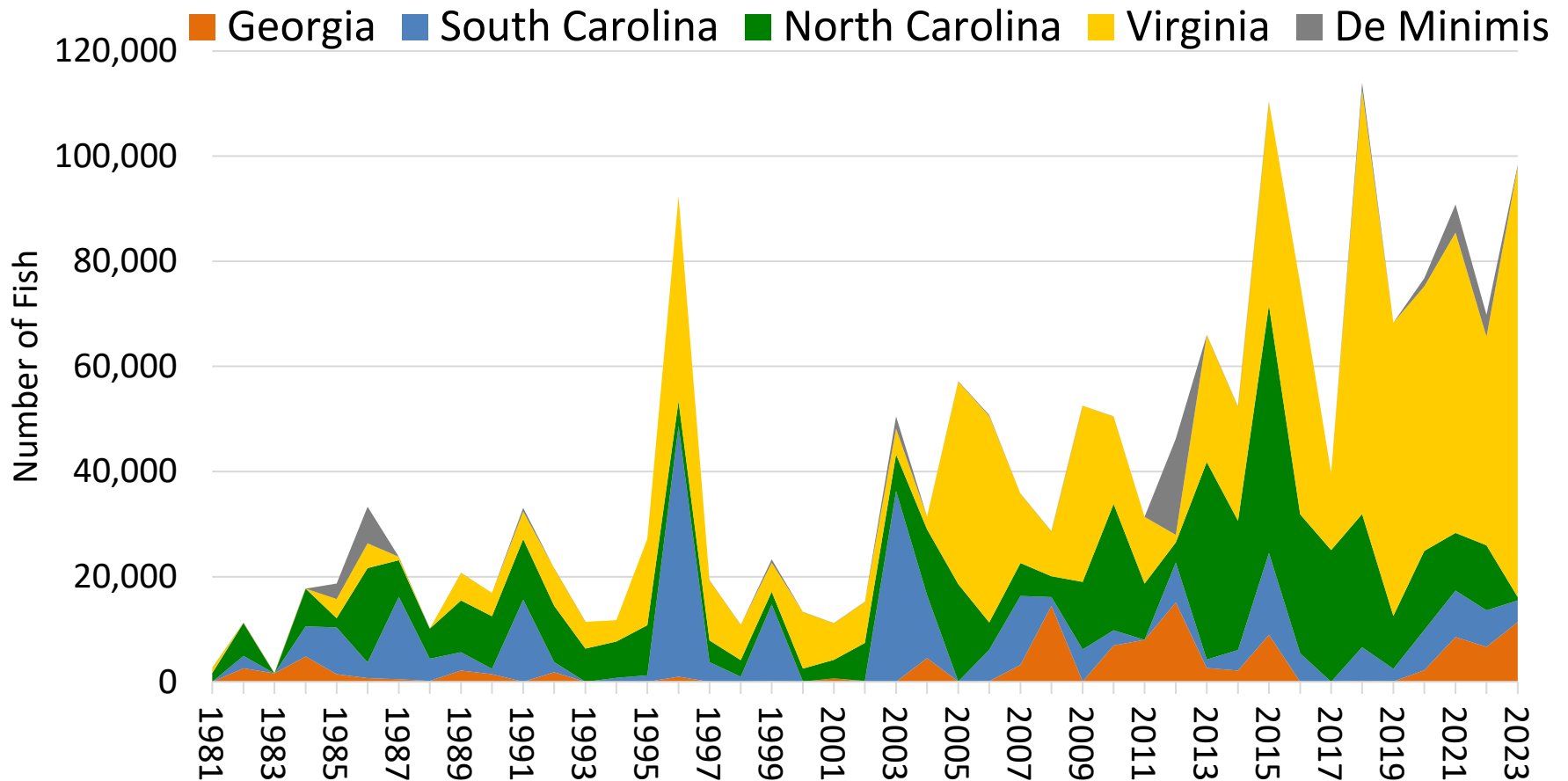


Figure 4 in Draft Addendum II. Cobia recreational harvest by state in number of fish. *De minimis* states are states north of Virginia. Source: Personal communication from the National Marine Fisheries Service, Fisheries Statistics Division (MRIP Query April 2024).

Statement of the Problem



- Recreational harvest estimates (MRIP) for cobia tend to have high uncertainty (high percent standard error, PSE)
- Concerns about using uncertain state-level estimates to evaluate performance and change state management
- Could reduce uncertainty by increasing sample size → regional or coastwide allocation framework

Statement of the Problem



- Uncertainty could also be addressed by considering:
 - number of data years included in rolling average for landings evaluation;
 - whether the use of point estimates is appropriate;
 - whether a state/region's performance is considered on its own or relative to another state/region

Statement of the Problem



- Allocation percentages may need to be updated in the future
- If future updates are considered via addendum, could take several months
- If the Board could make updates via Board action (Board vote), changes could be accomplished more quickly

Statement of the Problem



- Concern about changing management measures too frequently
- Board can set total harvest quota and measures for up to three years
- To avoid management whiplash, specifications could be set for a longer period of time

Timeline



Date	Action
October 2023	Board initiated the Draft Addendum
January 2024	Board provided additional guidance on scope
February – April 2024	Plan Development Team developed Draft Addendum document
May 2024	Board approved Draft Addendum II for public comment
June – July 8, 2024	Public comment period, including public hearings and written comments
August 2024	Board reviews public comment, selects management measures, final approval of Addendum II



Management Options

3.0 Management Options



- 3.1 Recreational Allocation Framework
- 3.2 Future Updates to Allocations
- 3.3 Data and Uncertainty in Recreational Landings Evaluations
- 3.4 Overage Response for Recreational Landings Evaluations
- 3.5 Timeline for Setting Rec./Comm. Measures

3.0 Management Options



- **3.1 Recreational Allocation Framework**
- 3.2 Future Updates to Allocations
- 3.3 Data and Uncertainty in Recreational Landings Evaluations
- 3.4 Overage Response for Recreational Landings Evaluations
- 3.5 Timeline for Setting Rec./Comm. Measures

3.1 Rec. Allocation Framework



- Consider how recreational quota is allocated
 - State-by-state (status quo)
 - Regional
 - Coastwide

3.1 Rec. Allocation Framework



- For state or regional framework, consider data timeframes as basis for allocation
 - 50% 2006-2015 + 50% 2011-2015 (status quo)
 - 100% 2018-2023
 - Data spans 6 years with 5 years used
 - 2020 excluded due to COVID-19 impacts
 - 50% 2014-2023 + 50% 2018-2023
 - Data spans 10 years with 7 years used
 - 2016-2017 excluded due to fishery closures
 - 2020 excluded due to COVID-19 impacts

3.1 Rec. Allocation Framework



Option A-B. State-by-State Allocations

- State-specific target evaluations and state-specific management measures
- Option A is status quo
- Option B considers updated allocation timeframe with more recent data and updated *de minimis* set-aside to account for increased harvest in *de minimis* states in recent years

3.1 Rec Allocation Framework



Data Timeframe	Status Quo	6-Year Average	Weighted 10-Year & 6-Year Average
	50% 2006-2015 + 50% 2011-2015	100% 2018-2023	50% 2014-2023 + 50% 2018-2023
	Option A	Option B1	Option B2
<i>De minimis</i> Set-Aside	1%	5%	5%
Virginia	39.4%	69.2%	64.5%
North Carolina	38.1%	13.2%	17.4%
South Carolina	12.1%	6.5%	7.1%
Georgia	9.4%	6.1%	6.0%
Total	100%	100%	100%

3.1 Rec. Allocation Framework



Option C. Regional Allocations

- Considers allocation by region using allocation timeframe with more recent data
- Eventually establish region-wide size and vessel limit; seasons may vary among states
- When a reduction is needed or when the next stock assessment is completed (whichever comes first) → consider regional measures

3.1 Rec Allocation Framework



Data Timeframe	6-Year Average 100% 2018-2023	Weighted 10-Year & 6-Year Average 50% 2014-2023 + 50% 2018-2023
	Option C1	Option C2
North Region RI-CT-NY-NJ-DE-MD-VA-NC	87.24%	86.65%
South Region Two State SC-GA	12.76%	13.35%
Total	100%	100%
	Option C3	Option C4
North Region RI-CT-NY-NJ-DE-MD-VA	73.77%	68.69%
South Region Three State NC-SC-GA	26.23%	31.31%
Total	100%	100%

3.1 Rec. Allocation Framework



Option D. Coastwide Target

- Only the coastwide recreational harvest quota (no state or regional allocation)
- Eventually establish coastwide size and vessel limit; seasons may vary among states
- When a reduction is needed or when the next stock assessment is completed (whichever comes first) → consider coastwide measures

3.0 Management Options



- 3.1 Recreational Allocation Framework
- **3.2 Future Updates to Allocations**
- 3.3 Data and Uncertainty in Recreational Landings Evaluations
- 3.4 Overage Response for Recreational Landings Evaluations
- 3.5 Timeline for Setting Rec./Comm. Measures

3.2 Updates to Allocations



- Option A. Status Quo. Allocations can only be changed via addendum/amendment process
- Option B. Change via Board Action. Allocations may be changed via Board vote under **two scenarios:**
 - A state loses *de minimis* status and needs their own harvest target factored into the allocation;
 - Harvest estimates for allocation source data are revised (i.e., future MRIP updates)

3.0 Management Options



- 3.1 Recreational Allocation Framework
- 3.2 Future Updates to Allocations
- **3.3 Data and Uncertainty in Recreational Landings Evaluations**
- 3.4 Overage Response for Recreational Landings Evaluations
- 3.5 Timeline for Setting Rec./Comm. Measures

3.3 Data and Uncertainty



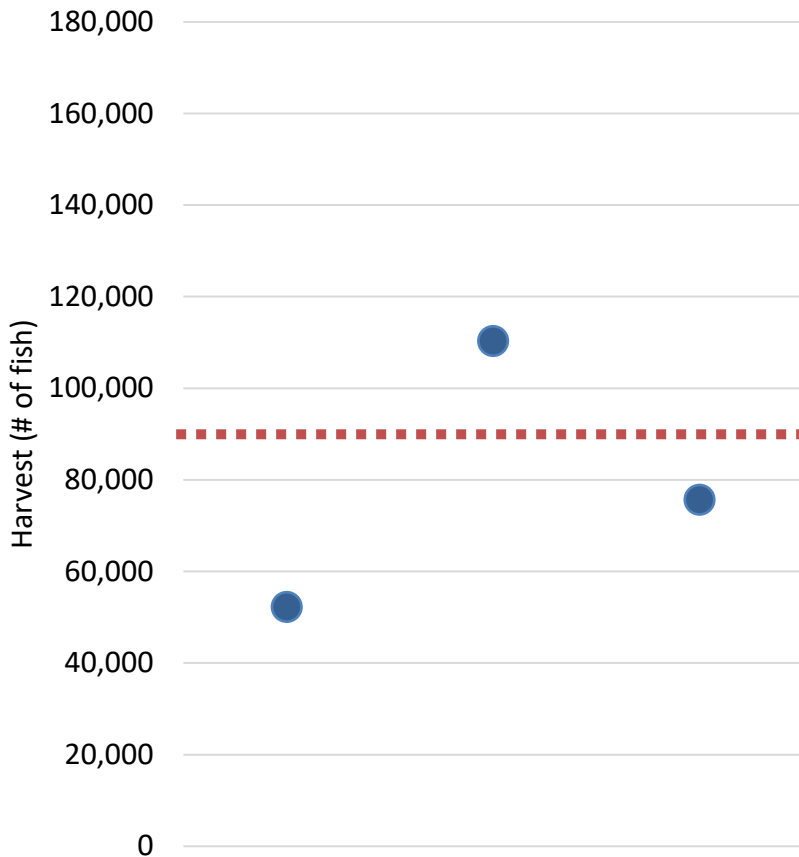
- Option A. Status Quo. Evaluate up to **3-year** rolling average of harvest against target
 - Average of up to 3 years under the same management measures
- Option B. Evaluate up to **5-year** rolling average of harvest against target
 - Average of up to 5 years under the same management measures
 - More years of data given variability and imprecision of harvest estimates

3.3 Data and Uncertainty

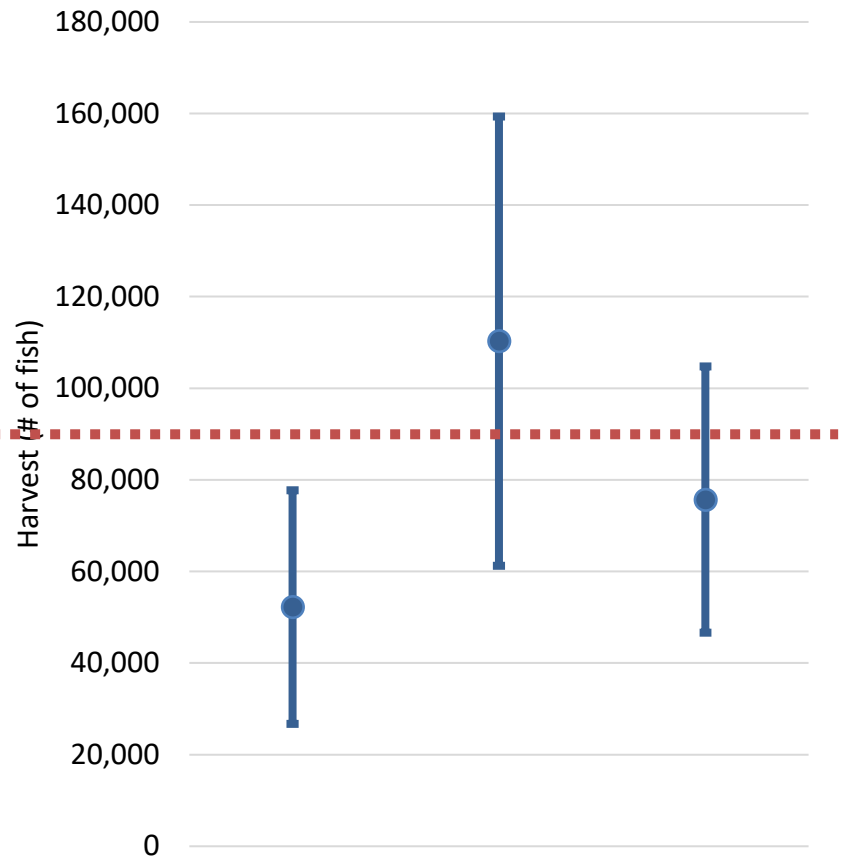


- In the future for a regional or coastwide allocation framework, the Board could vote to switch from using rolling averages to using confidence intervals for harvest target evaluation
- Confidence intervals would more directly account for uncertainty around MRIP harvest point estimates

3.3 Data and Uncertainty



● Average of point estimates vs. target



For regions or coast, could compare range of harvest each year within confidence interval vs. target

3.0 Management Options



- 3.1 Recreational Allocation Framework
- 3.2 Future Updates to Allocations
- 3.3 Data and Uncertainty in Recreational Landings Evaluations
- **3.4 Overage Response for Recreational Landings Evaluations**
- 3.5 Timeline for Setting Rec./Comm. Measures

3.4 Overage Response



- Option A. Status Quo. If a state/region's average harvest exceeds the target, measures must be adjusted to reduce harvest to achieve target.
- Option B. Performance Comparisons. If a state/region's average harvest exceeds the target, a reduction would not be required if:
 - Another state/region is below their target by the same amount and has chosen not to liberalize; AND
 - Average coastwide harvest has not exceeded the coastwide quota

3.0 Management Options



- 3.1 Recreational Allocation Framework
- 3.2 Future Updates to Allocations
- 3.3 Data and Uncertainty in Recreational Landings Evaluations
- 3.4 Overage Response for Recreational Landings Evaluations
- **3.5 Timeline for Setting Rec./Comm. Measures**

3.5 Timeline for Setting Measures



- Option A. Status Quo. Specifications (e.g., total harvest quota, rec measures) may be set through Board action for up to **3 years**.
- Option B. Specifications may be set through Board action for up to **5 years**.
 - Reduce frequency of management changes (management ‘whiplash’)
 - Better align with when new stock assessments are available



How to Provide Public Comment

Resources



**Draft Addendum II on ASMFC Public Input
web page:**

www.asmfc.org/about-us/public-input

Public Hearings on ASMFC Calendar:

www.asmfc.org/calendar/

YouTube Presentation Recording



ASMFCvideos

142 subscribers

Submit Written Comments to:



**Deadline for Public Comments is 11:59 PM,
July 8, 2024**

Emilie Franke, FMP Coordinator

Email: comments@asmfc.org

Subject line: 'Cobia Draft Addendum II'

Mail address:

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland St. Suite 200 A-N

Arlington, VA 22201



Extra Slides

Harvest by State # of fish



	RI	CT	NY	NJ	DE	MD	VA	NC	SC	GA	Total Rec. Harvest	
2018		569			581	206	80,679	25,331	6,340	233	113,939	
2019							55,770	10,090	2,381	72	68,313	
2020		219				1,360	50,287	15,067	7,650	2,203	76,786	
2021				250		5,084	57,135	10,970	8,858	8,510	90,807	
2022			3,462	711			39,668	12,330	6,988	6,641	69,800	
2023	361						81,824	629 ⁺	4,129	11,368	98,311	
<i>Soft Target for 2020-24</i>	<i>769 de minimis set-aside</i>							30,302	29,302	9,306	7,229	76,908

Table 1 from Draft Addendum II. Cobia recreational harvest by state in number of fish from 2018-2023 . Source: Personal communication from the National Marine Fisheries Service, Fisheries Statistics Division (MRIP Query April 2024).

PSE by State



	RI	CT	NY	NJ	DE	MD	VA	NC	SC	GA
2018		100.4			98.1	66.7	35.8	33.2	42.2	53.9
2019							22.6	38.6	70.6	56.9
2020		102.7				69.5	25.0	37.9	39.1	92.4
2021				92.4		43.8	22.9	39.1	41.9	41.4
2022			82.3	102.2			25.1	47	55.9	72.4
2023	71.9						34.2	53.1	61.9	56.0

Table 2 from Draft Addendum II. Percent standard error (PSE) for each state’s recreational cobia harvest estimate in number of fish from 2018-2023. Red indicates a PSE greater than 50 (MRIP does not support use of the estimate). Yellow indicates a PSE between 30 and 50 (MRIP cautions use of the estimate in fisheries management). Source: Personal communication from the National Marine Fisheries Service, Fisheries Statistics Division (MRIP Query April 2024).

PSE by Region



<i>Corresponds to Section 3.1</i>	<i>Options C1-C2 Regional Allocation</i>		<i>Options C3-C4 Regional Allocation</i>		<i>Option D Coastwide Target</i>
	<i>RI-NC</i>	<i>SC-GA</i>	<i>RI-VA</i>	<i>NC-GA</i>	<i>RI-GA</i>
Year					
2018	28.0	40.7	35.2	27.7	26.5
2019	20.0	68.6	22.6	33.8	19.5
2020	20.7	36.7	24.4	27.1	18.7
2021	19.0	29.5	21.2	23.6	16.4
2022	21.2	45.5	23.7	32.7	19.2
2023	33.7	44.3	34.0	42.6	29.3

Table B2 from Draft Addendum II for 2018-2023. Percent standard error (PSE) for each proposed region's recreational cobia harvest estimate in number of fish from 2014-2023. Red indicates a PSE greater than 50 (MRIP does not support use of the estimate). Yellow indicates a PSE between 30 and 50 (MRIP cautions use of the estimate in fisheries management). Source: Personal communication from the National Marine Fisheries Service, Fisheries Statistics Division (MRIP May 2024).