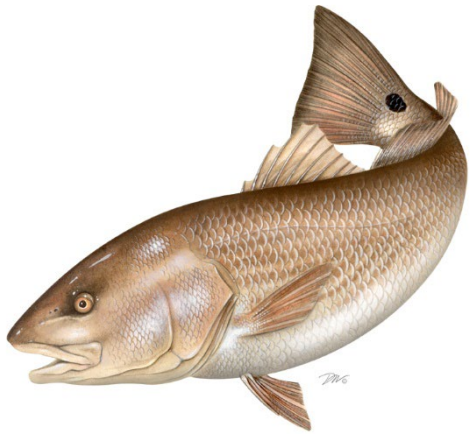
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries COMMISSION

Update on Board Tasks to Red Drum Technical Committee



Sciaenids Board

May 6, 2025

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Board Tasking

- Original task (Oct. 2024):
  - *Produce the static spawning potential ratio for a range of slot size limits (between 14" and 27") associated with bag limits ranging from 0 to 5 fish per person for: (a) the southern region and/or (b) SC, GA, FL individually*
- Administrative Commissioners from southern stock states agreed to revise task via email:
  - *Determine stockwide catch reduction necessary to achieve management target of $SPR_{40\%}$ and regulation changes that will achieve the necessary catch reduction*

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Revised Board Tasking

- ***Task 1****. Calculate the catch reduction needed for the southern stock to fish at F30%, F35%, and F40% as well as the projected timeline to reach the threshold and target SSBs under each F scenario. These analyses should not incorporate effort trends and should include alternative analyses with and without noncompliance assumptions.*
- **Task 2:** *Discuss how to interpret the TLA result of "Moderate Action", as well as methods for estimating regulation change impacts for the northern stock*

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TC Meetings

- TC met on 11/7/2024
  - Developed request for Board guidance on tasking
  - Formed a working group to develop catch reduction methods and tools

- Working group met twice
  - 11/20/2024
  - 1/13/2025

- TC met on 1/31/2025
  - Reviewed catch reduction methods and tools
  - Reviewed southern stock projections
  - Discussed guidance on northern stock items

- TC met 3/06/2025
  - Update on state-specific catch reduction analyses
  - Discussed additional requested F projections and stockwide catch reductions
  - Reviewed TC Report Outline

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Projections for Southern Stock

- Project stock forward from terminal year
- Project until equilibrium catches reached
- Compare catch at end of projection period under status quo F, $F_{40\%}$, $F_{35\%}$, and $F_{30\%}$ to determine stockwide catch reduction needed to achieve $F_{40\%}$, $F_{35\%}$, and $F_{30\%}$
  - $F_{40\%}$ is the F level associated with $SPR_{40\%}$ and so forth

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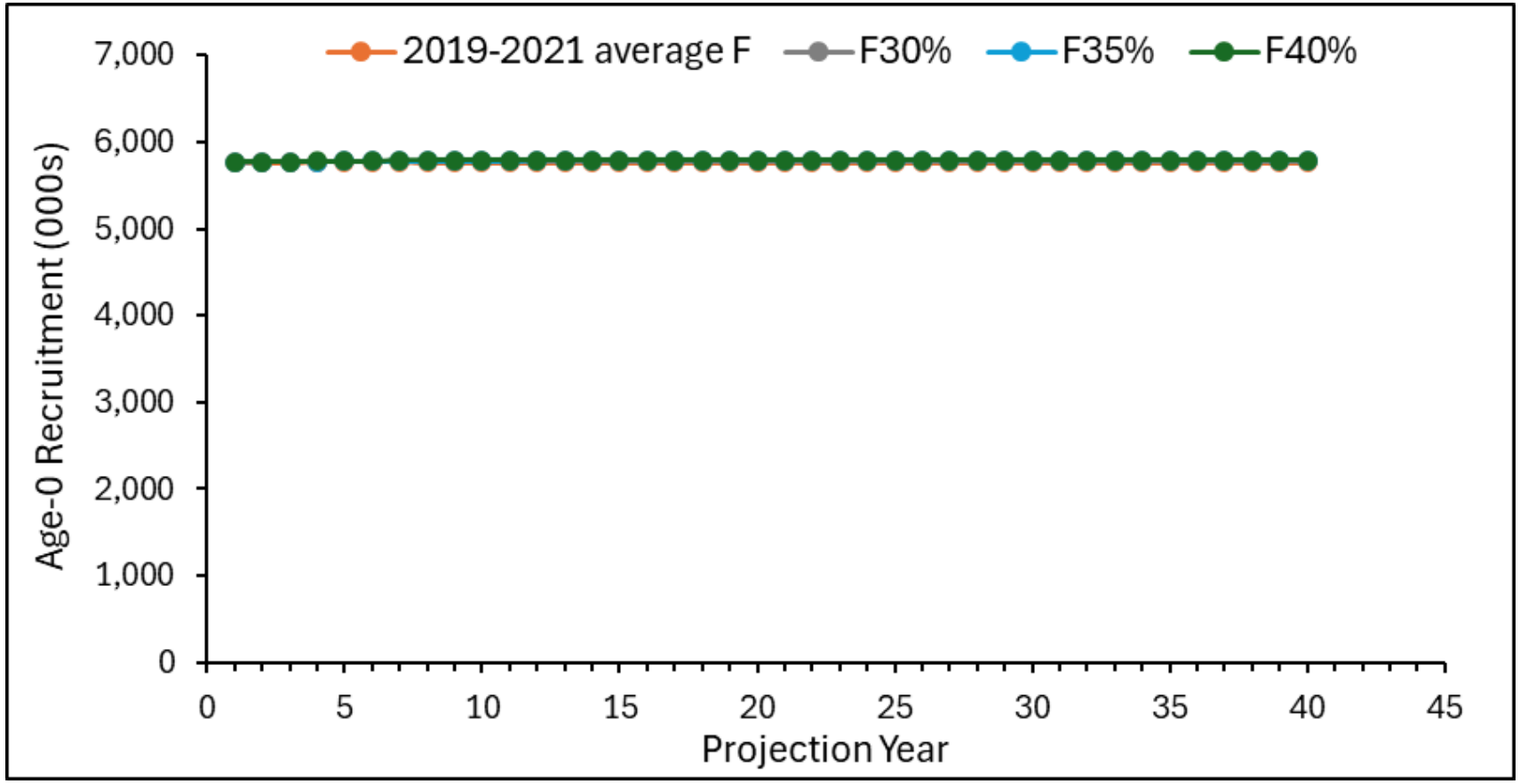
Projections for Southern Stock



- Recruitment levels expected from the model stock-recruitment relationship given the spawning stock biomass level at the time of spawning are used for projections

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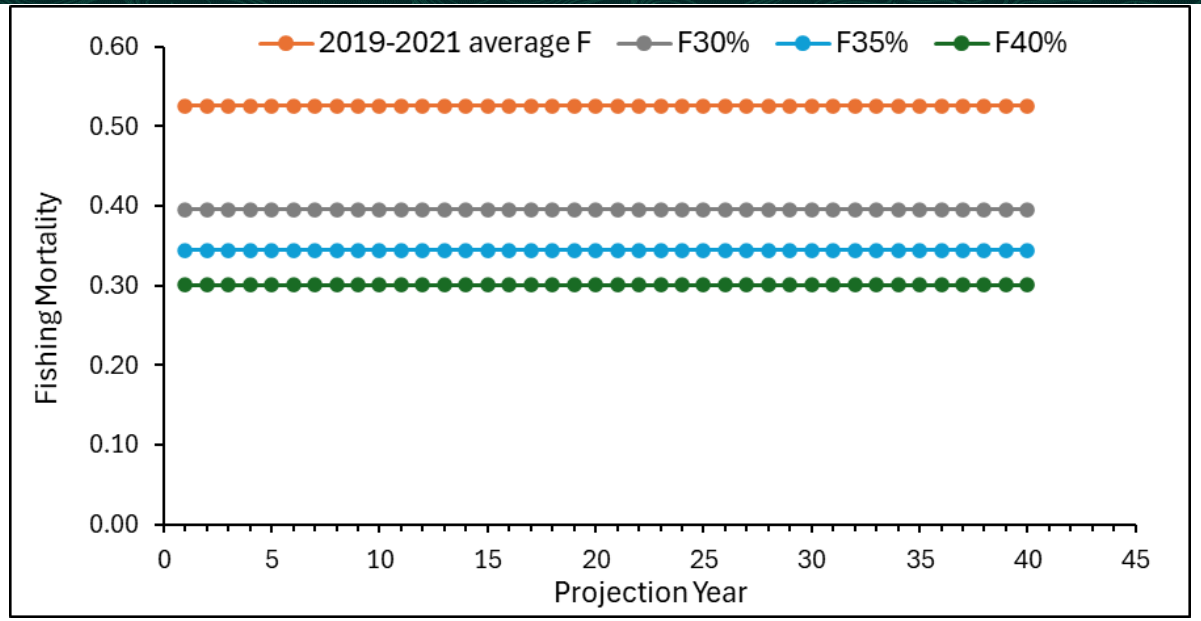
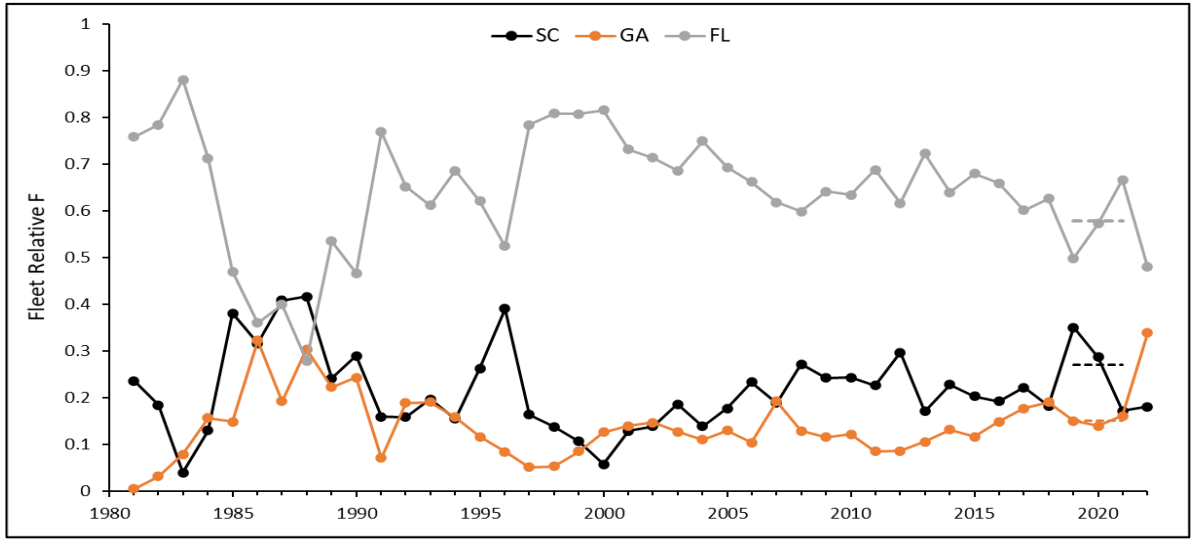
Projections for Southern Stock

- Fishing Mortality
  - Status Quo F Projection: Average F from status years (2019-2021; 0.526)
  - Projection 1: $F_{40\%}$ projection
    - Model estimated $F_{40\%}$ reference point (0.301)
  - Projection 2: $F_{35\%}$ projection
    - Model estimated $F_{35\%}$ reference point (0.345)
  - Projection 3: $F_{30\%}$ projection
    - Model estimated $F_{30\%}$ reference point (0.396)
  - F partitioned among fleets based on 2019-2021 average relative F
  - FL regulation changes in September 2022 not accounted for in time series used for stock status determination
    - To be accounted for in catch reduction analyses





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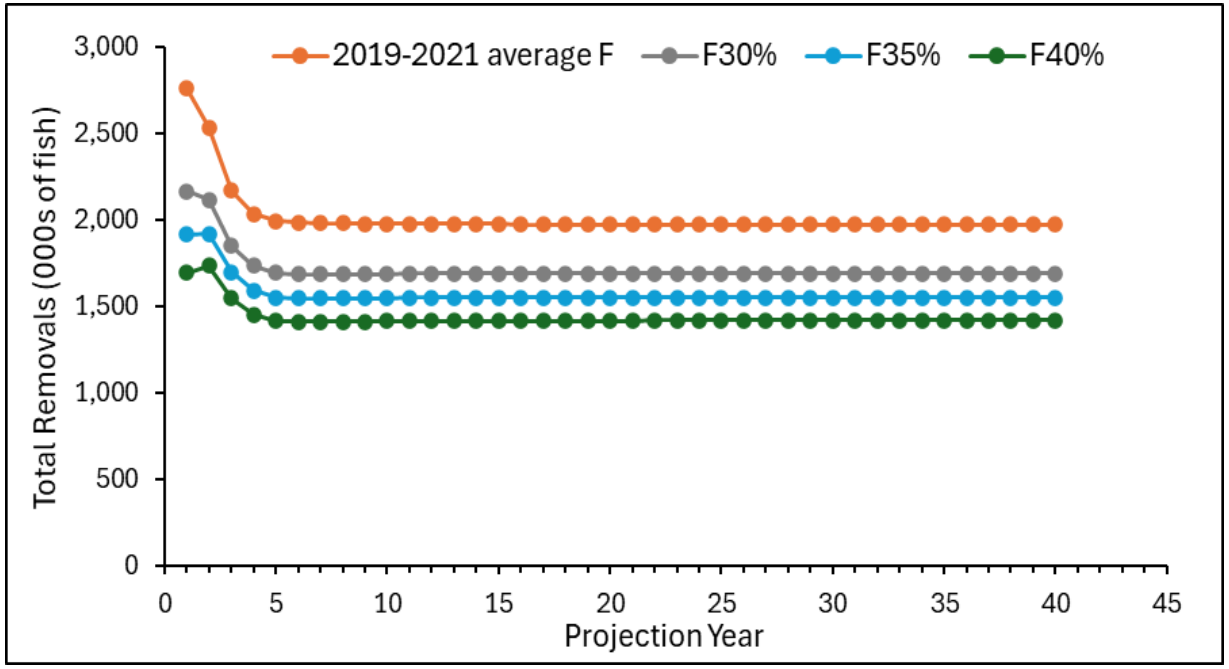
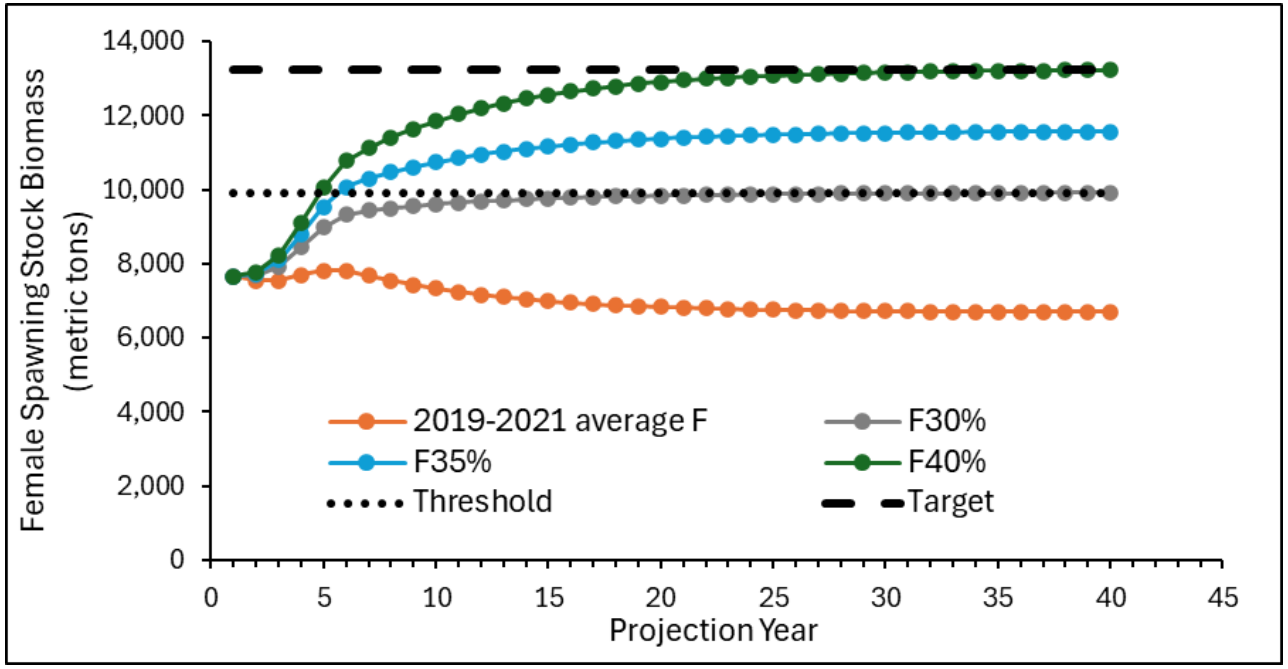
Projections for Southern Stock

- 40 year projections
- Constant F levels across projection years within projection





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Projections for Southern Stock

Projected Fishing Mortality	Catch Reduction Needed from 2019-2021 Average F Catch	Years to SSB Threshold (9,917 mt)	Years to SSB Target (13,250 mt)
$F_{40\%}$ (0.301)	28.1%	5	32
$F_{35\%}$ (0.345)	21.4%	6	NA
$F_{30\%}$ (0.396)	14.4%	23	NA

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Task 1. Catch Reduction Analyses

- Status quo catch adjusted according to proposed bag, vessel, and/or size limit changes
- Catch adjustments account for dead discards due to shifting harvest to releases
- Adjusted catch compared to status quo catch to determine reduction in dead catch (harvest+dead discards) from proposed regulations

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Task 1. Catch Reduction Analyses

- Uses MRIP data from 2018-2021 fishing years as status quo catch
  - Consistent management across states
  - Analyses do not incorporate effort trends

- Analyses account for additional documented mortality (non-compliance and observed dead discards) based on observed rates

- TC reviewed and approved methods and tools, have been applied to FL for recent regulation changes and can be applied to state data under proposed regulation changes in next steps

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Task 1. Catch Reduction Analyses

SC MRIP Intercept Data	Type A Fish (i.e., Claim)	Type B1 Fish (i.e., Harvest)	
	Observed Harvest	Reported Harvest	Reported Released Dead
2018 (Sep-Dec)	89%	11%	0%
2019 (Mar-Aug)	92%	8%	0%
2019 (Sept-Dec)	92%	8%	0%
2020 (Mar-Aug)	93%	7%	0%
2020 (Sept-Dec)	88%	12%	0%
2021 (Mar-Aug)	88%	12%	0%
2021 (Sept-Dec)	83%	16%	1%
2022 (March-Aug)	72%	18%	0%

GA MRIP Intercept Data	Type A Fish (i.e., Claim)	Type B1 Fish (i.e, Harvest)	
	Observed Harvest	Reported Harvest	Reported Released Dead
2018 (Sep-Dec)	87%	13%	0%
2019	85%	11%	5%
2020	84%	16%	0%
2021	92%	8%	0%
2022 (March-Aug)	96%	4%	0%

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FL 2022 Regulatory Changes Consideration

Jurisdiction	Removals		Reduction
	With 2018-2021 Regulations	With Current Regulations	
South Carolina	1,651,574	1,651,574	0.0%
Georgia	1,709,947	1,709,947	0.0%
Florida	4,207,205	3,499,687	16.8%
Northeast	3,479,763	3,129,735	10.1%
Indian River Lagoon	725,409	367,919	49.3%
Southeast	2,033	2,033	0.0%
Southern Stock	7,568,726	6,861,208	**9.3%**

- Catch reductions estimated for regulation changes that occurred following the stock assessment assuming perfect compliance with regulations.

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FL 2022 Regulatory Changes Consideration

Jurisdiction	Removals				Reduction		
	With 2018-2021 Regulations	With Current Regulations					
		Minimum	Mean	Maximum	Minimum*	Mean	Maximum*
South Carolina	1,651,574	1,651,574	1,651,574	1,651,574	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Georgia	1,709,947	1,709,947	1,709,947	1,709,947	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Florida	4,207,205	3,566,826	3,581,553	3,668,650	12.8%	14.9%	15.2%
Northeast	3,479,763	3,170,789	3,178,253	3,237,547	7.0%	8.7%	8.9%
Indian River Lagoon	725,409	394,005	401,267	429,070	40.9%	44.7%	45.7%
Southeast	2,033	2,033	2,033	2,033	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Southern Stock	7,568,726	6,928,348	6,943,074	7,030,171	**7.1%**	**8.3%**	**8.5%**

- Catch reductions estimated for regulation changes that occurred following the stock assessment assuming noncompliance with regulations based on rates observed from 2018-2021.

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Task 2. Northern Stock Considerations

- **Task 2:** *Discuss how to interpret the TLA result of "Moderate Action", as well as methods for estimating regulation change impacts for the northern stock*

- The TLA established that the northern stock is neither experiencing overfishing nor is the stock overfished.

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Task 2. Northern Stock Considerations

- Overfishing is defined by fishery performance:
  - Threshold is a red indicator in any one of the last three terminal years. TLA has shown yellow indicators for all three of the previous three years, suggesting levels of “Moderate Action” from management.
  - Fishery performance has been showing increasing proportions of red in annual metric results since the mid-2000s.

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Task 2. Northern Stock Considerations

- Overfished is defined by adult abundance:
  - Overfished status is only triggered when the tabular metric summary for adult abundance is red in any one of three previous years, which did not occur in the assessment.
  - Adult abundance has been trending towards yellow and red designations in recent years' annual metrics, the period of 2019 to 2022 showed two yellow years and a red year in the terminal year (2022)

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Task 2. Northern Stock Considerations

- Moderate Action Recommendations:
  - Continue to monitor fishery performance, adult abundance, and recruitment trends in TLA
  - Do not relax existing management measures for the northern stock.
  - Complete between-assessment updates of the TLA for both stocks
  - Develop abundance indices from the northern edge of the stock, including Virginia northward

Task 2. Northern Stock Considerations

- Estimating regulatory changes impacts
  - Use the same bag, vessel, and slot size catch reduction methods as those described for the southern stock.
  - No catch reduction analyses were completed for the northern stock here consistent with the TC's recommendation that specific regulatory changes are not necessary for the northern stock at this time.
  - To recommend regulatory changes for the northern stock, a method to identify necessary reductions would also need to be identified given that the TLA is a qualitative tool and does not have the same projection functionality as the SS model used for the southern stock.

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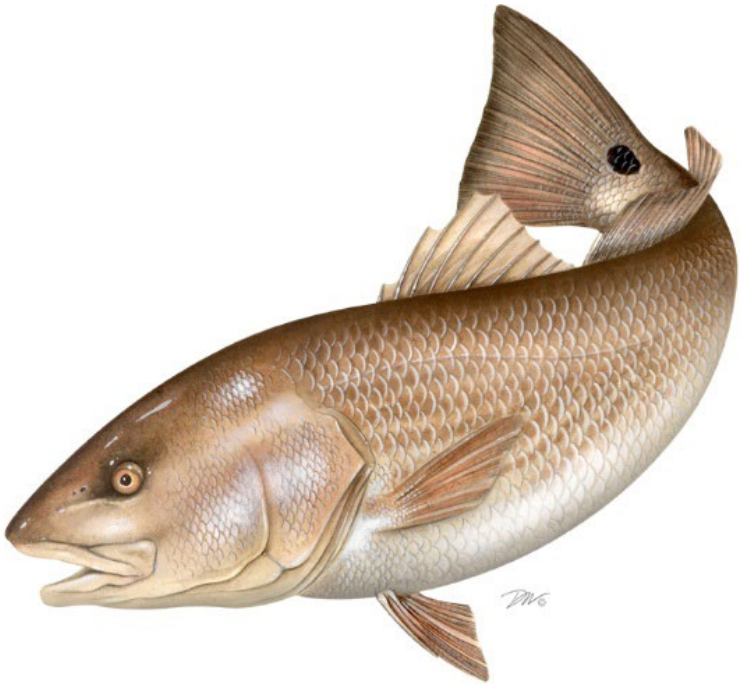
Next Steps

- Southern stock TC members will use catch reduction analyses to determine proposed regulations that meet the specified percent reduction

- TC will meet again to review proposed regulations and review any potential methodology to address regulatory changes for the northern stock.

- Final report provided in meeting materials for August (Or Annual?) Board meeting

Questions?



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Atlantic Croaker and Spot Stock Assessment Updates

Sciaenids Management Board

5/6/2025

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Assessment Updates

- Last Board update Summer 2024 Meeting

- SAS met 10/30/2024 to discuss different regional trends
  - Recommended structure of assessment shift to regional models with break at Cape Lookout, NC

- Lead analyst workload constraints delayed additional model development from October 2024 through February 2025

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Assessment Updates

- SAS has picked back up with assessment development
  - SAS met in February and April to plan and review data updates
  - Addition of 2023 and partial 2024 data
  - Data sets divided regionally
  - New data sets from the South Atlantic reconsidered
  - SAS will meet 5/22 to complete data review

- Second lead analyst confirmed for South Atlantic region model

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Atlantic Croaker Assessment Timeline

- Summer 2025: Croaker Regional Assessment Model Development
- October 2025: Croaker Assessment Workshop
- Winter 2025/2026: Draft Croaker Assessment Report
- February 2026: Review Croaker Assessment with TC
- April 2026: Croaker Peer Review Workshop
- August 2026: Present Croaker Assessment to Sciaenids Board

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Spot Assessment Timeline

- May 2026: Spot Data Due/Data Review
- Summer 2026: Spot Assessment Model Development
- October 2026: Spot Assessment Workshop
- Winter 2026/2027: Draft Spot Assessment Report
- February 2027: Review Spot Assessment with TC
- April 2027: Spot Peer Review Workshop
- August 2027: Present Spot Assessment to Sciaenids Board

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Questions?