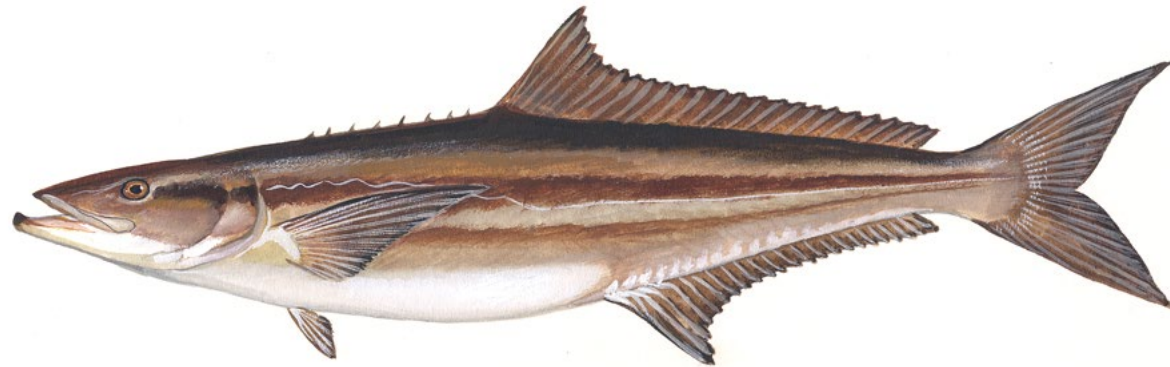




Atlantic States
Marine Fisheries
COMMISSION

Atlantic Cobia Total Harvest Quota and Recreational Measures



Coastal Pelagics Management Board

August 2026

- Total Harvest Quota
- Recreational Harvest Target Evaluation
- Technical Committee Recommendations for Total Harvest Quota and Recreational Measures



PROCESS FOR SETTING TOTAL HARVEST QUOTA AND EVALUATING LANDINGS VS. STATE RECREATIONAL HARVEST TARGETS

Addendum II

- Coastwide total harvest quota, vessel limits, possession or bag limits, size limits, and commercial closure triggering mechanism may be specified through Board action **for up to five years**
- New specified harvest measures may be implemented after the expiration of previous measures or following a completed stock assessment
- In years when harvest specifications are made, they are to occur no later than the Annual Board meeting, and resulting measures implemented in the following year

Summer Meeting – August 2023

Move to set the 2024-2026 total harvest quota at the status quo level of **80,112 fish**. This results in a **recreational quota of 76,908 fish** and a **commercial quota of 73,116 lbs**.

Recreational Harvest Targets

Addendum II

- Recreational landings are evaluated against recreational harvest targets at the same time as the specifications process
- Recreational landings for each region are evaluated against that region's target as an average of annual landings
- The timeframe for this average only includes years with the same recreational management measures

Recreational Harvest Targets

Addendum II

- If a region's averaged recreational landings exceed its annual recreational harvest target, that region is required to adjust its recreational management measures to reduce harvest
- If a region reports a consistent under-harvest during an evaluation time period for a **minimum of 2 years**, the region may present a plan to adjust management measures, if desired, to allow increased harvest

Recreational Harvest Targets

Addendum II

- All states in a region are required to have the same size limit and vessel limit, but seasons may differ among states in a region
- Recreational management measures remain status quo in each state until completion of the SEDAR 95 (now SEDAR 107) stock assessment, or until a region needs to take a reduction based on evaluation of the region's landings against the harvest target, whichever comes first.
- Regions cannot liberalize measures before the completion of SEDAR 95 (now SEDAR 107).
- Conservation equivalency (CE) is not allowed for recreational management measures.

- Current Total Harvest Quota – 2020-2026
- Current Recreational Measures – 2025-2026
- Recreational Harvest Target Evaluation Timeline – 1 Year (2025)
- MRIP Recalibration (estimated) – August 2026
- Stock Assessment Completion – 2027 (could inform 2028 specifications)

Allocations and Performance

Recreational Allocations

Region	Allocation Percentage	2024-2026 Soft Targets
Northern Region (RI-VA)	68.7%	52,825 fish
Southern Region (NC-GA)	31.3%	24,083 fish
Total	100%	76,908 fish

2025 Soft Target Performance

Region	2025 Soft Targets	Harvest	Performance
Northern Region (RI-VA)	52,825 fish	17,386 fish	32.9%
Southern Region (NC-GA)	24,083 fish	13,687 fish	56.8%
Total	76,908 fish	31,073 fish	40.4%

Allocations and Performance

2020-2025 Recreational Coastwide Performance

Year	Harvest (# of fish)	Quota Attainment
2020	76,786	99.84%
2021	90,807	118.07%
2022	69,800	90.76%
2023	98,311	127.83%
2024	54,289	70.59%
2025	31,073	40.40%
Average	70,177	91.25%



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TECHNICAL COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

TC Recommendations

- The TC recommends the Board set the Total Harvest Quota at the status quo level of 80,112 fish and keep recreational measures status quo for 2027 only
 - States underharvested in 2025
 - Ongoing stock assessment to inform specifications for 2028 and beyond
 - No new information since 2023 to recommend different quota
 - Addendum II guidance for recreational measures
- The TC notes a significant underage of recreational quota in 2025
 - Interest in continuing to monitor recreational landings to better understand harvest patterns



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QUESTIONS?

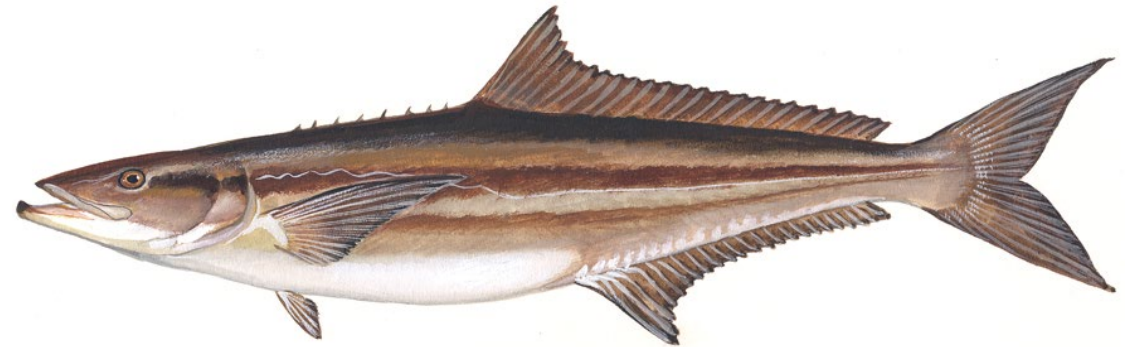
Atl. Cobia Assessment Timeline

Data Scoping	January 2026	☒
Data Workshops	March-April 2026	☒
Data Submission	June 30, 2026	☒
Methods Workshop	September 22-25, 2026	
Assessment Workshop	December 2026	
Report to SEDAR Reviewers	April 2027	
SEDAR Peer Review	May 18-21, 2027	
Present to Pelagics Board	August 2027	



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Atlantic Cobia FMP Review: 2025 Fishing Year



Coastal Pelagics Management Board

August 5, 2026

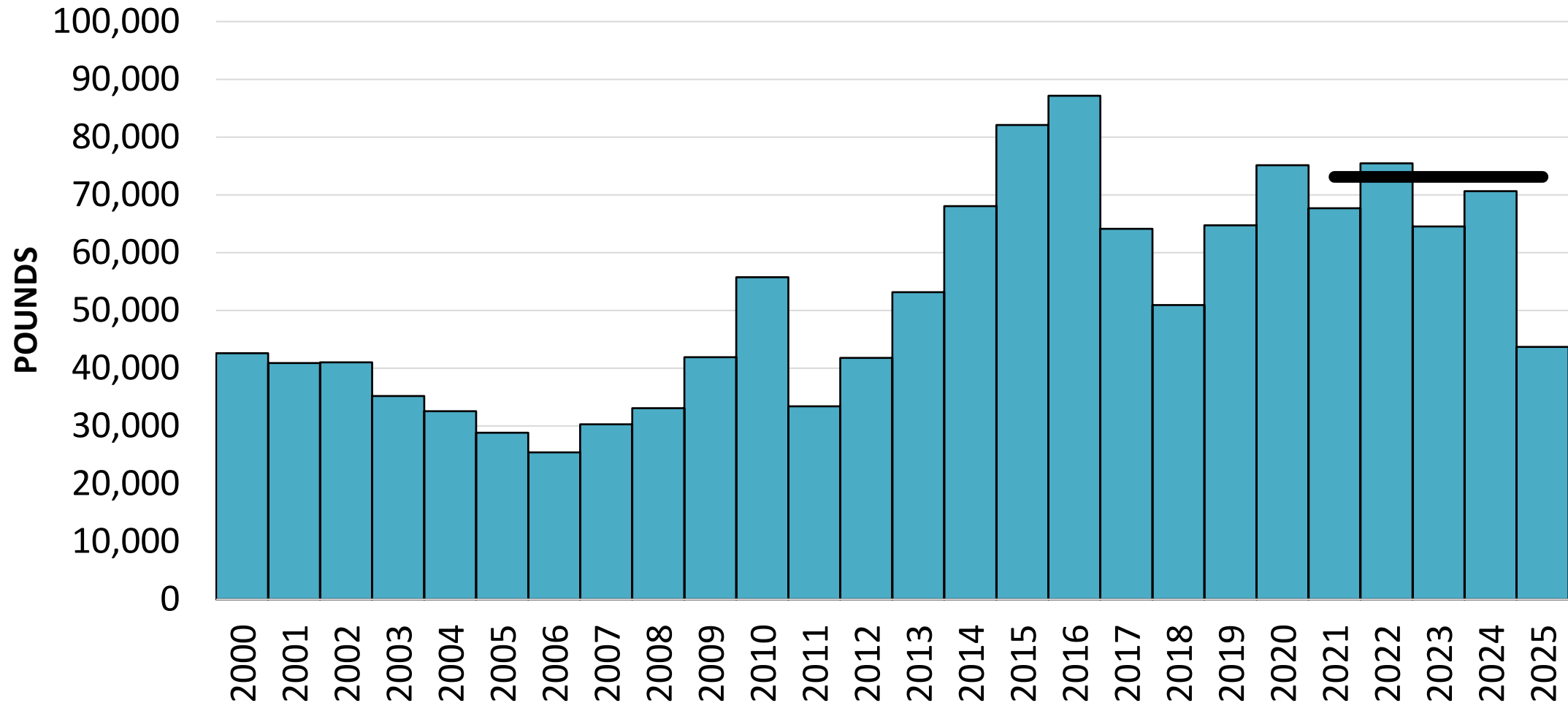
- Status of the FMP
- Status of the Stock
- **Status of the Fishery**
- **PRT Comments and Recommendations**

- **2025 Total Landings Both Sectors: 942,292 pounds**
 - 5% commercial; 95% recreational
 - 44% decrease from 2024

- **2025 Commercial landings: 43,678 pounds**
 - 38% decrease from 2024
 - Well below 73,116 pound-quota
 - Virginia (54%) and North Carolina (41%) accounted for majority of landings



Commercial Landings and Quota (Pounds)



2025 Recreational Harvest: 31,073 fish / 898,614 pounds

- 43% decrease by number from 2024
- Lowest harvest since 2011
- Less than half of the coastwide recreational quota of 76,908 fish
- MRIP directed trips decreased by only 2% from 2024

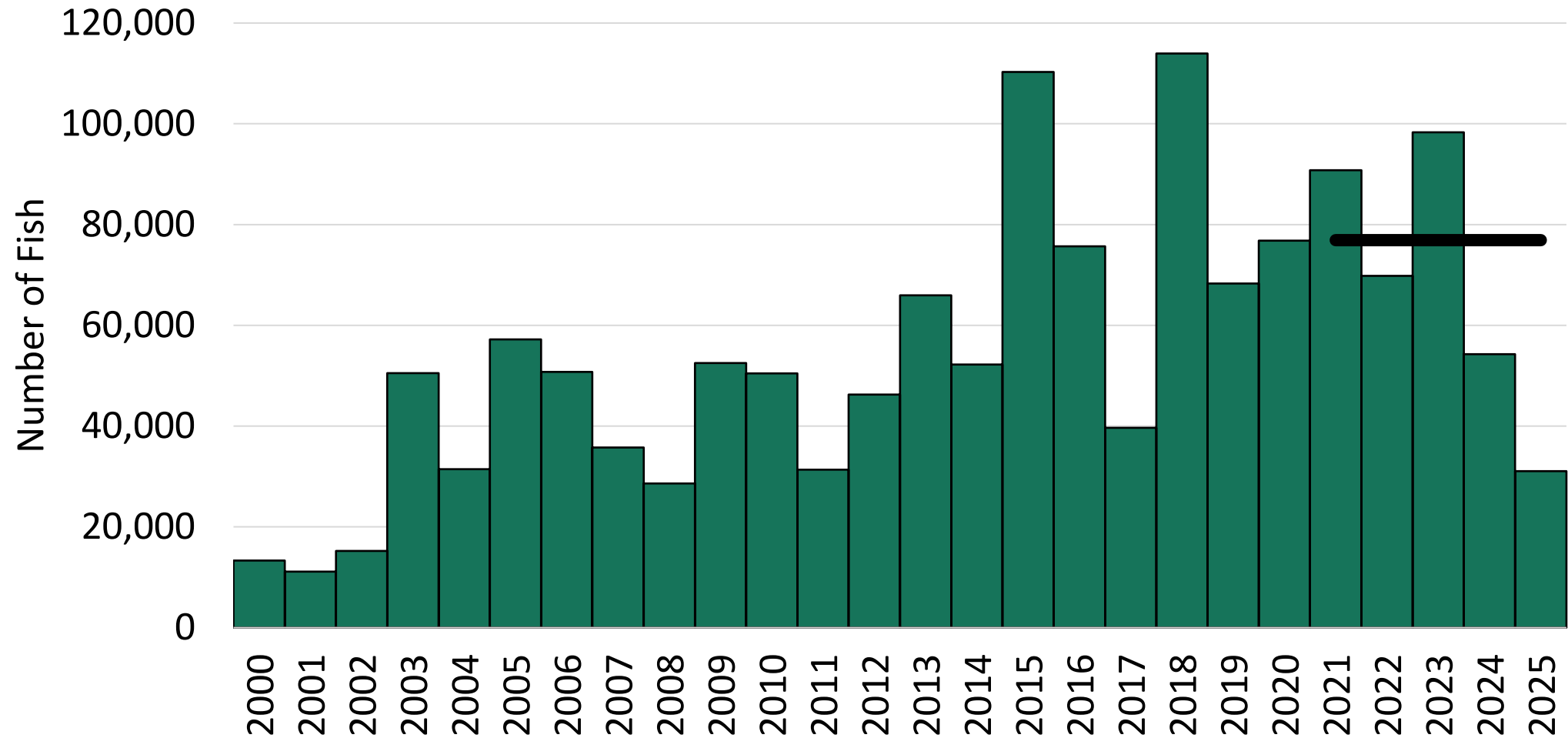
2025 Recreational Live Releases: 175,297 fish

- 85% of 2025 catch released alive
- Highest percentage of catch released since 2017



Recreational Fishery

Recreational Harvest and Quota (Number of Fish)



2025 Recreational Landings by State

- VA 53%; NC 42%, GA 2%
- Virginia: Previous years 2018-2024, Virginia averaged 72% of annual coastwide rec. harvest; 2025 was lowest harvest since 2017
- North Carolina: 2025 harvest back up to 2019-2022 levels after very low harvest in 2023-2024
 - Anecdotal observations suggest cobia are migrating to Chesapeake Bay much earlier in April-May and residing in North Carolina for a shorter period of time

MRIP Notes: MRIP estimate of 0 harvest in 2025 for SC and MD

- South Carolina: 2025 was unusual year with no MRIP harvest intercepts
 - SC charter logbook program did document landings from 2025; indicated a decrease compared to prior years
 - Previous years 2018-2024, South Carolina averaged 6.5% of annual coastwide rec. harvest
- Maryland: issues in past years as well with no MRIP harvest intercepts
 - MD charter logbook program indicated very low catch in 2025

- Changes in harvest likely due to multiple factors (e.g., stock distribution, fish nearshore or offshore, regulatory changes, effort)
- Timeframe of fish available in state waters can be very limited; factors like poor weather can affect catch and effort during narrow window
- Low commercial landings in 2025 paired with low MRIP estimates in 2025 seem to indicate a low landings year in general; although MRIP estimates have high PSEs, estimates seem to pick up low landings trend
 - Lack of available fish in general? Prevalence of undersize fish?
 - Notably, Virginia recreational landings decreased by 63% → could be due in part to increasing minimum size from 40" TL to 43" TL



PRT Comments and Recommendations

- PRT found no inconsistencies in state implementation of FMP
- Recreational *De Minimis*
 - Recreational harvest <1% of coastwide rec. harvest for 2 of 3 years
 - Note: no longer any regulation differences for rec. *de minimis* states
 - RI, DE, MD request and qualify
- Commercial *De Minimis*
 - Commercial harvest <2% of coastwide comm. harvest for 2 of 3 years
 - Not required to monitor landings in-season
 - RI, NJ, DE, MD, PRFC, GA request; all qualify except NJ

NJ Commercial *De Minimis* Request

- NJ requesting to continue as commercial *de minimis* (no in-season commercial landings reporting)
- NJ notes its 2023 and 2025 landings anomalously high compared to past decade
- NJ notes coastwide landings were exceptionally low in 2025 → NJ being above 2% may be a result of lower coastwide landings leading to a higher percentage
- NJ will continue to work towards in-season reporting for the future

NJ Commercial *De Minimis* Request

- PRT notes 2025 landings were well below the quota, so there may be less concern about this request currently
- PRT notes 1% of 2025 landings is only 437 pounds, which is only 19 cobia based on 22.8-pound average weight from last assessment → small number of fish to be over 2% threshold

- Multiple states could exceed *de minimis* thresholds over the next few years if cobia landings continue to increase in Mid-Atlantic
- New assessment will add several years of data (2018-2025) → capture recent trends of higher landings in Mid-Atlantic and transition to Commission-only management
- PRT emphasizes the importance of using the revised MRIP time series in the assessment



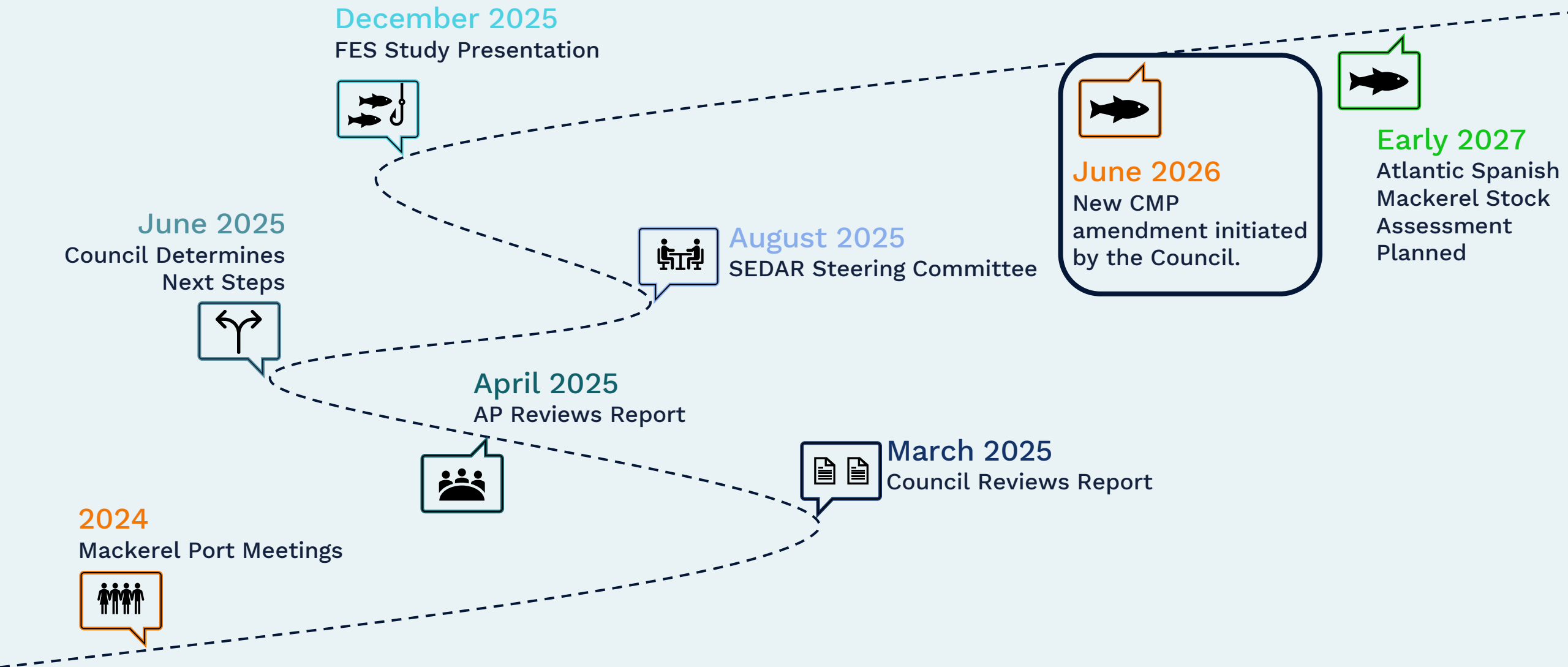
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Questions?



THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Atlantic Spanish Mackerel Management Update – ASMFC Summer Meeting August 2026



June 2026 Council Meeting Motion:

MOTION 1: INITIATE AN AMENDMENT TO ADDRESS A FISHING YEAR CHANGE FOR SPANISH MACKEREL AND PROHIBIT TOURNAMENT SALES FOR KING MACKEREL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. APPROVED BY COUNCIL

- Bring this to the AP in the fall (will constitute scoping).
- Limit discussions with the AP to actions that are not dependent on the stock assessment for Spanish mackerel.
- It was clarified that given the Council's current workload, this amendment would not likely start until March 2027.



Questions?

Mackerel Cobia
Advisory Panel Meeting

November 2nd & 3rd
Charleston, SC