



Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog (SCOQ)

Council Meeting

June 5, 2018

Today

- Review the 2019 SCOQ specifications, and determine whether modification of 2019 measures is warranted
 - Recent history
 - Short summary of current measures
 - Review what's new for each species!



Last Year (2017)

- “Benchmark” stock assessments received:
 - Atlantic surfclam (SAW/SARC 2016)
 - Ocean quahog (SAW/SARC 2017)
- Developed specifications 2018-2020
 - SSC met in May
 - Council in June
- Implemented by NMFS



Last year (2017)

- Specifically, SSC set ABCs for both species
- Specified 2018-2020 OFL for quahog from SARC reviewed estimates (previously no OFL specified from 2014-2017)
- OFL for surfclam was considered “unreliable” by the SARC; therefore, it was not specified by SSC
- The SSC also identified metrics for data updates for the interim reviews (2019 and 2020 measures)

Last year (2017)

- At the June Council Meeting, industry expressed concerns about the absence of a surfclam OFL and the associated ABC level
- August 2017, Council discussed this issue
- Council sent letter to NEFSC requesting additional surfclam information/metrics as part of data update to the SSC

Last year (2017)

- Early request to provide the NEFSC staff additional time to prep the survey information for May 2018
- Reiterated again in letter request to NEFSC later in year (all species assessment and data update needs)
- No specific request from Council to SSC for remand of ABCs, or peer review of any reports

This year (2018)

- Data update/interim metrics were received in advance of the SSC meeting
- Provided in May 2018 SSC meeting materials
- Note: Dr. Boreman will provide recommendations from May 2018 meeting later in talk

Surfclam Current Measures

Quick recap of SSC and Council recommendations for 2018-2020



Current Measures (SSC 2018-2020)

- Reported OFL estimate considered to be highly uncertain, and deemed in assessment report to be unreliable
- No absolute estimates of fishing mortality rate or current stock size were endorsed by [SARC] review panel or assessment report
- Therefore, OFL could not be estimated

Current Measures (SSC 2018-2020)

- SSC recommended ABC of 29,363 mt, based on commercial quota of 26,218 mt and 12% incidental mortality
- Noted that this catch level has been sustained by stock historically and shown to show no harm

Current Measures (Council 2018-2020)

- $ACL = ABC = 29,363$ mt as prescribed in FMP
- Mgmt. uncertainty low, $ACT = 29,363$ mt
- Commercial quota = 26,218 mt (3.4 mil bu)
- 3.4 mil bushels (max. OY from Industry)
- Industry lands about 2/3 quota each year

Current Measures (Council 2018-2020)

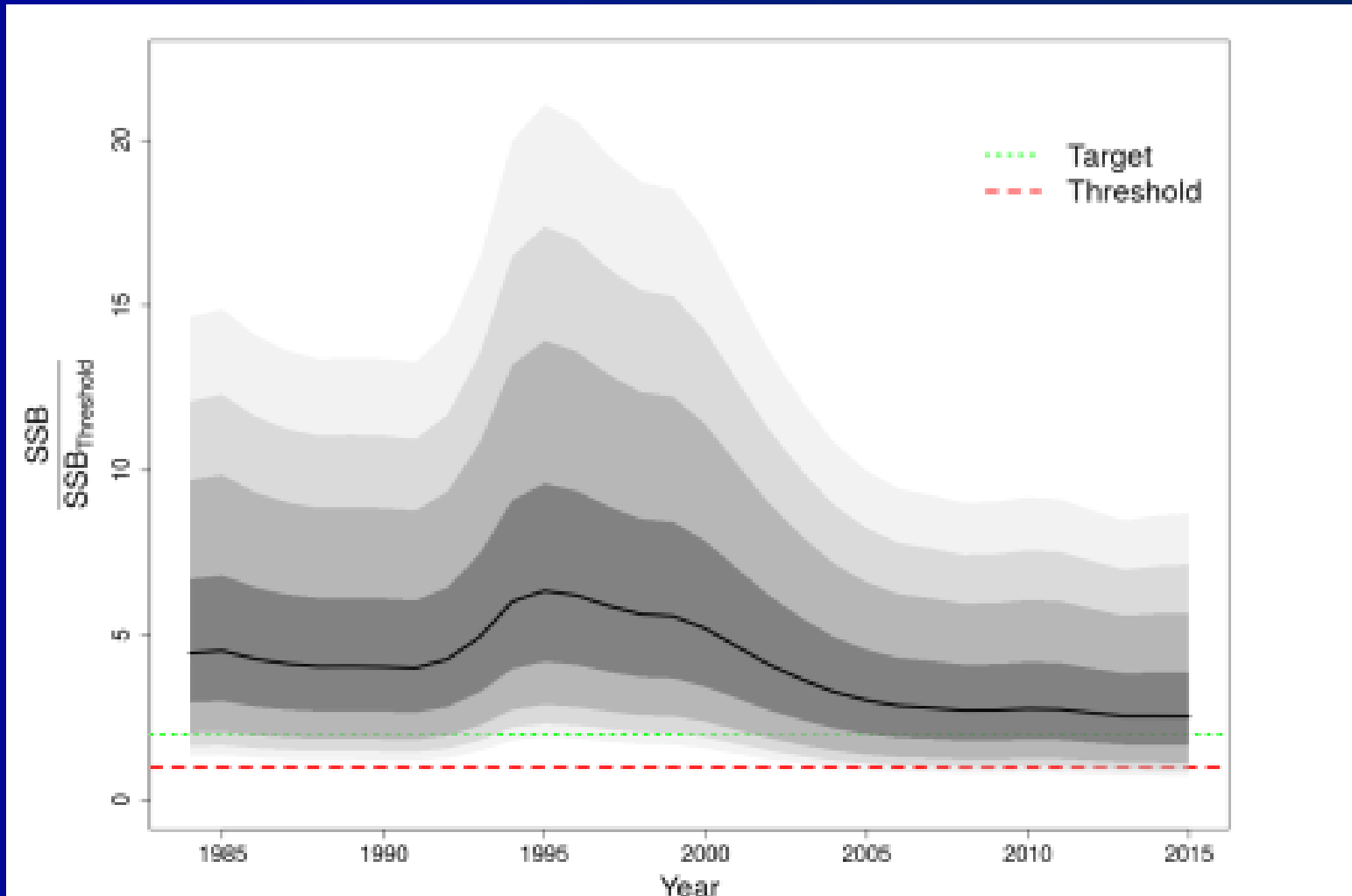
- Recommend suspending min. size of 4.75"
- 30% coastwide threshold not triggered (exam. of landings from 2016)
- Report for 2017 indicated that 10.4% of the surfclam landings were smaller than 4.75":
 - Georges Bank=6.1%, New Jersey=7.8%, and Delmarva=22.7%

What's New - Surfclams

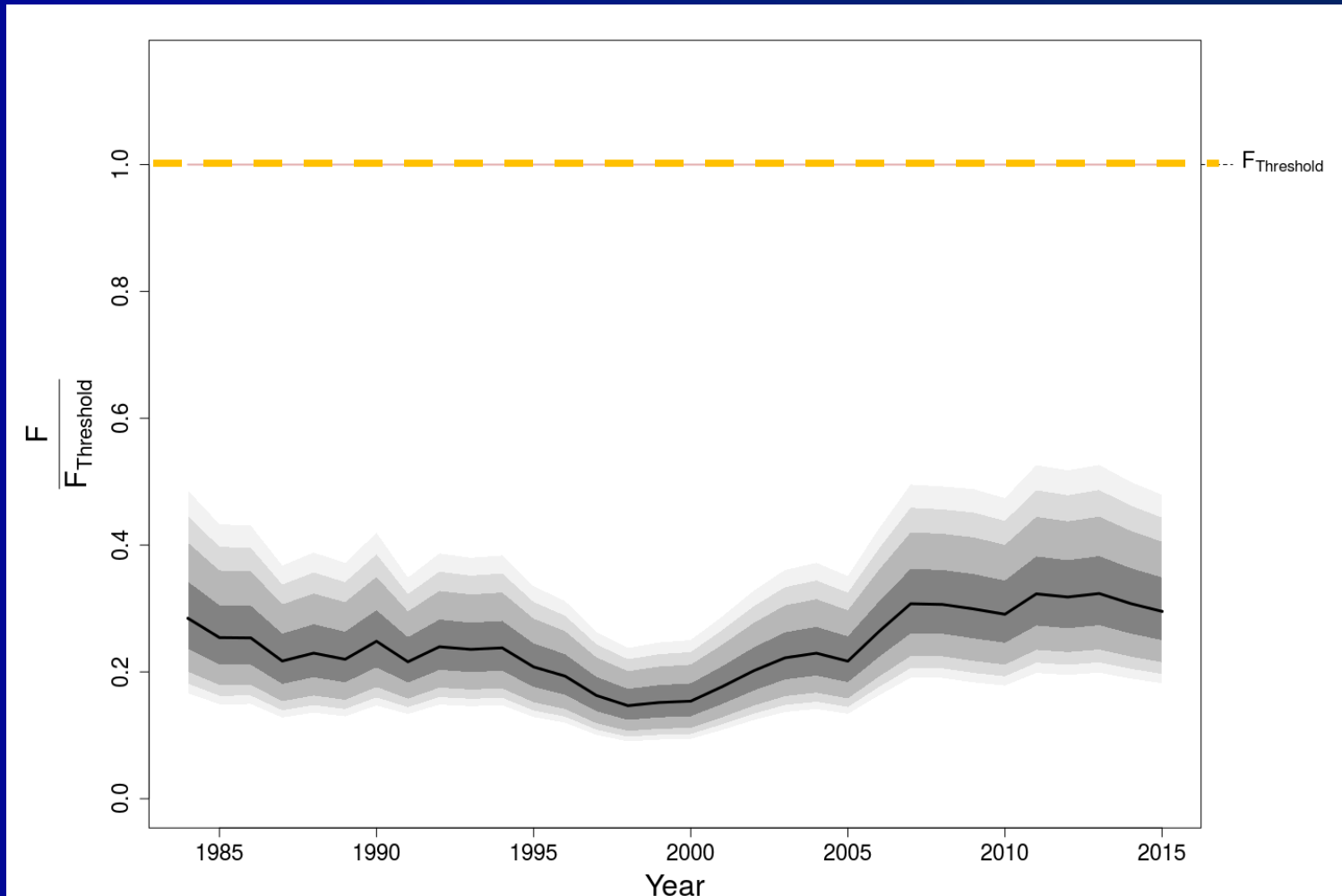


- Updated Fishery Info Docs
 - Prepped using the data update from NEFSC
- Advisor's SCOQ Fishery Performance Report (review it once for both species)
- Staff recommendations (for both species)
- SSC recommendations (for both species)

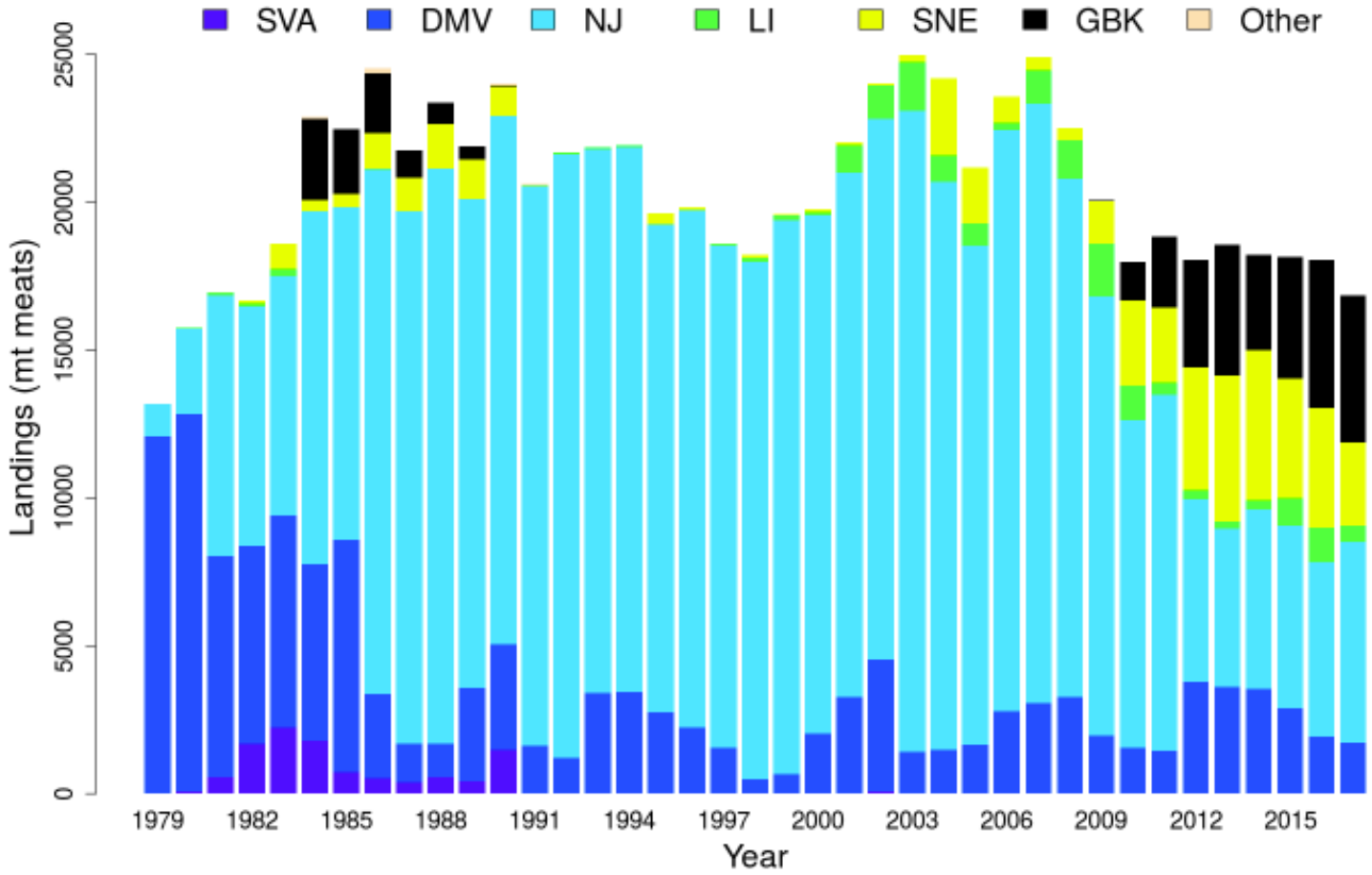
Surfclam Biomass



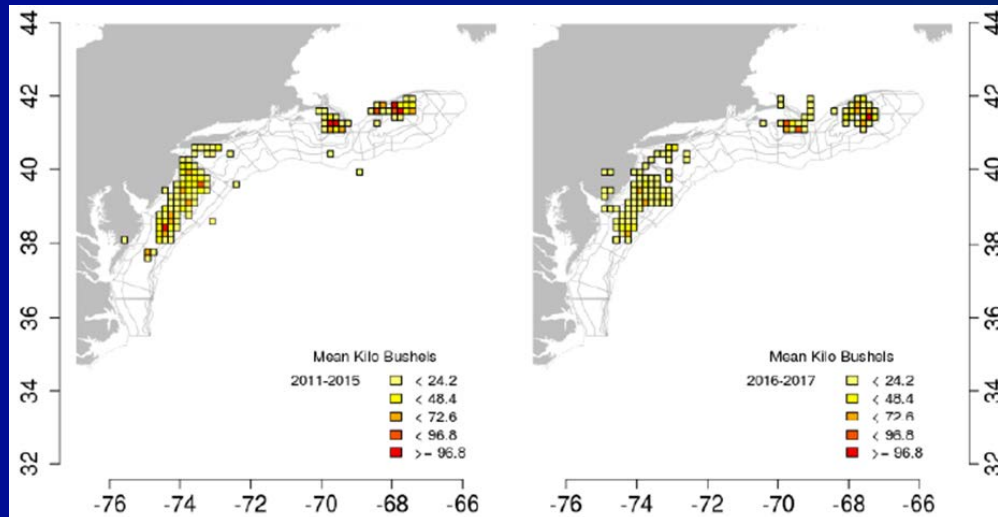
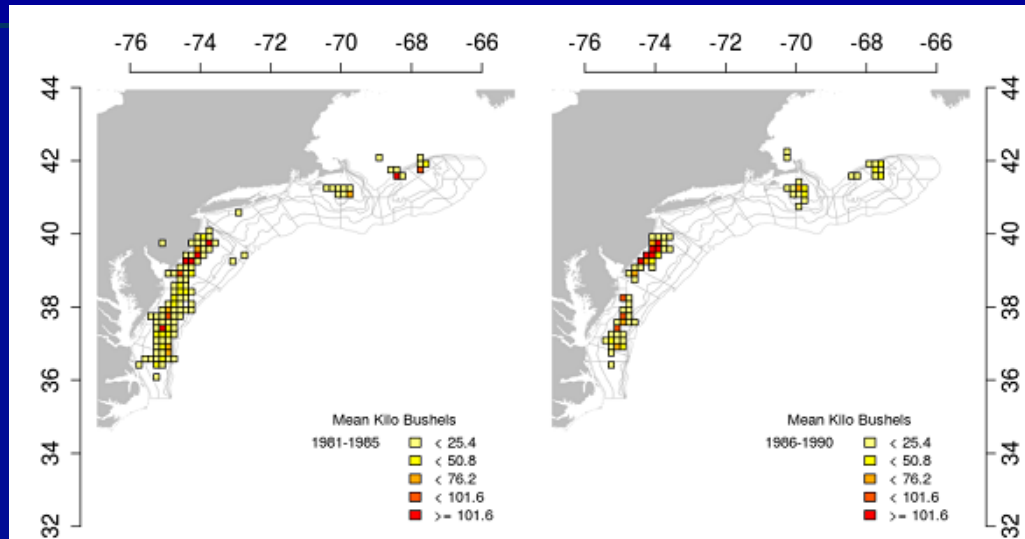
Surfclam Fishing Mortality



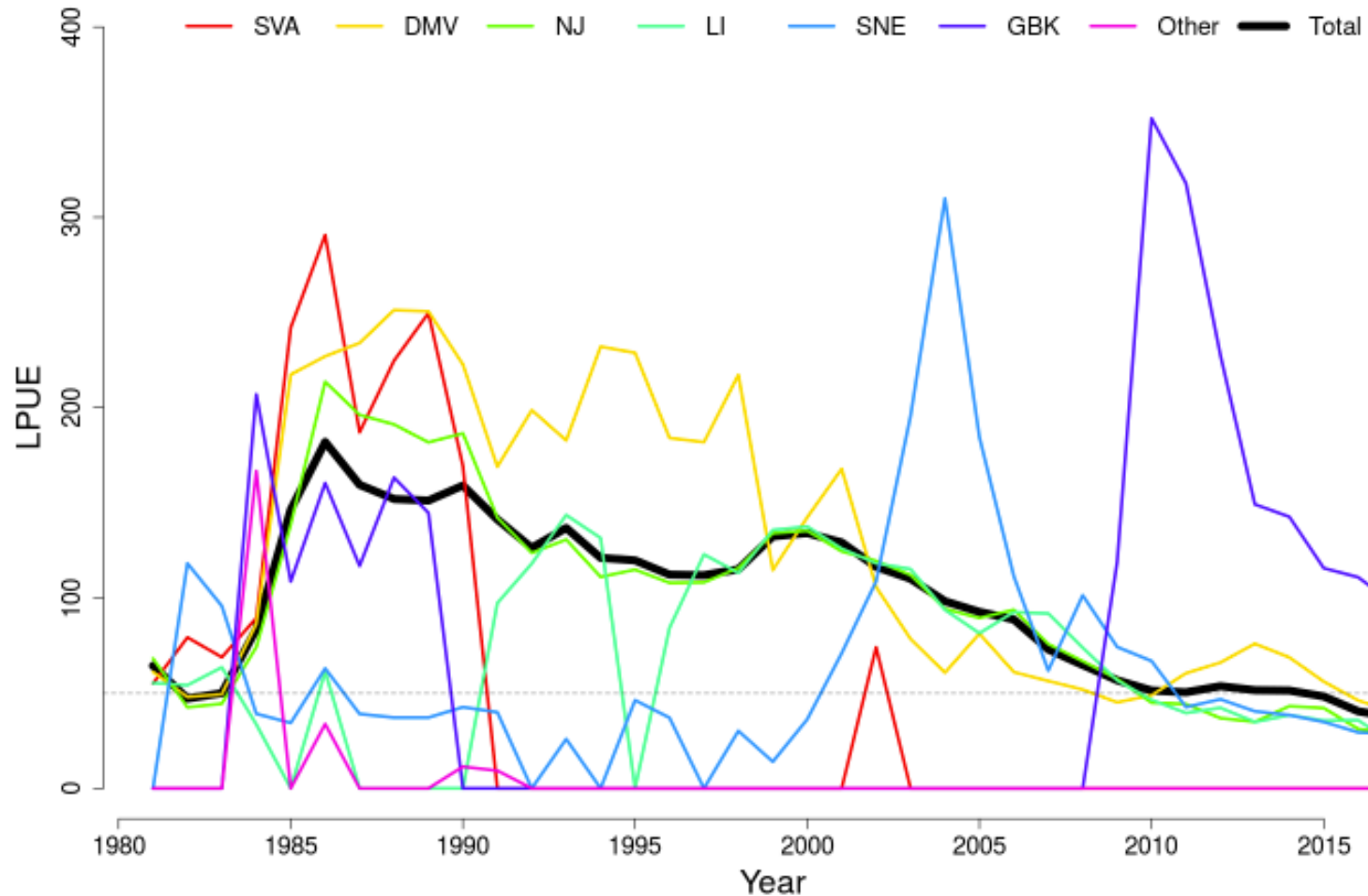
Surfclam Info Doc



Surfclam Info Doc



Surfclam Info Doc

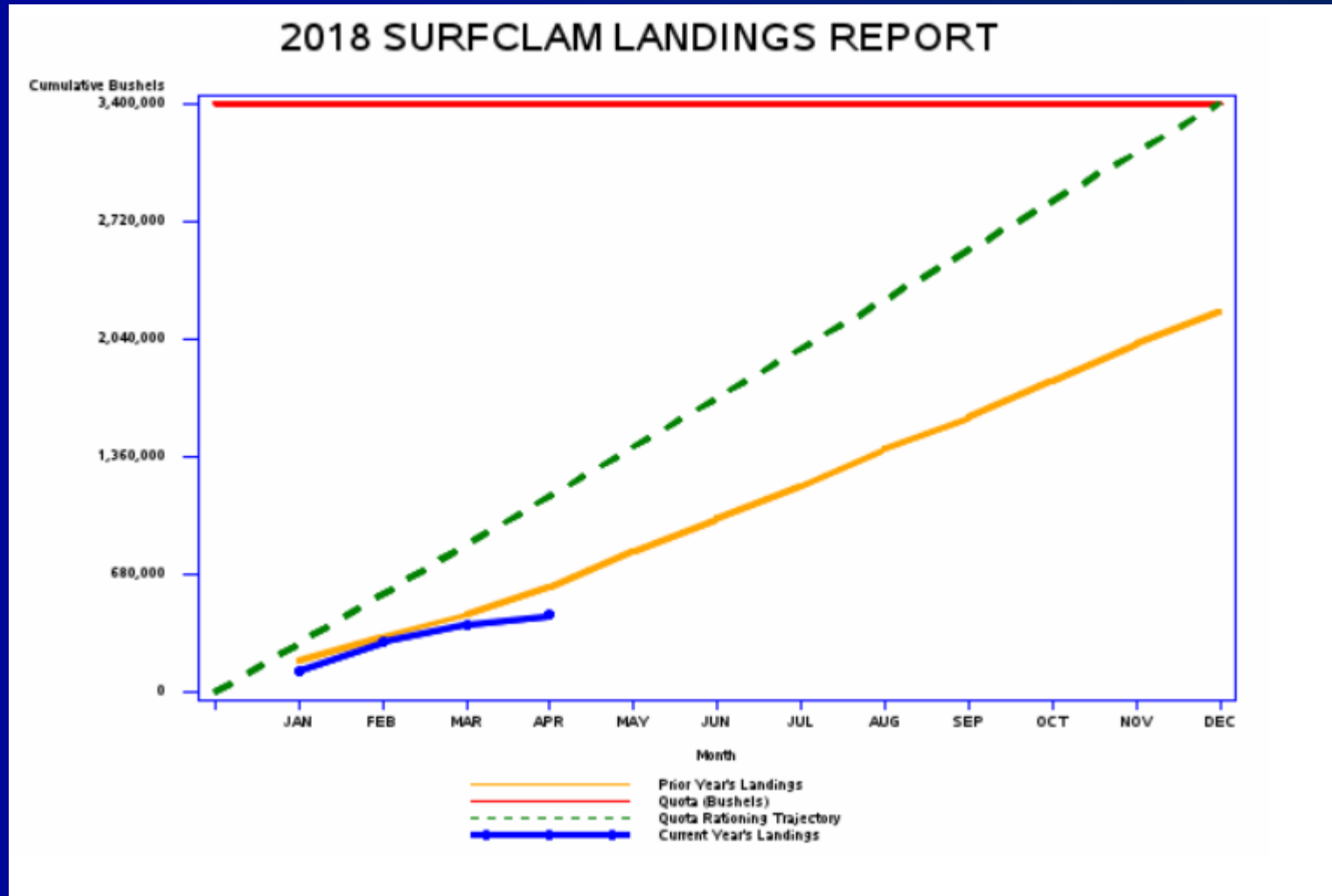


Surfclam Info Doc

- 2017: 40 vessels (up 2 from 2016)
- 9 processors SCOQ
- Prices:
 - \$31 million in 2017
 - Same as 2016



Surfclam Landings (thru Apr 22)



Fishery Performance Report - SCOQ

- SCOQ Advisor met via webinar – April 13, 2018
- Revised a few things from the prior year
- Status quo quotas; recommendations for OY stayed the same
- Review the critical issues

Fishery Performance Report - SCOQ

- New England Council's Omnibus Habitat Amendment (OHA2)
- Excessive shares amendment
- Mixing of surfclam and ocean quahog - regulations
- Lack of an OFL, and reduction of ABC to the current quota level

SCOQ Staff Recommendations

- Review of 2019 SCOQ measures
- Data update suggests nothing has changed substantially in fisheries or assessment of stocks
- No changes to SCOQ 2019 measures already specified
- Note: To maintain current measures, Council must vote to suspend surfclam min. size



MAFMC SSC Recommendations

Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog
2019 Review

Surfclam and Quahog

- Dan Hennen (NEFSC) presented survey and fishery updates for Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog, and Jessica Coakley (MAFMC staff) summarized the fishery performance reports and MAFMC staff recommendations.



Surfclam and Quahog

- Based on the information presented, the SSC concluded that no changes to the standing ABC recommendations for the 2019 fishing year were necessary for either species.



Surfclams

- Following his update of the survey and fishery catch information for Surfclam, Dan Hennen presented a method he developed for calculating a proxy for the Surfclam OFL.
- Several SSC members expressed interest in working with Dan to refine the method so it can be considered for use with a P^* approach to estimating an ABC.



Surfclams

- Pending approval from the Council and NEFSC, a joint SSC/NEFSC working group will be established for this project with delivery of the results at a future SSC meeting.



Next species.....



Current Measures (SSC 2018-2020)

- The reported OFL estimate, though associated with substantial uncertainty, was deemed credible, and could form the basis of developing management advice.
 - OFL 2018 = 61,600 mt
 - OFL 2019 = 63,600 mt
 - OFL 2020 = 63,100 mt

Current Measures (SSC 2018-2020)

- The SSC considered the Ocean Quahog to be a species with an atypical life history, and applied an SSC modified OFL distribution with a $CV=100\%$ for a stock with an SSB biomass $>$ SSB target.
 - ABC 2018 = 44,695 mt
 - ABC 2019 = 46,146 mt
 - ABC 2020 = 45,783 mt

Current Measures (Council 2018-2020)

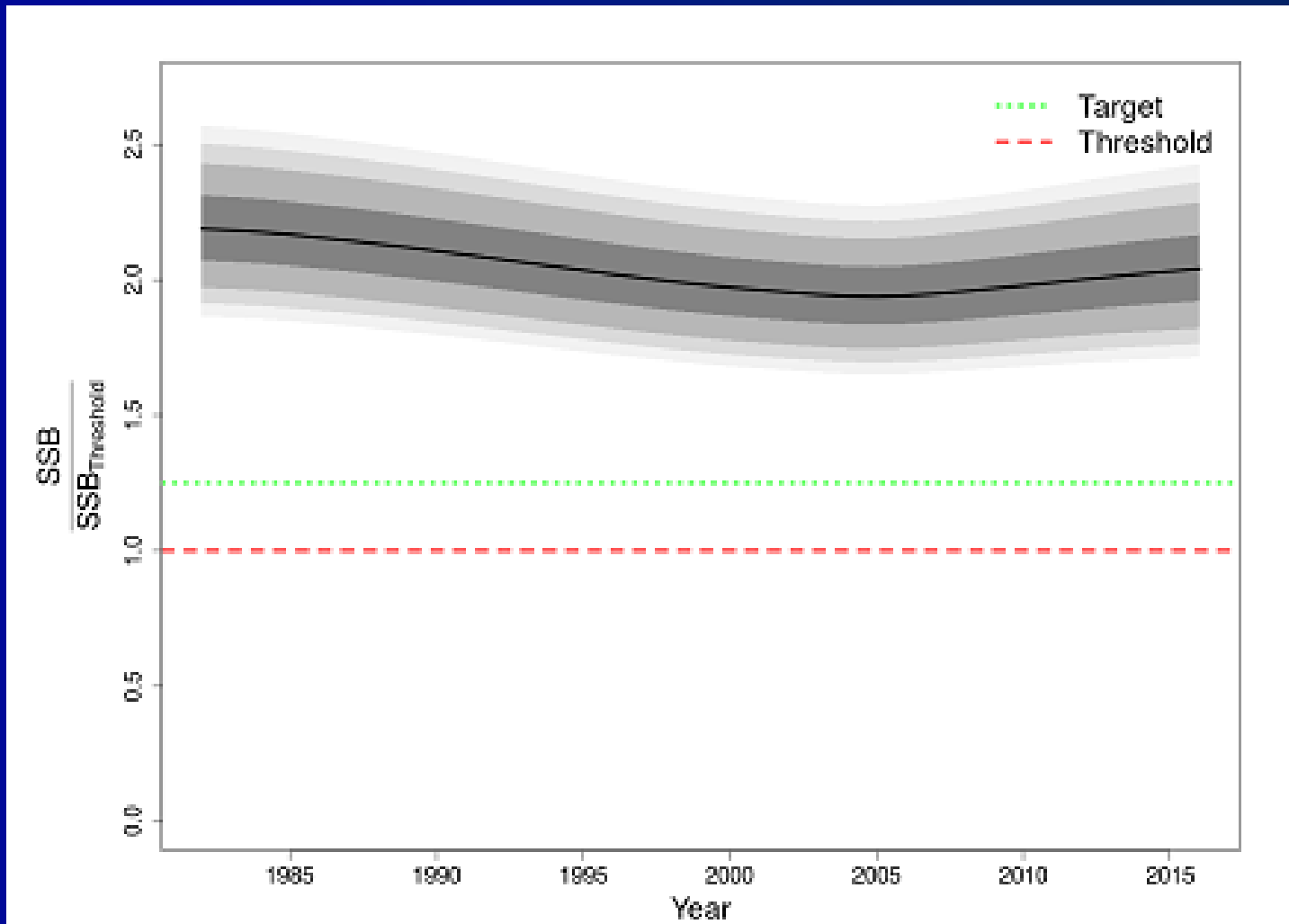
- ACL = ABC as prescribed in FMP
- ACT = 25,924 mt
- Commercial quota = 24,689 mt (5.3 mil bu)
- 100,000 bu allocated to Maine Fishery
- Industry lands about 2/3 quota each year; recommended an OY of 6 mil bu

What's New - Quahogs

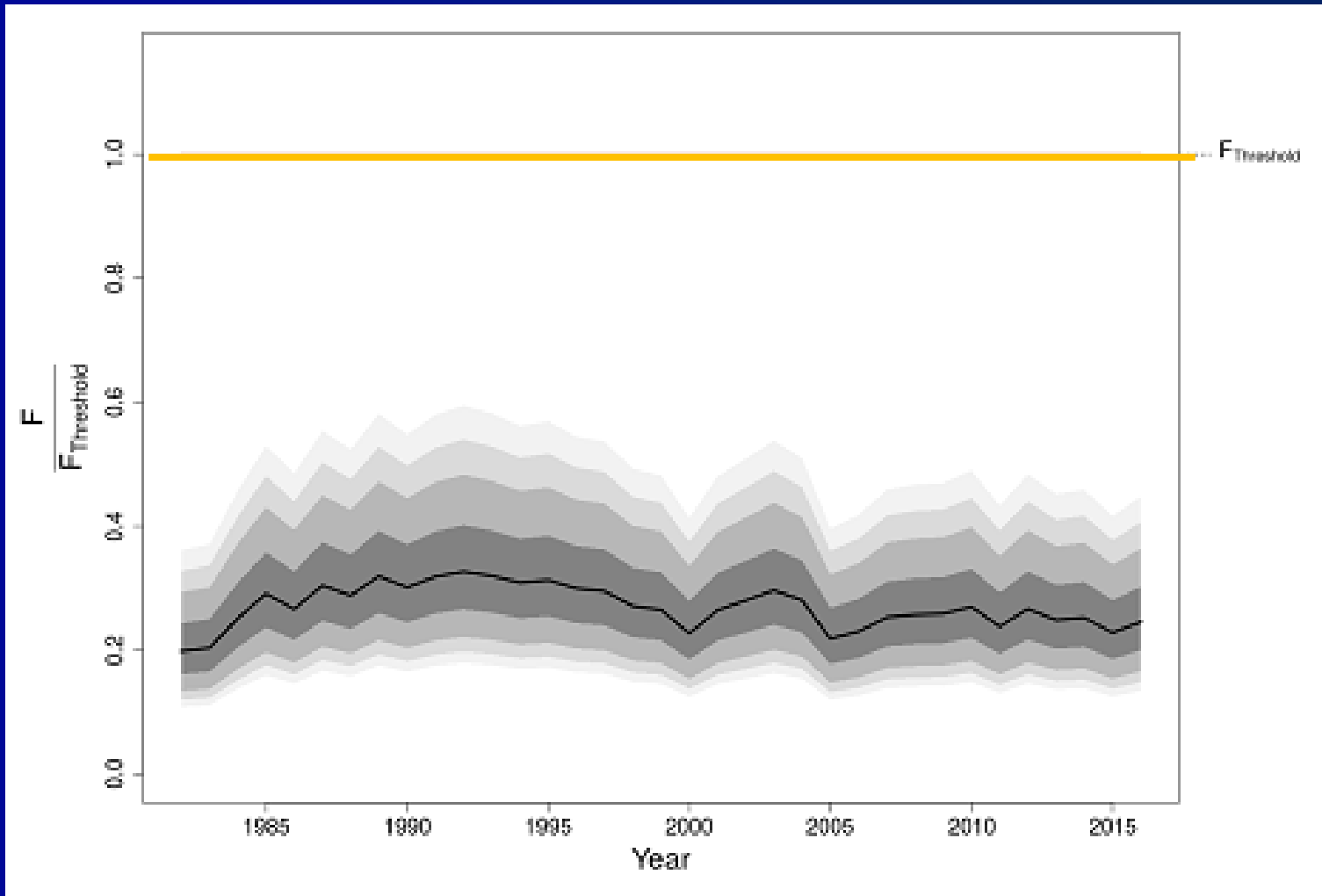


- Updated Fishery Info Docs
 - prepped using the data updates
- Advisor's Fishery Performance Report ✓
- SSC recommendations ✓
- Staff recommendations ✓

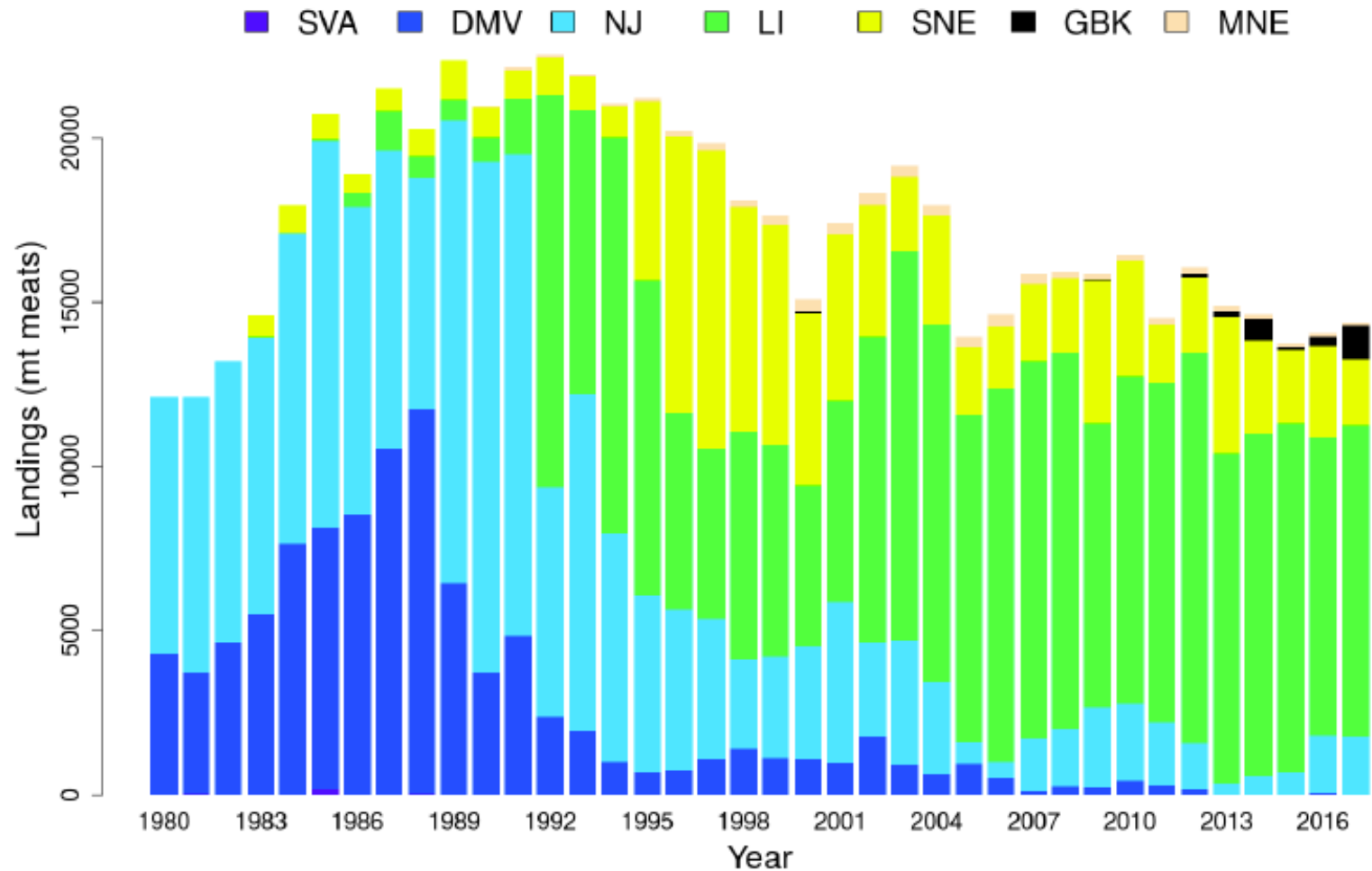
Quahog Biomass



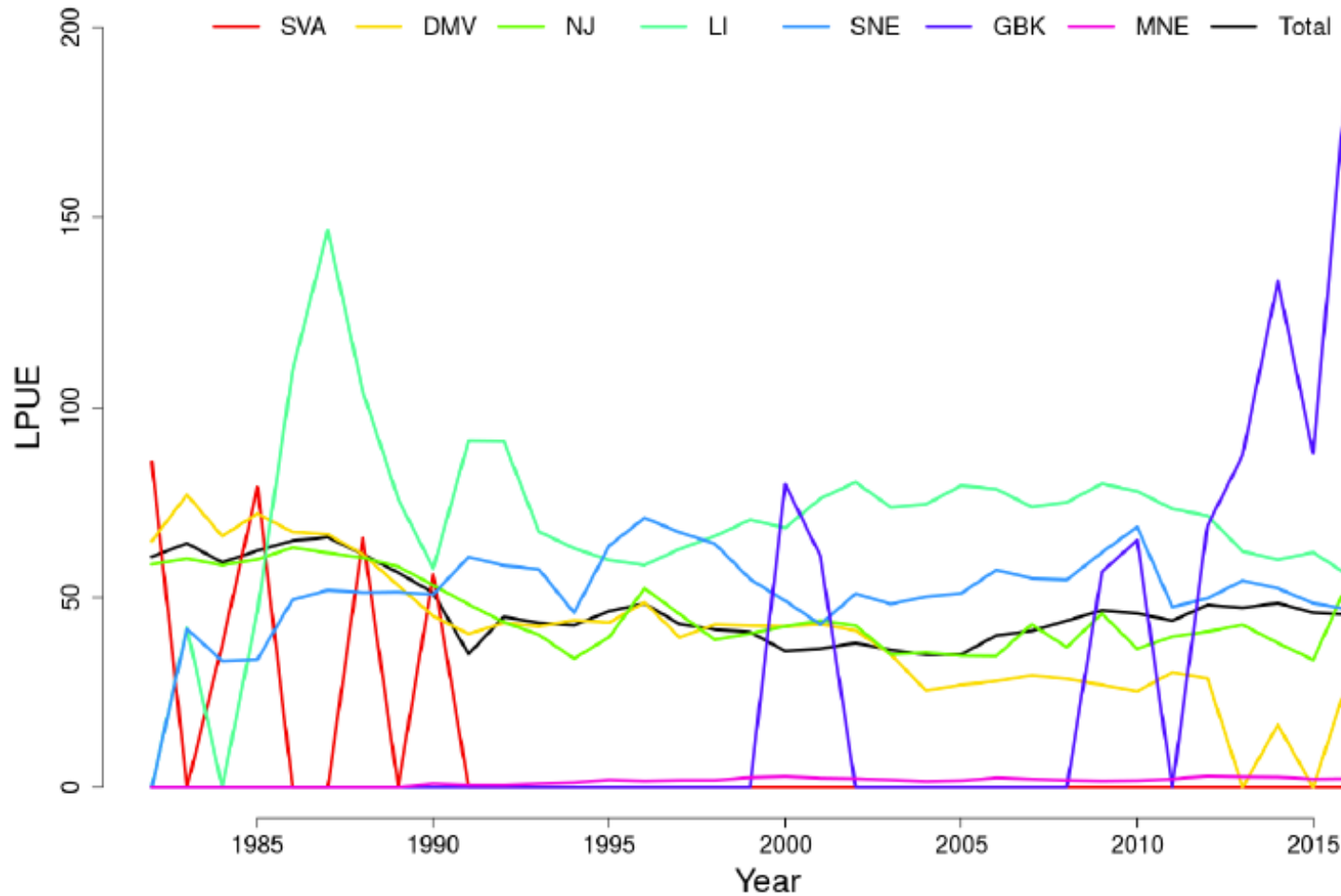
Quahog Fishing Mortality



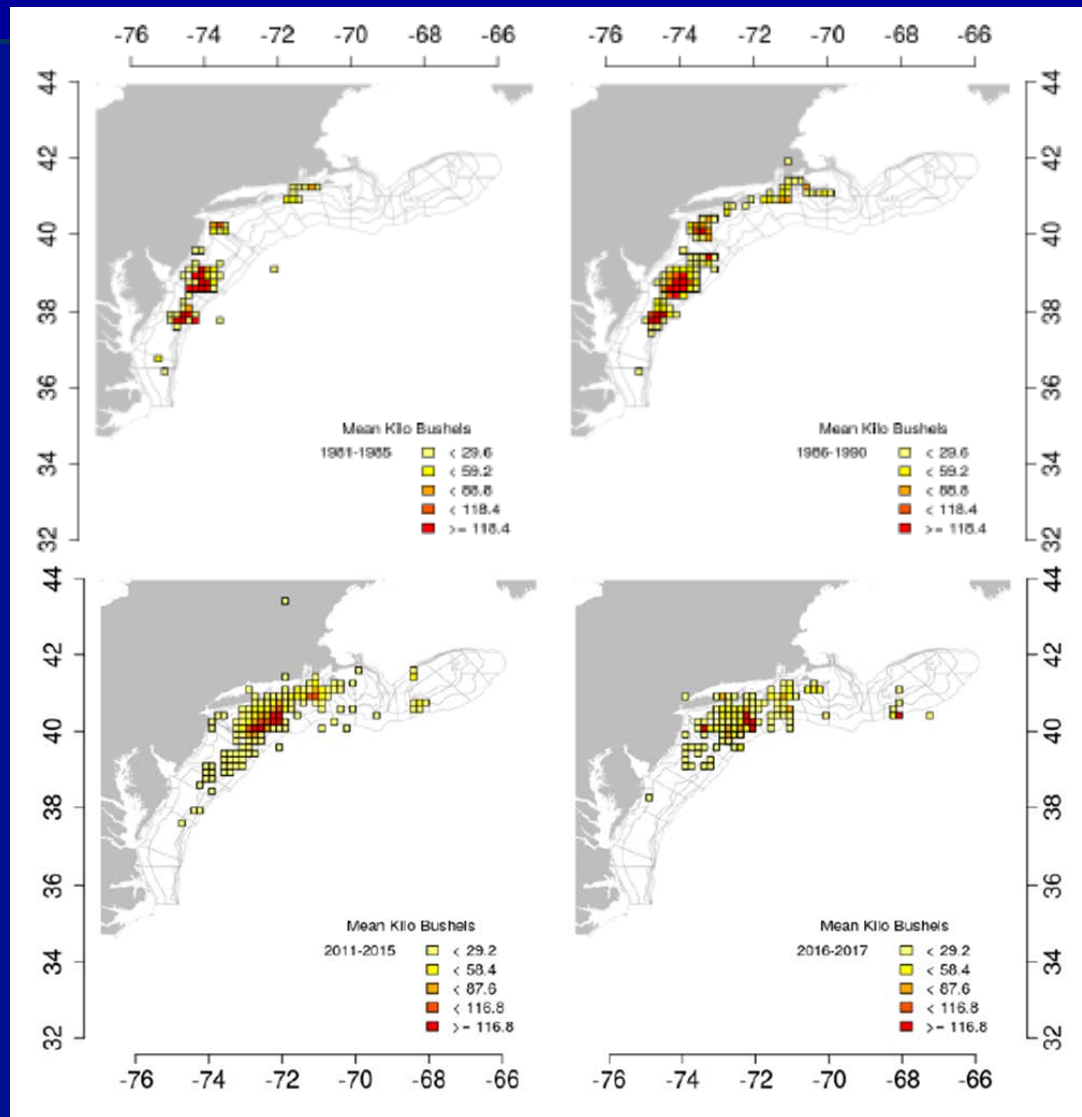
Quahog Info Doc



Quahog Info Doc



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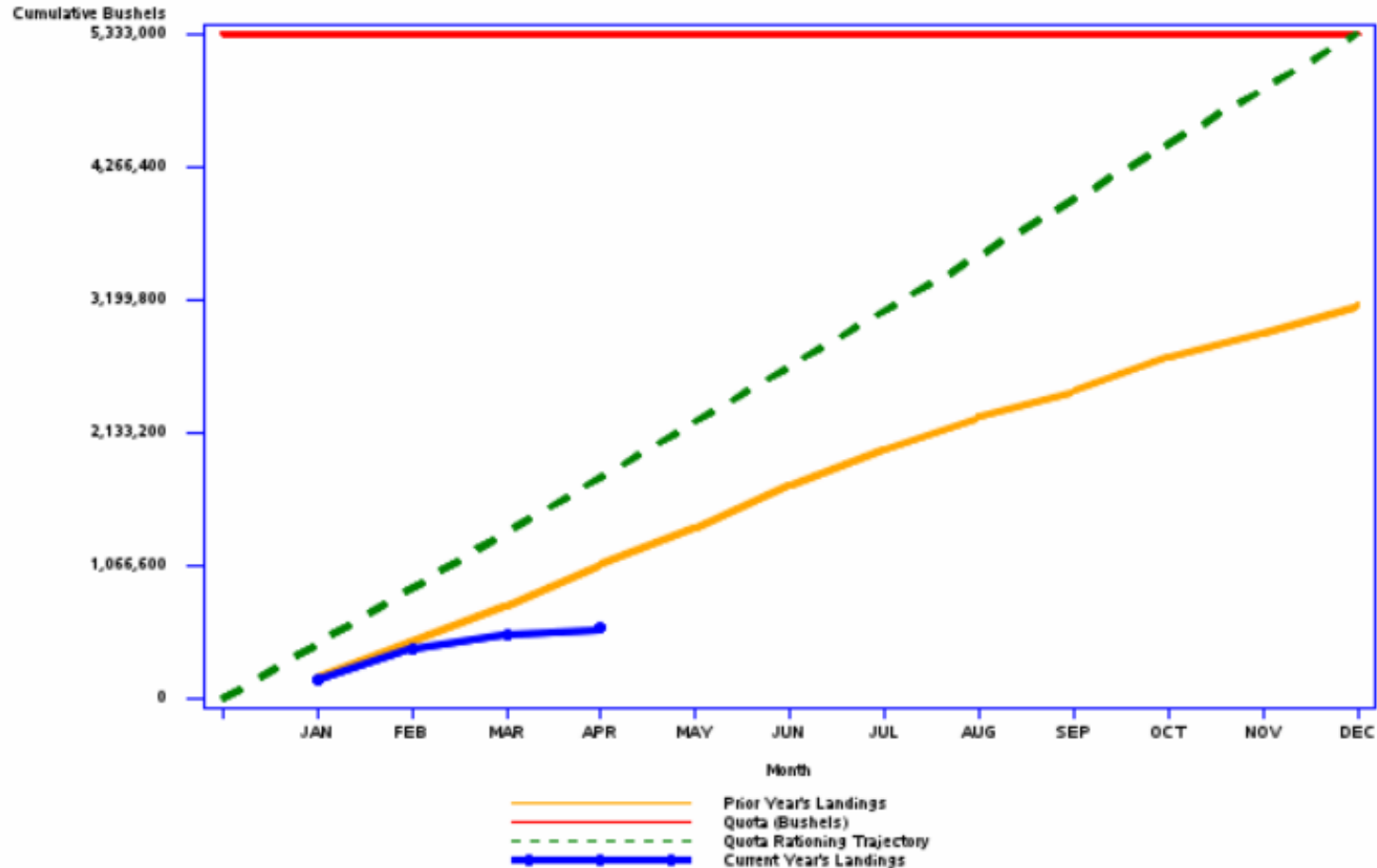


Quahog Info Doc

- 2017: 22 non-ME vessels (+5), 8 ME
- 9 processors SCOQ
- Increase in overall ex-vessel value
 - \$23 million in 2017
 - Up \$1 million from 2016

Quahog Landings – Non-Maine (thru Apr 22)

2018 OCEAN QUAHOG LANDINGS REPORT



Quahog Landings – Maine (thru Apr 22)

