

Blueline Tilefish



Council Meeting
April 11, 2018

Outline



- Meeting objective
- Specifications process
- Stock status
- Review recent fishery performance (AP information document)
- Review 2018 Fishery Performance Report
- SSC Report
- Recommendations



Objective and Specifications

- Develop specifications for 2019-2021
- Commercial trip limits
 - Open until closure
 - 300 lbs. gutted weight (head and fins must be attached)
- Recreational trip limits
 - May 1 – Oct 31 → 7,5,3 (Inspected, Uninspected, Private)

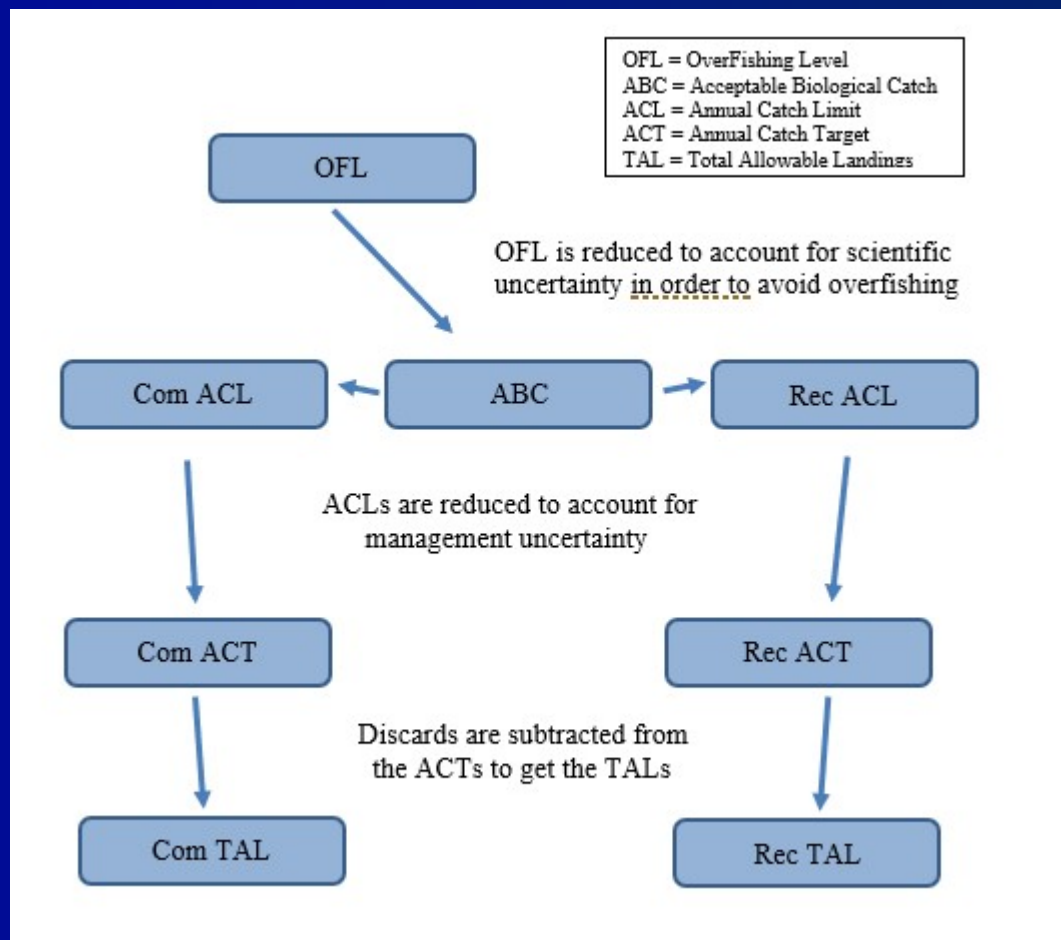
2017 and 2018 Specifications

Specification	Recreational	Commercial
ABC	87,031 lbs	
ACLs	63,533 lbs	23,498 lbs
ACTs	63,533 lbs	23,498 lbs
TALs	62,262 lbs	23,263 lbs

2017 Landings

Recreational	Commercial
57,802 lbs	9,957 lbs

Specifications Process



Specifications Process



- Assessment made no ABC recommendations
 - 2 Stocks
- Pilot tilefish survey
- Subcommittee: MAFMC/SAFMC/NEFSC/SEFSC
 - Develop ABC recommendations North of Cape Hatteras
- SSC: ABC recommendations at March meeting
 - Review 2018 FPR and AP info doc
- MC: Recommend management measures at March meeting
- Council: Recommendations presented at the April meeting

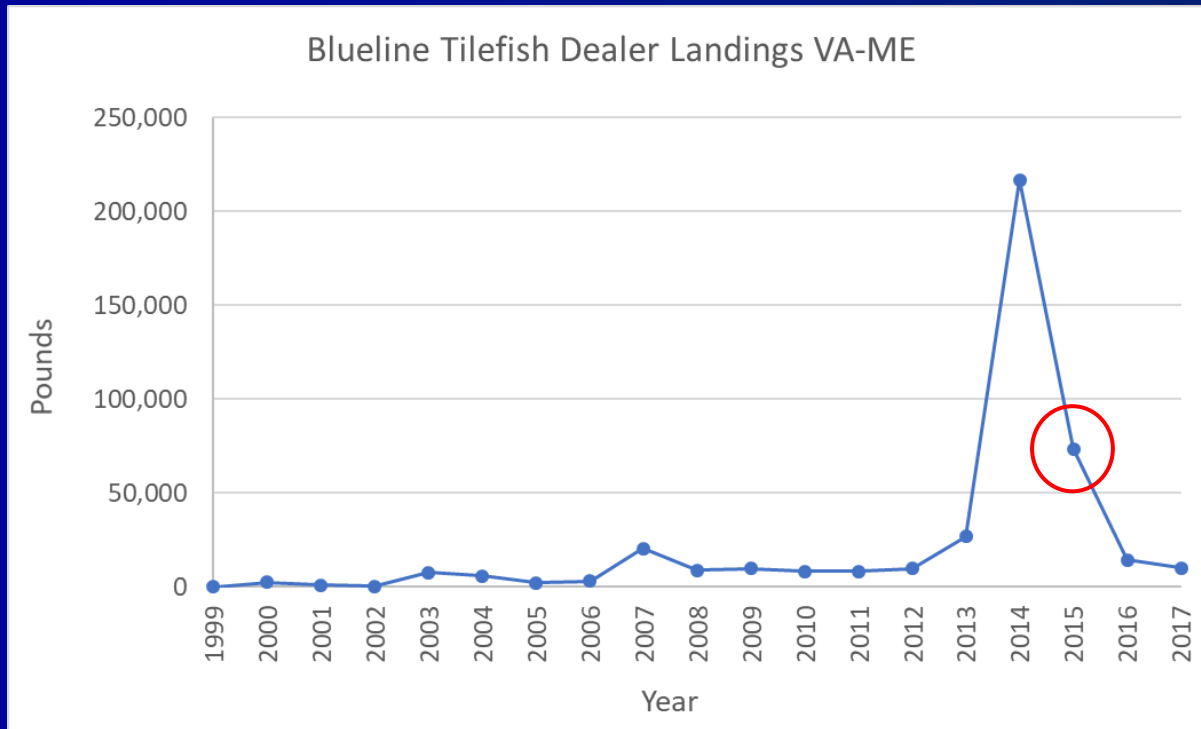
Stock Status



■ SEDAR 50

- North (NOH) and South of Cape Hatteras (SOH)
- SOH
 - Not overfished, overfishing not occurring
- NOH: Explored the DLMTool
 - Unknown: being addressed by the joint Mid and South Atlantic Blueline Tilefish Subcommittee

Commercial Fishery Performance



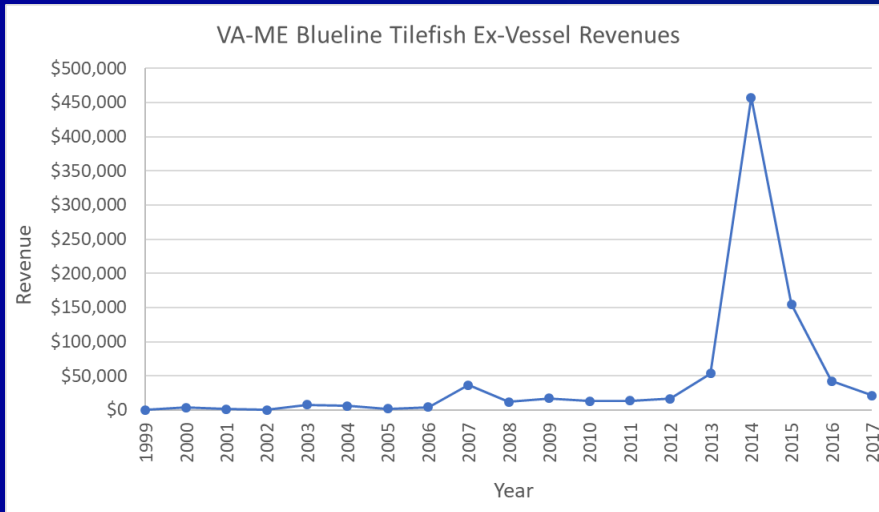
Year	Landings (lbs)
2013	26,780
2014	217,016
2015	73,668
2016	14,203
2017	9,957

- Regulations began restricting catch
- 2015 Catch was on pace to pass 2014 catch

Commercial Fishery Performance

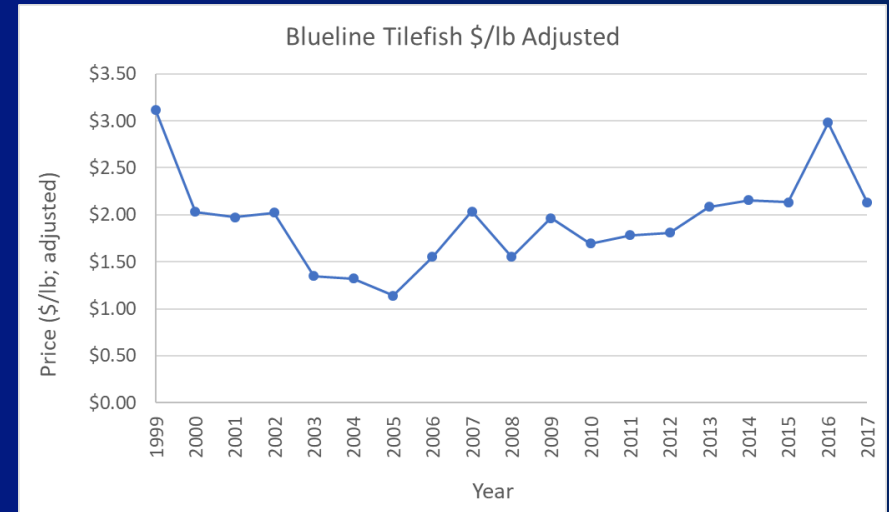


Figure 3. Ex-Vessel Revenues for blue line tilefish, Maine through Virginia combined, 1999-2017.



2017: \$21,183

Figure 4. Price for blue line tilefish, Maine through Virginia combined, 1999-2017. Note: Price data have been adjusted by the GDP deflator indexed for 2016 (2017 – unadjusted).

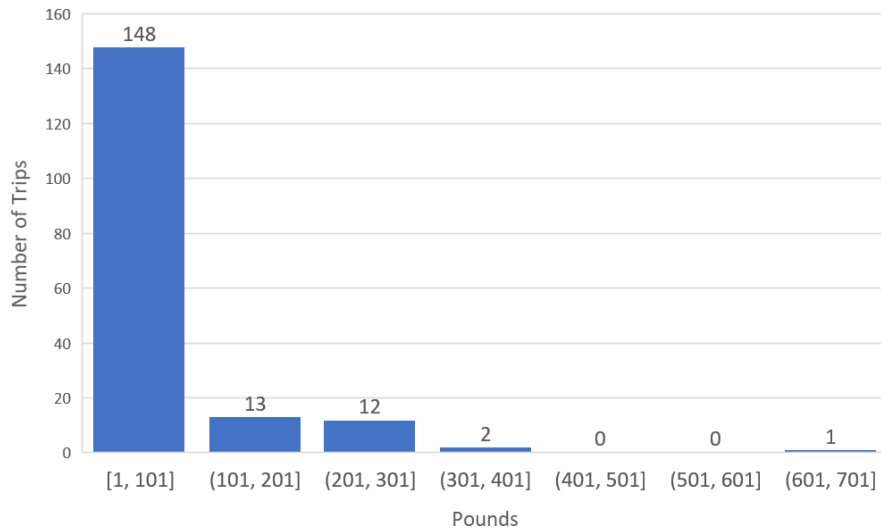


2017: \$2.13

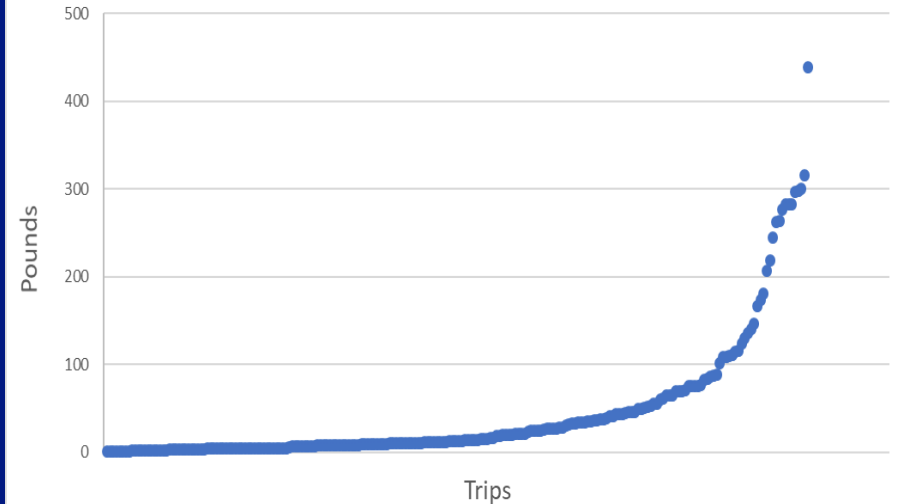
Commercial Fishery Performance



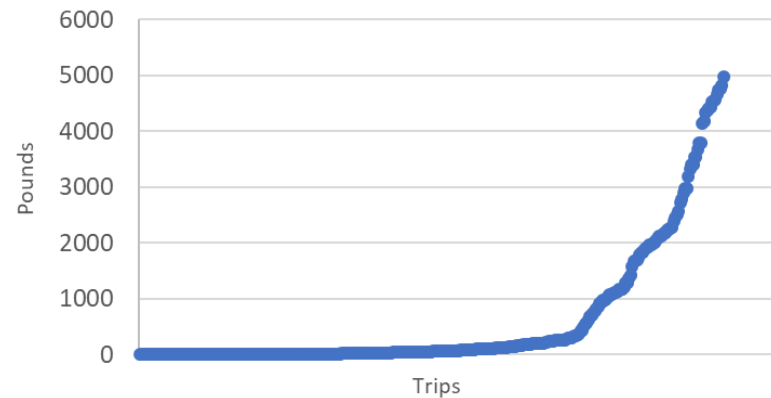
2017 Dealer Blueline Tilefish Trips



2017 Dealer Pounds Per Trip



2014 Dealer Pounds Per Trip



Commercial Fishery Performance

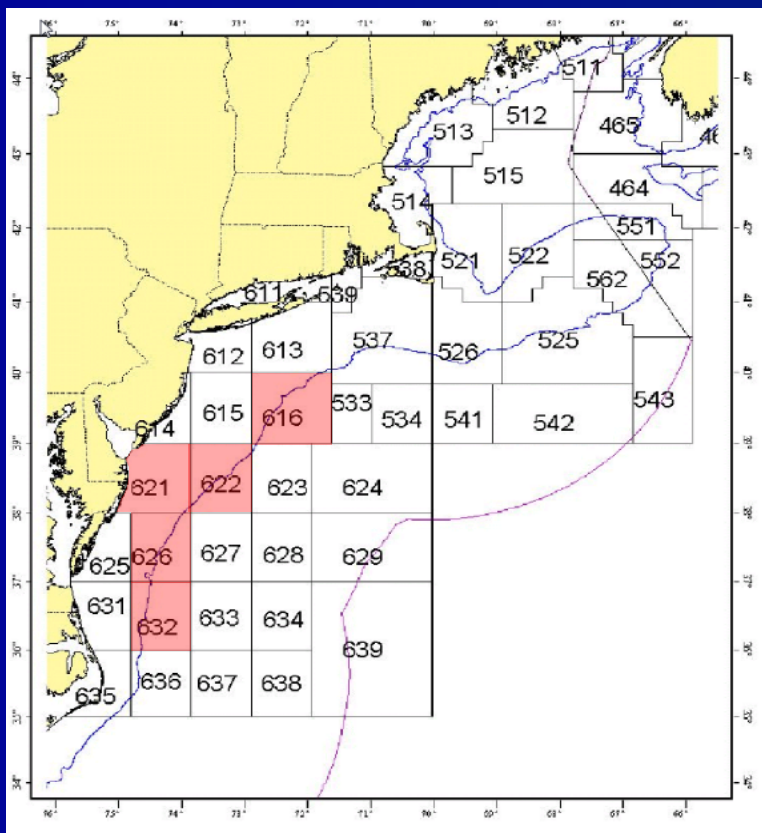


Figure 2. NMFS statistical areas accounting for the majority of blue tilefish landings (1994-2017).

2017 Dealer

Gear	Percentage of Landings
Bottom Longline	28.56
Handline	19.40
Trawl	37.44
Gill Net	0.09
Dredge	0.95
Unknown	13.55

Recreational Fishery Performance



MRIP

Year	State	Landings (lbs)	Number of Fish
2016	Maryland	92,691	10,644
2016	New Jersey	12,922	3,040
2016	Virginia	102,905	23,134
2017	Virginia	15,166	3,444

MRIP estimates by state for 2016 and 2017 (preliminary). Large majority of landings come from private/rental. 1000 fish from charter boats (2016 only)

MRIP Landings prior to 2016 are almost non-existent.

Party/Charter

Year	Frequency	Number of Fish
2012	103	10,051
2013	120	11,838
2014	138	15,849
2015	170	14,391
2016	160	15,531
2017	112	9,682

Table 1. Blueline tilefish VTR landings from ME-VA, 2012-2017

***Private recreational reporting is on GARFO's priorities list for the next two years**



Fishery Performance Report

- No major changes observed on water
 - When BLT limits are met, rec trips target other species
- Commercial fishery is very limited by regulations (state and/or federal)
 - Occasionally effort has to shift to avoid BLT areas
- Recreational fishery is also limited by regulations.
- Interested in higher trip limits, but cautious of creating a directed fishery (too much uncertainty)
- Supportive of the pilot survey
 - Help future assessments?

Staff Recommendations to the SSC



- Considering the recommendations from the joint Subcommittee and given recent fishery performance, which has been constrained by the regulations, Council staff recommends a blueline tilefish ABC of 132,344 pounds and specifying it for 3 years (2019-2021).
 - Unlikely to get new info that suggests something different
 - No new assessment
 - Standard annual review



MAFMC SSC ABC Recommendations

Blueline Tilefish
2019 - 2021 Fishing Years

Review of Joint BLT WG Report

- Concern about large degree of scientific uncertainty throughout the DLMTool analysis
- Still considered it an improvement over the 2016 analysis upon which ABC was based, and constituted best science information available
- Determined that the MSY estimate based on the DLMTool analysis represents a proxy for OFL, not ABC

The level of uncertainty that the SSC deems most appropriate for the information content of the most recent stock assessment, based on criteria listed in the Omnibus Amendment.

- OFL estimate is available
- SSC determines the CV for the OFL



If possible, the level of catch (in weight) and the probability of overfishing associated with the overfishing limit (OFL).

- OFL is **107.2 mt** (236,329 pounds)
- OFL equivalent to the MSY proxy derived from the DLMTool analysis



The level of catch (in weight) and the probability of overfishing associated with the acceptable biological catch (ABC) for the stock.

- SSC applied draft protocol for determining CV for the OFL, resulting in a CV of 150%
 - No reliable abundance indices
 - Catch estimates are unreliable
 - Natural mortality rate unknown
 - Plausible models gave highly divergent results
 - No retrospective analysis performed
 - No estimate of recruitment
 - No estimate of prediction error



ABC recommendation (cont'd).

- No estimate of stock biomass relative to B_{msy} , so SSC used a default ratio of 1
- SSC assumed a “typical” life history, similar to what was assumed for Golden Tilefish
- The resultant ABC estimate is **81.42 mt** (179,500 pounds) for the stock north of Cape Hatteras.



ABC recommendation (cont'd).

- SSC agreed with the Joint WG recommendation allocating 56% of the ABC to the portion of the stock north of the VA/NC border
 - Based on a fishery independent survey
 - Catch estimates not reliable enough to support allocation decisions
 - SSC reached same conclusion as SEDAR 50 review panel



ABC recommendation (cont'd).

- ABC for the MAFMC-managed portion of the stock is therefore **45.6 mt** (100,520 pounds).
- This ABC specification is for fishing years 2019, 2020, and 2021.



ABC recommendation (cont'd).

- SSC will review the following information in 2019 and 2020:
 - Regulatory changes and how they may have altered fishery performance;
 - Total catch by fishery sector;
 - Size distribution in the catch;
 - Spatially explicit catch, including recreational; and
 - CPUE and size distributions from fishery independent surveys.



The most significant sources of scientific uncertainty associated with determination of OFL and ABC.

- The model used by the SSC to set the ABC assumes that Blueline Tilefish in MAFMC waters represents a distinct sub-unit with limited exchange with a sub-unit to the south.
- The catch time series was developed from a Delphi method and remains uncertain.
- Steepness of the stock-recruit relationship remains highly uncertain
- Assumption that BLT carrying capacity and productivity are constant



Research recommendations.

1. Improvements in the accuracy of the catch time series, in particular in the recreational sector.
2. Implementation of additional fishery-independent sampling.
3. The potential for localized depletion of fish in specific areas.



Research recommendations (cont'd).

4. Selectivity of the commercial fishery in the northern part of the range.
5. Reliability of aging and determination of growth parameters well in advance of future assessments.
6. There are dynamic non-equilibrium methods that are not yet in DLMTool that may be more appropriate and should be investigated.



SSC Recommendations



- Treat staff/subcommittee recommendation as an OFL
 - 132,344 pounds with 150% CV buffer (2019-2021)

- ABC = 100,520 pounds
 - 73% Recreational: 73,380 pounds
 - 27% Commercial: 27,140 pounds

MC/Staff Recommendations



Specification	Recreational	Commercial
ABC	100,520 lbs (45.60 mt)	
ACLs	73,380 lbs (33.28 mt)	27,140 lbs (12.31 mt)
ACTs	73,380 lbs (33.28 mt)	27,140 lbs (12.31 mt)
TALs	71,912 lbs (32.62 mt)	26,869 lbs (12.19 mt)

2% discard

1% discard

MC/Staff Recommendations



- Recreational
 - No change
- Commercial
 - 70% or 18,808 pounds
 - 500 pound trip limit
 - Remaining 30% or 8,061 pounds
 - 300 pound trip limit

Commercial

Year	Landings (lbs)
2013	26,780
2014	217,016
2015	73,668
2016	14,203
2017	9,957



*Stakeholder comments indicated 500 lbs can lead to directed trips
- 9,957 lbs were caught in all of 2017 (8,061 lbs is a substantial buffer)



Questions?

Motion



- Move that the blue line tilefish ACT=ACL=ABC is 100,520 pounds for 2019, 2020, and 2021. The ACL and ACT are allocated 73% and 27% to the recreational and commercial fishery, respectively. After discards, the recreational TAL is 71,912 pounds (2%) and the commercial TAL is 26,869 pounds (1%).

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- Move that the blue line tilefish commercial trip limit be changed for 2019, 2020, and 2021 from 300 pounds (gutted/head and fins attached) to 500 pounds until 70% of the quota (18,808 pounds) has been met. Then, the trip limit will be reduced to 300 pounds for the remaining 30% of the quota (8,061 pounds).