



MID-ATLANTIC | FISHERY
MANAGEMENT
COUNCIL



Black Sea Bass 2019 Specifications



Council and Board Meeting
August 14, 2018

Objectives

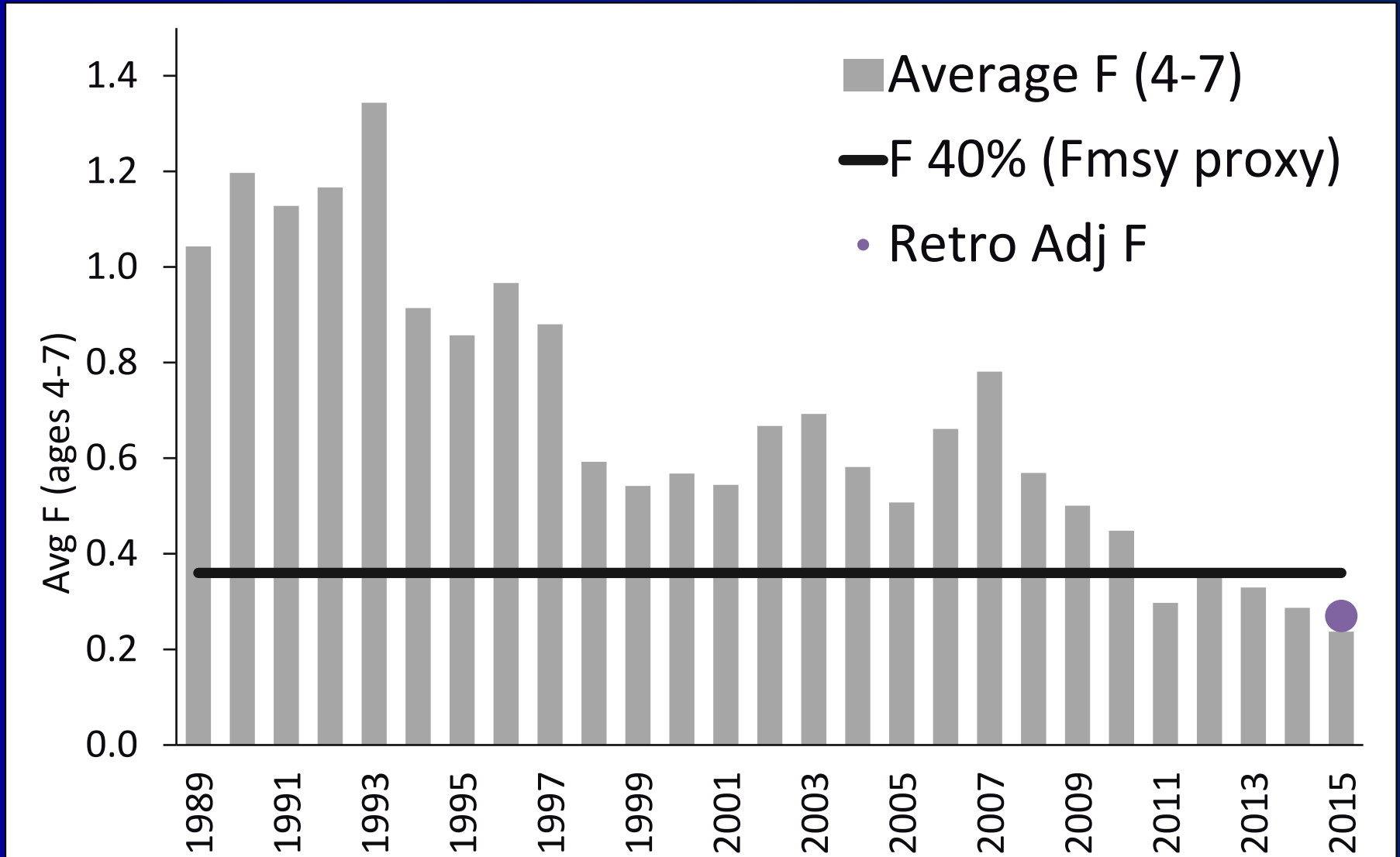
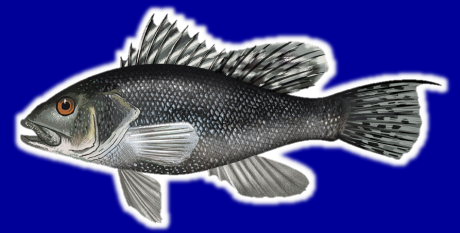


- Review SSC, Monitoring Committee, Advisory Panel, and staff recommendations for 2019 specifications
- Adopt 2019 specifications

SSB, Recruitment

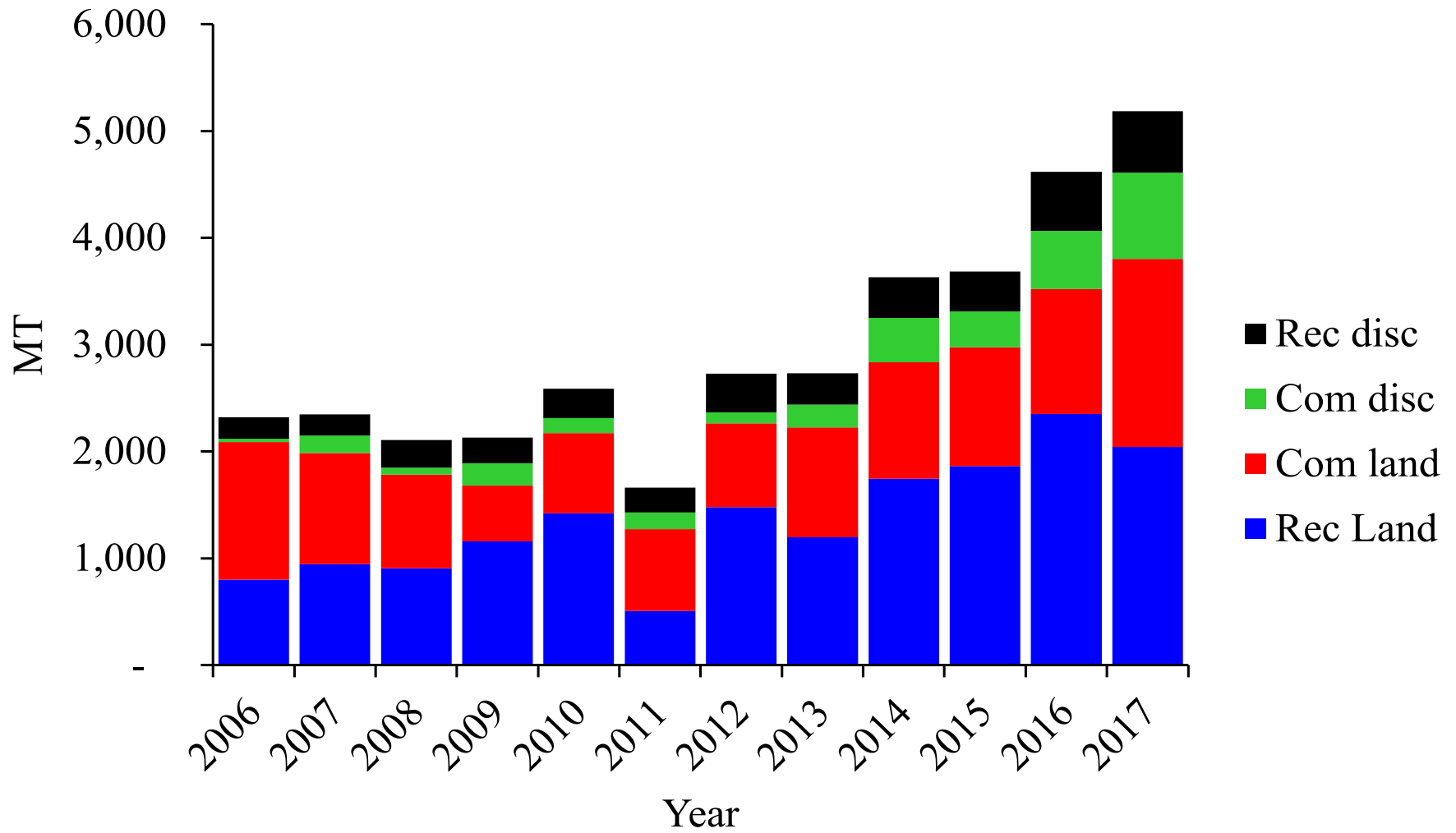


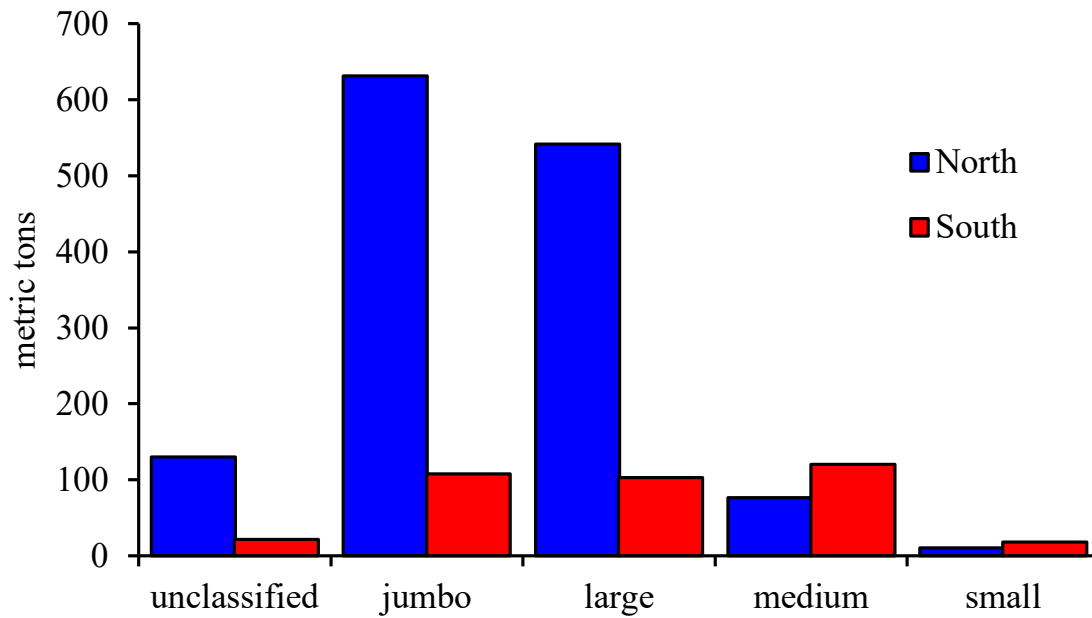
Fishing Mortality



2018 Data Update

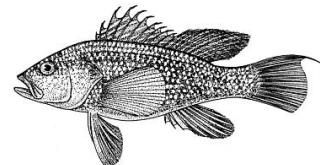
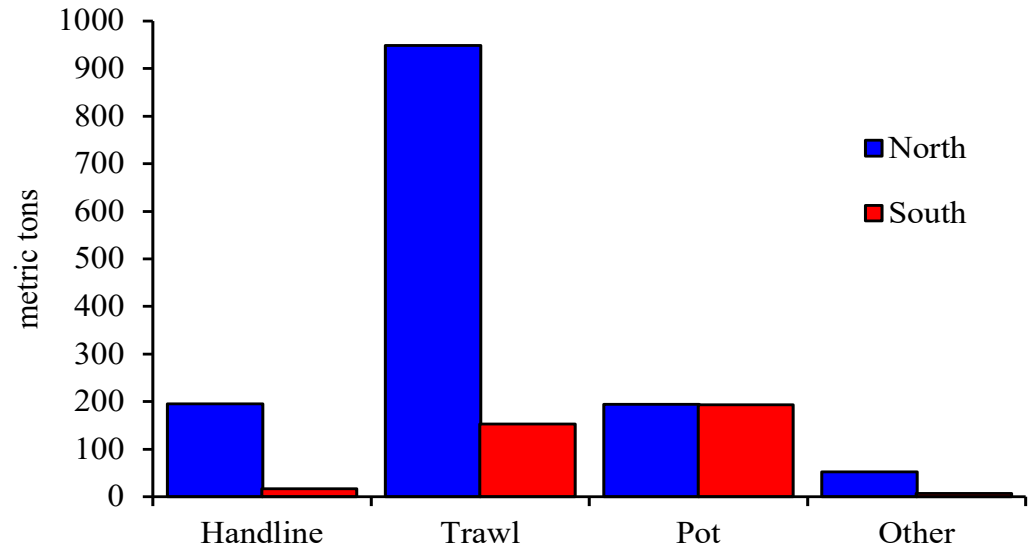
- 2011 year class remains dominant in fisheries and surveys in N region
- 2015 year class appears above avg in many N & S surveys and fishery discards
- 2017 com. landings highest since at least 1982 (1,761 mt/3.88 mil lb)
- Most com. landings from stat areas off NY-DE. Most com. discards from S region
- Most rec. landings, discards occurred in N



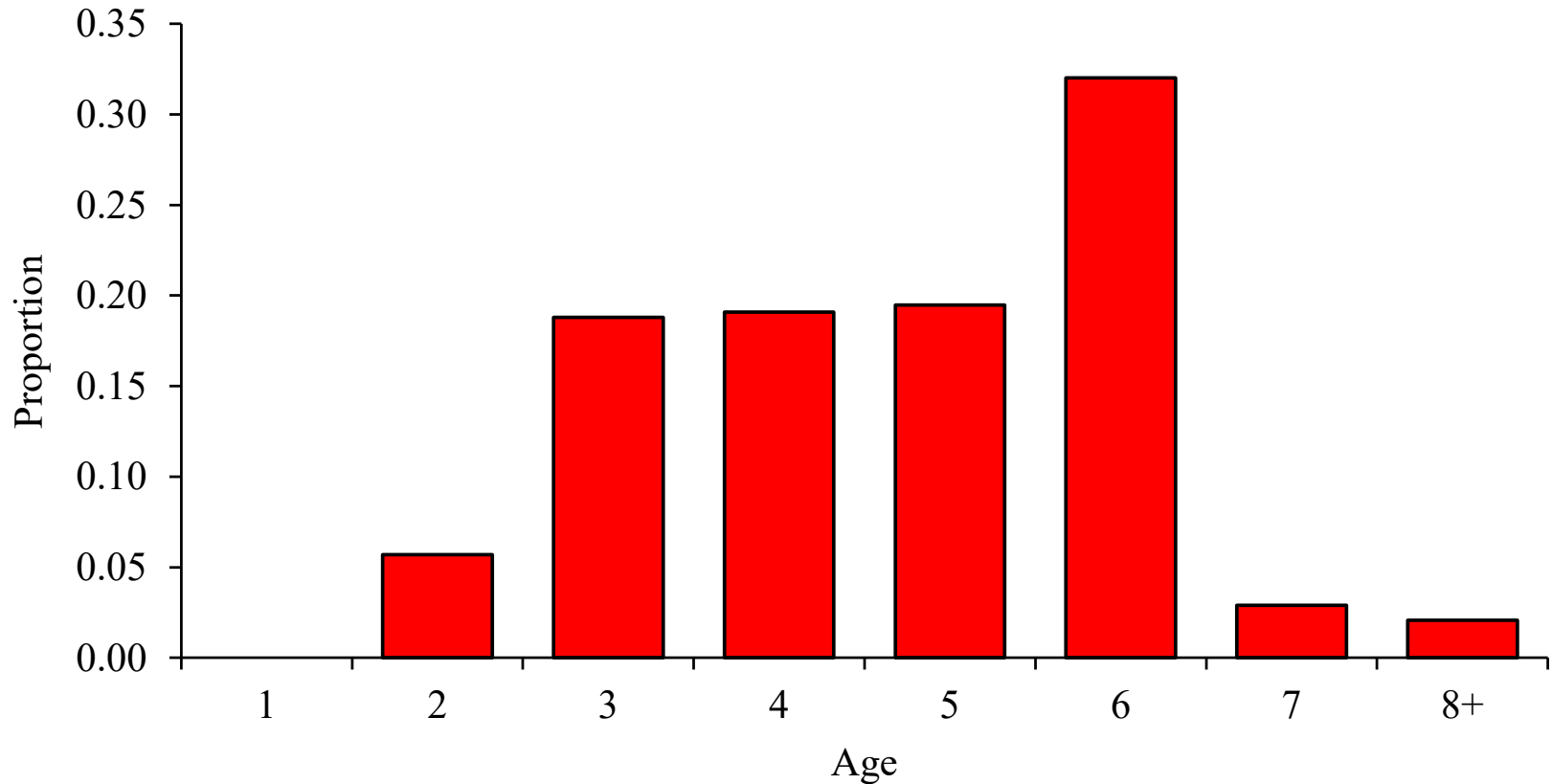


2017 commercial landings by region and market category

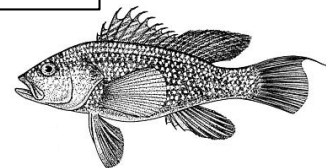
2017 commercial landings by region and gear type

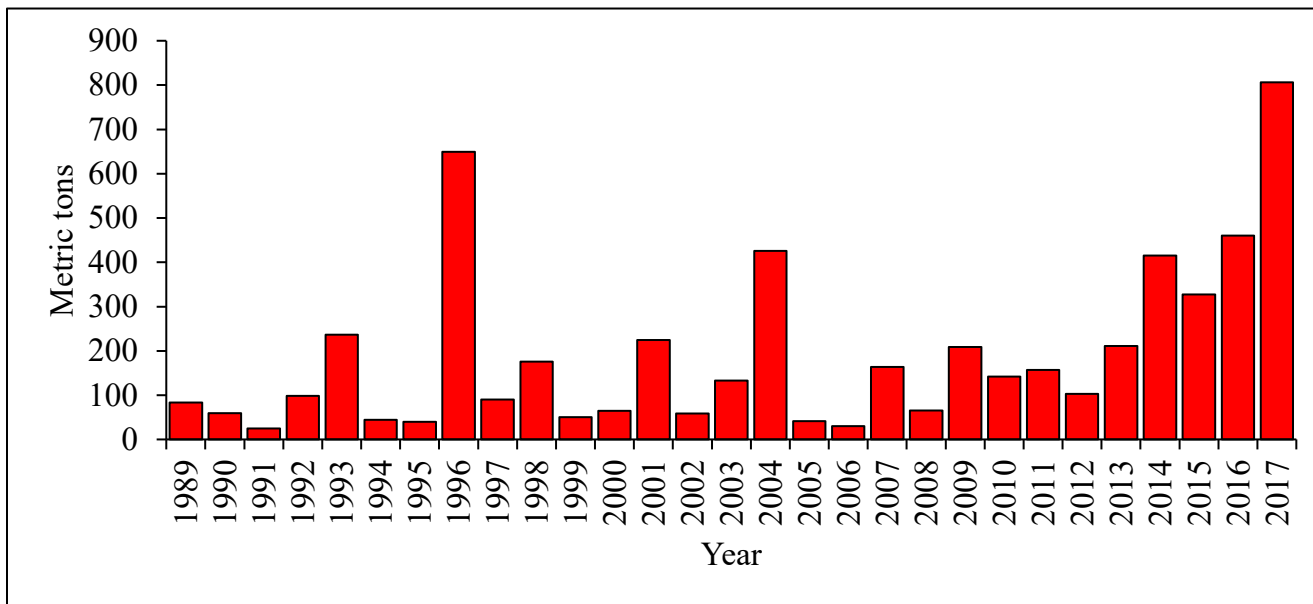


2017 Commercial Landings Age Comp



**Age composition of 2017
commercial landings**



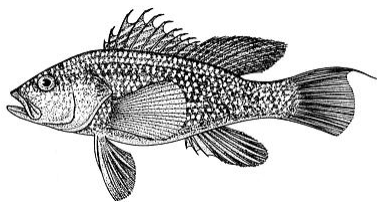
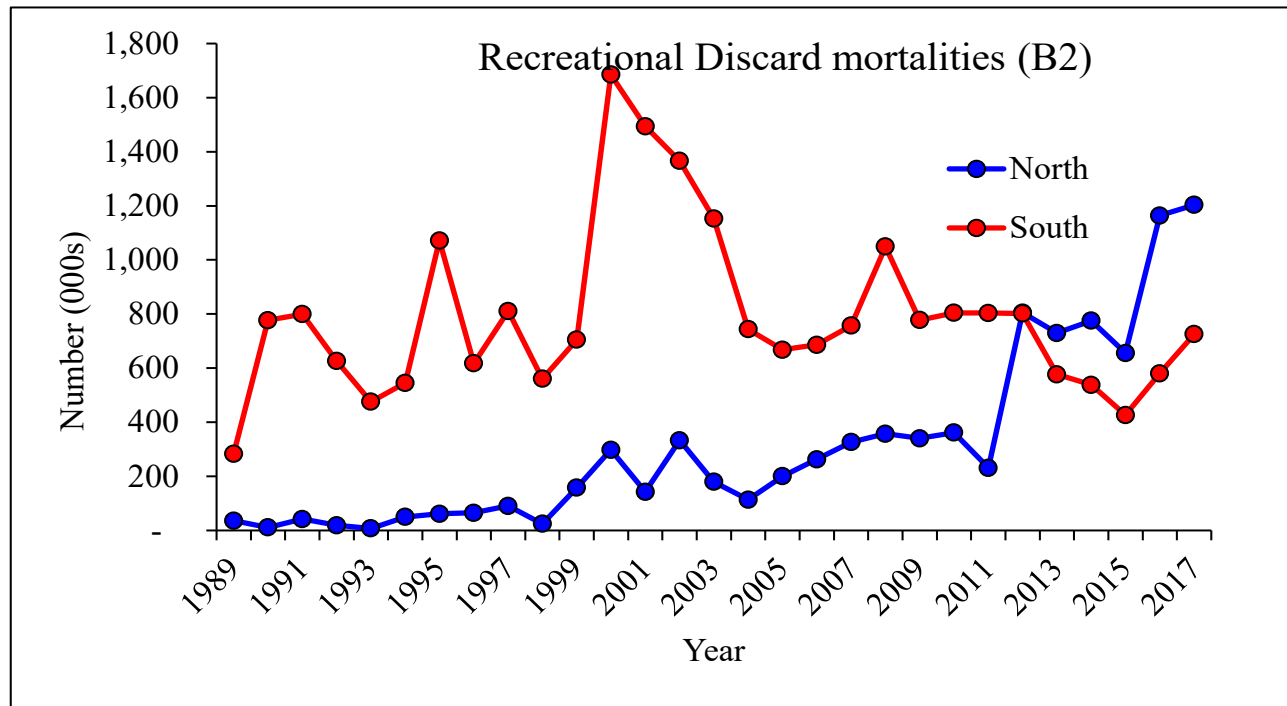
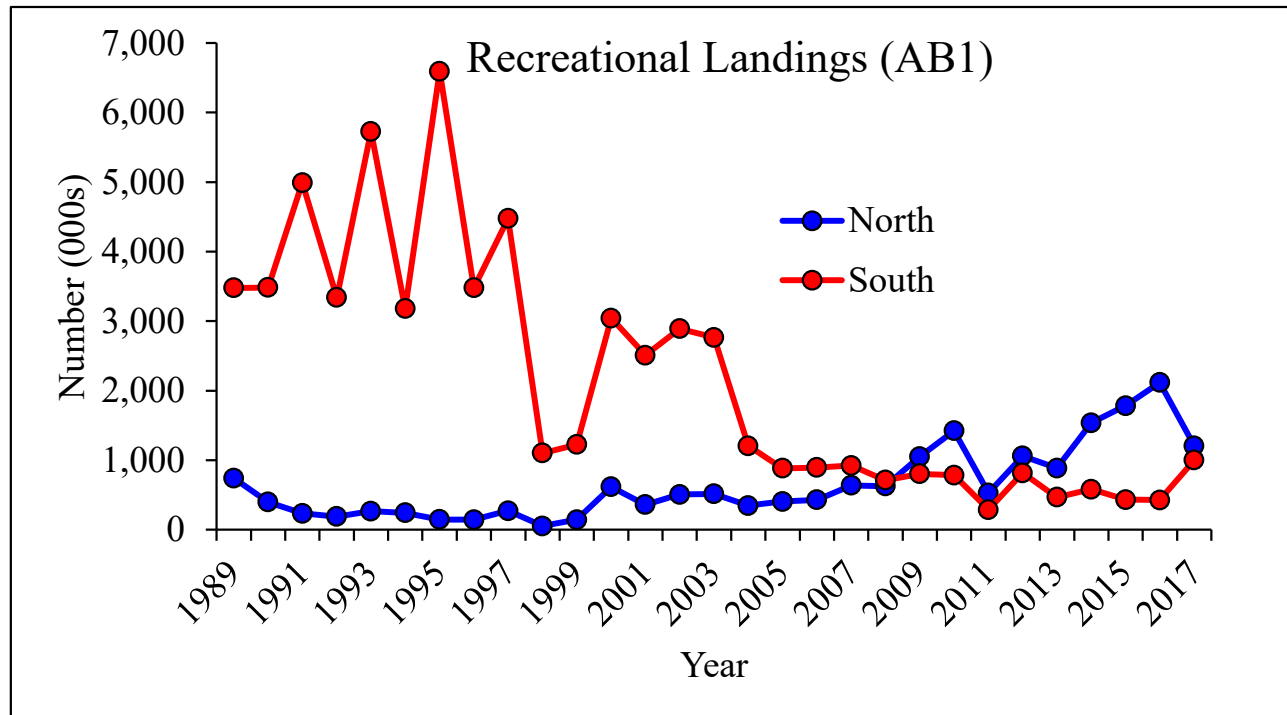


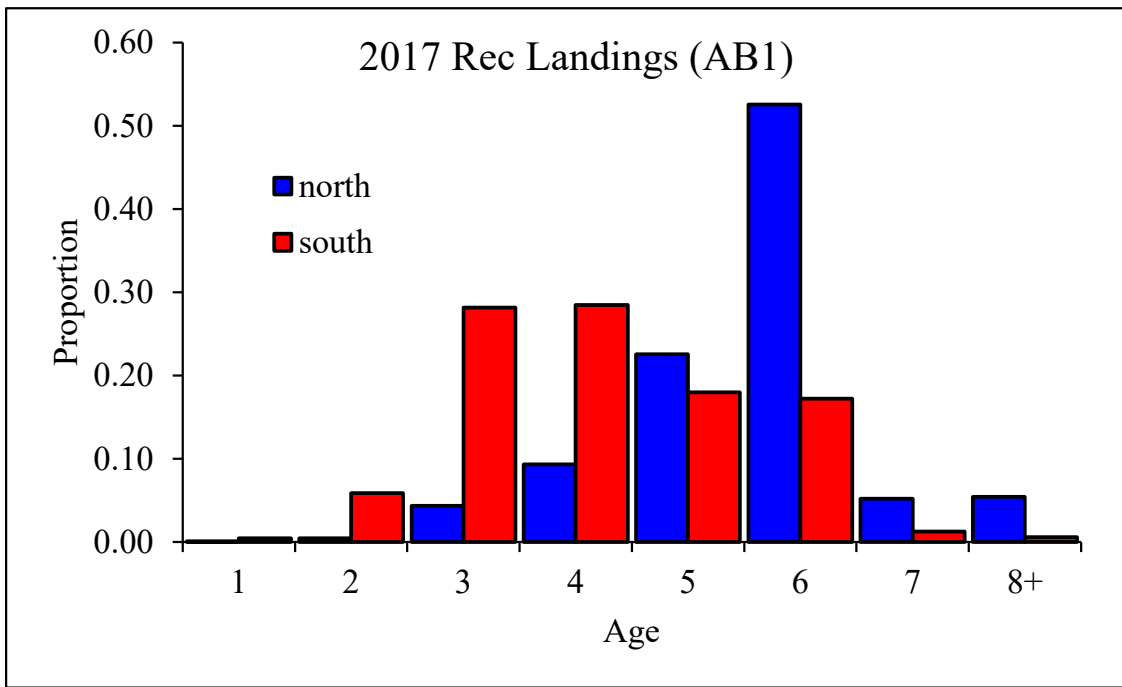
Commercial discards (mortalities) 1989-2017

2017 commercial discards (mortalities) by gear type and region

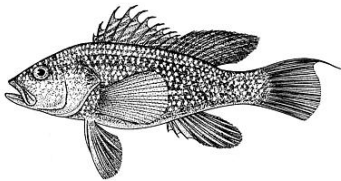
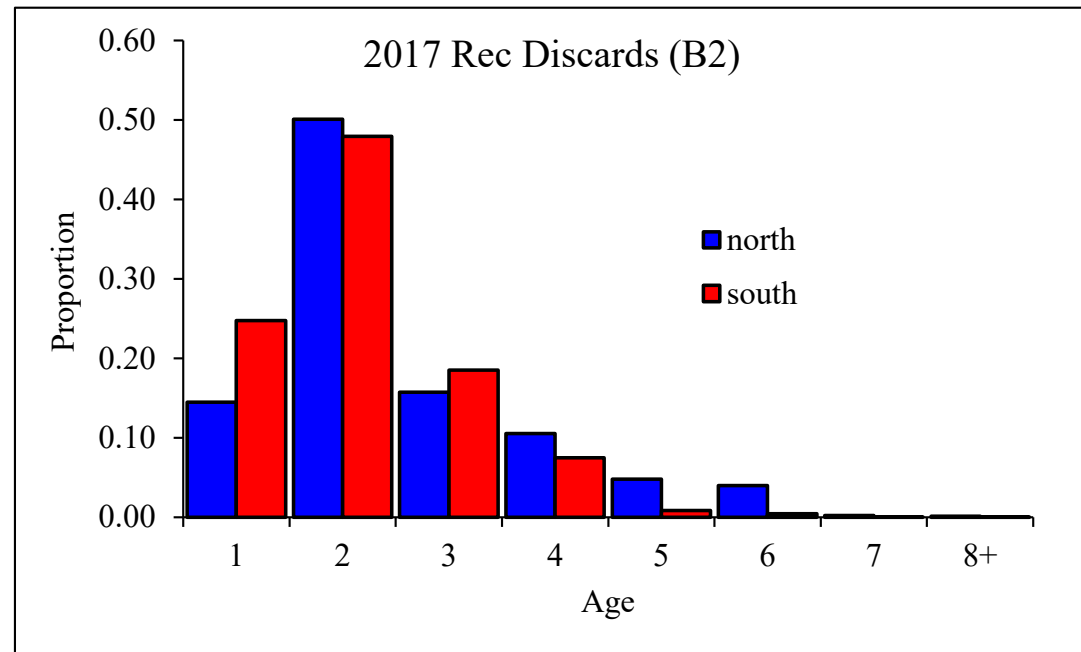
2017	Source	NEGEAR	MT
NORTH	OBS	Otter trawl	224.1
	VTR	Handline	5.2
	VTR	Fish pots	7.0
	VTR	Other pots	1.4
SOUTH	OBS	Otter trawl	560.1
	OBS	Gillnet	5.8
	VTR	Handline	0.3
	VTR	Fish pots	1.7
	VTR	Other pots	0.3
TOTAL			805.9







**2017
recreational
catch
age frequencies
by region**



Commercial Fishery

Year	Quota (mil lb)	Landings (mil lb)	% of quota landed
2013	2.17	2.26	104%
2014	2.17	2.18	100%
2015	2.21	2.29	104%
2016	2.71	2.59	96%
2017	4.12	3.99	97%
2018	3.52	--	--

Recreational Fishery

Year	RHL (mil lb)	Harvest (mil lb)	% of RHL harvested
2013	2.26	2.46	109%
2014	2.26	3.60	159%
2015	2.33	3.79	163%
2016	2.82	5.19	184%
2017	4.29	3.93	92%
2018	3.66	--	--

2017 Fishery



- Com. landings – 3.99 mil lb, 97% of quota
- Commercial discards – 1.78 mil lb
- Com. catch 5.77 mil lb, 113% of ACL
- Rec. harvest – 3.93 mil lb, 92% of RHL
- Recreational discards – 1.27 mil lb
- Rec. catch – 5.20 mil lb, 97% of ACL
- Total catch exceeded ABC by ~5%

AP Comments



- MRIP data inaccurate, should be replaced with reporting via smart phone app
- Predictability, stability in regulations needed
- Concerns about trawl survey data
- RSA should be used to fund research
- Research should be done on hook sizes, gear configurations to reduce discard mortality
- Council and Board don't listen to AP input

AP Comments



- BSB range has expanded – negative impacts lobster, clam, and other fisheries
- Catch limits should be increased to address these negative impacts
- Abundance is cyclical
- Winters and springs are colder –seasonal patterns of landings have changed
- Research recommendation – why are BSB moving into new areas?

AP Comments



- Council should modify risk policy to allow more harvest, given biomass $>2x$ target
- Frustration that ABC is declining from 2018-2019 even though biomass is $>2x$ target and 2015 year class is above avg

AP Comments



- Bottom trawls tend to catch bigger fish and have accounted for a greater proportion of landings over time
- Dealers pay more per pound for bigger fish – shift towards trawl gear may have impacted overage avg price
- Markets are generally stable but mid-year change in 2017 quota flooded the market and caused prices to drop

AP Comments



- Frustration with current restrictive recreational management measures
- High discard rate is troubling
- Challenges with managing in lb vs #s
 - With increasing min. size limits anglers can keep fewer fish
 - RHL more easily exceeded
 - Higher discards

AP Comments



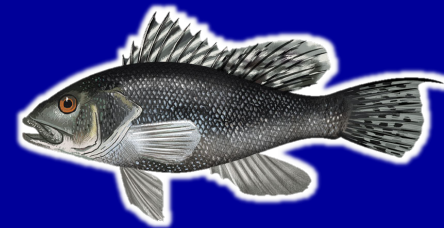
- Should consider different bag limits for private and for-hire
- Southern states don't have same diversity of rec. species as northern states – BSB very important for VA
- Non-compliance an issue in some areas
- High rec. catches suggest stock is bigger than we think

AP Comments (Email)



- Issues with varied regulations by state
- Consider requiring venting
- Consider male-only rec. fishery
- Research on survival at different depths

2017-2019 ABCs



Year	ABC (mil lb)
2017	10.47
2018	8.94
2019	7.97

MC Recommendation

Measure (mil lb)	2018	2019
ABC	8.94	7.97
ABC Landings	7.18	6.03
ABC Discards	1.76	1.94
Projected Com. Discards	0.83	1.03
Projected Rec. Discards	0.93	0.91
Commercial ACL	4.35	3.98
Commercial ACT	4.35	3.98
Com. Quota	3.52	2.95
Recreational ACL	4.59	3.99
Recreational ACT	4.59	3.99
RHL	3.66	3.08

MC - Discards

- ABC divided into expected landings and discards based on 2015-2017 avg
- Discards further divided into com and rec based on 2015-2017 avg
- Reactive to past fishery performance, does not account for differences in strengths of incoming year classes
- No alternative justifiable approach

Mesh Study (Hasbrouck et al. 2018)

- Valuable contemporary information
- Current min mesh sizes are effective at releasing catch of most undersized and immature fish
- 4.5" or 5" diamond mesh could be common min mesh size for scup and BSB
- Before pursuing specific changes to min mesh sizes:
 - Fishing industry feedback should be sought
 - Additional analysis should be done

MC Recommendation

No changes to

- 11" commercial minimum size
- Incidental possession limits
 - 500 lb January – March
 - 100 lb April – December
- 4.5" minimum mesh size
- Pot/trap vent sizes

Action Needed

- Adopt 2019 ACTs, ACLs, RHL, quota
- Changes needed to commercial min. fish size, incidental possession limits, commercial gear regs?

Discard Calculations

2013-2015

- Total catch:
 - 80.3% landings
 - 19.7% discards
- Com vs rec discards
 - 47.2% commercial
 - 52.8% recreational

2015-2017

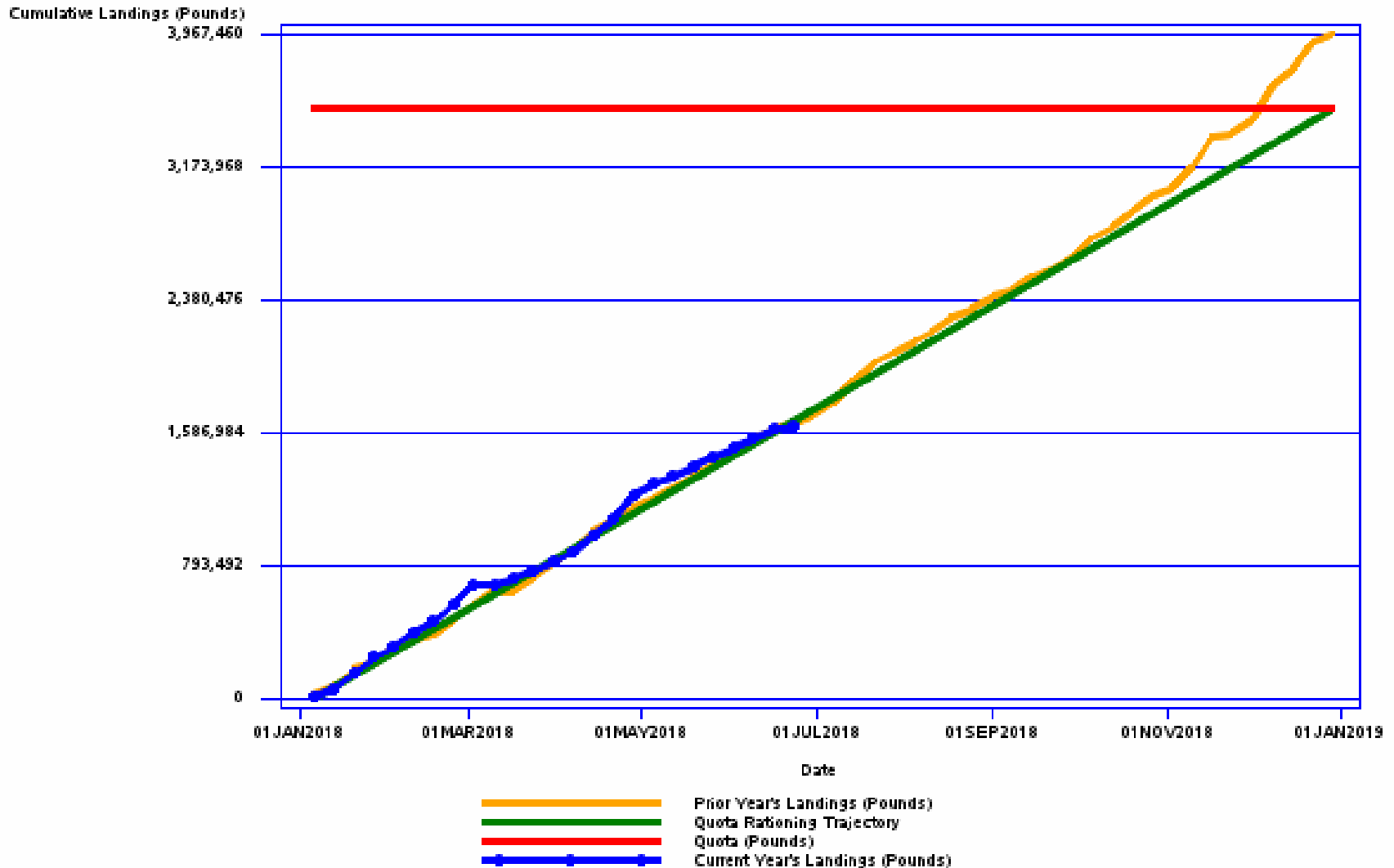
- Total catch:
 - 75.7% landings
 - 24.3% discards
- Com vs rec discards
 - 53.0% commercial
 - 47.0% recreational

Management Measure	2018	Basis	2019	Basis
ABC	8.94	SSC recommendation	7.97	SSC recommendation
ABC Landings	7.18	80.3% of ABC (avg 2013–2015 landings as % of catch)	6.03	75.7% of ABC (avg 2015–2017 landings as % of catch)
ABC Discards	1.76	19.7% of ABC (avg. 2013–2015 discards as % of catch)	1.94	24.3% of ABC (avg. 2015–2017 discards as % of catch)
Projected Commercial Discards	0.83	47.2% of ABC discards, (2013-2015 avg. % discards by sector)	1.03	53.0% of ABC discards (2015-2017 avg. % discards by sector)
Projected Recreational Discards	0.93	52.8 % of ABC discards (2013-2015 avg. % discards by sector)	0.91	57.0% of ABC discards, (2015-2017 avg. % discards by sector)
Commercial ACL	4.35	49% of ABC landings (per FMP) + projected discards	3.98	49% of ABC landings (per FMP) + projected discards
Commercial ACT	4.35	=ACL	3.98	=ACL
Com. Quota	3.52	=ACT-discards	2.95	=ACT-discards
Recreational ACL	4.59	51% of ABC landings (per FMP) + projected discards	3.99	51% of ABC landings per FMP) + projected discards
Recreational ACT	4.59	=ACL	3.99	=ACL
RHL	3.66	=ACT-discards	3.08	=ACT-discards

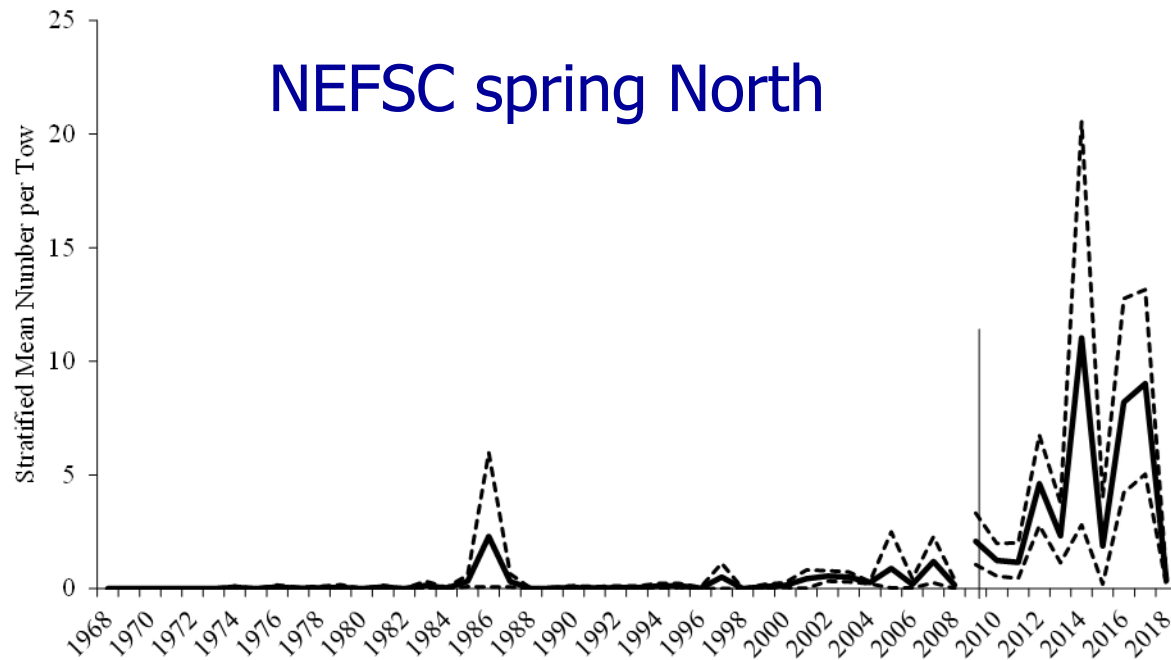
Measure	Previous 2019 Recommendation	MC Recommendation 2019
ABC	7.97	7.97
ABC Landings	6.40	6.03
ABC Discards	1.57	1.94
Proj Com Discards	0.74	1.03
Proj Rec Discards	0.83	0.91
Com ACL	3.88	3.98
Com ACT	3.88	3.98
Com Quota	3.14	2.95
Rec ACL	4.10	3.99
Rec ACT	4.10	3.99
RHL	3.27	3.08

2018 Commercial Landings

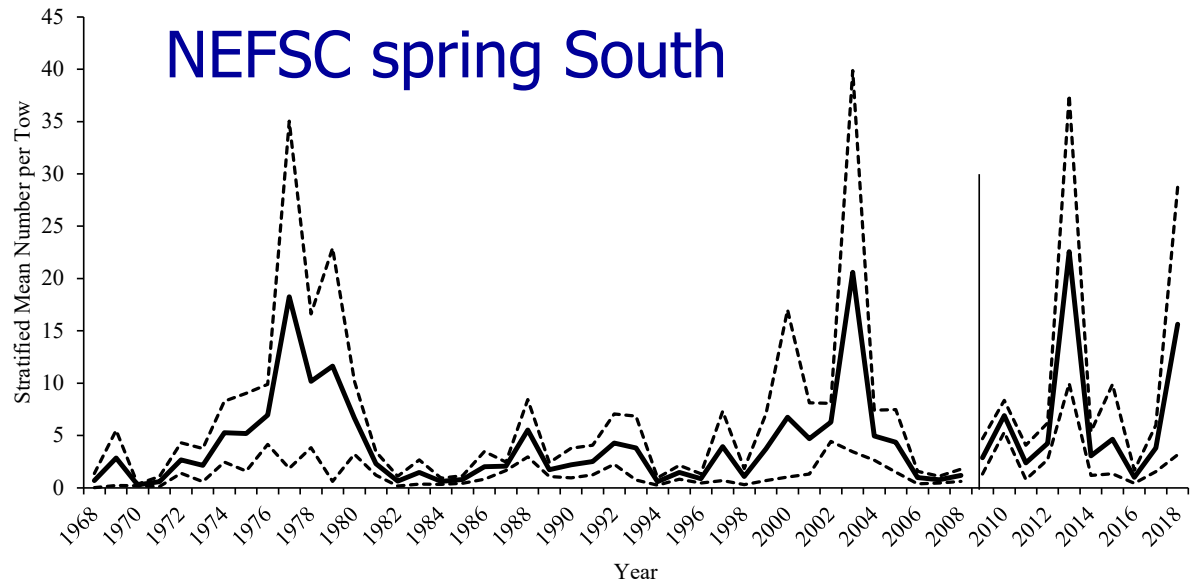
Black Sea Bass Quota Monitoring Report



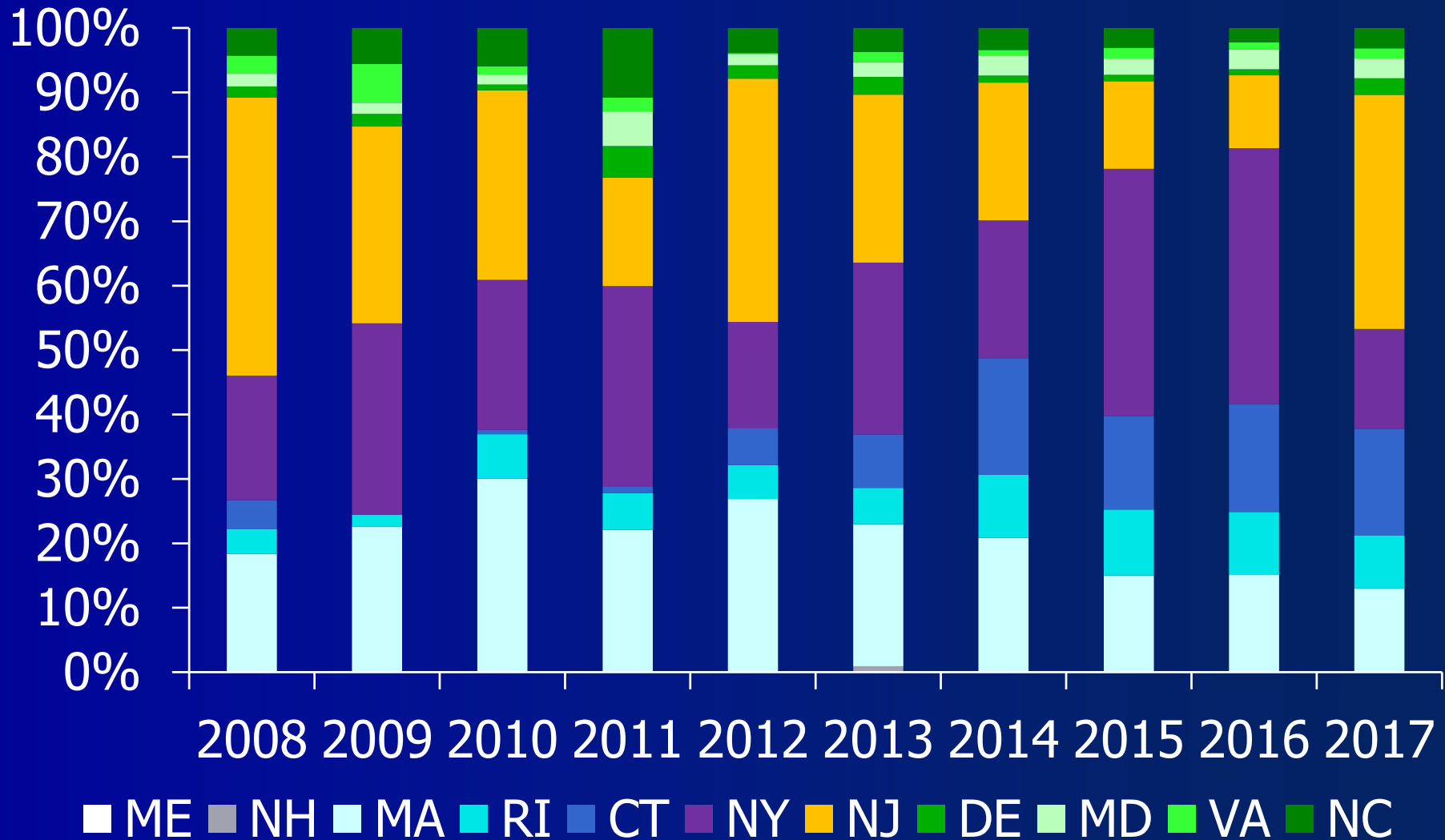
NEFSC spring North



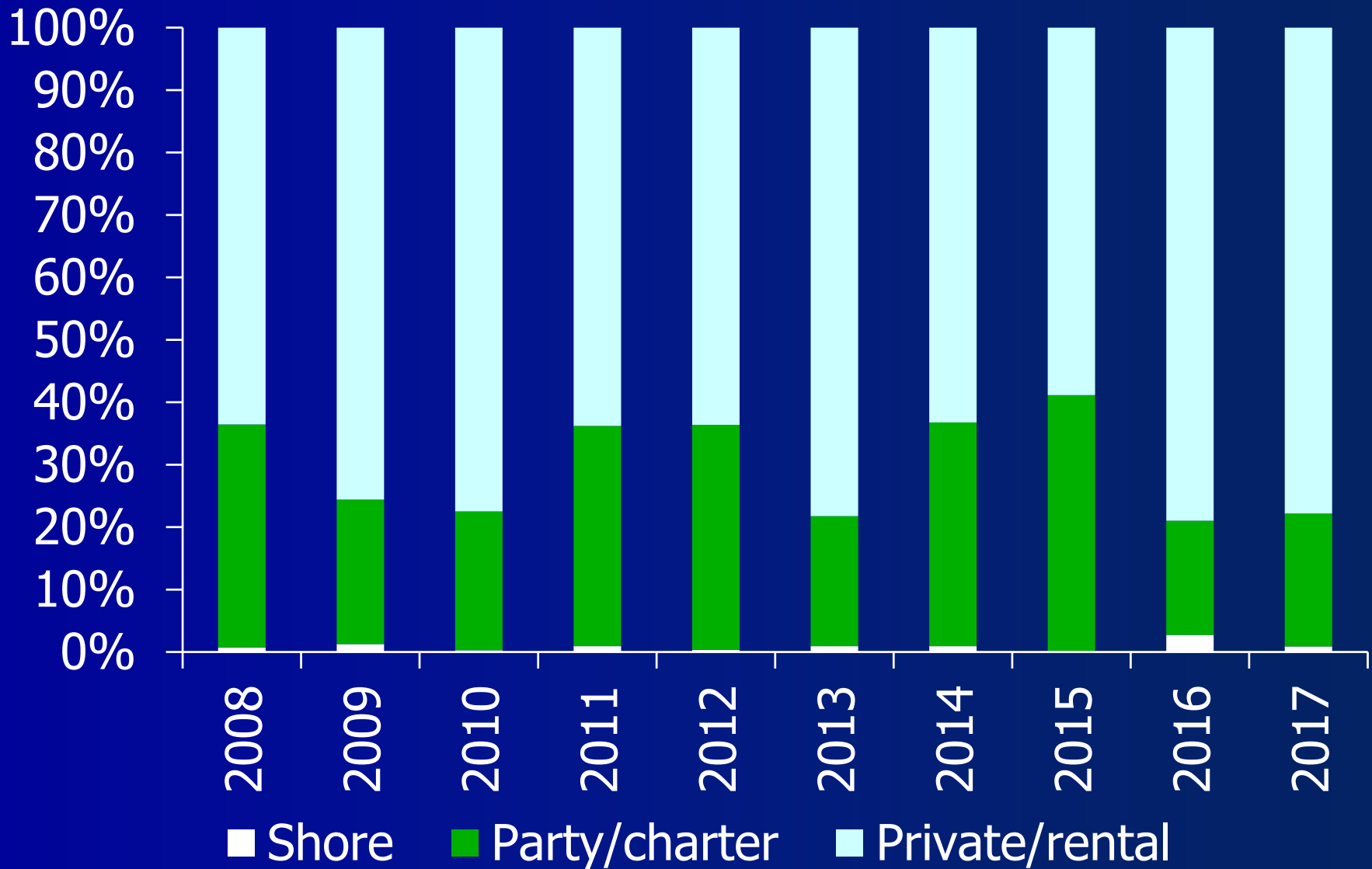
NEFSC spring South



Recreational Harvest by State



Recreational Harvest by Mode



Fishery Dependent Indices

MRIP recreational catch (AB1B2) per angler for northern and southern regions, 1981-2017. Effort based on catch per angler trip within a regional guild of species.

