



Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

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MEMORANDUM

Date: August 3, 2023
To: Chris Moore
From: Jason Didden
Subject: 2024-2025 Atlantic Mackerel Trip Limits

Per the main [August 2023 briefing materials \(Tab 9\)](#), the Atlantic mackerel (mackerel) Acceptable Biological Catches (ABCs) for 2024 and 2025 are very low. They are also preliminary given that the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) will be reviewing the mackerel ABCs after additional peer review (a change in status to *no longer overfishing* triggered additional peer review under the current assessment process).

When it met July 27, 2023, the Monitoring Committee was still analyzing possible commercial trip limits that would keep catches at or below the 2,726 metric ton (MT) 2024 ABC. After deducting expected Canadian catch (74 MT), expected recreational catch (2,143 MT), and expected discards (115 MT), only 394 MT remained for 2024 commercial landings. The commercial fishery has not operated under quotas like these before, making any predictions uncertain. Follow-up analyses by NMFS staff indicate that based on the most recent full year of landings (2022), the following trip limit scenarios would all be expected to hold 2024 landings below 394 MT:

Starting trip limits for limited access/open access	Threshold to lower trip limits	Trip limits after threshold	Approximate Landings Result
20000/1000 lbs	80%	1000/250 lbs	339
20000/1000 lbs	85%	1000/250 lbs	351
20000/2500 lbs	80%	1000/250 lbs	357
20000/2500 lbs	85%	1000/250 lbs	371
20000/1000 lbs	80%	5000/1000 lbs	372
20000/1000 lbs	85%	5000/1000 lbs	372

If 2021 landings patterns were used instead of 2022 patterns, estimated landings would be about 100-250 MT higher than those in the above table, highlighting the uncertainty inherent in setting such low limits. These trip limits may also decrease trips (lowering catch) or increase discards (increasing catch), but it's not possible to precisely model that interaction. Staff recommends maintaining the trip limits set for 2024 into 2025 even though the 2025 ABC may be higher. 2025 modifications could be considered after 2024 landings were evaluated.