

Summer Flounder 2024-2025 Recreational Measures

Monitoring Committee
November 13, 2023



MC Objectives



- Recommend 2024-2025 recreational measures under Percent Change Approach
 1. Review information used to identify appropriate percent change and resulting harvest target
 2. Recommend use of coastwide measures or conservation equivalency to achieve 2024-2025 harvest target, and associated measures

<i>Column 1</i> 2023 RHL vs expected harvest under 2022 measures	<i>Column 2</i> Biomass compared to target level (SSB/SSB_{MSY})	<i>Column 3</i> Change in Harvest
RHL greater than upper bound of expected harvest CI (RHL underage expected)	Very high greater than 150% of target	Liberalization % = difference between harvest estimate and 2023 RHL, not to exceed 40%
	High at least target, but no higher than 150% of target	Liberalization % = difference between harvest estimate and 2023 RHL, not to exceed 20%
	Low below target stock size	Liberalization: 10%
RHL within expected harvest CI (harvest expected to be close to RHL)	Very high greater than 150% of target	Liberalization: 10%
	High at least target, but no higher than 150% of target	No liberalization or reduction: 0%
	Low below target stock size	Reduction: 10%
RHL less than lower bound of expected harvest CI (RHL overage expected)	Very high greater than 150% of target	Reduction: 10%
	High at least target, but no higher than 150% of target	Reduction % = difference between harvest estimate and 2023 RHL, not to exceed 20%
	Low below target stock size	Reduction % = difference between harvest estimate and 2023 RHL, not to exceed 40%

2023 Recreational Measures



- Regional Conservation Equivalency
 - State measures control harvest; federal measures waived
- Non-preferred coastwide measures
 - Implemented in federal regulations, but waived
 - 18-inches, 3 fish, May 15-Sept. 22
- Precautionary default
 - “Deterrent” measures
 - 20-inch TL, 2 fish, July 1-August 31

2023 State Measures



	Min. Size (in)	Bag Limit	Season
MA	16.5	5 fish	May 21-September 29
RI	18	4 fish	
RI SHORE	18	2 fish*	May 3-December 31
	17	2 fish*	
CT	18.5	4 fish	May 1-October 9
CT SHORE SITES	17		
NY	18.5		
NJ	Slot limit 17-18	2 fish ^b	May 2-September 27
	18	1 fish ^b	
NJ SHORE SITE	16	2 fish	
NJ DE BAY	17	3 fish	
DE, MD, PRFC, VA	16	4 fish	
NC^c	15	1 fish	September 15-29

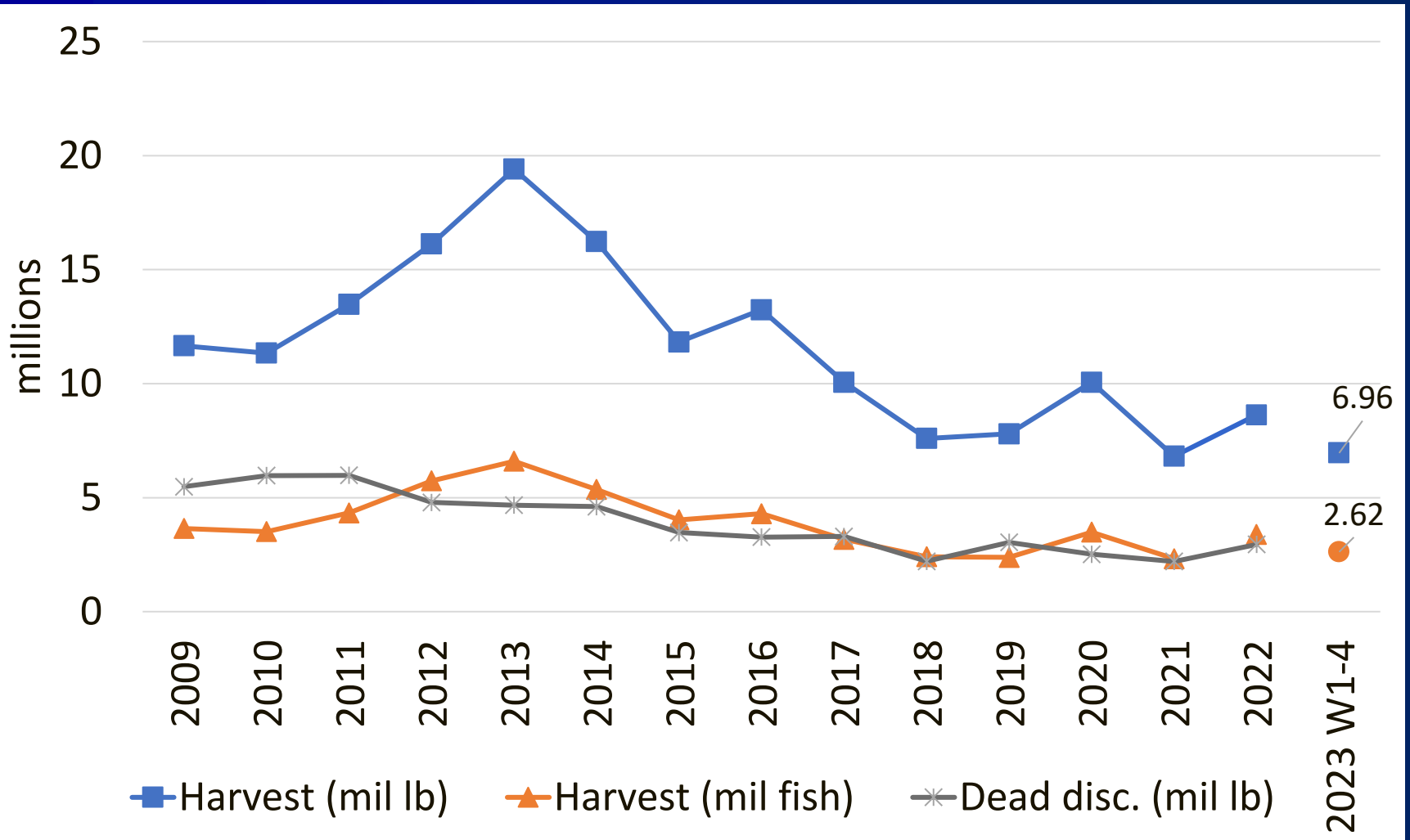
^a Combined limit of 4 fish, no more than 2 at 17 inches

^b NJ slot limit total possession limit of 3 fish: 2 between 17-18; 1 over 18

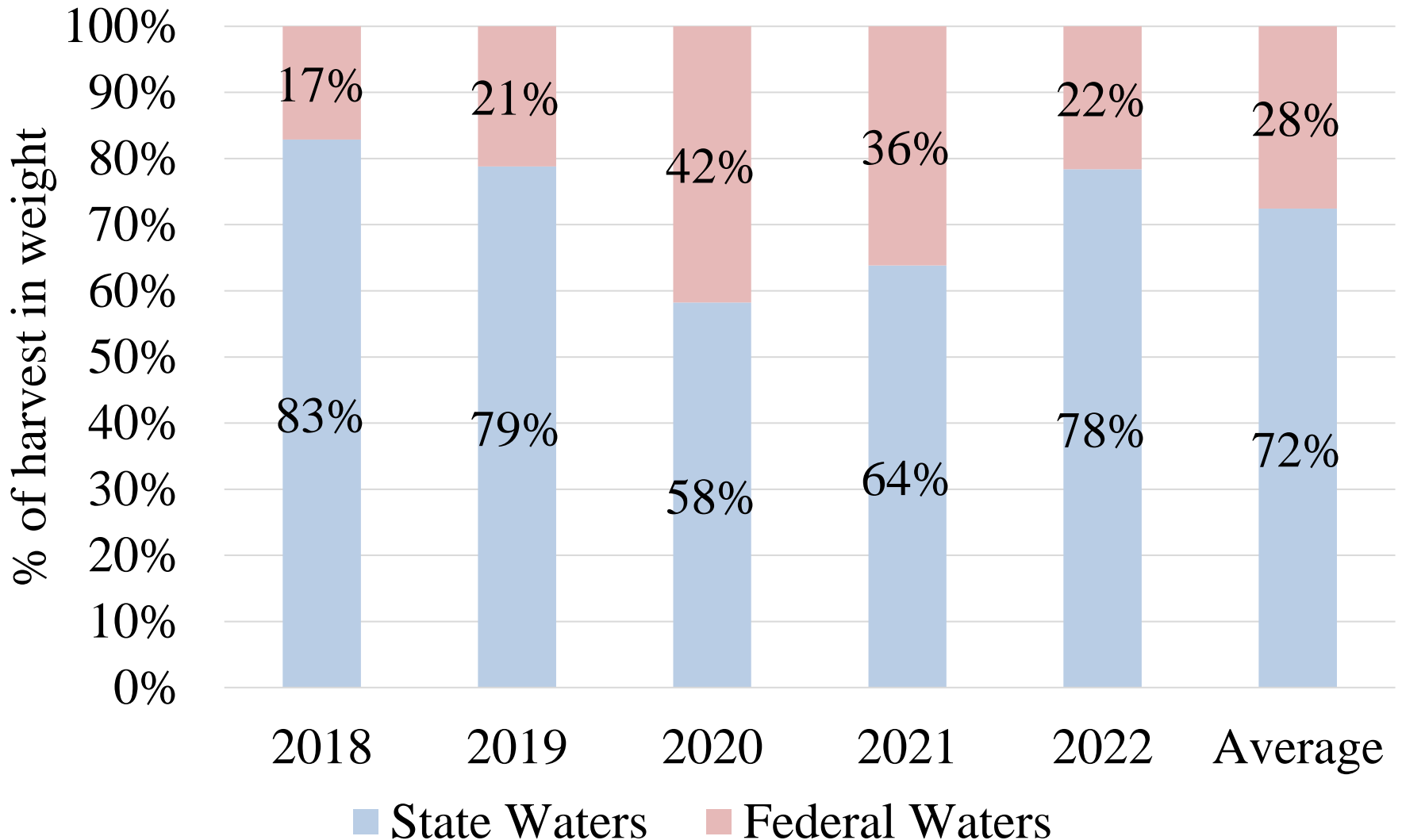
^c NC restrictions to reduce mortality on southern flounder

Harvest 2009-2022

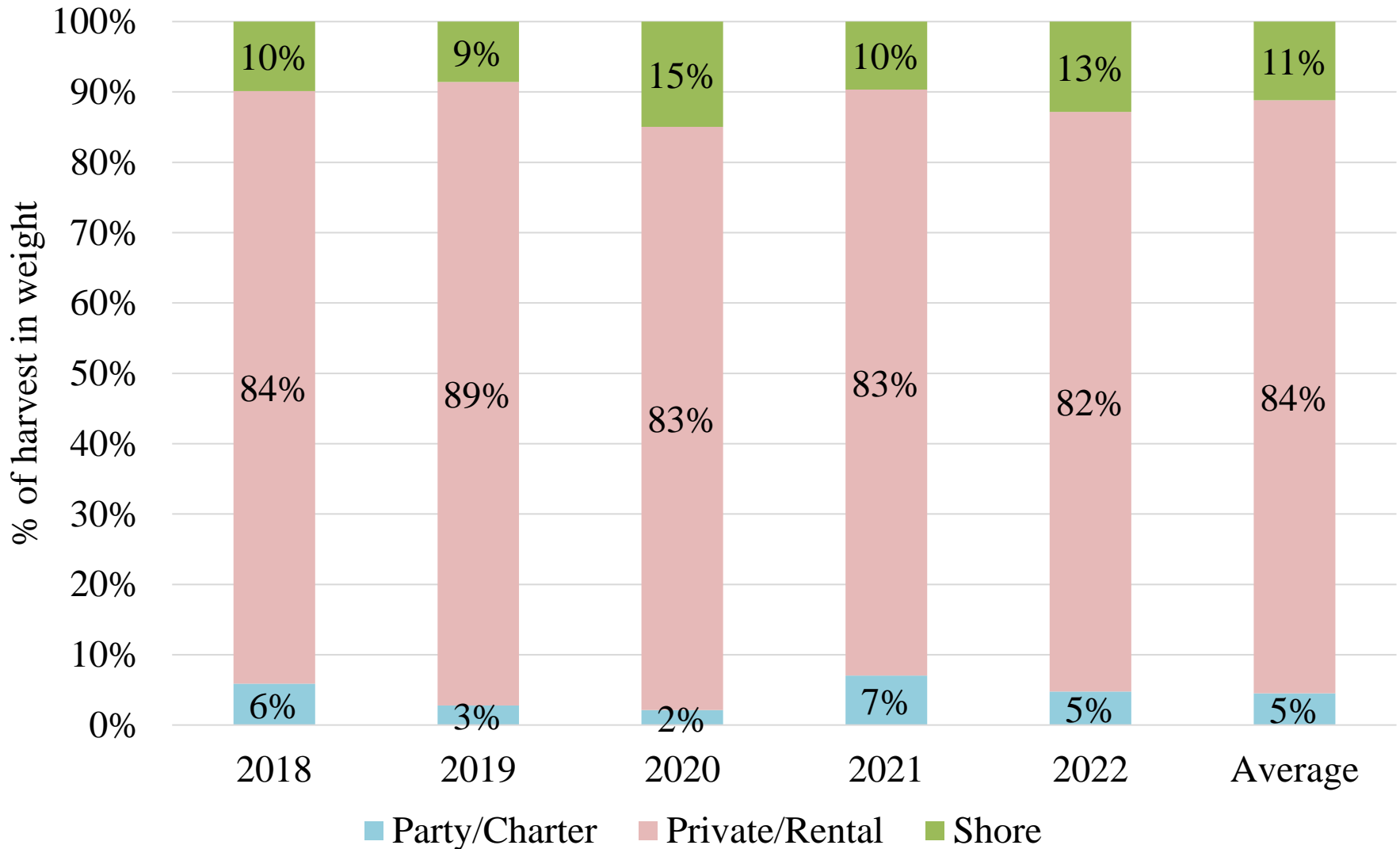
With 2023 Waves 1-4



State vs. Federal Waters Harvest (lb)



Harvest (lb) by mode



Percent Change in Harvest Needed for 2024-2025



- **Percent Change Approach Step 1:**
Compare 2024-2025 RHL to 80% confidence interval around expected 2024-2025 harvest under current (2023) measures
 - Estimate and CI generated from Recreational Demand Model (RDM)
 - 80% CI based on recommendation of the MC/TC from May 2023

Percent Change in Harvest Needed for 2024-2025



- **Percent Change Approach Step 1:**
Compare 2024-2025 RHL to 80% confidence interval around expected 2024-2025 harvest under current (2023) measures
- RHL is less than the lower bound of this CI

	Median	80% CI	2024-2025 RHL
RDM	8.88	8.10 – 9.48	6.35

<i>Column 1</i> 2024-25 RHL vs expected harvest under 2023 measures	<i>Column 2</i> Biomass compared to target level (SSB/SSB_{MSY})	<i>Column 3</i> Change in Harvest
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Rec. Accountability Measures: Not Triggered for Summer Flounder



	Rec. Harvest (mil lb)	Rec. Dead Discards (mil lb)	Dead Rec. Catch (mil lb)	Rec. ACL (mil lb)	% Over/Under ACL
2020^a	10.08	2.52	12.59	11.51	+9%
2021	6.82	2.20	9.01	12.48	-28%
2022	8.63	2.95	11.58	14.64	-21%
Average	8.51	2.55	11.06	12.88	-14%

^a 2020 MRIP harvest estimate incorporated ~19% imputed data

2024-2025 Harvest Target

- Percent reduction = difference between harvest estimate and RHL, not to exceed 40%
- Harvest estimate of 8.88 million pounds, reduced down to RHL of 6.35 million pounds = 28% reduction in harvest

2024-2025 Staff Recommendation

- Recommend continuation of regional conservation equivalency
- Non-preferred coastwide measures required under CE; waived in favor of state regulations
 - Current: 18 inches, 3 fish, May 15-September 22
- RDM run(s) for NP coastwide measures – not yet available

Staff Recommendation: Precautionary Default Measures

- *Status quo* precautionary default measures of **2 fish, 20 inches, July 1-August 31**
- MC should consider whether these will be sufficiently restrictive in all states given reduction needed

Summary and MC Discussion

- Recommend either coastwide measures or conservation equivalency to achieve harvest target of 6.35 mil lb (28% reduction)
 - Staff recommend using conservation equivalency
 - Non-preferred coastwide measures: use RDM results to determine necessary change from current 18 in, 3 fish, 5/15-9/22
 - Precautionary default: may be ok as is at 20 in, 2 fish, 7/1-8/31