



## Chub Mackerel Fishery Performance Report

April 2022

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's (Council's) Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Advisory Panel met via webinar on April 26, 2022 to review the 2022 Chub Mackerel Fishery Information Document and develop the following Fishery Performance Report. The meeting also addressed longfin squid, but a separate report was generated for longfin squid.

The primary purpose of this Fishery Performance Report is to contextualize catch histories for the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) by providing information about fishing effort, market trends, environmental changes, and other factors.

Eight advisors were in attendance. Two additional advisors with experience in the commercial chub mackerel fishery were not in attendance.

Advisor comments described below are not consensus or majority statements.

**Advisory Panel members present:** Katie Almeida, Greg DiDomenico, Daniel Farnham Jr., Emerson Hasbrouck, Jeff Kaelin, Pam Lyons Gromen, Samuel Martin, Gerry O'Neill

**Others present:** Carly Bari (GARFO), Julia Beaty (MAFMC staff), Alan Bianchi (NC DMF), Jason Didden (MAFMC staff), Michelle Duval (MAFMC member), Gavin Fay (SSC member), Damiana Hartley, Mark Holliday (SSC member), Peter Hughes (MAFMC MSB Committee Chair), Mary Beth Tooley

### Discussion questions:

1. What factors have influenced recent catch (markets/economy, environment, regulations, other factors)?
2. Are the current fishery regulations appropriate? How could they be improved?
3. What would you recommend as research priorities?
4. What else is important for the Council to know?

### Summary of Advisor Comments

#### Factors Influencing Catch

One advisor noted that the commercial fleet hasn't been targeting chub mackerel in recent years because they have been focusing on *Illex* squid.

One advisor suggested that the increasing recreational catch in recent years is due to increased prevalence in this region with warming waters. He added that south of the Gulf of Maine, recreational fishermen are more successful at catching chub mackerel than Atlantic mackerel.

#### Management Issues

Three advisors agreed that the concept of chub mackerel as an emerging fishery with climate change has been missing from Council management discussions. They agreed that the Council is being overly precautionary rather than prioritizing and supporting the development of sustainable

emerging fisheries which could bring economic benefits to the region. This mindset is preventing the Council from considering how fisheries can adapt to a changing environment.

Advisors did not recommend any changes to the catch and landings limits and other management measures for upcoming years. One advisor noted that the SSC will be asked to recommend acceptable biological catch levels for the upcoming three years. He said he hopes that three years from now we can have more information to make better informed decisions, especially in regards for the potential for the stock to support the fishery.

#### Research Recommendations

One advisor supported research on the range of the species, especially in regards to climate change, to help inform future management.