



Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
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Richard B. Robins, Jr., Chairman | Lee G. Anderson, Vice Chairman
Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

Date: May 6, 2016
To: Chris Moore, Executive Director
From: Jason Didden, Staff *JDD*
Subject: Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish (MSB) Specifications Review for 2017 Fishing Year

Mackerel is in multi-year specifications for 2016-2018 and butterfish and the squids are in multi-year specifications for 2015-2017. The Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) is scheduled to review the 2017 MSB ABCs during its May 2016 meeting.

Data updates from NMFS' Northeast Fisheries Science Center, the Advisory Panel's Fishery Performance Report, and a fishery information document that supported the Advisory Panel's discussion have been posted to <http://www.mafmc.org/council-events/2016/ssc-2>.

Regarding ABCs, the low 2015 *///ex* landings and low 2016 mackerel landings to date are of some concern. Butterfish and longfin squid landings have been within expected ranges, and recent indices for all MSB species are also within expected ranges. Given previous findings for these species and the inherent variability in the MSB fisheries, the updated data do not warrant changes to MSB ABCs at this time from staff's perspective.

Looking forward, for the May 2017 SSC Meeting, the Council has requested butterfish and longfin squid assessment updates, as well as data updates for mackerel and *///ex*. It is expected that information from a 2017 mackerel benchmark assessment will be available in May 2018, and the Council has requested an *///ex* benchmark be conducted during 2018.