2020 RH/S Cap - Overview

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2. Staff Ideas
3. Monitoring Committee Input
4. AP Input
5. NMFS ?s
6. Committee Motion
## 1. Cap/Progress Update

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cap (mt)</th>
<th>Caught (mt)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>155/89</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018**</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>109.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019**</td>
<td>82*</td>
<td>91.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*2019 will become 129mt with 89mt trigger if proposed rule becomes final

**Years mackerel closed due to RH/S cap
1. Cap/Progress Update (Mack FW)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Mackerel (mt)</th>
<th>RH/S Cap (mt)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>17,371</td>
<td>129/89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>20,557</td>
<td>152/89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>21,517</td>
<td>159/89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

June Council: Revised 2020 Mackerel down to 17,312 mt, deferred RH/S Cap decision until August.
1. Cap/Progress Update

Note: catch before 2005 may have been higher than shown because midwater trawl estimates begin in 2005.
1. Cap/Progress Update

- Proportions of 2005-2018 incidental catch of all RH/S by region, fleet and quarter
  - 40% Small mesh bottom trawl
  - 50% Mid-water trawl
  - 40% Mid-Atlantic
  - 60% New England
1. Cap/Progress Update

Metric Tons River Herring Landed ME-FL

- 2012: 0
- 2013: 0
- 2014: 0
- 2015: 0
- 2016: 0
- 2017: 0
- 2018: 0
1. Cap/Progress Update

Metric Tons Am. Shad Landed ME-FL

2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018
1. Cap/Progress Update

- 2018 Observer Coverage

- 21% of Mid-Atlantic small mesh bottom trawl trips;
- 17% of New England small mesh bottom trawl trips;

- 4% of Mid-Atlantic single mid-water trawl trips;
- 13% of Mid-Atlantic paired mid-water trawl trips;
- 5% of New England single mid-water trawl trips;
- 4% of New England paired mid-water trawl trips.
1. Cap/Progress Update

- To date, cap has been tied to historical RH/S catch rates
  - reduced 2014-2018 based on falling mackerel quotas to maintain high incentive to avoid RH/S

- Some recent staff exploration of using NEFSC trawl surveys to account for changes in RH/S abundance
  - would need dedicated effort/project
1. Cap/Progress Update

- Monitoring Committee also recommends taking another look at Atlantic herring/mackerel RH/S cap alignment possibilities
  - Possible 2020 white paper project
1. Cap/Progress Update

- RH/S ESA Listing
  - “not warranted at this time”

- “Stock in Fishery” Lawsuits
  - Some recent court decisions supportive of Council/NMFS but issue not fully resolved

- Monitoring Committee noted interlinkages among various actions
1. Cap/Progress Update

- TEWG Work
- RH/S Story Map
1. Cap/Progress Update

- RH/S Trends
  - 2017 RH Update: 54 in-river stocks
  - “remain depleted at near historic lows”
    - 16 = increasing trends over the ten most recent years of the update assessment data time series,
    - 2 = decreasing trends,
    - 8 = stable,
    - 10 = no discernible trend/high variability, and
    - 18 = did not have enough data to assess recent trends, including 1 that had no returning fish.
1. Cap/Progress Update

- RH/S Trends
  - 2007 Shad Assessment
    - Stocks were at all-time lows and did not appear to be recovering
    - Benchmark underway, expected in August 2020
      - Probably mostly qualitative trend info, unlikely to give some “OK” catch quantity
1. Cap/Progress Update

- Attached Indices
  - Some trending up, some trending down...
2. Staff Ideas

- Status quo (129 MT cap with 89 MT trigger)
- Status quo (129 MT) minus trigger
- Use 2016-2018 ratio, no trigger...154 MT
- Scale cap to RH/S trends in spring NEFSC trawl survey (169 MT)
- Use original 236 MT Cap
- Use weighted mean (206 MT Cap)
2. Staff Ideas

- Status quo (129 MT cap with 89 MT trigger)
- Status quo (129 MT) minus trigger
- Use 2016-2018 ratio, no trigger...154 MT
- Scale cap to RH/S trends in spring NEFSC trawl survey (169 MT)
- Use original 236 MT Cap
- Use weighted mean (206 MT Cap)
3. Monitoring Committee Input

- a variety of cap options are likely justifiable if the Council clearly describes its rationale related to controlling incidental RH/S catch/bycatch

- Within specs, stay within Am 14 goals

- Difficult situation - no biological reference points...
3. Monitoring Committee Input

- Low observer coverage has the potential to result in imprecise estimates
  - Transition methods
  - Portside sampling
3. Monitoring Committee Input

- Straying too far from current methods or AM 14 goals via specifications creates liabilities
  - Process or substantive

- Keep in mind the intertwined nature of various actions (ESA, Stock in the Fishery)
3. Monitoring Committee Input

- Review of preliminary monthly analysis didn’t seem to offer a magic bullet...

![Monthly Ratio of RH/S to Combined Atlantic Herring and Mackerel Retained Catch on Trips Keeping at Least 40,000 Pounds Combined Atlantic Herring and Mackerel, 2009-2018 observer data, bottom and mid-water trawl gears.](image)

Figure 6. Monthly RH/S Interaction Rates
3. Monitoring Committee Input

- Dual track approach would be possible – make a relatively minor change for early 2020 that could build off existing analyses and consider a future framework for other options
  - Will need to set 2021 mackerel specs in 2020
4. AP Input

- Divergent support for both higher quota and maintaining status quo
  - Some concern about shifting proportion of bottom trawl catch
  - Some support for exploring NE-Mid cap alignment and RH/S run story map
5. NMFS Q'ss

- Guidance on practicability
  - No threshold that defines practicability
  - The Council must balance any adjustment with the Council's policy for river herring and shad
    - Reduce RH/S catch
    - Provide strong incentives to harvesters such that they reduce river herring and shad bycatch.
Guidance on in-season adjustments
- MSB specs including RH/S cap can be adjusted through in-season action by the agency (after consultation with the Council, rulemaking, etc. per regs)
- The Council should not rely on the in-season adjustment process to resolve foreseeable (or recurring) events
6. Committee Motion

- I move to recommend to the Council to set the cap at 129 MT with no trigger.

- This would set the mackerel fishery’s RH/S cap for 2020 at 129 MT (2019 proposed value), but not use a provision whereby a lower 89 MT cap is in effect until 10,000 MT of mackerel has been landed.
6. Committee Motion

- 129 MT is 0.745% of the new DAH

- New DAH times 0.74% = 128 MT

- Results from slight tweak to recreational deduction
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