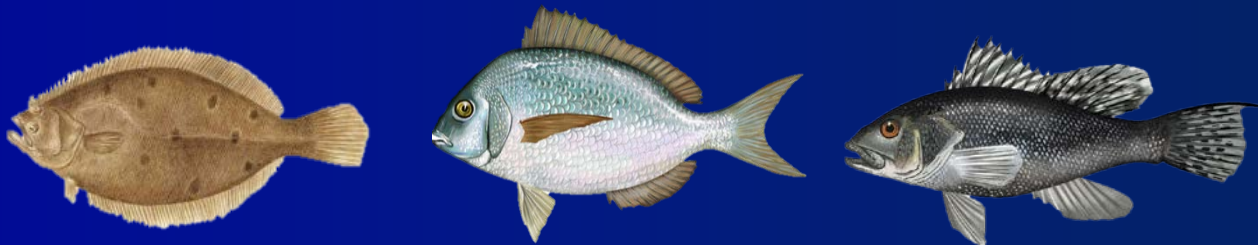




Summer Flounder, Scup, & Black Sea Bass
**Commercial/Recreational
Allocation Amendment**
Scoping and Public Information Document

Council and Board
December 11, 2019
Annapolis, MD



Overview

- Joint amendment initiated October 2019
- Today: review and approve joint scoping/public information document
 - Draft action plan also included in materials (will be regularly updated; no approval needed)
- Scoping hearing schedule TBD; planned for early 2020

Document Outline

1. Introduction
2. Current allocations
3. Why is this action being considered?
4. Issues for consideration
5. How to get involved
6. Next steps
7. Stock status
8. Fishery landings/discards trends
9. Additional resources

Why are changes being considered? (Section 3)

- Allocations based on historic proportions of harvest or catch from each sector
- Understanding of historic & recent harvest proportions have changed due to 2018 MRIP data revisions
 - Management implications for fixed allocation percentages defined in FMP
- Allocations have not been revised since set in early/mid 1990s

Amendment Objective (Section 3)

- Consider modifications to the current allocations between the commercial and recreational sectors for summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass.

Issues for Consideration (Section 4)

- Range of options will be developed, potentially including (1 of 2):
 - No action/status quo
 - Updating current base years with revised data
 - Using alternative base years
 - Other approaches not involving base years
 - Considering whether allocations should be catch or landings based

Issues for Consideration (Section 4)

- Range of options will be developed, potentially including (2 of 2):
 - Socioeconomic basis (e.g., optimizing economic efficiency or socioeconomic benefits)
 - Separate mode allocations for rec. sector (i.e., private vs. for-hire)
 - Ability to transfer allocation between sectors
 - Static vs. dynamic allocations
 - Framework provisions for future changes
 - Other approaches TBD

How to Get Involved (Section 5)

- Scoping hearings
 - Schedule TBD: staff will work with states, but feedback today is welcome
 - Anticipate starting hearings in late January/early February
- Written comment instructions
 - Comment period length will extend at least 14 days after the last hearing

Timeline (Section 6)

(Abbreviated; more detailed timeline in action plan)

Jan/Feb 2020	Scoping hearings and comment period
Mar/Apr 2020	Scoping comments summarized
May 2020	Review scoping comments; identify potential categories of alternatives
May-Jul 2020	Initial development of draft management alternatives
Aug 2020	Approve range of alternatives for inclusion in a public hearing document
Dec 2020	Approve public hearing document
Early 2021	Public hearings
Spring 2021	Final action
Summer 2021	Federal rulemaking and comment periods
Late 2021/Early 2022	Final rule effective

Timeline Notes

- Based on planned 2020 joint meeting schedule including May, August, and December
- Committee/subset of Board meeting planned for ~June 2020
- Unclear at this time what type of NEPA analysis will be required; EIS may mean slightly longer timeline

Fishery Background (Sections 7 and 8)

- Section 7: basic description of stock status for each species
- Section 8:
 - Landings/discard trends over time by sector
 - Tables for allocation base years with new and old data (provided in October discussion document)

Next Steps

- Populate Fishery Management Action Team (FMAT)
- Develop scoping hearing schedule & release document for comment
 - F.R. notice required 23 days in advance
 - Commission must make document publicly available 30 days before first hearing

<http://www.mafmc.org/actions/sfsbsb-allocation-amendment>

Discussion

- Feedback on document structure & content
- Input on potential hearing locations
- Approve document

EXTRA SLIDES

Current Sector Allocations

	Allocation	Base Years	Action	Year
Summer Flounder	60% comm./ 40% rec. (landings)	1980-1989	Am. 2	1993
Scup	78% comm./ 22% rec. (catch)	1988-1992	Am. 8	1996
Black Sea Bass	49% comm./ 51% rec. (landings)	1983-1992	Am. 9	1996

Figure 1: Commercial and recreational summer flounder landings and dead discards, 1982-2018. Data retrieved from the Northeast Fisheries Science Center 2019 data update. Commercial discard estimates prior to 1989 are not available.

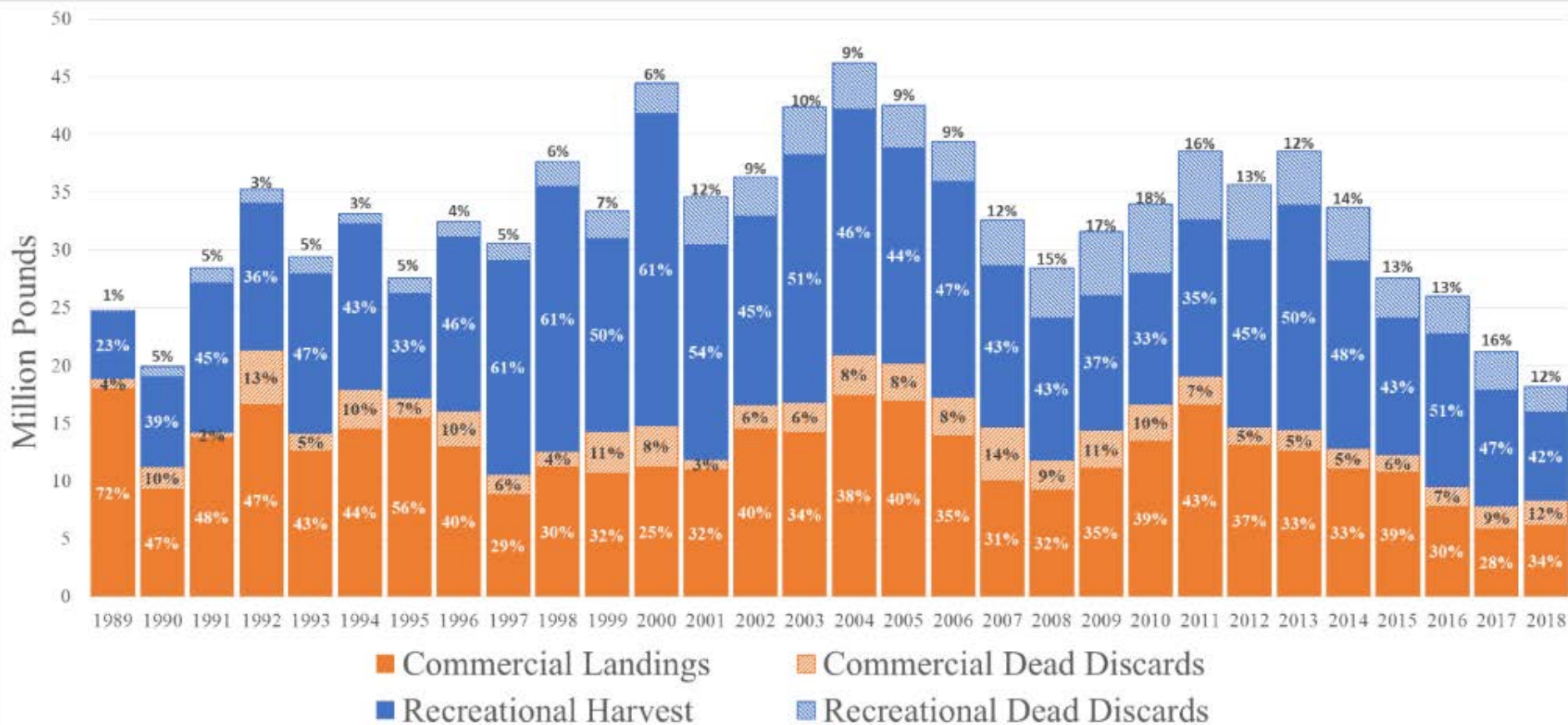


Figure 2: Commercial and recreational scup landings and dead discards, 1981-2018. Data retrieved from the 2019 Northeast Fisheries Science Center Scup Operational Assessment.

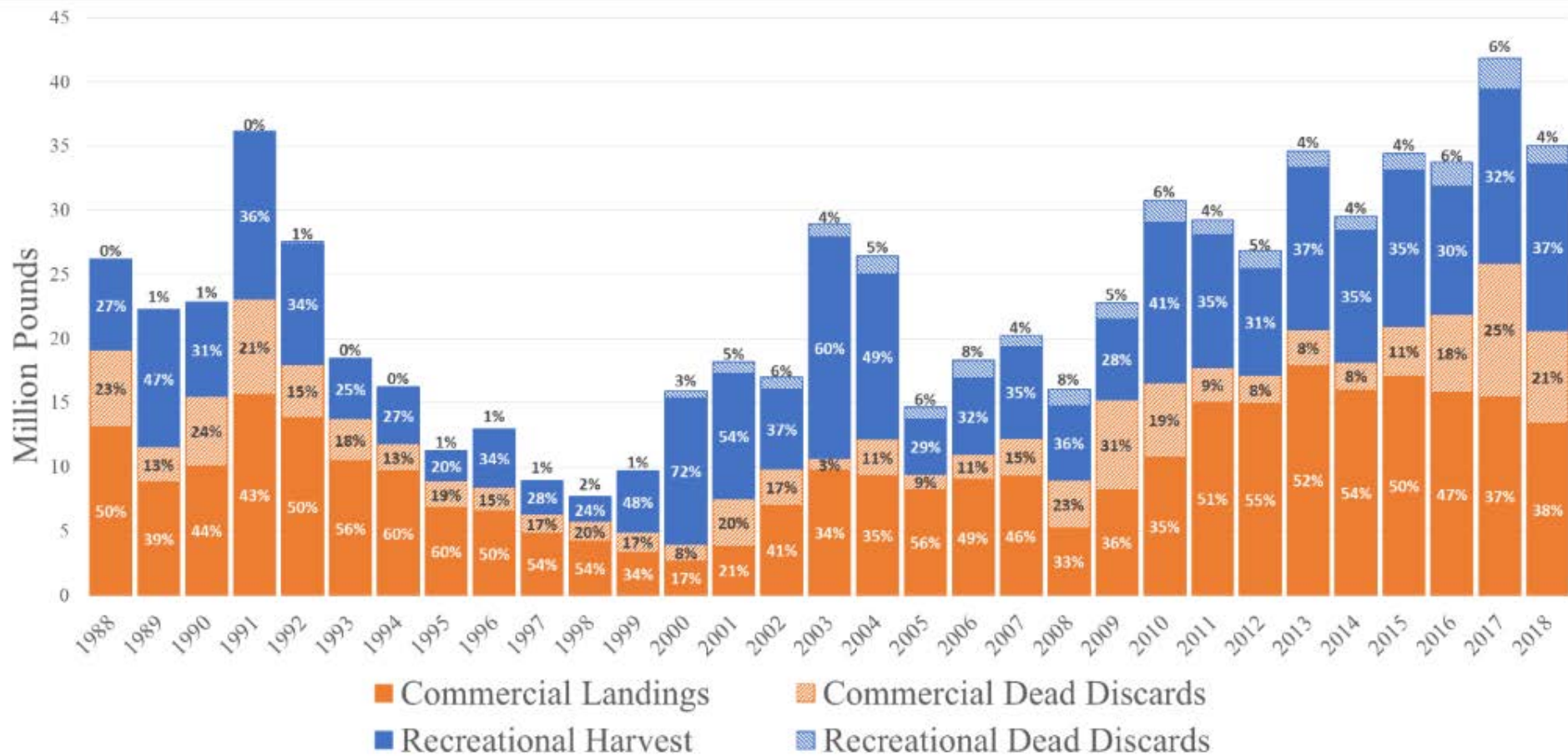


Figure 3: Commercial and recreational black sea bass landings and discards, 1989-2018. Data retrieved from the 2019 Northeast Fisheries Science Center Black Sea Bass Operational Assessment.

