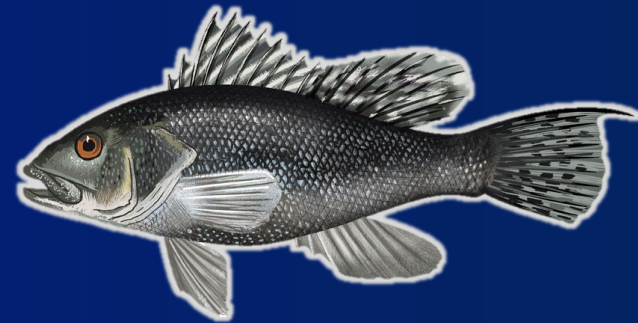


Black Sea Bass 2021 Recreational Measures

Council/Board Meeting
December 14, 2020

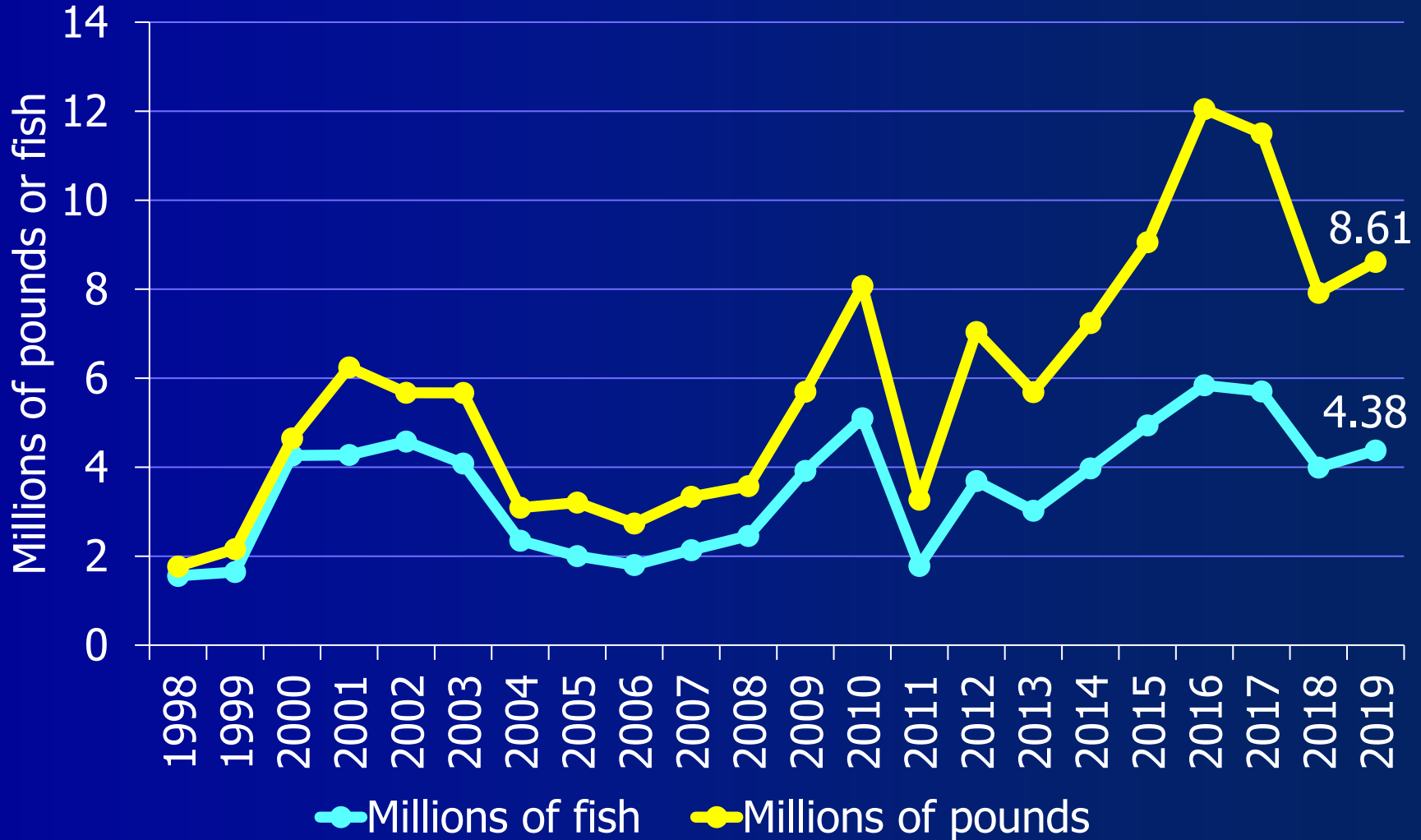


2021 RHL

■ 6.34 million pounds

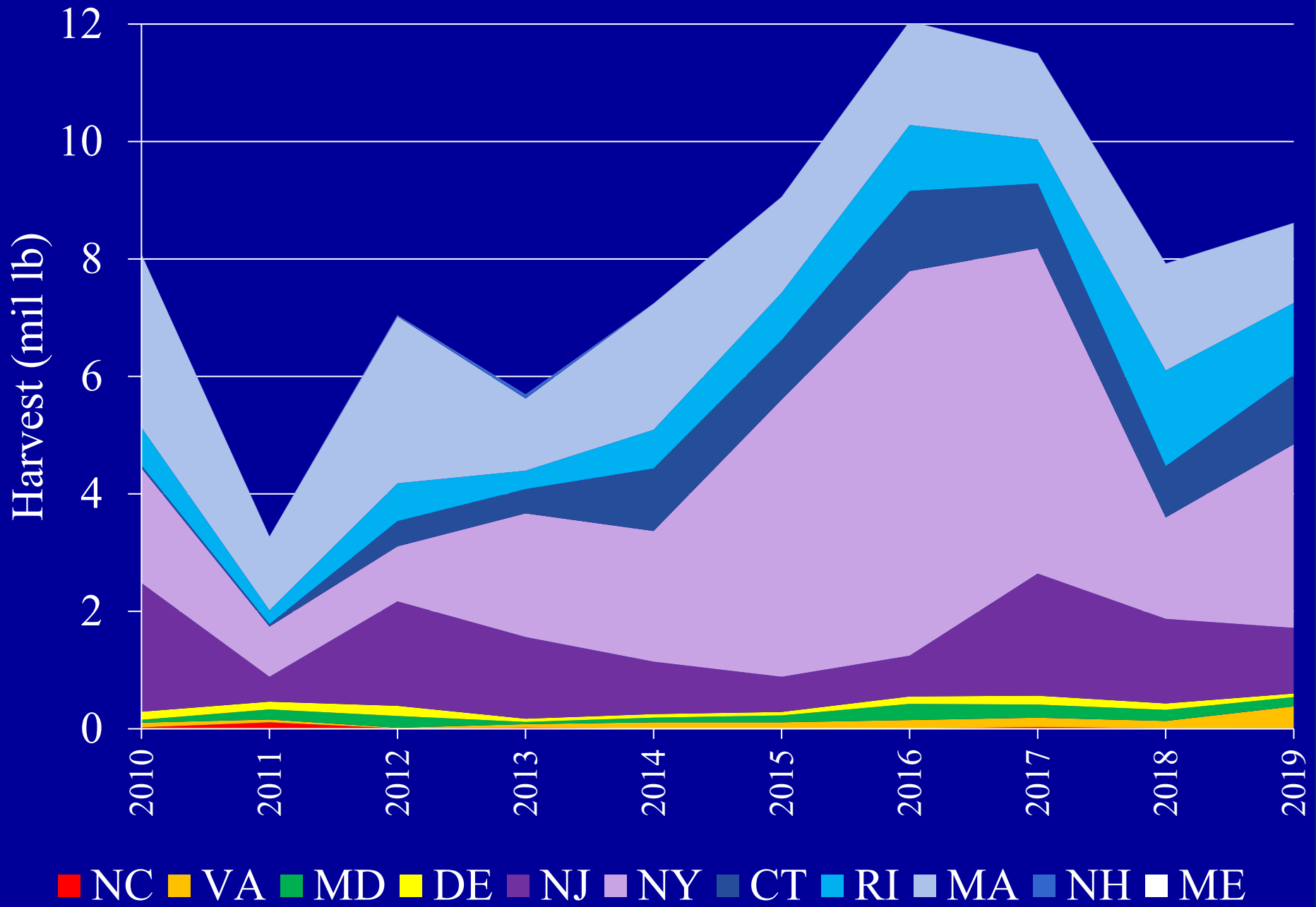
- 9% increase from 2020 (& previously implemented 2021 RHL).
- Revised based on changes to Council's risk policy which now allows for a slightly higher risk of overfishing.
- Highest RHL ever implemented for BSB.

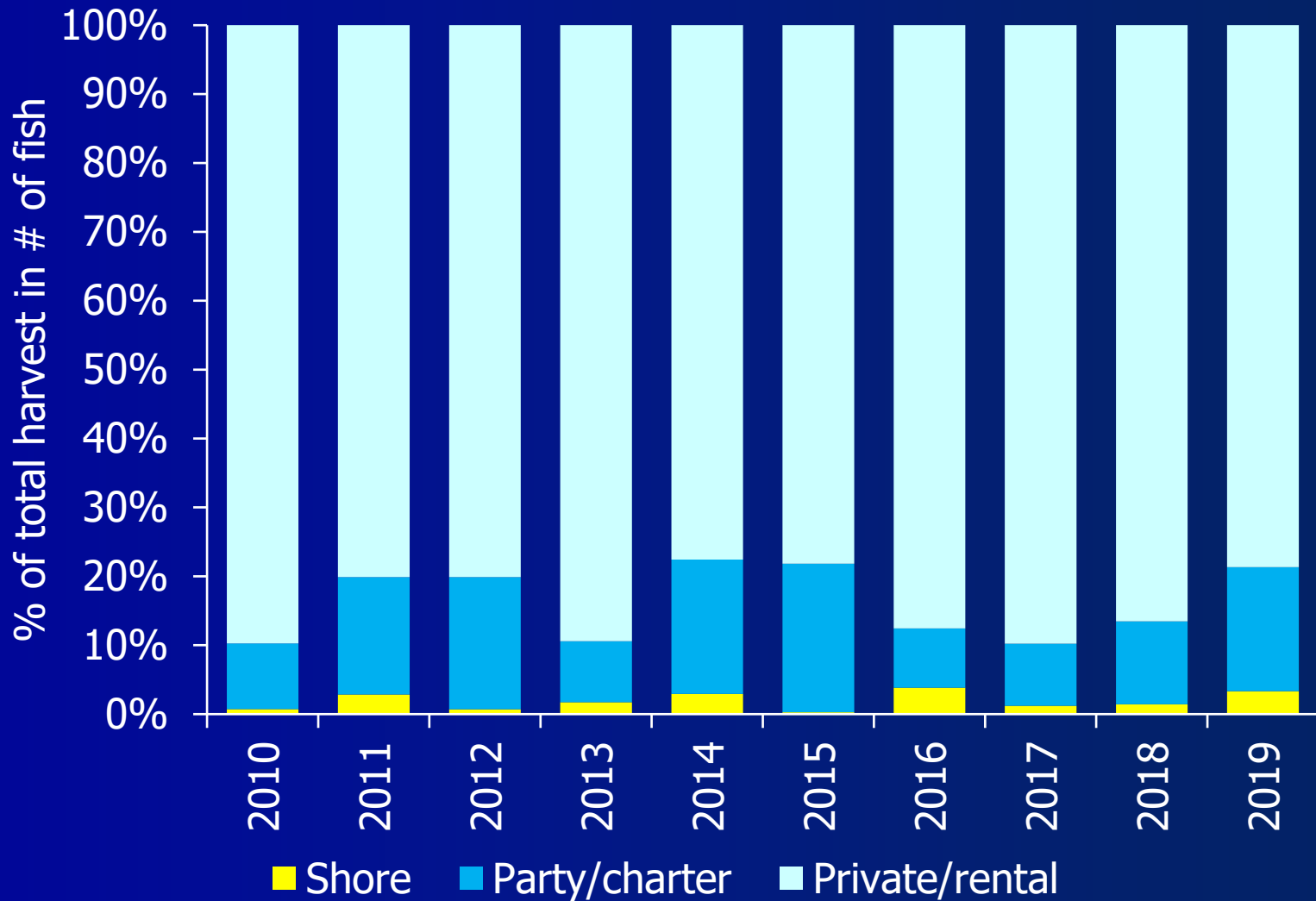
Harvest 1998-2019



RHL Performance

	Year	RHL (mil lb)	Harvest OLD MRIP (mil lb)	% Over/ Under RHL	Harvest NEW MRIP (mil lb)
RHLs based on constant catch or data limited approach	2014	2.26	3.67	+62%	7.24
	2015	2.33	3.79	+63%	9.06
	2016	2.82	5.19	+84%	12.05
RHLs based on peer reviewed and accepted stock assessment	2017	4.29	4.16	-3%	11.50
	2018	3.66	3.82	+4%	7.92
	2019	3.66	-	-	8.61
	2020	5.81	-	-	-
RHLs account for "new" MRIP data	2021	6.34	-	-	-





2010-2019 average:

84% private/rental

14% party/charter

2% shore

2018-2020 Federal Measures

- **12.5-inch TL minimum size**
- **15 fish possession limit**
- **Feb 1 – 28, May 15 - December 31**

2018-2020 State Measures

State	Min. Size	Bag Limit	Open Season
ME	13"	10 fish	May 19 - Sept 21; Oct 18 - Dec 31
NH	13"	10 fish	Jan 1 - Dec 31
MA	15"	5 fish	2018: May 19 - Sept 12
			2019 & 2020: May 18 - Sept 8
RI	15"	3 fish	Jun 24 - Aug 31
		7 fish	Sept 1 - Dec 31
CT private & shore	15"	5 fish	May 19 - Dec 31
CT party/charter	15"	5 fish	May 19 - Aug 31
		7 fish	Sept 1- Dec 31
NY	15"	3 fish	Jun 23 - Aug 31
		7 fish	Sept 1- Dec 31
NJ	12.5"	10 fish	May 15 - Jun 22
		2 fish	Jul 1- Aug 31
		10 fish	Oct 8 - Oct 31
	13"	15 fish	Nov 1 - Dec 31
DE & MD	12.5"	15 fish	May 15 - Dec 31
VA	12.5"	15 fish	2018: Feb 1 - 28; May 15 - Dec 31
			2019: Feb 1-28; May 15-31; June 22-Dec 31
			2020: Feb 1 - 28; May 29 - Dec 31
NC (north of Hatteras)	12.5	15 fish	2018: Feb 1 - 28; May 15 - Dec 31
			2019: Feb 1 - 28; May 17 - Dec 31
			2020: Feb 1 - 28; May 17 - Nov 30

Accountability Measures

- Compare 3 yr avg rec. ACL to 3 yr avg catch.
- Must use "old" MRIP units for catch; 2017-2019 ACLs did not account for new MRIP.
- 2019 catch in "old" MRIP units not currently available.
- Based on 2017-2018, 4% avg. ACL overage. Triggers an AM.
- Biomass above target. Must consider adjustments to bag, size, and/or season limits, taking into account the performance of the measures and conditions that precipitated the overage.

Year	Rec. ACL	Rec. landings	Rec. dead disc.	Rec. Catch	% Over/Under ACL
2017	5.38	4.16	1.27	5.43	+1%
2018	4.59	3.82	1.10	4.92	+7%
2019	4.59	Not available in "old" MRIP units			Unknown
2017-2018 avg	4.99	3.99	1.19	5.18	4%

Staff Recommendation

- Challenging to predict 2021 harvest.
- Recent years' harvest greater than 2021 RHL.
 - Example: 2019 harvest 36% greater than 2021 RHL.
- Still transitioning mgmt. to full use of new MRIP data.
 - Ongoing commercial/recreational allocation amendment.
- Similar situation last year. Council/Board wished to avoid further restricting rec. fishery during transition period considering biomass is so high.
- Same considerations currently apply, plus greater uncertainty in rec. data due to Covid-19.
- **Staff recommend no changes to bag/size/season for 2021.**

AP Comments

- 6 advisors expressed support for status quo.
- 1 wanted a liberalization.

- Will recruitment data from 2020 be available?
- Fishing pressure in both com and rec sectors likely reduced in 2020.
- If rec discard mortality were reduced due to use of gear such as descending devices, how would that impact the RHL?
- Most private anglers fish from private docks where they are not sampled by APAIS.

Monitoring Committee

- One more year of status quo is justified as a temporary solution, despite potential overages.
 - Data limitations; uncertainty in 2021 catch.
 - Essential to continue to make progress on com/rec allocation amendment and Recreational Reform Initiative.
 - Catch must be constrained to meaningful limits in the long-term.
- Given potential for 2021 overages, should be a strict status quo approach. Conservation equivalency proposals should be discouraged.

Decision Point

- 2021 recreational management measures.
- Monitoring Committee recommendation: status quo state and federal waters recreational measures.
 - Federal measures: 12.5 inches, 15 fish, Feb 1-28 and May 15-Dec 31.

Backup slides

Conservation Equivalency

- Option to waive federal waters measures in favor of state measures where anglers land their catch. Can be used for BSB in 2021.
- Non-preferred coastwide measures
 - Bag/size/season that would constrain harvest to RHL if implemented in all state and federal waters
- Precautionary default measures
 - Bag/size/season used as a deterrent to encourage states to develop measures which can be approved through ASMFC process