

KING MACKEREL

(06/02 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

Stock Status--*Viable* - Based on the 1999 stock assessment, including data through the 1996/97 fishing year, spawning stock biomass is above target and fishing mortality is below target. Forward projections of stock abundance suggest that the 10.0 million pound TAC (total allowable catch) recommended in 1999 is still acceptable and is unlikely to lead to declines in stock abundance. However, such projections are based on assumptions of catch age composition and recruitment conditioned on the 1999 stock assessment and may not reflect changes in the fishery or stock which may have occurred over the last 5 years.

Average Commercial Landings and Value 1992-2001-- 1,024,608 lb, \$1,586,766

2001 Commercial Landings and Value-- 832,295 lb, \$1,343,605

Average Recreational Landings 1992-2001-- 1,243,242 lb **and 2001--** 1,851,189 lb

Average Number of Award Citations (30lb) 1992-2001-- 437 **and 2001--** 506

Status of Fisheries Management Plan-- Currently managed under Amendment 12 to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Coastal Pelagic Fishery Management Plan. Management measures include commercial and recreational TAC's, minimum size limits, commercial trip limits (3,500 lb/trip), recreational bag limits (3 fish/person/day), gear restrictions, and commercial limited entry.

Research and Data Needs-- Bycatch mortality estimates in the directed shrimp fishery and fishery independent methods of monitoring stock size

Current Minimum Size Limit-- 24 inches (fork length)

Harvest Season-- Open year round, based on an April 1 to March 31 fishing year - Commercial and recreational fisheries can close when the TAC is reached.

Size and Age at Maturity-- 28 inches (fork length), 2-3 years old

Historical and Current Maximum Age-- 26 years old, 22 years old

Juvenile Abundance Indices Average 1972-2001 and 2001-- Unknown

Habits/Habitats-- King mackerel are considered coastal pelagic, meaning they live in the open waters near the coast. They make inshore and offshore migrations triggered by water temperature and prey availability. In the winter and early spring, king mackerel congregate just inside the Gulf Stream along the edge of the continental shelf. During the summer and fall, they move inshore along the beaches and near the mouths of inlets and coastal rivers. They prefer water temperatures between 68 and 78 degrees Fahrenheit.

For more information, see [DMF Species Leads page](#)