

KING MACKEREL

(06/05 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

Stock Status -Viable - The South Atlantic king mackerel stock is considered healthy and not overfished. Based on the 2003 stock assessment update, the spawning stock biomass is above target and fishing mortality is below target. Concern over estimates of Atlantic and Gulf stock mixing rates in south Florida and the addition of up to date aging data delayed the 2004 full stock assessment.

Average Commercial Landings and Value 1995-2004 - 997,634 lbs./\$1,565,927

2004 Commercial Landings and Value - 955,010 lbs./\$1,572,624

Average Recreational Landings 1995-2004 -1,180,860 lbs., **2004** - 1,219,468 lbs.

Average Number of Award Citations (30lb) 1995-2004 – 372, **2004** - 216

Status of Fisheries Management Plan - In North Carolina, king mackerel is currently included in the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Management Plan, which defers to SAFMC FMP compliance requirements. Currently managed under Amendment 12 to the SAFMC's Coastal Pelagic Fishery Management Plan. Management measures include commercial and recreational TAC's, minimum size limits, commercial trip limits (3,500 lbs/trip), recreational bag limits (3 fish/person/day), gear restrictions, and commercial permit moratorium. Charterboat/headboat operators must possess a charter/headboat vessel permit for Coastal Migratory Pelagics and must comply with recreational bag limits.

Research and Data Needs - Bycatch mortality estimates in the directed shrimp fishery, fishery independent methods of monitoring stock size, and estimates of Atlantic and Gulf stock mixing rates in south Florida.

Current Minimum Size Limit (2005) - 24 inches FL

Harvest Season (2005) - 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 FL/2 years-3 years

Historical and Current Maximum Age - 26 years/23 years

Juvenile Abundance Indices Average 1972-2004 and 2004 - Unknown

Habits/Habitats-- King mackerel are 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° Fahrenheit.

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