KING MACKEREL
(06/07 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

Stock Status - *Viable* - Based on the 2003 stock assessment update the spawning stock biomass is above target and fishing mortality is below target. The south Atlantic king mackerel stock is considered healthy and not overfished. Concern over estimates of Atlantic and Gulf stock mixing rates in south Florida and the addition of up to date aging data has delayed approval of the most recent stock assessment. A new stock assessment is planned for 2008.

Average Commercial Landings and Value 1997-2006 - 1,042,822 lbs./$1,665,948

2006 Commercial Landings and Value - 1,012,676 lbs./$1,808,238 (quota managed)

Average Recreational Landings 1997-2006 -1,248,030 lbs., **2006 —** 1,114,458 lbs.

Average Number of Award Citations (30 lbs.) 1997-2006 – 372, **2006** - 185

Status of Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) - Currently managed under Amendment 12 to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's (SAFMC) Coastal Pelagic FMP. Management measures include commercial and recreational quotas, minimum size limits, commercial trip limits (3,500 lbs./trip), recreational bag limits, 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 Regulations (2007) - 24 inches fork length (FL), 3 fish per day for recreational anglers

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

Size and Age at Maturity - 28 inches (FL), 2-3 years

Historical and Current Maximum Age - 26 years/23 years

Juvenile Abundance Index 1997-2006 – Unknown**, 2006** - 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° F.

For more information, see DMF Species Leads page