

SPANISH MACKEREL

(06/99 ARCHIVE - NCDMF)

Stock Status--Viable - The SSB (spawning stock biomass) increased and TAC (total allowable catch) remained the same as 1998 based on the 1999 South Atlantic assessment.

Average Commercial Landings and Value 1987-1998--585,977 lb, \$257,209

1998 Commercial Landings and Value-- 372,415 lb, \$261,973

Average Recreational Landings 1987-1998 and 1998-- 874,165 lb, 296,629 lb

Average Number of Award Citations (6lb) 1987-1998 and 1998-- 234, 122

Status of Fisheries Management Plan-- Currently managed under Amendment 8 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 (10 fish/person/day), and gear restrictions.

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

Current Minimum Size Limit-- 12 inches (fork length)

Harvest Season-- April 1 to March 31 - Commercial and recreational seasons close when the TAC is reached.

Size and Age at Maturity-- 12 inches (fork length), 2 years old

Historical and Current Maximum Age-- 12 years old, 8 years old

Juvenile Abundance Indices Average 1972-1998 and 1998-- Unknown

Habits/Habitats-- Spanish mackerel are considered coastal pelagic, meaning they live in the open waters near the coast. They make north and south migrations depending on water temperature, with 68 degrees Fahrenheit being a preferred minimum. In North Carolina's waters, Spanish mackerel can be found from April to November. They migrate south to the Florida coast in the late fall. In the summer months, they may be found as far inland as the sounds and coastal river mouths. Spanish mackerel spawn from May to September.

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