



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Marine Fisheries

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MarineFisheries Advisory

Public Input Sought on Atlantic Mackerel Specifications for 2026-2027

The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Mid-Atlantic) is considering potential changes to the Atlantic Mackerel rebuilding plan and specifications for Fishing Years (FY) 2026-2027. Before the Mid-Atlantic takes final decision in December, MA DMF is providing this notice to New England stakeholders to ensure they are able to participate in the public process (virtual options available).

A [2025 Atlantic mackerel management track assessment](#) concluded that Atlantic mackerel is no longer overfished (56% of biomass target) and overfishing is not occurring. Based on those results, the Mid-Atlantic is considering a range of potential alternatives to the Atlantic mackerel rebuilding plan:

- status quo Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) of 3,200 metric tons (MT);
- an earlier rebuilding fishing mortality (F) of $F=0.12$; and
- a standard averaged P^* risk policy approach (i.e. the maximum F limit buffered for scientific uncertainty).

The Mid-Atlantic's Science and Statistical Committee (SSC) is scheduled to consider potential Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) limits for these rebuilding approaches. As noted in [a staff memo](#), potential ABCs for each approach vary substantially depending on how the SSC evaluates the scientific uncertainty of the assessment – a key issue is the terminal year recruitment estimate. Some rebuilding alternatives may lead to an increase in catch advice triggering consideration of potential management changes for the 2026 and 2027 fishing years (e.g., possession limits).

For further information and upcoming meetings where you can provide public comment, please visit the [Mid-Atlantic Council's website](#) and see the meeting schedule below.

Upcoming Meetings:

- **Thursday, October 16:** [Mackerel, Squid, Butterfish Advisory Panel Meeting](#)
- **Thursday, October 23:** [SSC Meeting - Atlantic Mackerel](#)
- **Friday, November 7:** [Mackerel, Squid, Butterfish Monitoring Committee](#)
- **Wednesday, November 12:** [Mackerel, Squid, Butterfish Monitoring Committee](#)