

Blueline Tilefish



Council Meeting
April 7, 2021



Outline

- Meeting objective
- Specification process
- Stock status
- Review recent fishery performance (fishery information document)
- 2021 Fishery Performance Report Comments
- Staff Recommendation
- SSC Report (TORs)
- MC Recommendation

Meeting Objective



- Approve specifications for up to 3 years (2022-2024)
 - Previous ABC and management measures
 - Factors influencing recent catch and landings
 - AP Fishery Performance Report
 - Other issues or concerns

2020 Specifications and Management Measures



- Reviewing year 3 of 3 (2019-2021 specifications)
- Commercial trip limits
 - 500 lbs → 300 lbs once 70% of the quota has been landed
 - Jan. 1 – Dec. 31
- Recreational trip limits
 - 7,5,3 (Inspected, Uninspected, Private)
 - May 1 – Oct. 31

2019-2021 Specifications

Specification	Recreational	Commercial
ABC	100,520 lbs	
ACLs	73,380 lbs	27,140 lbs
ACTs	73,380 lbs	27,140 lbs
TALs	71,912 lbs	26,869 lbs

2020 Landings

Recreational (Numbers)		Commercial (Pounds)
9,600 (VTRs)	None reported (MRIP-Private) 3,813 (Delphi est. – Private)	31,270

Stock Status



- SEDAR 50 (2017)
 - North (NOH) and South of Cape Hatteras (SOH)
 - SOH
 - Not overfished, overfishing not occurring
 - NOH
 - Unknown: Data Limited Toolkit used to estimate ABCs
- No specific data update from NEFSC
 - Data is similar to what is reported in the Fishery Information Document

Next Assessment

YEAR	<u>SA Team</u>			
	1	2	3	4
2020	Scamp RT	Snowy Grouper U	Gag Grouper OA	Tilefish OA
2021		Red Snapper OA		
2022	Scamp OA			Spanish Mackerel OA
2023	Gray Triggerfish RT	Vermilion OA	Black Sea Bass OA	Red Grouper OA
2024		White Grunt RT		Blueline Tilefish OA
2025				Snowy Grouper/ Tilefish
2026				

- Conducted with the SAFMC/SEFSC – SEDAR
- Tentative research track assessment for 2024
- Available in 2025
- Need to sync up our specifications cycle.

Specifications Process

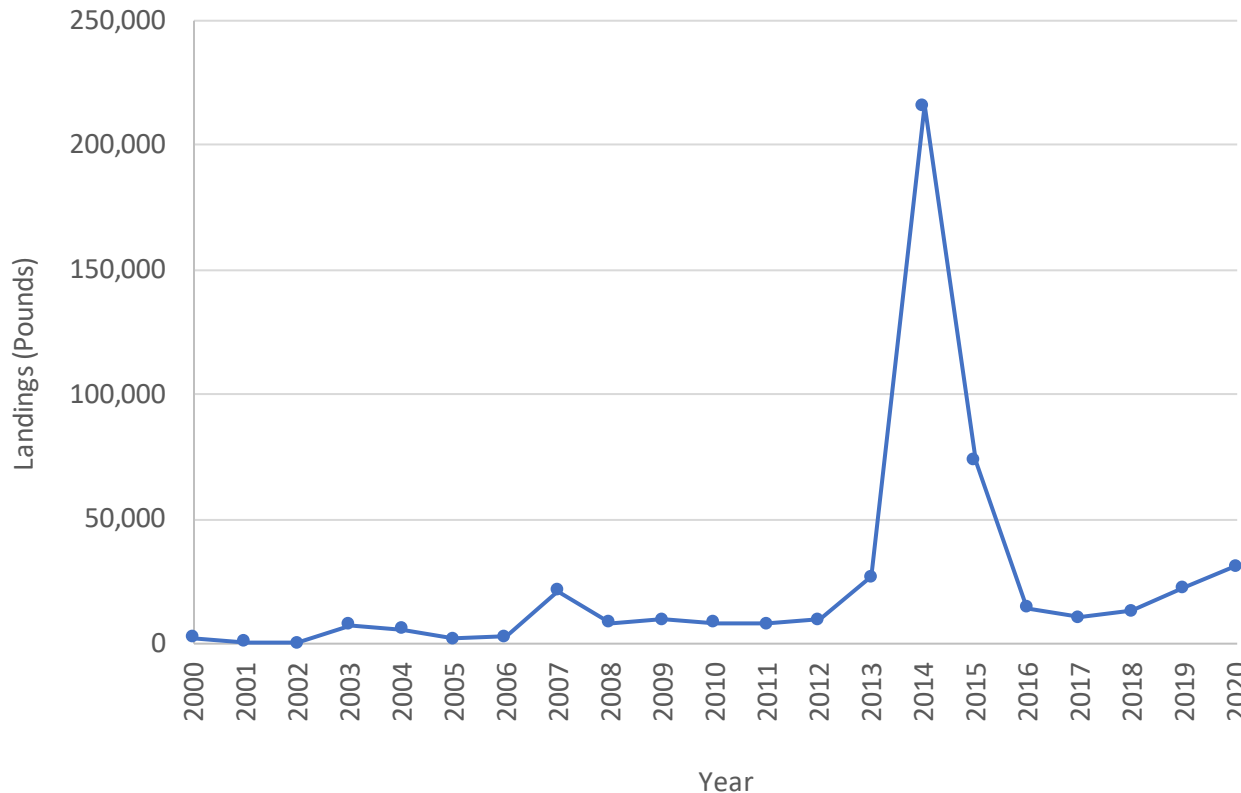


- Assessment (2017) made no ABC recommendations
 - 2 Stocks
- Subcommittee: MAFMC/SAFMC/NEFSC/SEFSC
 - Develop ABC recommendations North of Cape Hatteras
- SSC: ABC recommendations at March meeting
 - Will review 2021 FPR and fishery info doc
- MC: Recommend management measures at March meeting
- Council: Approve specifications at the April meeting

Commercial Fishery Performance



Blueline Tilefish Dealer Landings



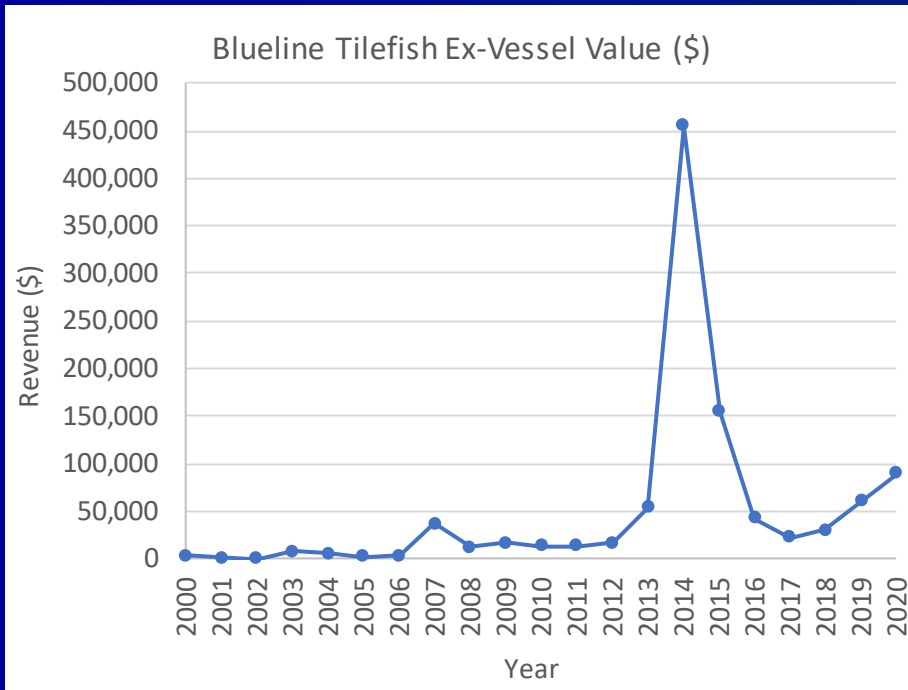
Year	Landings (lbs)
2013	26,781
2014	215,928
2015	73,644
2016	14,235
2017	10,734
2018	13,068
2019	22,759
2020	31,270

NMFS unpublished dealer data, ME-VA

Commercial Fishery Performance

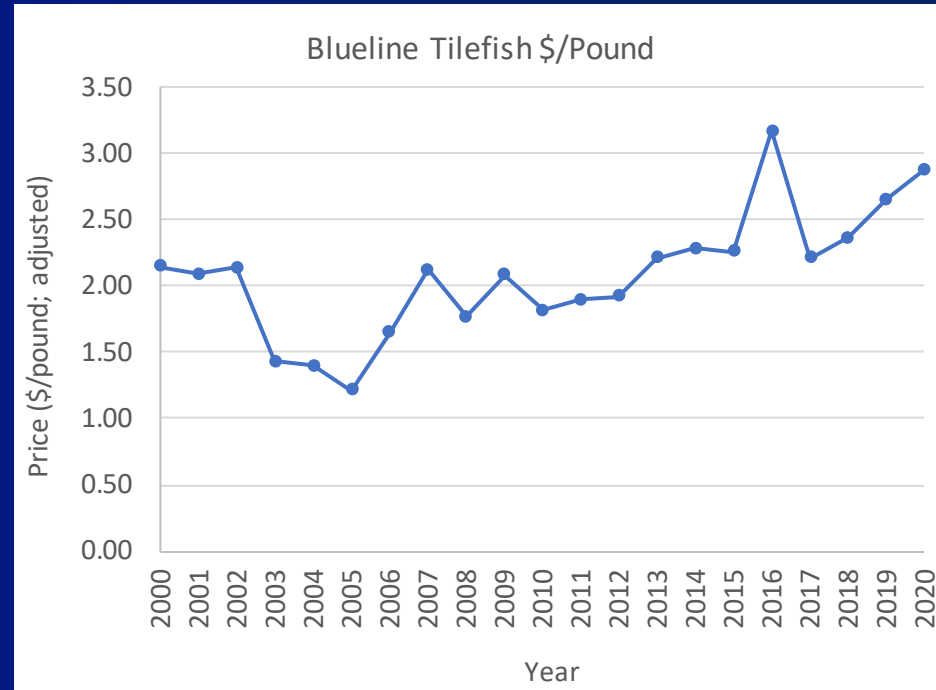


Figure 3. Ex-Vessel Revenues for blue line tilefish, Maine through Virginia combined, 2000-2020.



2020: \$90,092

Figure 4. Price for blue line tilefish, Maine through Virginia combined, 2000-2020. Note: Price data have been adjusted by the GDP deflator indexed for 2019 (2020 – unadjusted).



2020: \$2.88

Commercial Fishery Performance



2020 Landings by Gear (ME-VA)
Source: NMFS unpublished VTR

Gear	Pounds	Percent
Longline	13,545	48%
Handline	10,130	36%
Trawl	3,632	13%
Pots/Traps	880	3%
Total	28,187	100%

Pound Range	Trips (N)
500+	13
400 - 499	10
300 - 399	11
200 - 299	33
100 - 199	27
1 - 199	49
Total	143

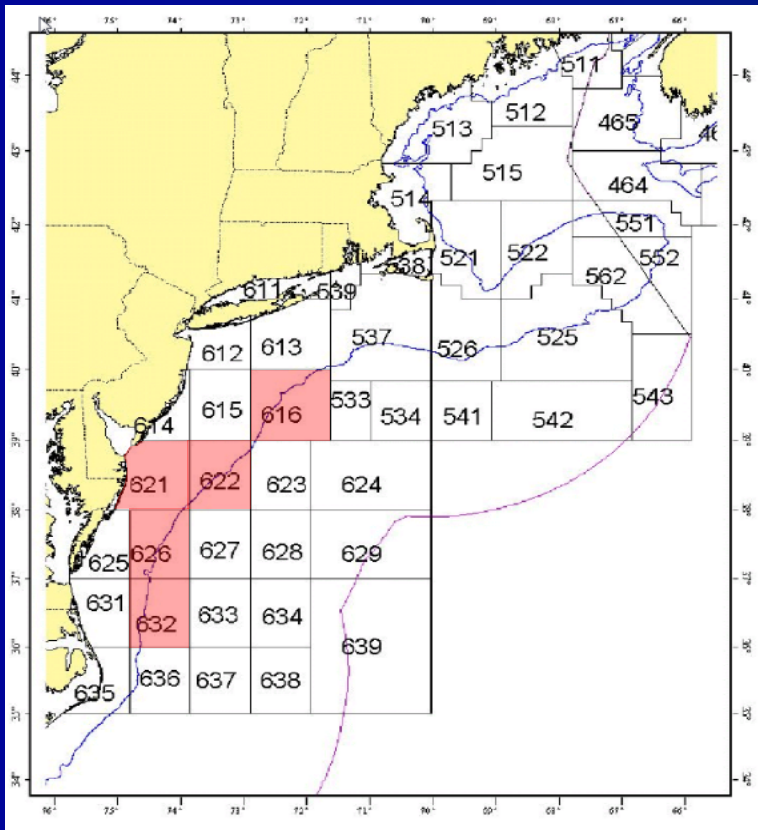
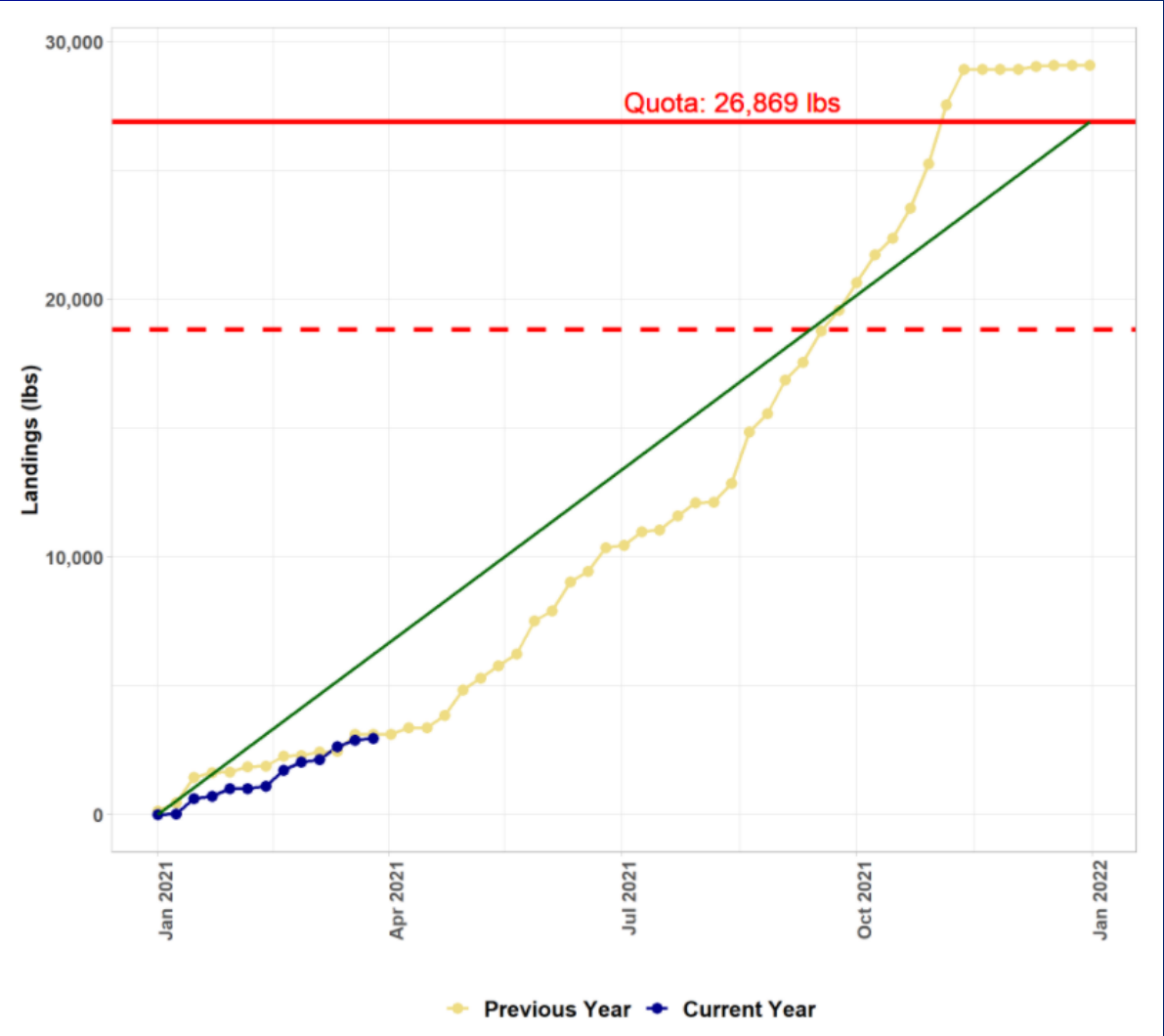


Figure 2. Top 5 NMFS statistical areas accounting for total 2020 blueline tilefish landings identified with commercial VTRs. Source: NMFS unpublished VTR data.

Commercial Fishery Performance



Recreational Fishery Performance



MRIP

Year	State	MRIP (#)	Mode
2015	DE	4,663	Private/Rental
2016	MD	46,106	Private/Rental
	NJ	9,924	Private/Rental
	VA	1,222	Charter
	VA	60,803	Private/Rental
2017	VA	12,122	Private/Rental
2018	DE	19	Charter
	MD	11	Party
	VA	2,373	Charter
	VA	2,989	Private/Rental
2019	MD	4,839	Private/Rental
	VA	7	Party
	VA	2,294	Charter

Party/Charter

Year	Trips	Catch (#)	Reported Discards (#)
2012	103	10,051	338
2013	120	11,838	128
2014	138	15,849	254
2015	170	14,391	292
2016	158	15,493	246
2017	129	10,164	115
2018	221	12,432	99
2019	167	10,711	176
2020	143	9,600	174

Blueline tilefish VTR landings and discards from ME-VA, 2012-2020 (Numbers of fish).

Recreational Fishery Performance



Year	Party (Numbers)	Charter (Numbers)	Private Rental (MRIP 2015-2019, VTR 2020 Numbers)	Private Rental (Delphi - Numbers)	Total Recreational Landings (Pounds)
2015	12,381	2,298	4,663	2,417	62,400
2016	13,746	2,057	116,833	2,163	65,576
2017	8,735	1,632	12,122	1,716	44,103
2018	4,796	7,885	2,989	8,291	76,548
2019	3,247	7,679	4,839	8,075	69,354
2020	6,166	3,626	84	3,813	49,658

Table 9. Recreational blueline tilefish catch (ME-VA) using VTRs (party/charter: 2015-2020, private rental: 2020) and MRIP (private/rental: 2015-2019), as well as estimates of private/rental catch using the Delphi method (Delphi – 105.16% of charter).

Private Recreational Permitting/Reporting

- Approved in Amendment 6 to the Tilefish FMP in 2017, but with delayed implementation
- Report through VTRs, eTrips/mobile, *eFin Logbook*
- Requirements went live in August 2020
 - Season goes through October 31st
- For 2020:
 - ~340 permits
 - 8 recreational trips → 84 fish

Discussion Points



- What factors have influenced recent blue line tilefish catch?
 - Markets/economy?
 - Fishery regulations?
 - Environment?
 - Other factors?
- Are the current fishery regulations appropriate?
How could they be improved?
- Feedback on some of the patterns we saw in 2020
- What else is important for the Council to know?

Fishery Performance Report



- No major changes have been observed for bluelines in terms of catch rates/composition
 - Once blueline limits are met recreational trips search for other targets
- When targeting other species, trip limits restrict commercial fishermen from targeting areas where bluelines are present
- Many advisors stated they prefer status quo specifications and management since the fishery is still new
- Recreational effort decreased this year as it does not make economic sense to target blueline tilefish when tuna are not present or are very plentiful



Fishery Performance Report

- New York (Hunts Point) was receiving approximately \$2.88 per pound, and occasionally as high as \$4.00 per pound for larger fish
 - Advisors remain confident that there is continued demand for blue line tilefish
- Advocated to maintain the 3, 5, 7 bag limits in place since there is currently limited reporting for private anglers and we are still learning how the fishery responds to management in the Mid-Atlantic
- Some disagreement on whether an increased bag limit will have negative effects on the overall stock
- Advisors want to avoid creating a directed fishery especially with the uncertainty of the overall stock

Staff Recommendation



- Council staff recommends a status quo ABC of 100,520 pounds (45.60 mt) for the 2022-2024 specifications package.
 - Considering last year's recommendation
 - Recent fishery performance
 - Lack of an updated assessment
 - The need to streamline the Mid-Atlantic specifications cycle with a SEDAR assessment scheduled for 2024/2025
 - The high degree of uncertainty within the recreational sector

SSC - Blueline Tilefish (1 of 2)

- No compelling evidence from either the data update or the reports from the Advisory Panel (AP) to change the current ABC.
- BUT--Setting of ABC generated much discussion. Key points
 - Current knowledge is inadequate to manage this stock on the quantitative basis desired.
 - Concerns about underlying basis for current quota (Data Limited Methods, Expert Judgement)
 - Paucity of new information
 - Restrictions to fishery would cause major decrease in new information
 - Potential benefits of mandatory reporting by Recreational fisherman are to be determined. Insufficient data to evaluate.
 - SSC expressed the concern that specifying the ABC for the 2022-2024 period effectively guarantees no additional work will be focused on this species, because the data analyses and assessment evaluation is tied directly with the need to conduct an assessment to set an ABC.
 - Review data annually during the specification period

SSC - Blueline Tilefish: Terms of Reference (2 of 2)

Term of Reference	Decision
1) Level of Catch for ABC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recommends 100,520 bs (45.6 mt) for 2022-2024 based on 2018 information.• Recommends annual review of regulations, catches by sectors, size composition, spatial catch metrics
2) Sources of Uncertainty	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• OFL based on data through 2015.• Private/rental catch rescaled by Delphi method• Uncertain model DLM and parameters• Spatial expansion or fishery expansion?
3) Research and Monitoring Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collect biological samples from existing sources• Consider prioritizing as Research Track prior to 2024• Contact MRIP “rare events” working group• Revisit Delphi process• Selectivity of commercial fishery• Improve Age and growth information
4) Materials Used	See List
5) Certification of Best Scientific Information Available	Agree, but with reservations

MC Recommendations

- The MC recommends status quo management measures to go along with the status quo ABC of 100,520 pounds (45.60 mt) for the 2022-2024 specifications package.
 - AMs not be triggered
 - COVID-19, no reduction in trip limit, rec. sector underharvested, and likely minimal biological justification since the quota was so small.
 - GARFO and commercial port side biological samplers work with golden tilefish vessels in the Mid-Atlantic to improve overall intercepts and sampling of blueline tilefish.

Questions?

