



Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog (SCOQ)

June Council Meeting

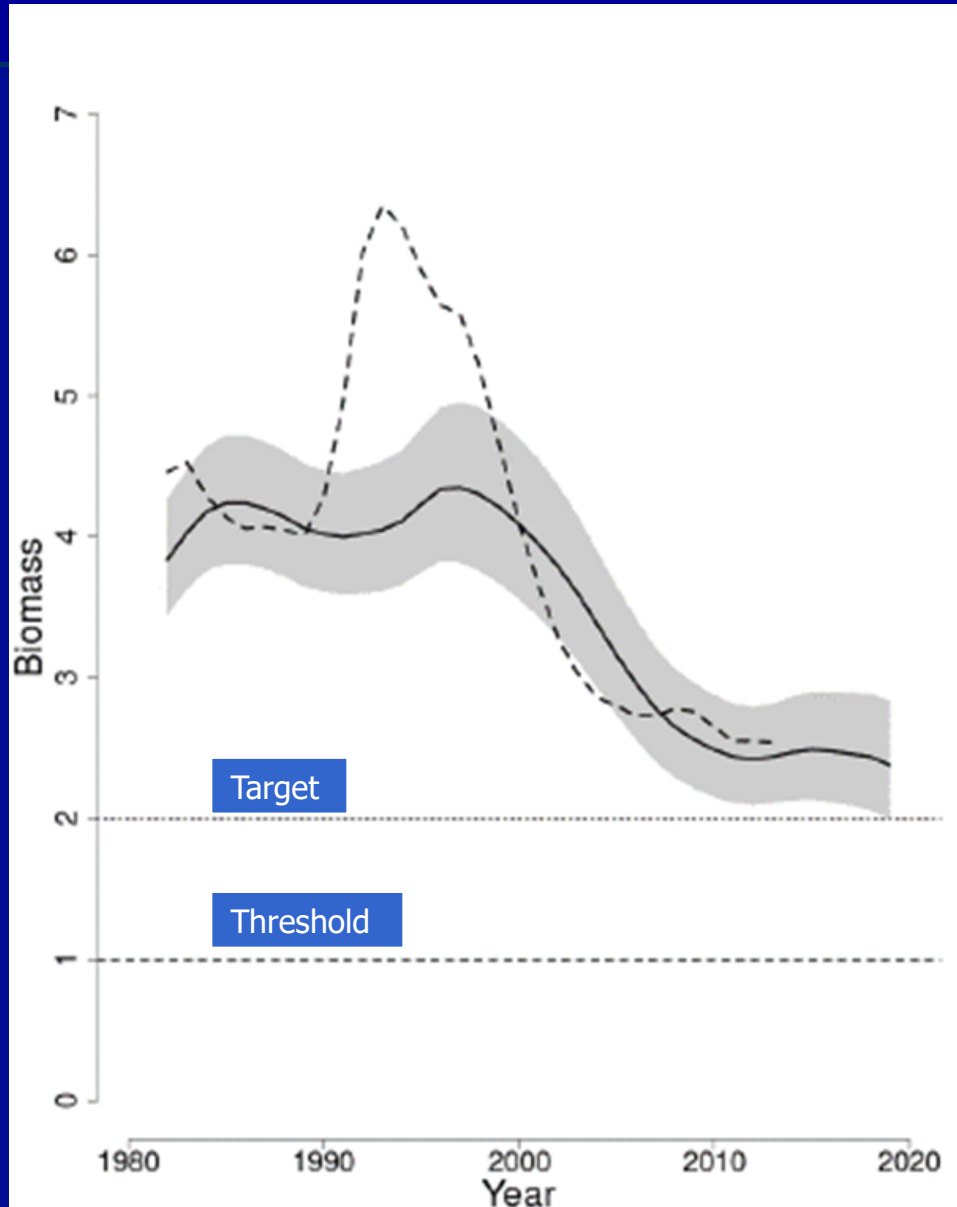
June 7, 2022



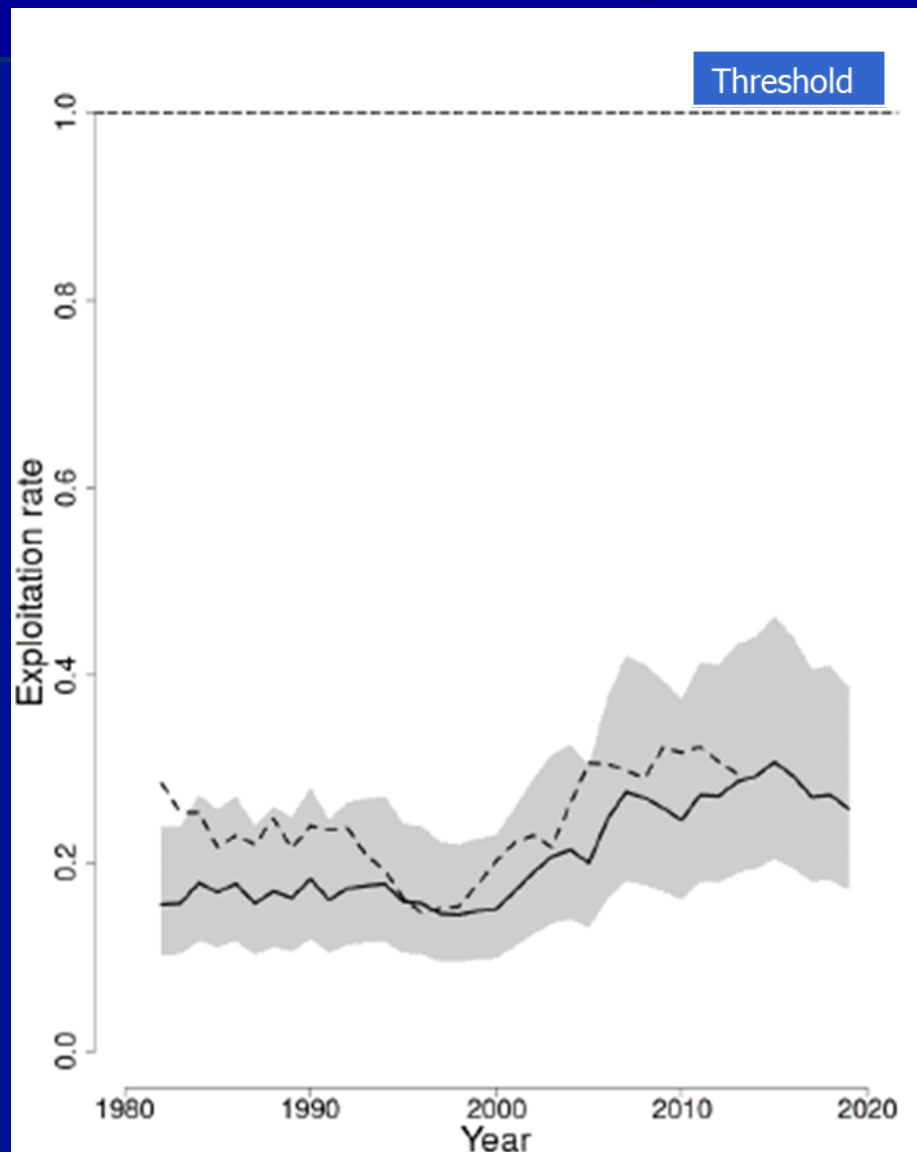
Today's Review (2023 Measures)

- Surfclam fishery info doc
 - Fishery data update, no survey data
 - Received Level 3 SC and Level 1 OQ Management Track Assessments in 2020
- Fishery performance report (both species)
- Staff recommendations for surfclam
- SSC recommendations for surfclam
- Repeat for ocean quahog...

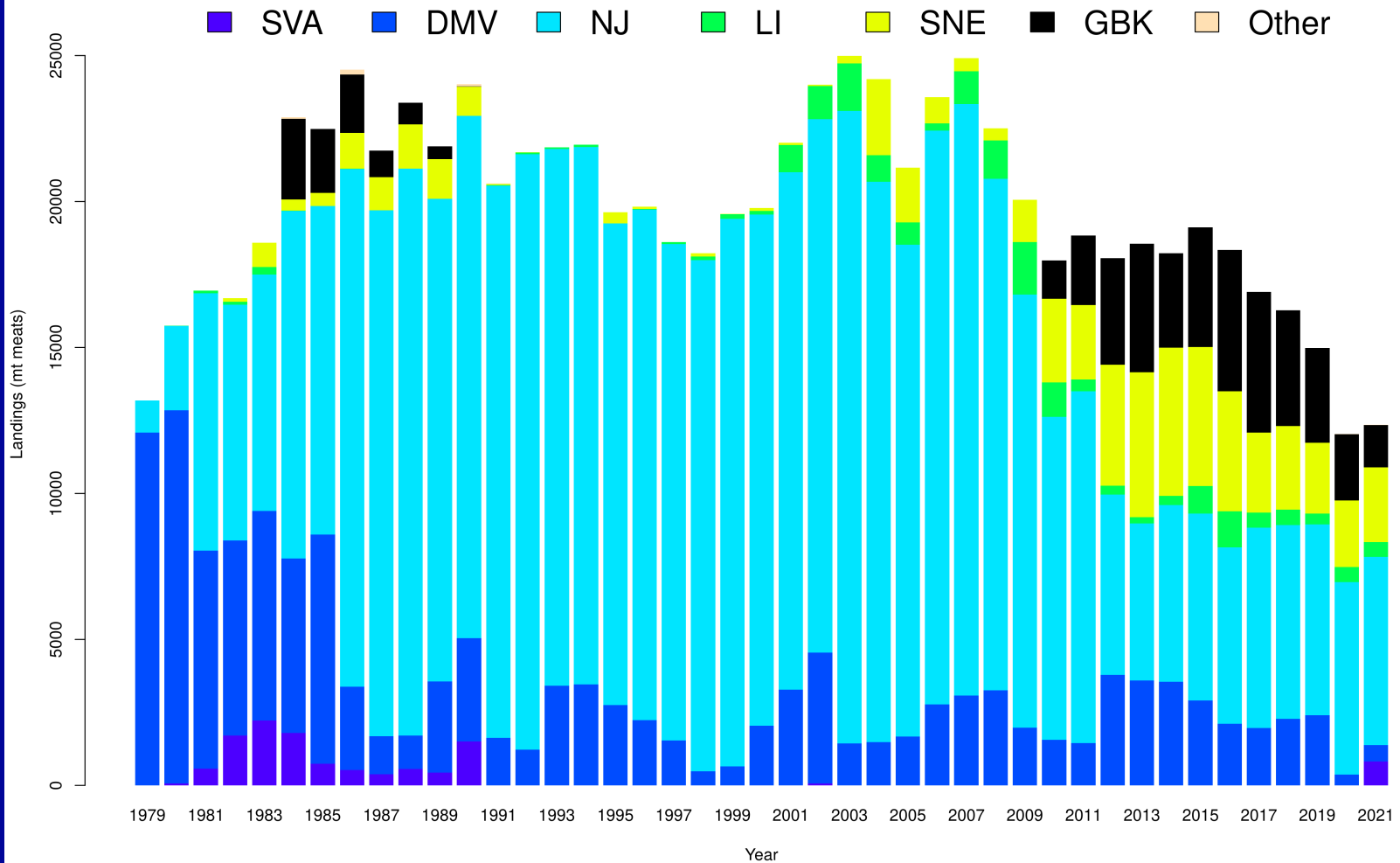
Surfclam Biomass



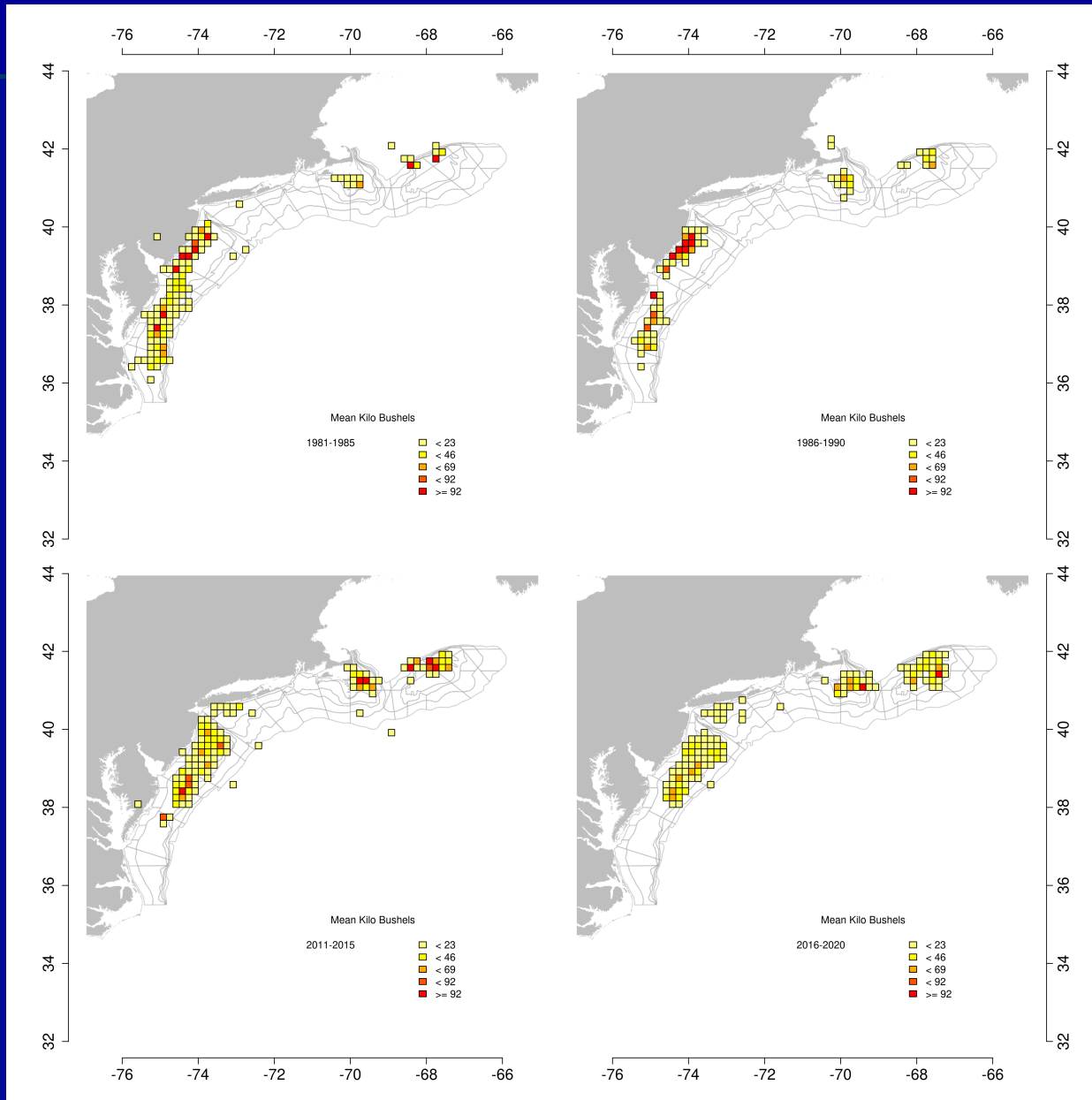
Surfclam Fishing Mortality



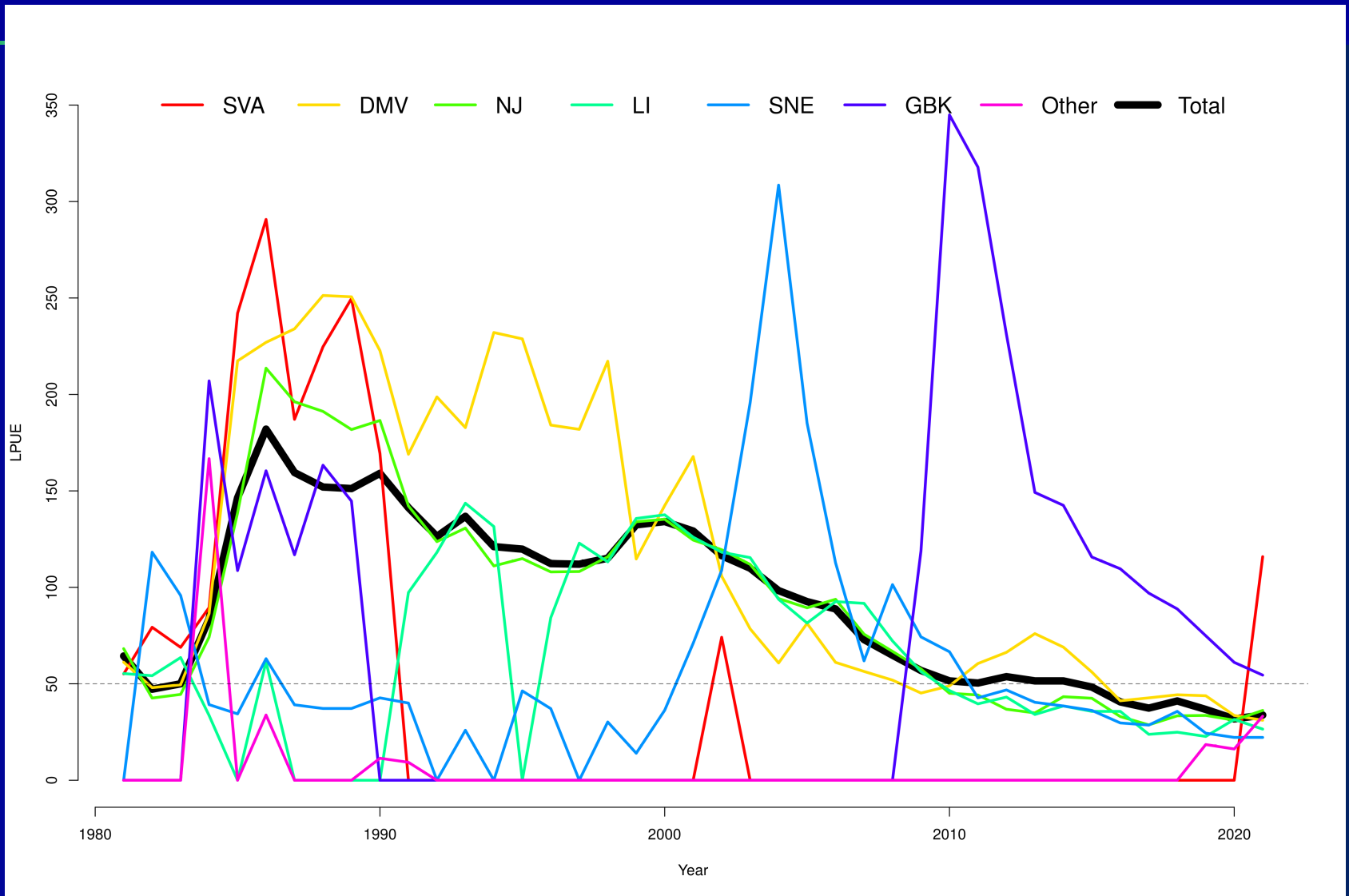
Surfclam Info Doc



Surfclam Info Doc



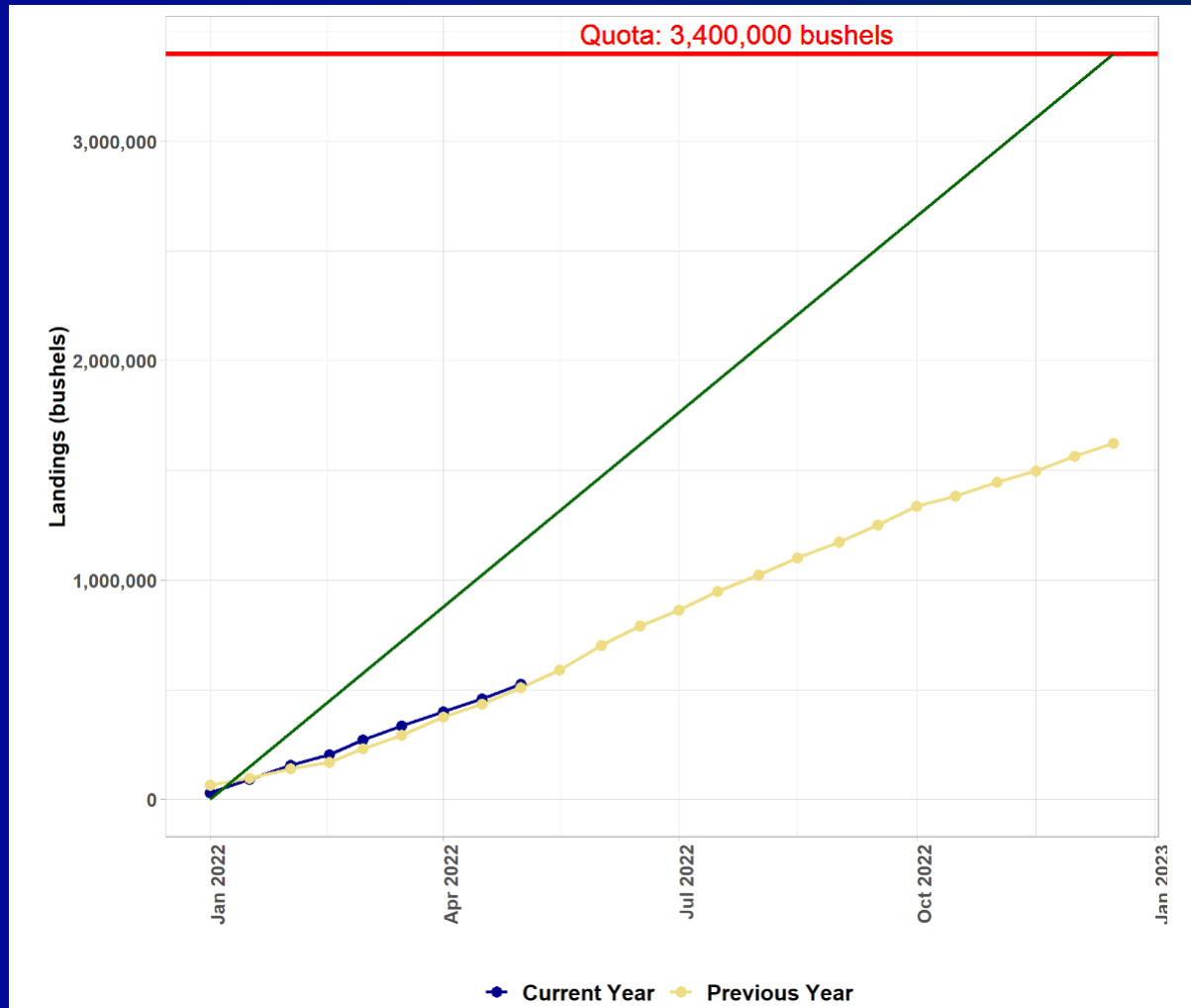
Surfclam Info Doc



Surfclam Info Doc

- 2021: 41 vessels (2 fewer than 2020)
- 8 processors/dealers SCOQ in 5 states
- Increase in overall ex-vessel value
 - \$24 million in 2021
 - Up \$1 million from 2020

Surfclam Landings (thru May 26)



Fisheries Performance Report

- Covers both SCOQ
- Advisors met April 19, 2022
- Asked series of trigger questions
- AP identified several “Critical Issues”
- Also note, advisors would like status quo quotas (quota stability = fishery/market stability)



Fisheries Performance Report

- Regulations for shellfish safety have been updated by FDA.
- NOAA Fisheries has not addressed these changes on Georges Bank - preventing access to fishing areas unnecessarily.
- NOAA Fisheries/GARFO has not yet acted to modify these unnecessary shellfish safety area closures in a timely manner.
- AP requests Council send a letter to NOAA Fisheries and the appropriate public health safety groups (in NOAA and FDA).

Fisheries Performance Report

■ A. COVID-19:

- Sales to restaurants (foodservice) was low for 2020 and in 2021.
- Clam industry has seen a ramp up in food service demand, so COVID not a huge issue for 2022 in this sector.
- Demand is high but limitations in terms of the amount of product available (i.e., able to sell more than can be produced).
- Industry anticipates that as if inventories grow, they would be able to sell the addition product.

Fisheries Performance Report

■ B. Research:

- Important Council support research in Great South Channel Habitat Management Area (Nantucket Shoals/Southern New England area)
- Lack of access in this area is challenge for industry and has negatively impacted catch rates.
- Advisors would like to see Councils work on issue.
- Industry members are frustrated with their lack of ability to work through Exempted Fishing Permit program.

Fisheries Performance Report

■ B. Research:

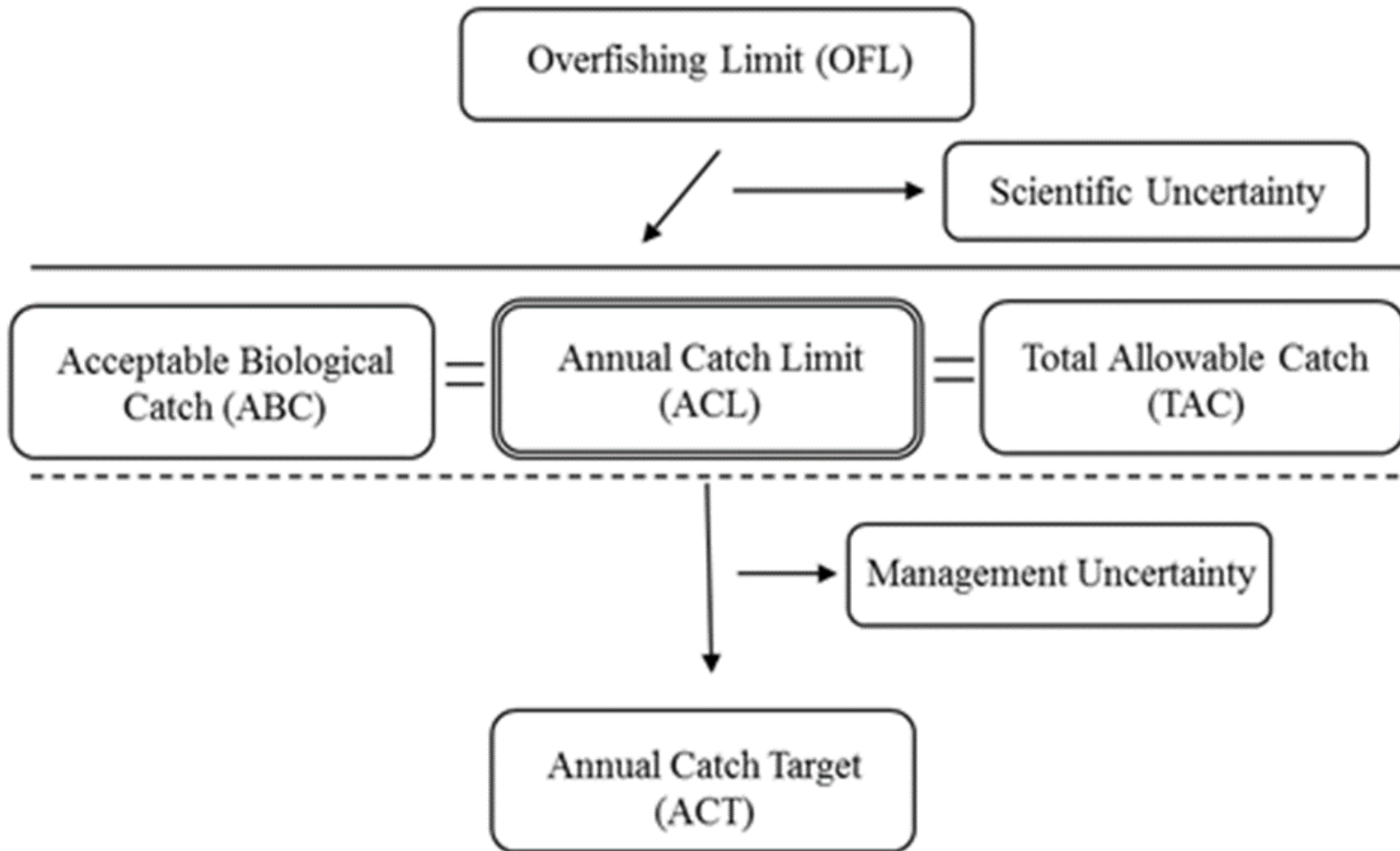
- Time components of the GSCHMA access areas (seasonal restrictions for cod) should be revisited.
- AP recognizes that Councils have taken initial steps, but industry does not feel it is being addressed.
- AP requests the MAFMC make this issue a priority under their responsibilities to SCOQ Fishery Management Plan.
- AP also recommends the MAFMC follow up with NEFMC to conduct a cross Council workshop on the issue.

Fisheries Performance Report

- Other Important Issues:
 - The SCOQ AP would like to request that surfclam and ocean quahog AP members have two seats on Fishery Management Action Teams (FMATs) for issues related to these fisheries.



Atlantic Surfclam Flowchart



Surfclam SSC/Council Recommendations

Year	OFL	ABC	ACL	ACT	Commercial Quota
2021	51,361 mt	47,919 mt	47,919 mt	29,363 mt	26,218 mt
2022	48,202 mt	44,522 mt	44,522 mt	29,363 mt	26,218 mt
2023	45,959 mt	42,237 mt	42,237 mt	29,363 mt	26,218 mt
2024	44,629 mt	40,946 mt	40,946 mt	29,363 mt	26,218 mt
2025	44,048 mt	40,345 mt	40,345 mt	29,363 mt	26,218 mt
2026	43,886 mt	40,264 mt	40,264 mt	29,363 mt	26,218 mt

Surfclam ABC for 2023

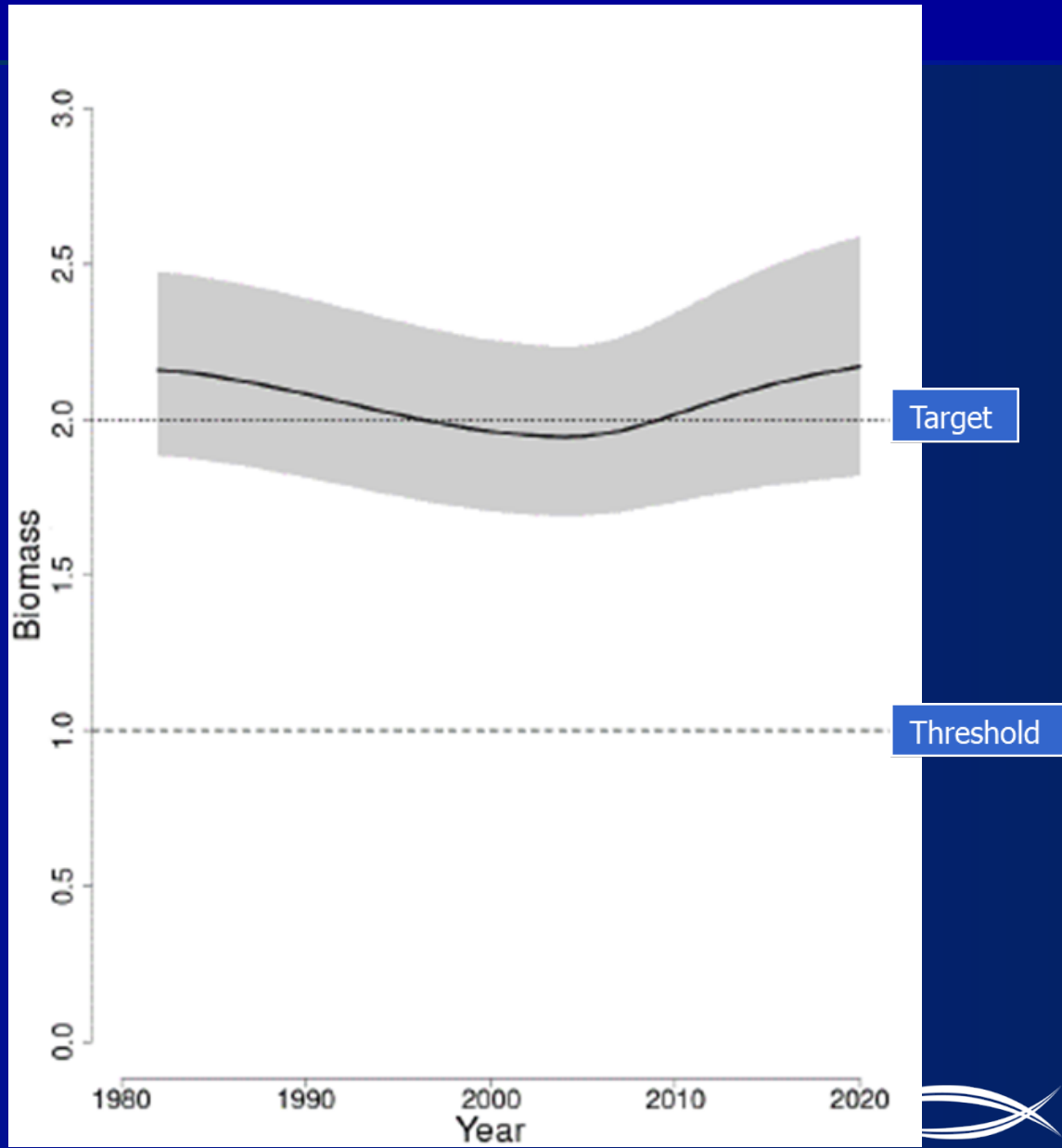
- No new fishery independent data available.
- Atlantic Surfclam LPUEs have shown steady declines as the overall stock approaches Bmsy levels.
- Catches of Surfclams on Georges Bank and in Southern New England constitute an increasing fraction of landings since 2011.
- Catches continue to be below existing quotas.
- Stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring.
- **The SSC recommended continuation of previously approved** quotas of 42,237 mt for Atlantic Surfclams for 2023.

Surfclam Staff/SSC Recommendations

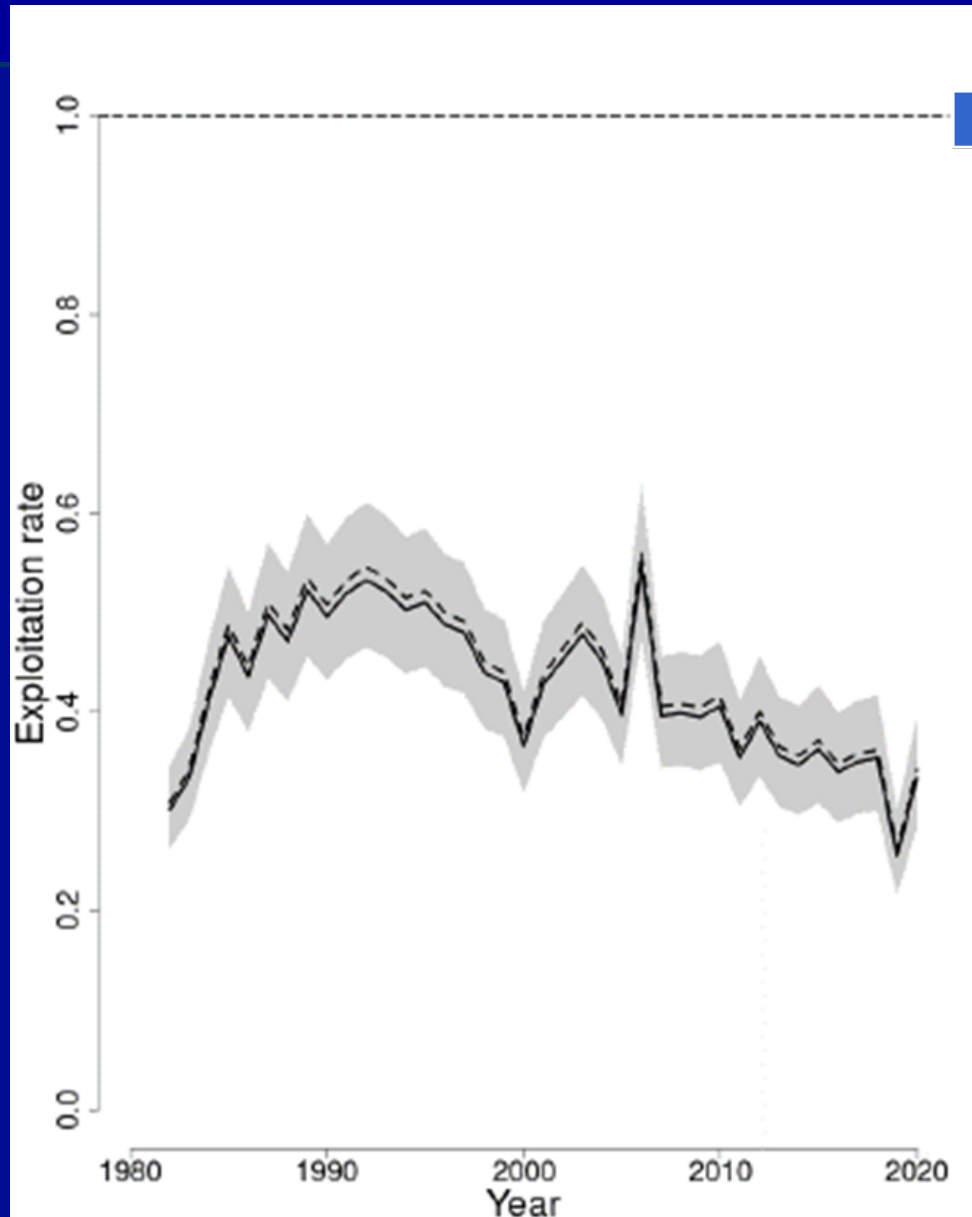
- Staff (see Memo): No changes to measures for 2023
 - Note: Council will need motion to recommend RA suspend minimum size (required annually)
- SSC (see SSC Report): Continuation of previously recommended 2023 measures



Quahog Biomass

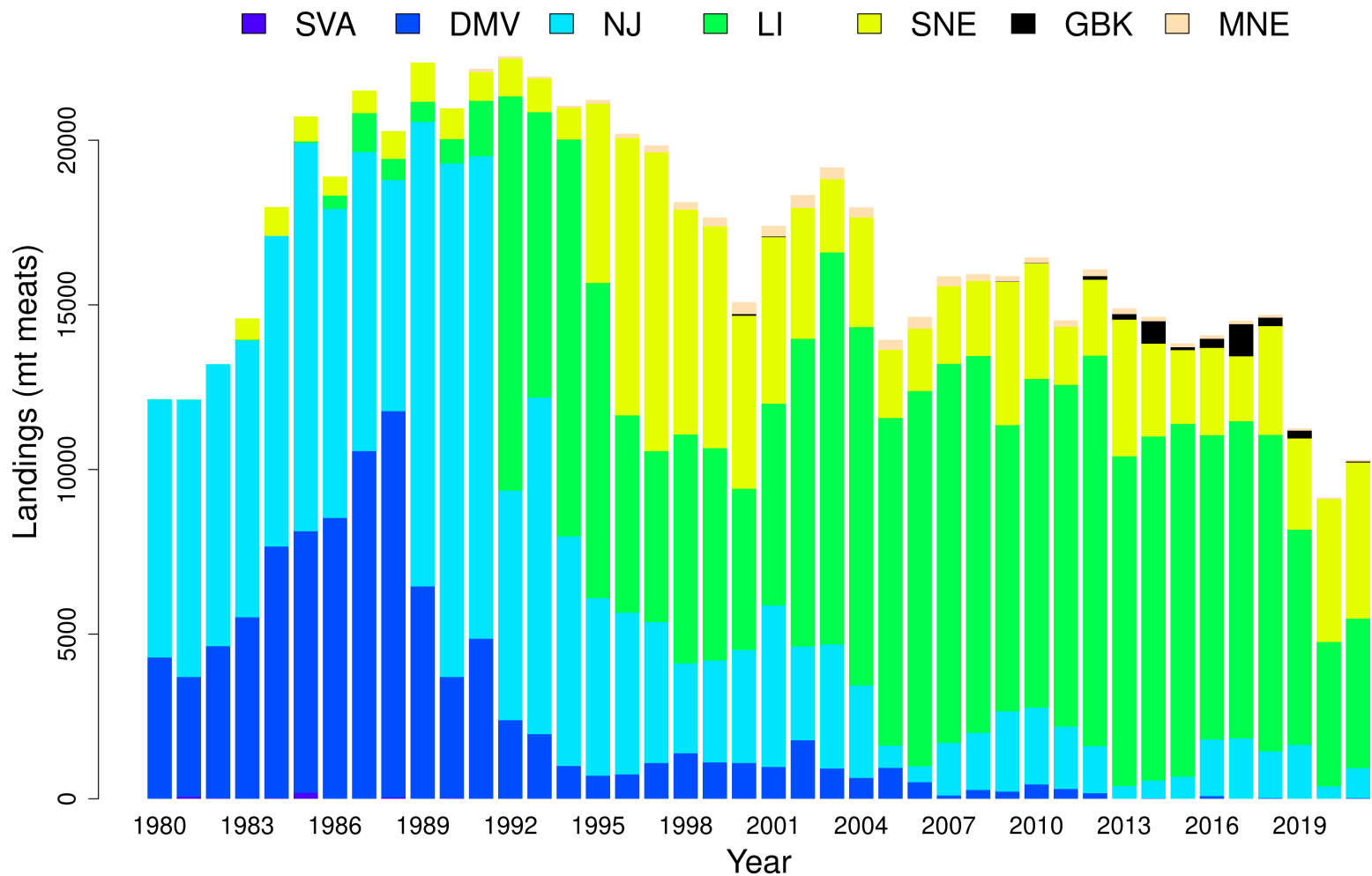


Quahog Fishing Mortality

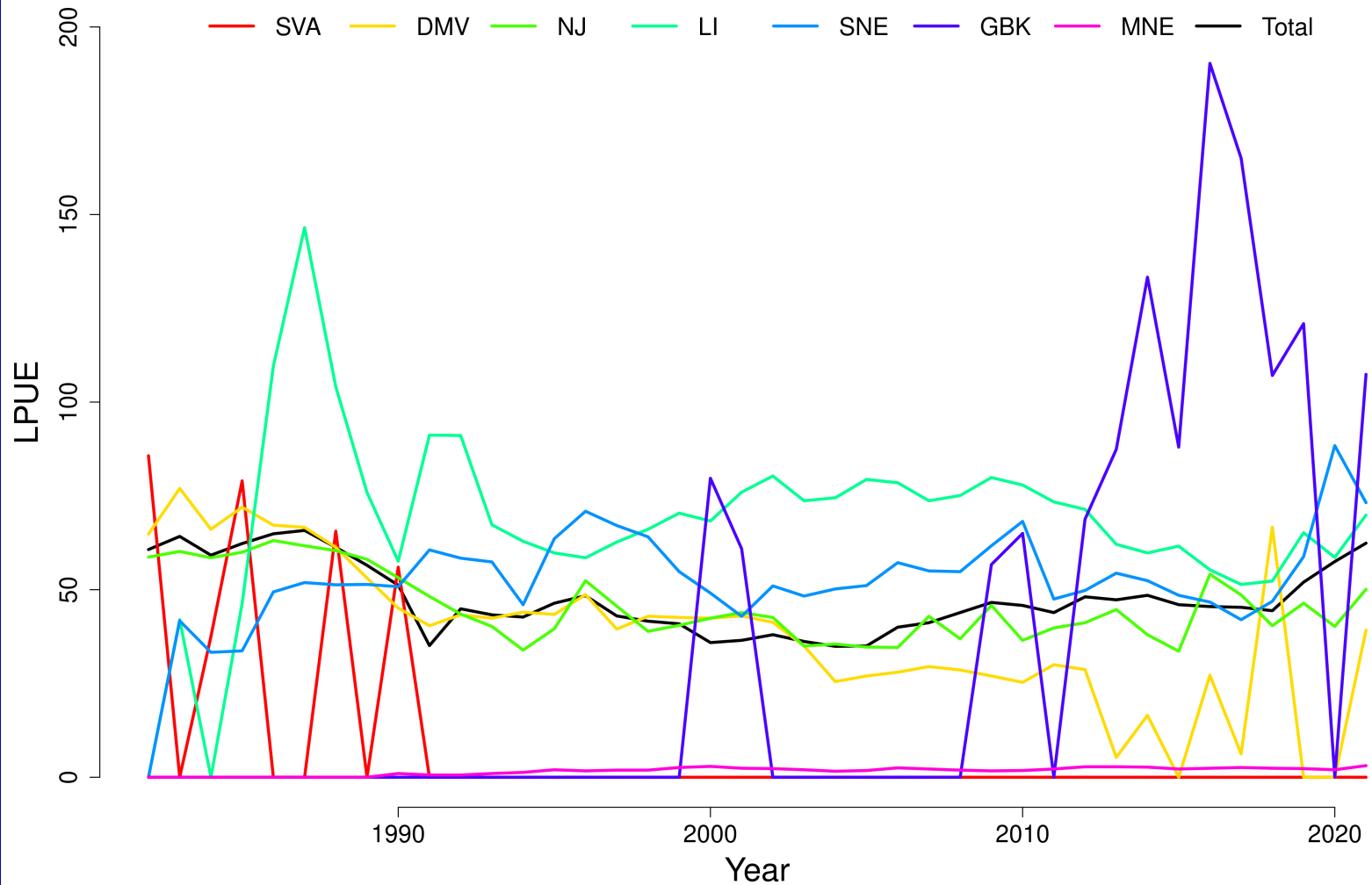


Threshold

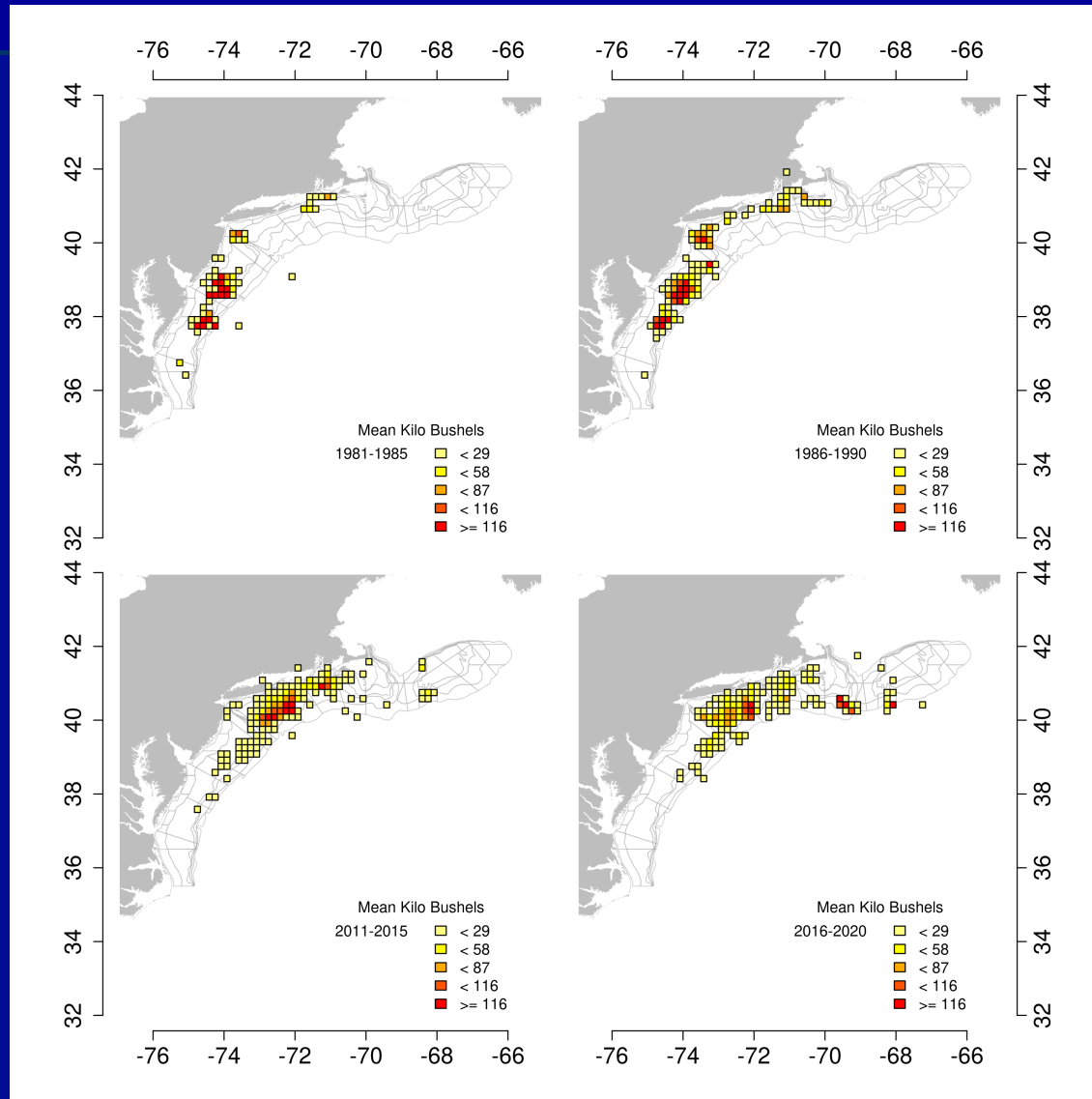
Quahog Info Doc



Quahog Info Doc



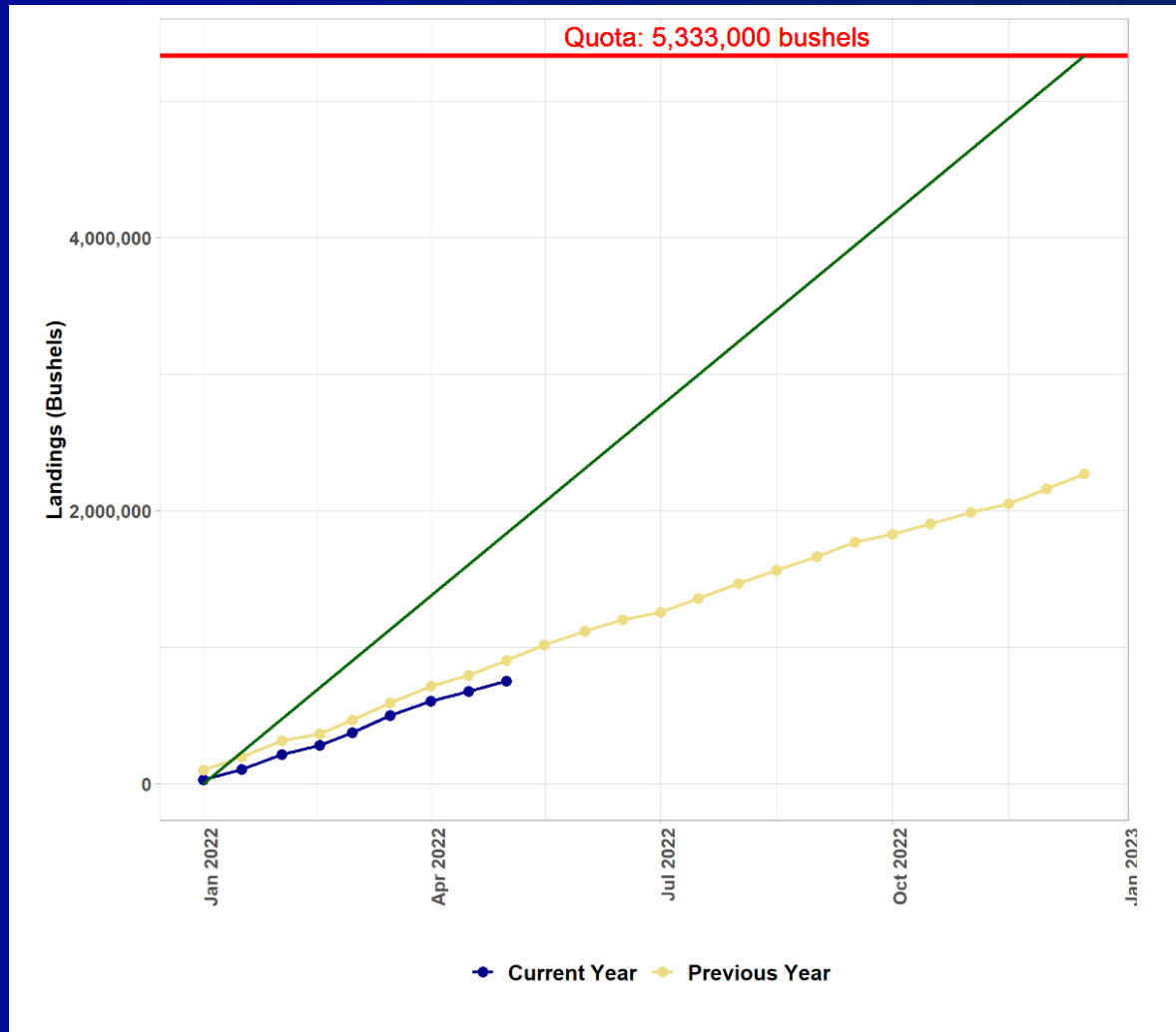
Quahog Info Doc



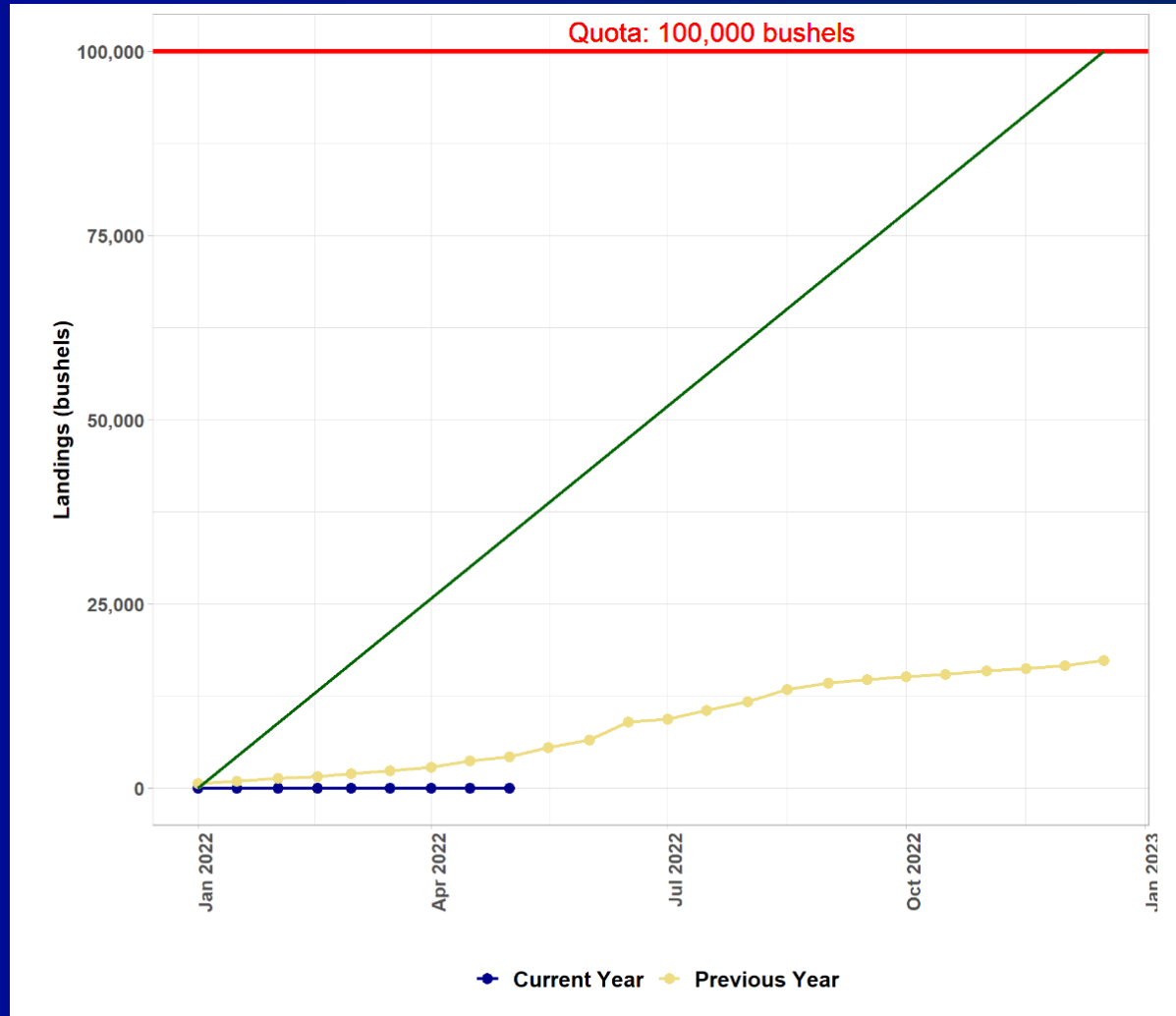
Quahog Info Doc

- 2021: 16 non-ME vessels, 3 ME
- 8 processors/dealers of SCOQ in 5 states
- Increase in overall ex-vessel value
 - \$18 million in 2021
 - Up \$2 million from 2020

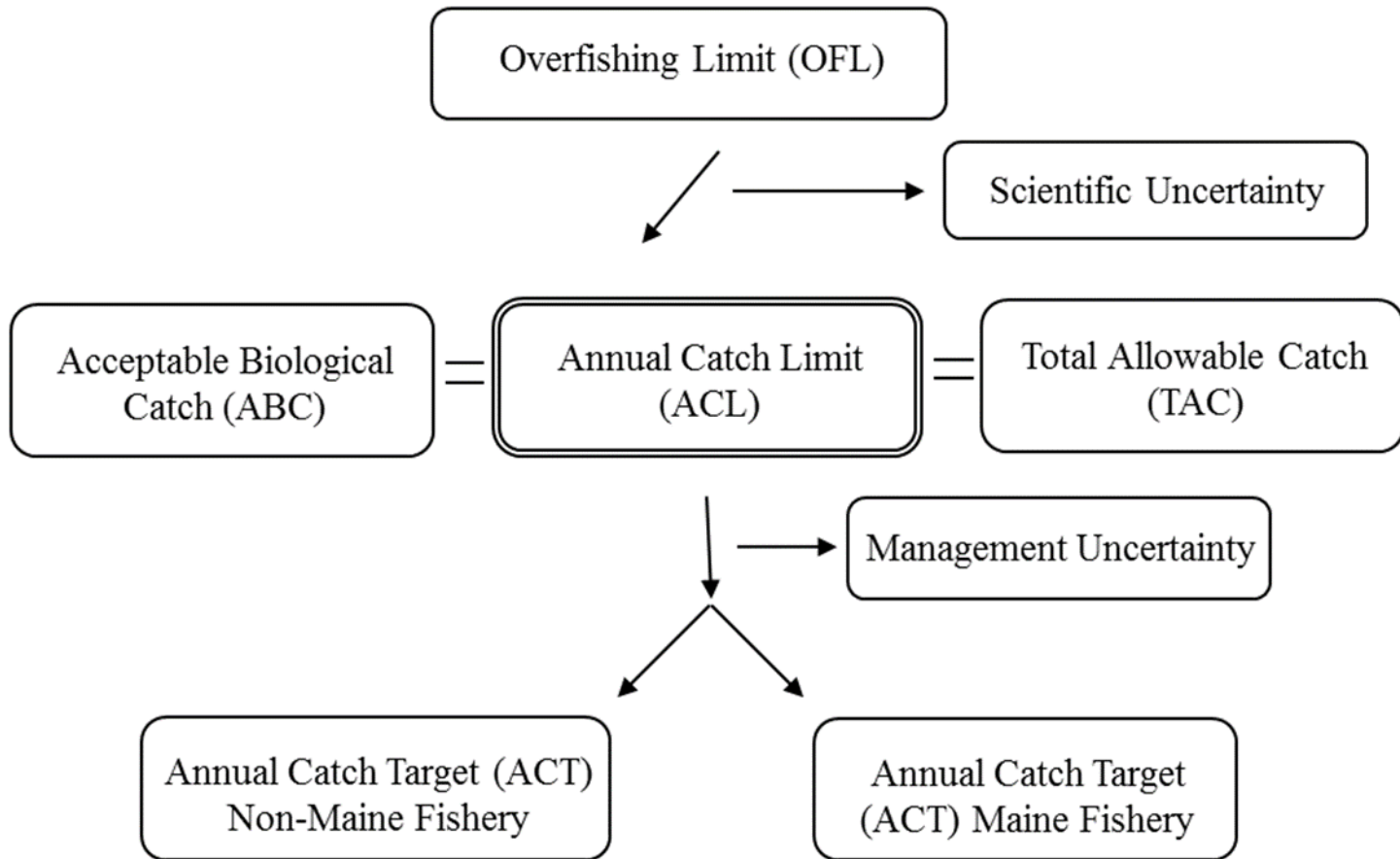
Quahog Landings – Non-Maine (thru May 26)



Quahog Landings – Maine (thru May 26)



Ocean Quahog Flowchart



Quahog SSC/Council Recommendations

Year	OFL	ABC	ACL	ACT*	Commercial Quota*
2021	44,960 mt	44,031 mt	44,031 mt	25,924 mt	24,689 mt
2022	45,001 mt	44,072 mt	44,072 mt	25,924 mt	24,689 mt
2023	45,012 mt	44,082 mt	44,082 mt	25,924 mt	24,689 mt
2024	44,994 mt	44,065 mt	44,065 mt	25,924 mt	24,689 mt
2025	44,948 mt	44,020 mt	44,020 mt	25,924 mt	24,689 mt
2026	44,875 mt	43,948 mt	43,948 mt	25,924 mt	24,689 mt

* For combined Maine and non-Maine quahog fishery.

Ocean Quahog ABC for 2023

- Previous model results for Ocean Quahog suggest stable abundance trends at about two times B_{msy} since 1980.
- Overall LPUE trend consistent with this model result.
- Fishing patterns have shifted northward and eastward over time. Catches continued to be below existing quotas.
- No new fishery independent data were available. Stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring.
- **The SSC recommended continuation of previously approved quotas 44,082 mt for 2023.**

Quahog Staff/SSC Recommendations

- Staff (see Memo): No changes to measures for 2023
- SSC (see SSC Report): Continuation of previously recommended 2023 measures

