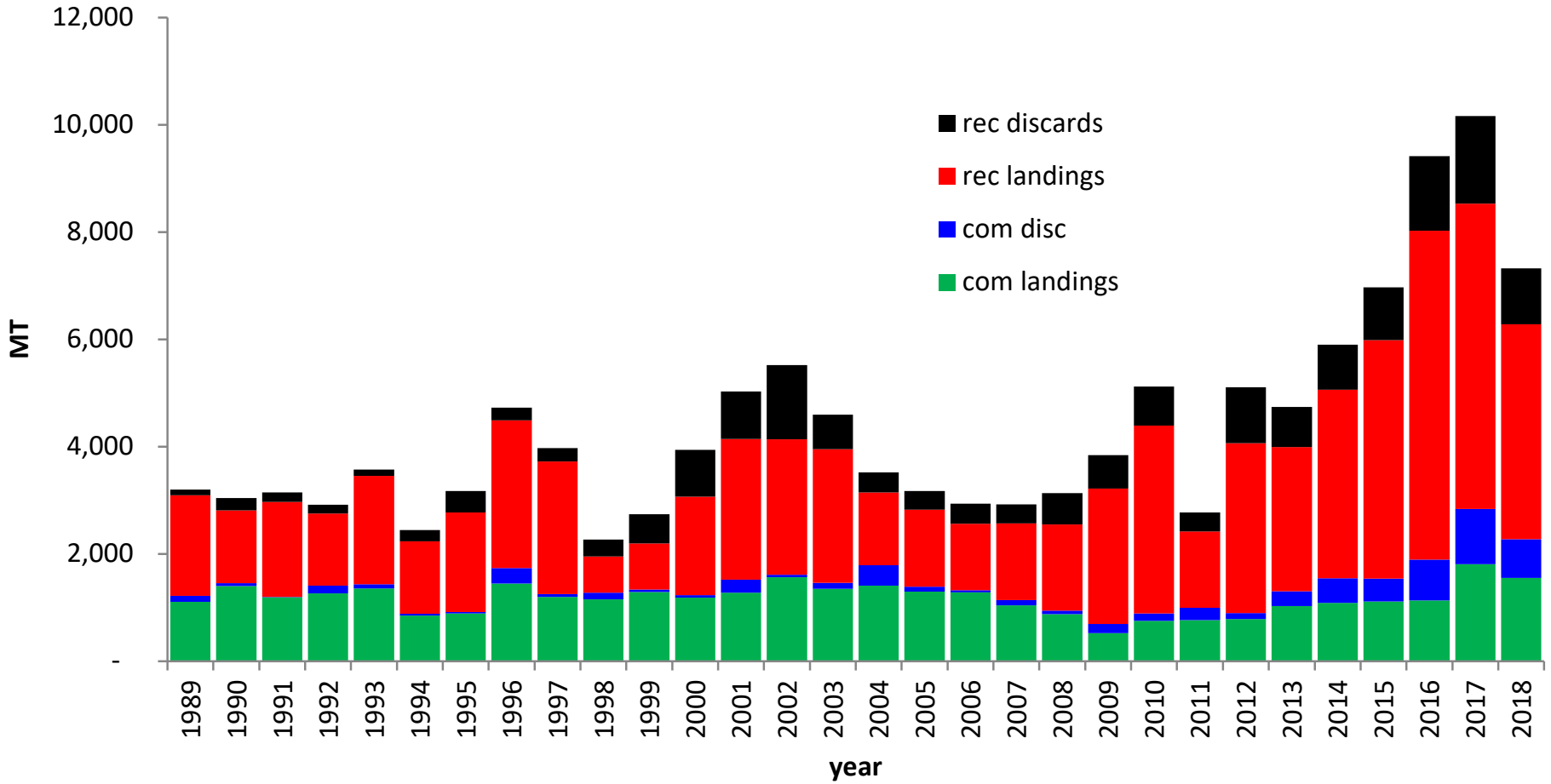
MID-ATLANTIC
FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Black Sea Bass

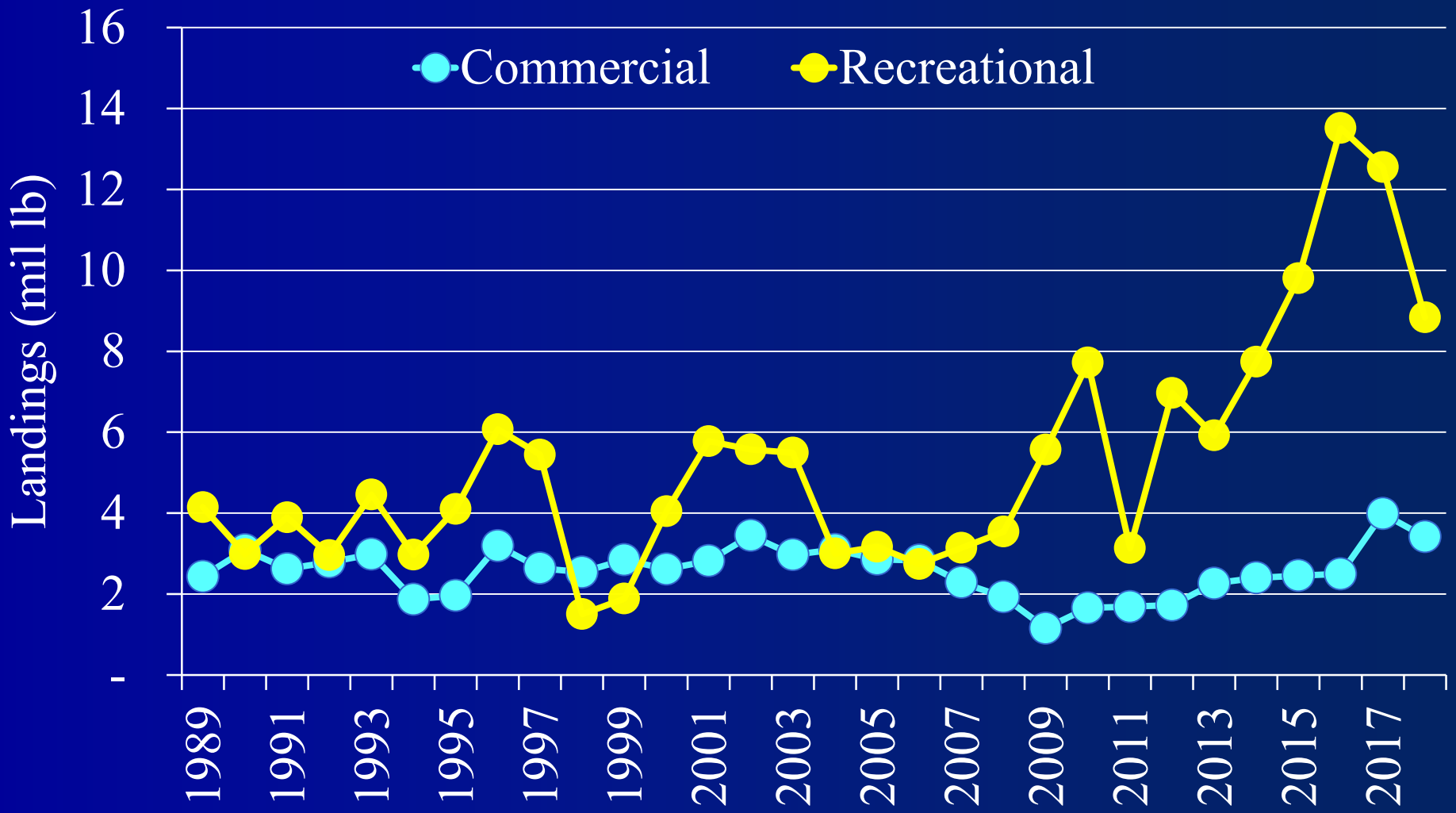
SSC Meeting

September 10, 2019

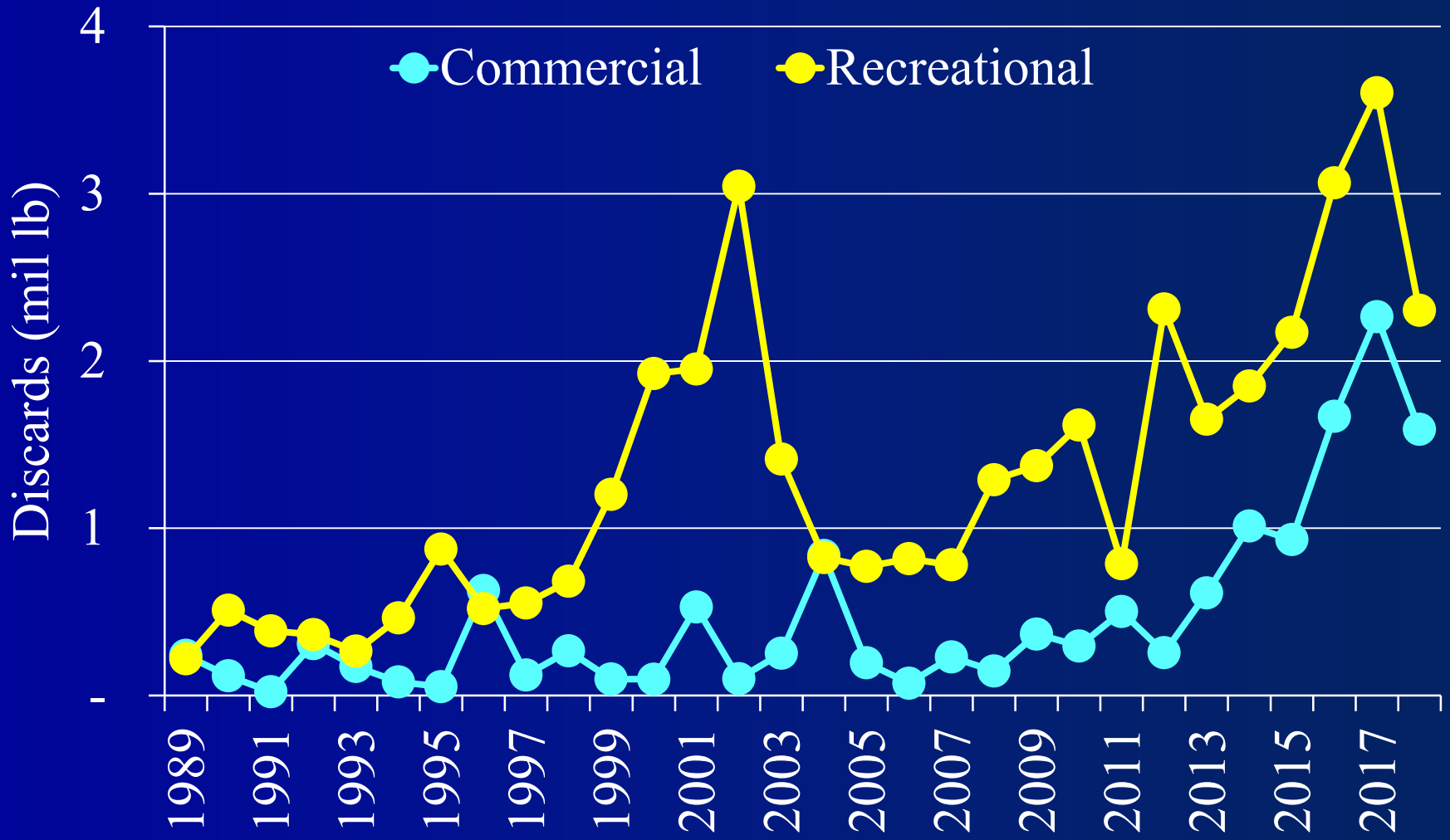
Fishery Performance



Landings

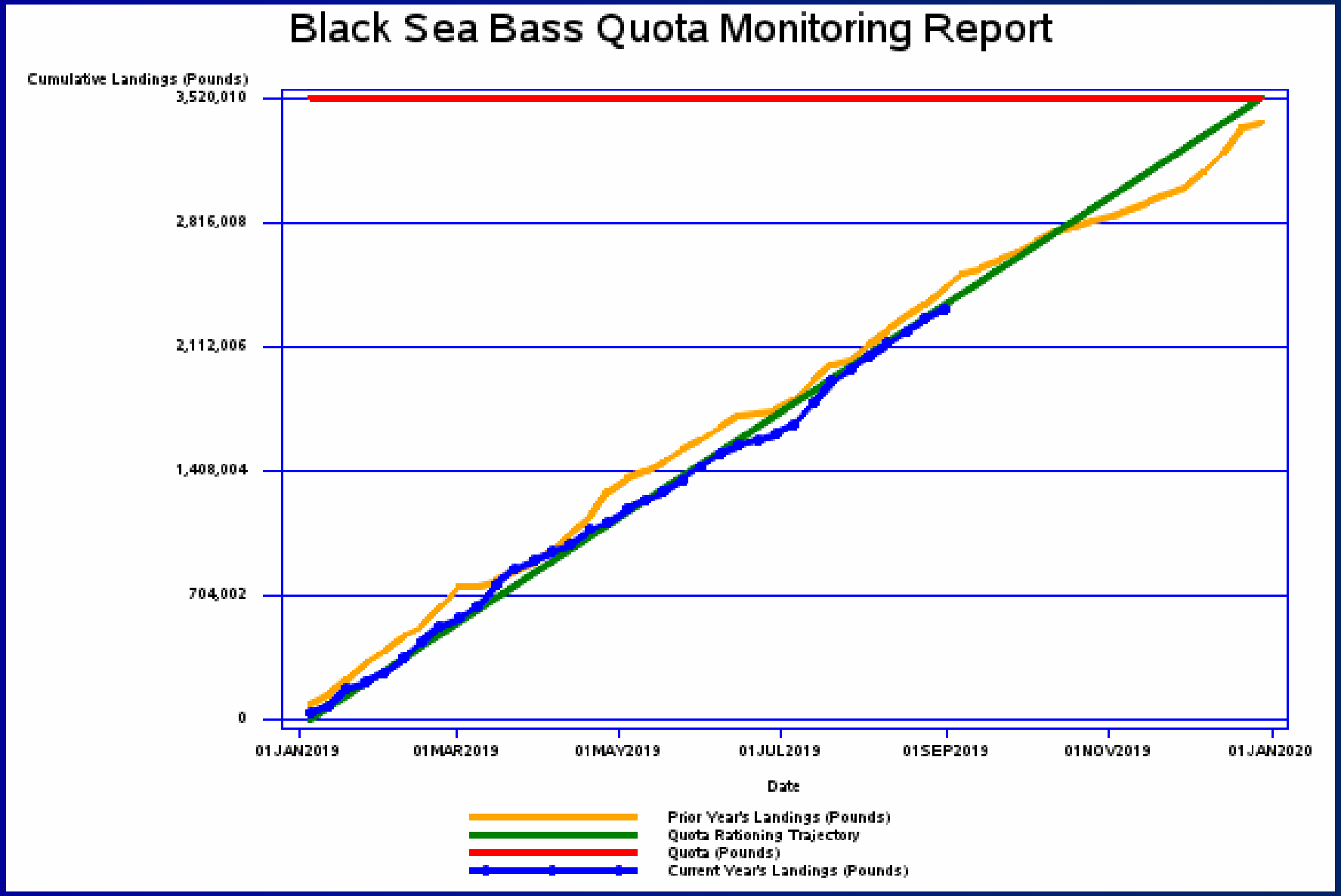

Commercial
Recreational
Landings (mil lb)
16
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
-
1989
1991
1993
1995
1997
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
2013
2015
2017

Discards

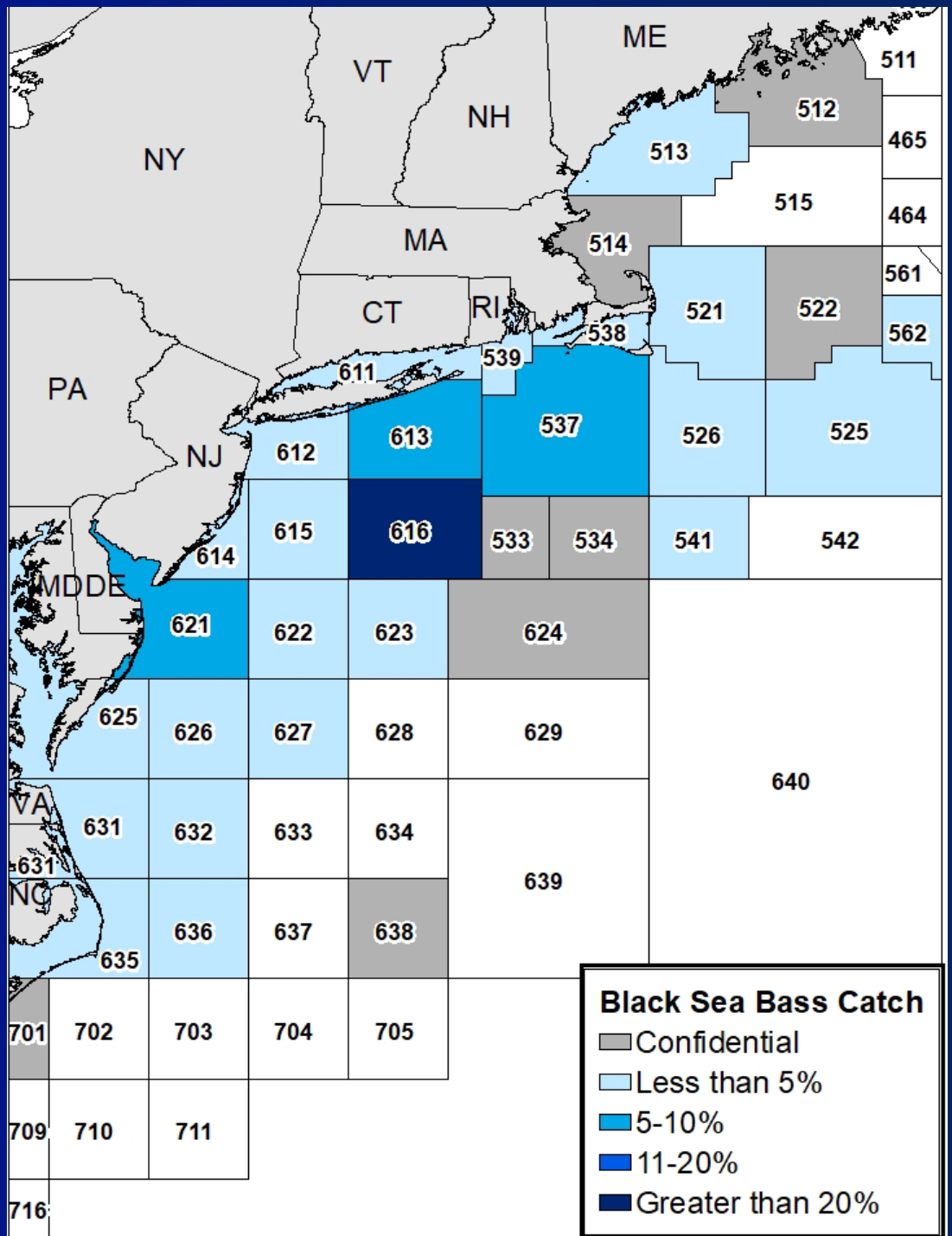

Commercial
Recreational
Discards (mil lb)
4
3
2
1
-
1989
1991
1993
1995
1997
1999
2001
2003
2005
2007
2009
2011
2013
2015
2017

Year	Com. land.	Com. quota	Com. land. vs. quota	Rec. land. (old MRIP)	RHL	Rec. land. vs. RHL	Rec. land. (new MRIP)
2014	2.18	2.17	0%	3.67	2.26	+62%	6.93
2015	2.46	2.21	+11%	3.79	2.33	+63%	7.82
2016	2.59	2.71	-4%	5.19	2.82	+84%	12.05
2017	3.99	4.12	-3%	4.16	4.29	-3%	11.48
2018	3.41	3.52	-3%	3.82	3.66	+4%	7.92

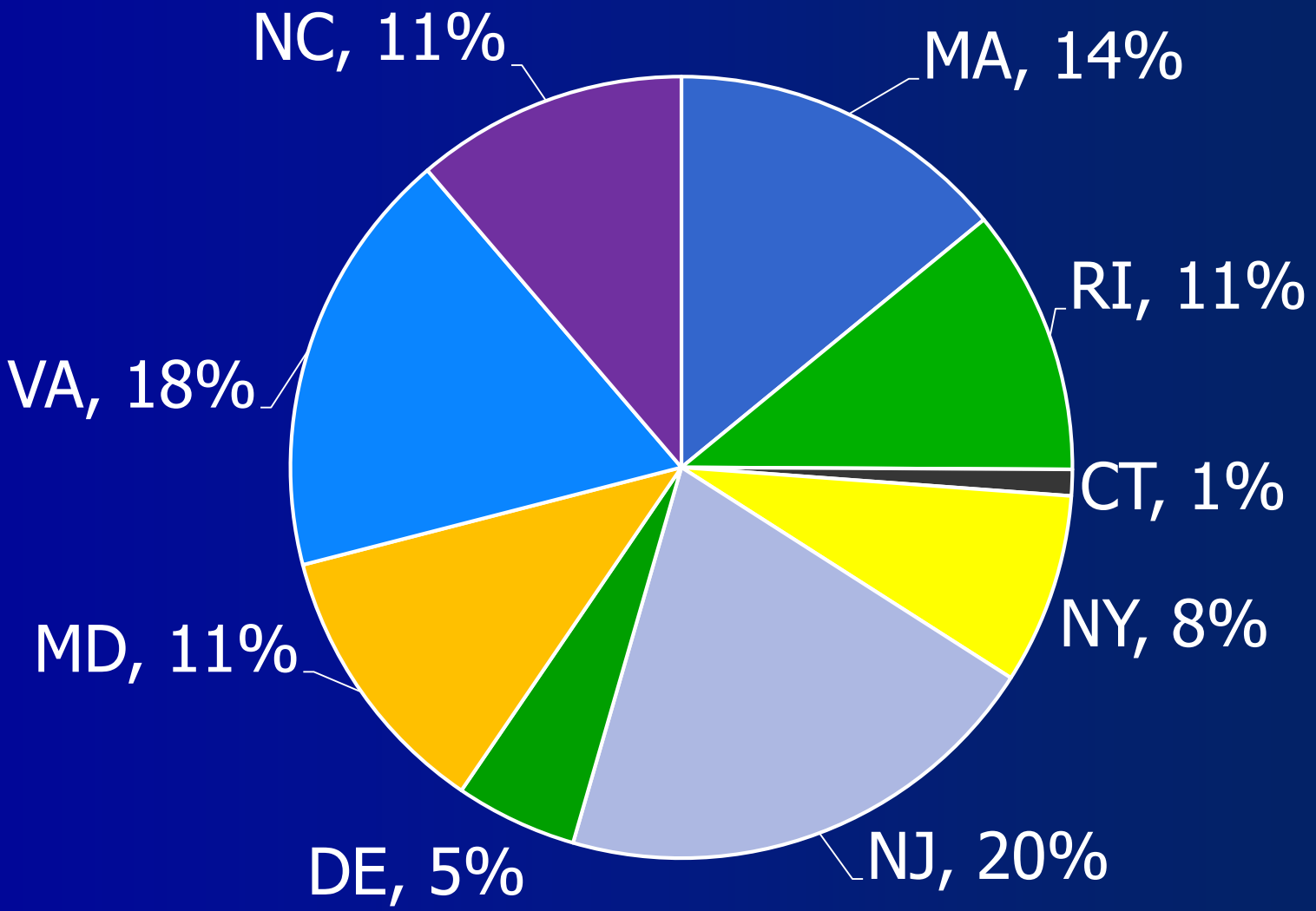
2019 Commercial Landings



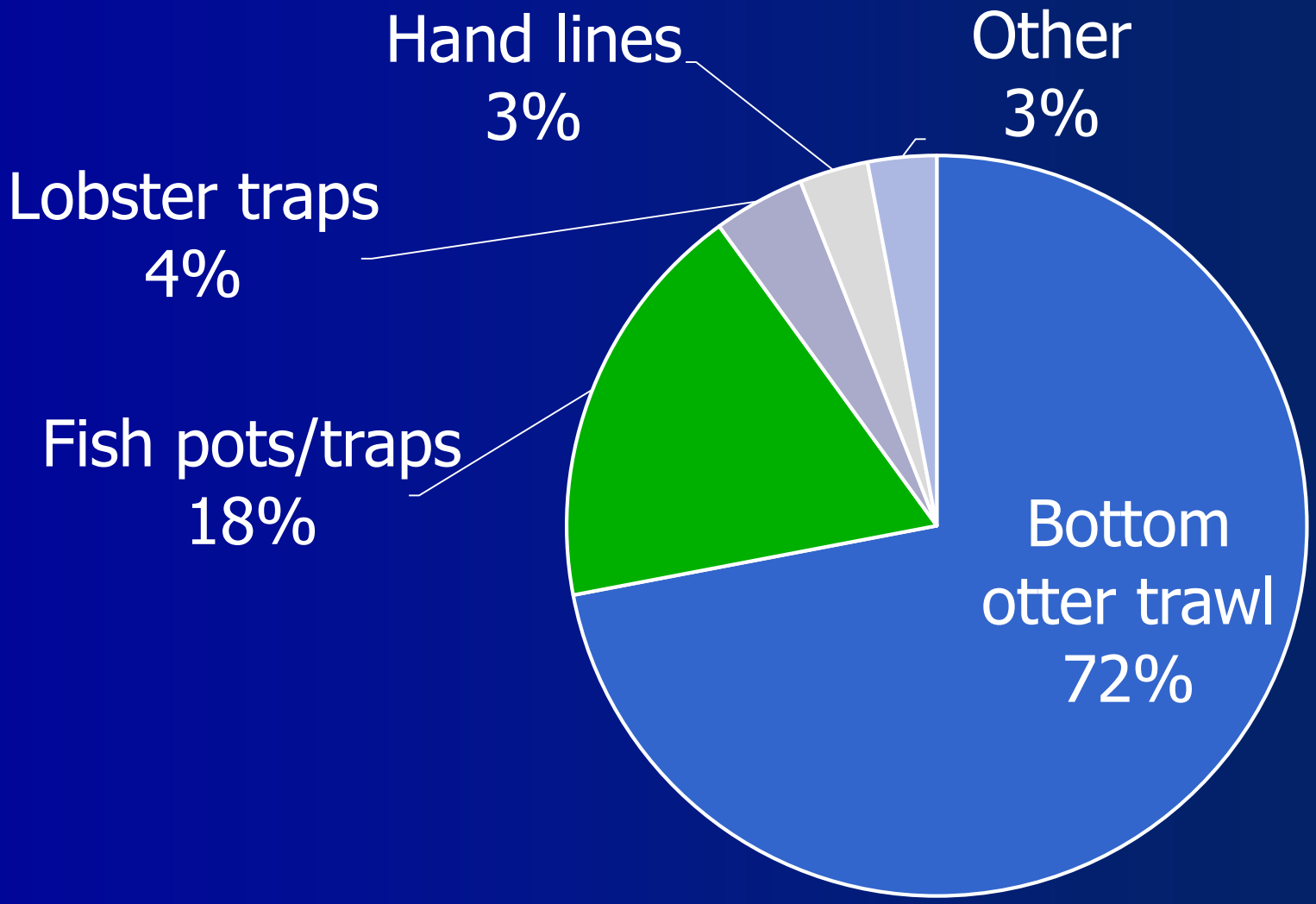
2018 Commercial Catch



2018 Commercial Landings



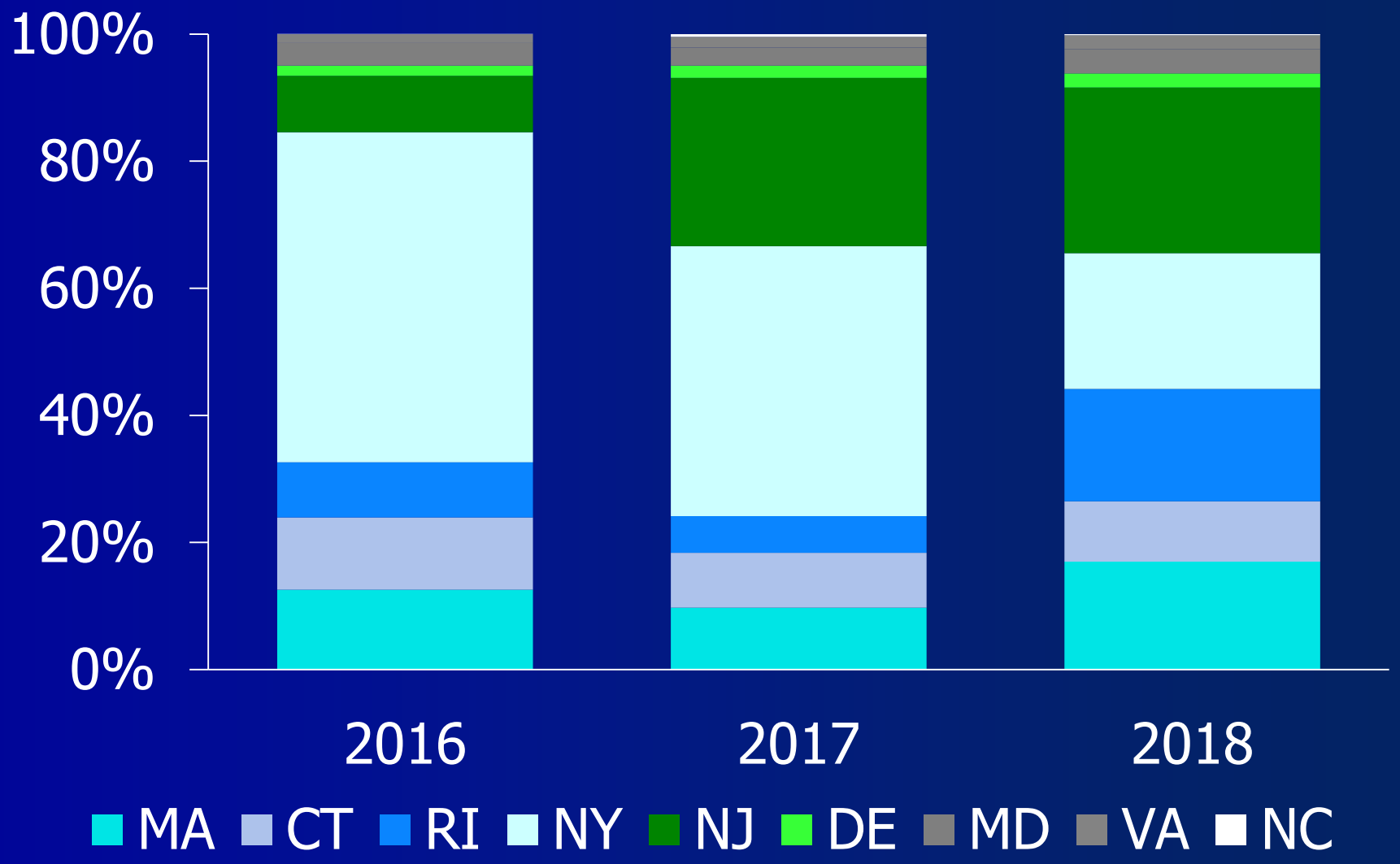
2018 Commercial Landings by Gear Type



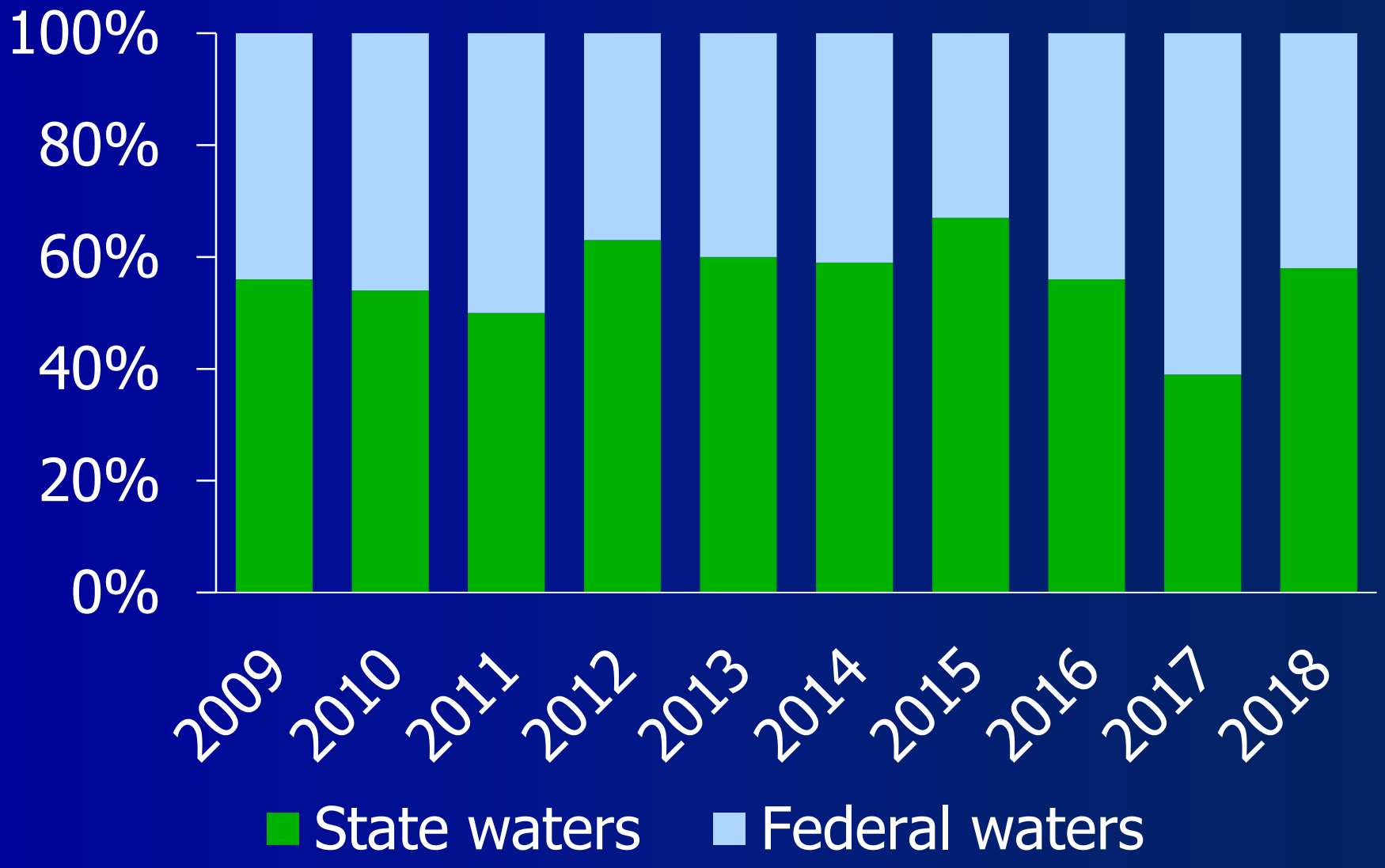
2019 Rec. Landings, W1-3

State	Harvest (lb)
ME	0
NH	0
MA	690,355
RI	15,153
CT	166,702
NY	135,165
NJ	586,821
DE	11,613
MD	67,412
VA	29,970
NC (north of Cape Hatteras)	3,353
Total	**1,706,544**

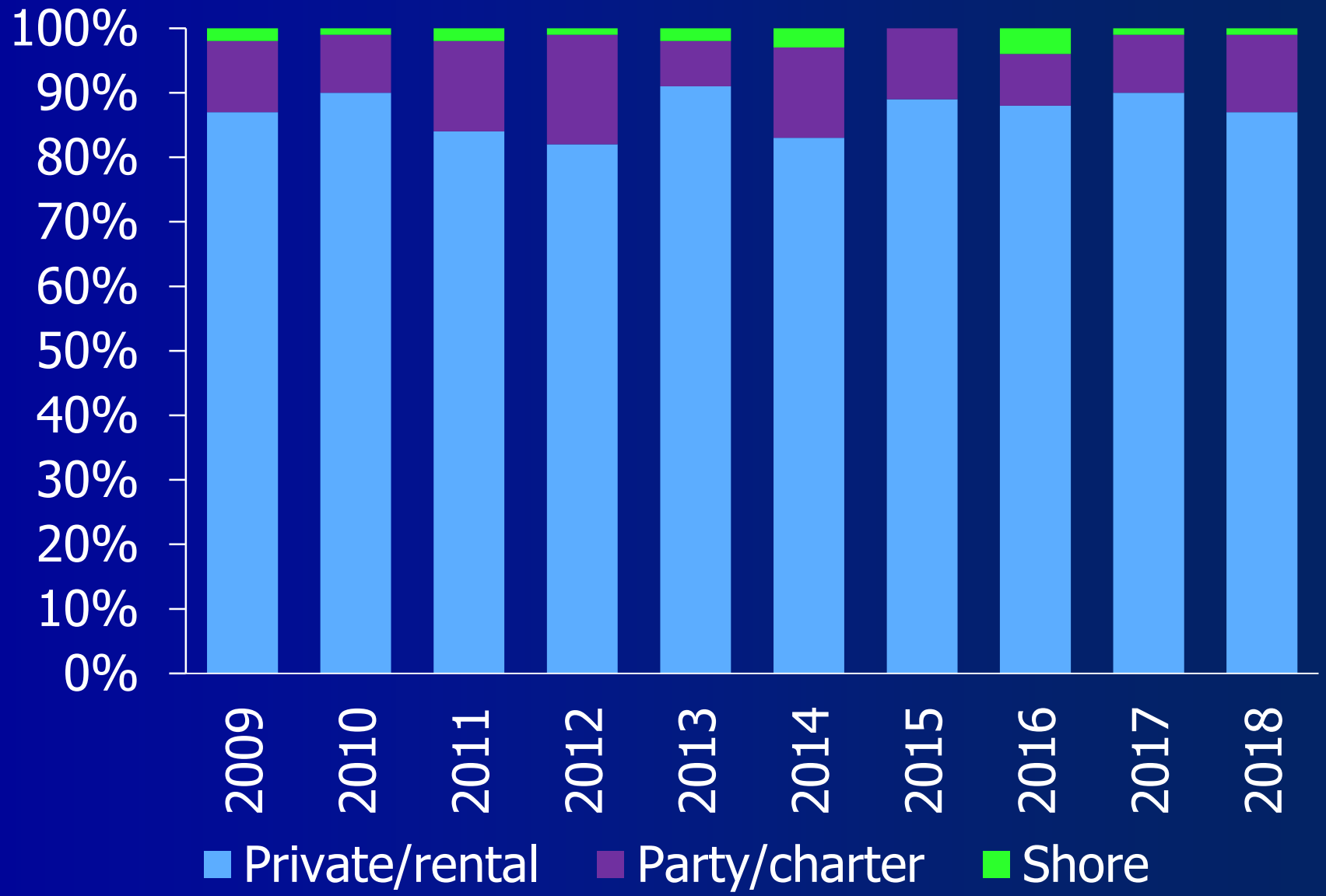
Recreational Harvest by State



Harvest Location



Recreational Harvest by Mode



AP Comments

MRIP

- No faith in MRIP data
- Methodology hard to understand, not trusted

Recreational Fishery Management

- For-hire guides fishing on private boats without for-hire permits
- Some for and against private rec. reporting

General Management Concerns

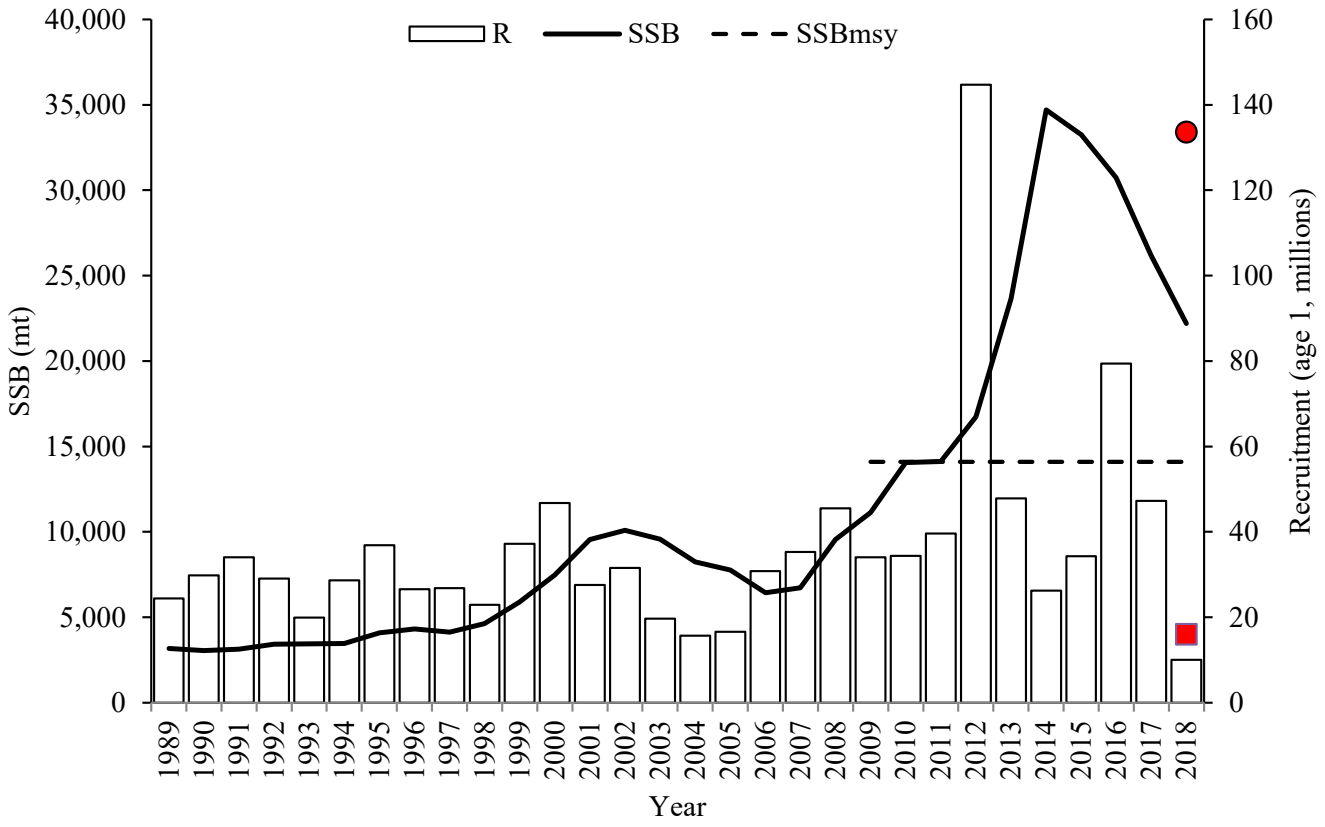
- Open access and latent permits (com and rec)

AP Comments

Biological Issues and Biomass Projections

- Below avg 2018 recruitment could be due to cannibalism and high abundance of large BSB.
- BSB have been caught as far as 150 miles from shore. Surveys may be missing that biomass. SSB may be under-estimated.
- Biomass very high, but SSB graph shows steep decline. ABC projections also declining. Is the stock in crisis? (No)

Black Sea Bass Spawning Stock Biomass and Recruitment



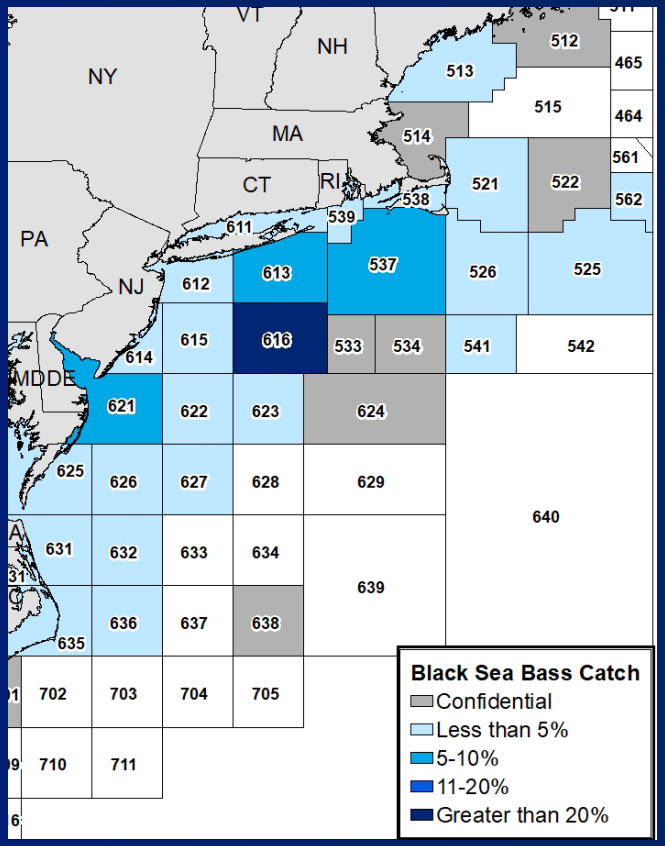
Retrospective adjusted point indicated in terminal year

NOAA FISHERIES

AP Comments

Commercial Catch Locations

- High prevalence of 2011 year class in N does not mean abundance decreased in S.
- Stat area 616 – vessels travel there to target summer flounder. Target BSB on same trip. Map reflects effort, not distribution.
- Pot/trap catch locations impacted by lobster area 4 and 5 closures in spring (NY-Hatteras).



AP Comments

Recreational Fishery

- Despite high biomass, loosening of restrictions never seems possible.
- For-hire fishermen depend on BSB for their livelihoods.
- MRIP estimates showing higher catch from anglers on private/rental boats than for-hire boats are unbelievable.

AP Comments

Allocation Issues

- ABC landings portion allocated 51% rec, 49% com.
- New MRIP – rec. catches much more than 51%.
- Recreational fishery "will be thrown under the bus again" due to MRIP changes.
- Commercial fishery has also been constrained for a long time and has suffered from past rec. overages.
- If reallocated, issues with groundfish catch shares should be avoided. Rec. reporting and accountability should be improved.

AP Comments

Research Recommendations

- Greater sampling in inshore areas.
- Recommendation for study of genetic structure of population north of Hatteras should be expanded to include stock mixing and migration patterns.

AP Written Comments

- Recommend a dedicated black sea bass survey
- Recreational size limit has lowered spawning production – fewer small mature fish, fish are maturing later and at larger sizes
- Sound causes BSB to leave area (e.g., sub-bottom profiler, offshore energy surveys)
- Need regional winter catch limits to address site fidelity

AP Written Comments

- Reduce dead discards (not BSB-specific)
  - Rec. saltwater angler registry a good opportunity for angler education
  - Allow a smaller size limit
  - Prohibit commercial discards, consider commercial gear modifications

Previous SSC Recommendations

- 2016 benchmark – substantial improvements compared to previous assessments
- OFL CV of 60%
- Typical life history control rule (life history accounted for in assessment)
- Used to set 2017-2019 ABCs
- Interim 2020 ABC = 2019 ABC

ABC Projections

- Assume 2019 catch = 7,917 mt
  - i.e., implemented ABC with expected recreational catch scaled up based on avg. ratio of new to old MRIP estimates, 2013-2017
- Projections in N and S regions at Fmsy=0.46. Combined for total OFL and ABC calculations.
- Recruitment sampled from 2000-2018
- 60% and 100% OFL CVs
- Basic/standard/varying and average/constant

100% OFL CV

Standard/Basic/Varying

Year	OFL	ABC	F	P*	SSB
2019	--	7,917	0.33	--	27,629
2020	8,795	7,112	0.34	0.40	23,497
2021	8,083	6,217	0.36	0.40	24,053

Averaged/Constant

Year	OFL	ABC	F	P*	SSB
2019	--	7,917	0.33	--	27,629
2020	8,795	6,605	0.29	0.37	23,804
2021	8,031	6,605	0.32	0.41	22,587

60% OFL CV

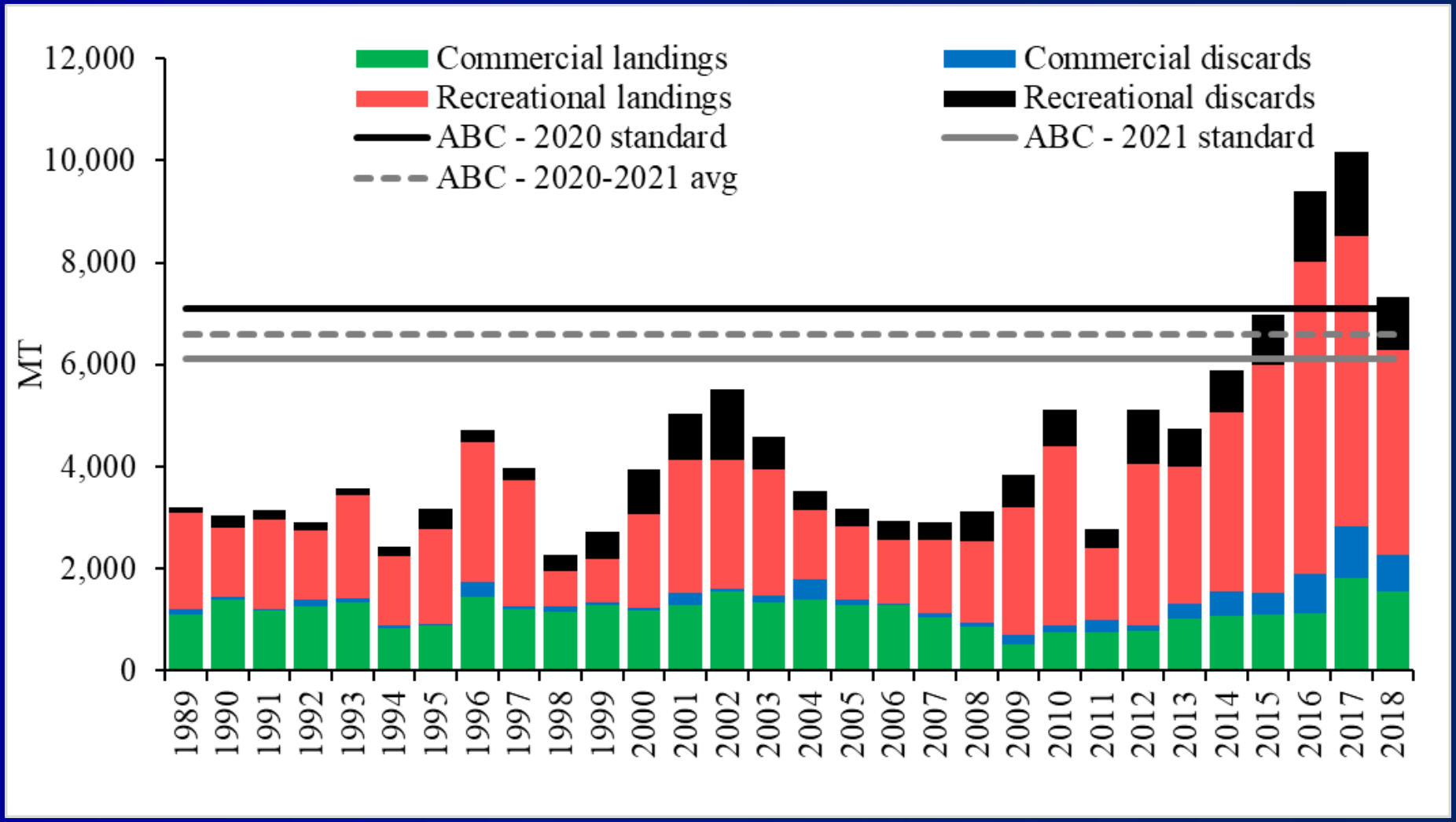
Standard/Basic/Varying

Year	OFL	ABC	F	P*	SSB
2019	--	7,917	0.33	--	27,629
2020	8,795	7,643	0.37	0.40	23,439
2021	7,928	6,831	0.39	0.40	21,754

Averaged/Constant

Year	OFL	ABC	F	P*	SSB
2019	--	7,917	0.33	--	27,629
2020	8,795	7,124	0.32	0.35	23,543
2021	8,072	7,124	0.31	0.41	22,864

QUESTIONS?


Commercial landings
Recreational landings
ABC - 2020 standard
ABC - 2020-2021 avg
Commercial discards
Recreational discards
ABC - 2021 standard
MT
12,000
10,000
8,000
6,000
4,000
2,000
0
1989
1990
1991
1992
1993
1994
1995
1996
1997
1998
1999
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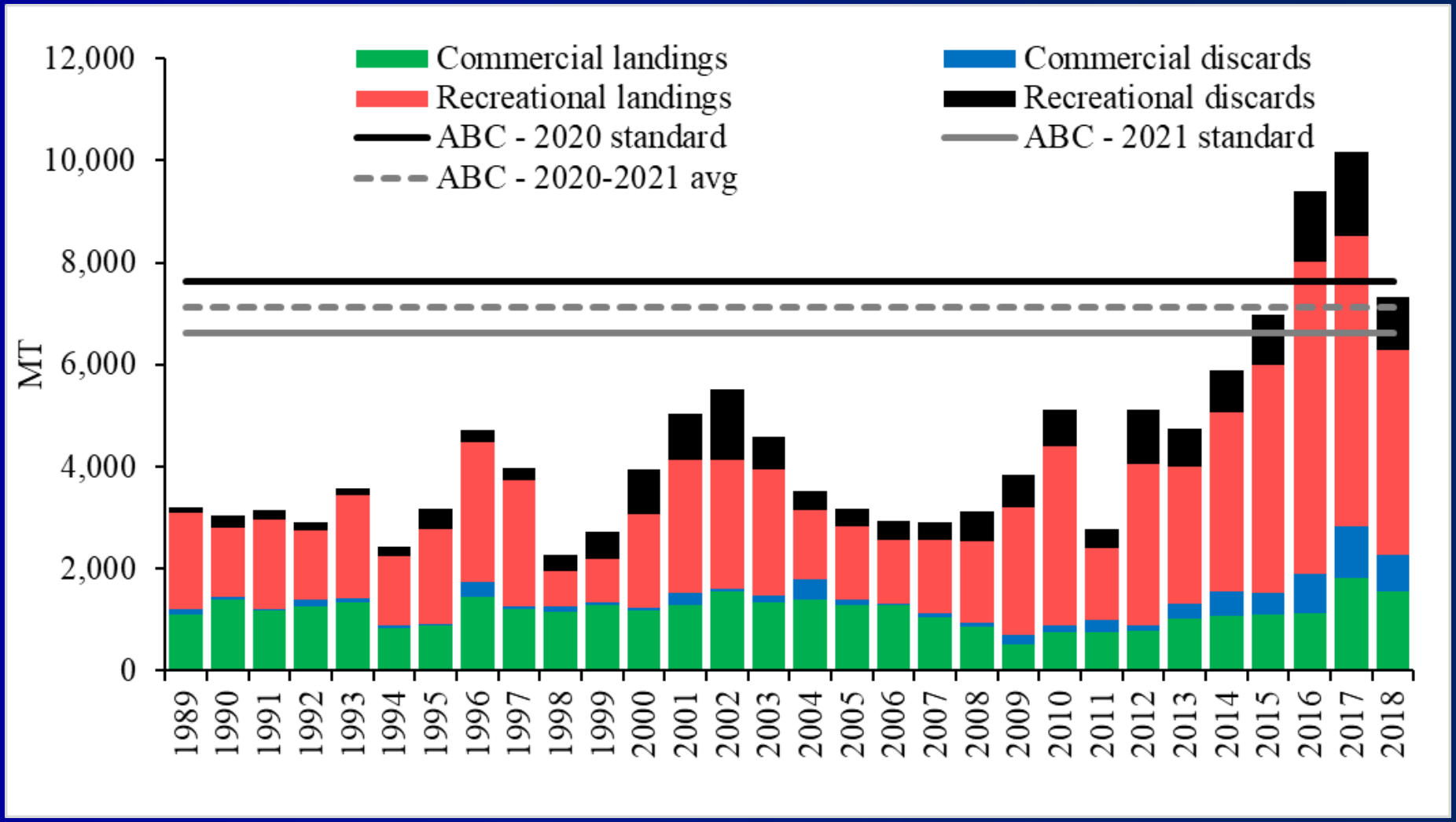
Commercial landings
Recreational landings
ABC - 2020 standard
ABC - 2020-2021 avg
Commercial discards
Recreational discards
ABC - 2021 standard
MT
12,000
10,000
8,000
6,000
4,000
2,000
0
1989
1990
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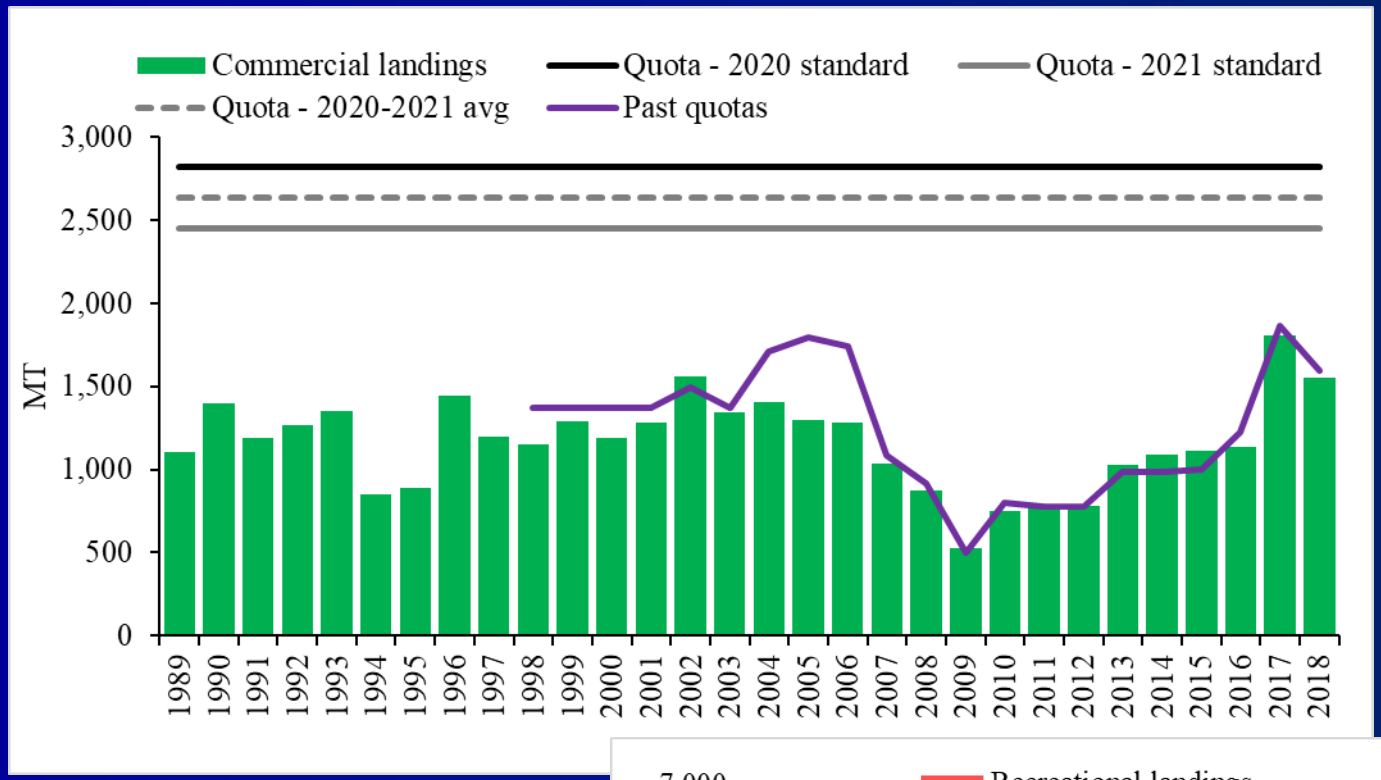
Commercial landings
Quota - 2020 standard
Quota - 2021 standard
Quota - 2020-2021 avg
Past quotas
MT
3,000
2,500
2,000
1,500
1,000
500
0
1989
1990
1991
1992
1993
1994
1995
1996
1997
1998
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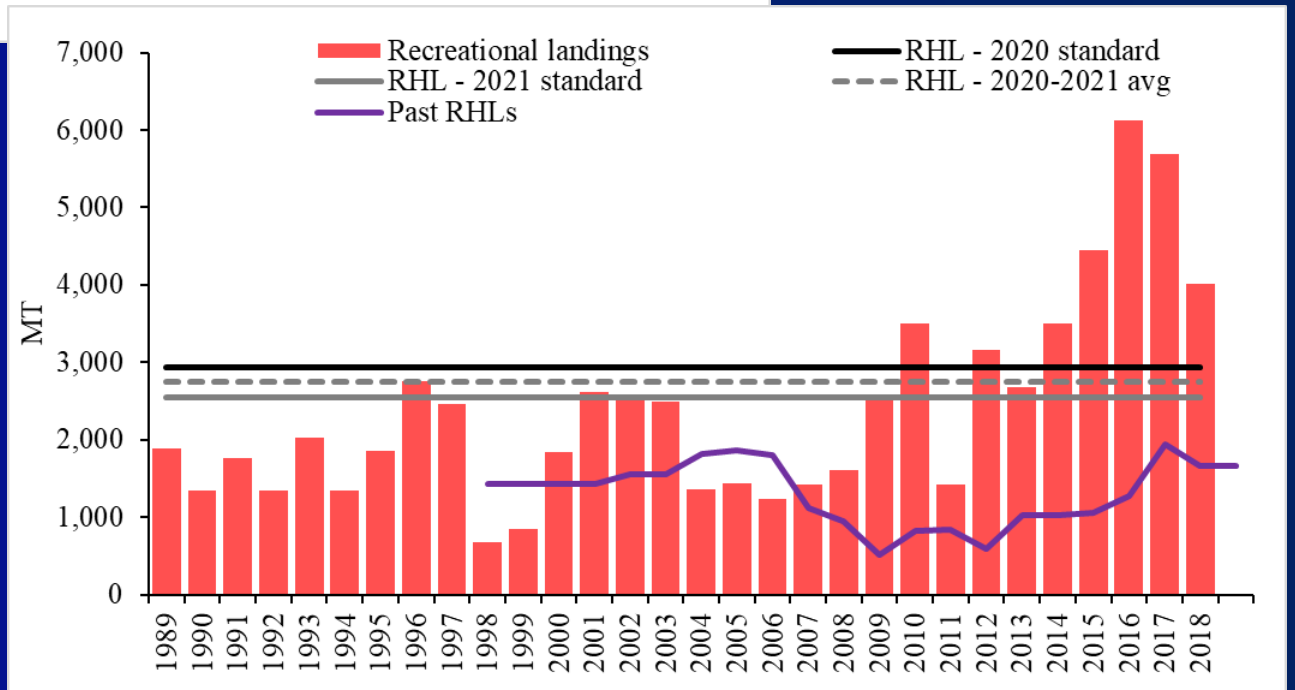
Recreational landings
RHL - 2020 standard
RHL - 2021 standard
RHL - 2020-2021 avg
Past RHLs
MT
7,000
6,000
5,000
4,000
3,000
2,000
1,000
0
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2017
2018

Previous SSC Recommendations

Sources of uncertainty

- Assumption of a constant natural mortality rate for both sexes
- Spatial distribution of productivity within the stock range
- Level, temporal pattern, and spatial distribution of recreational catches
- Nature of exchanges between the spatial regions defined in the assessment model