



Atlantic Mackerel

2024-25 Specifications

SSC - July 2023

Overview

- Background
- Advisory Panel (AP) Fishery Performance Report
- Staff ABC Recommendation

2023 Specifications

Table 1. Revised rebuilding plan catch and initial biomass trajectory.

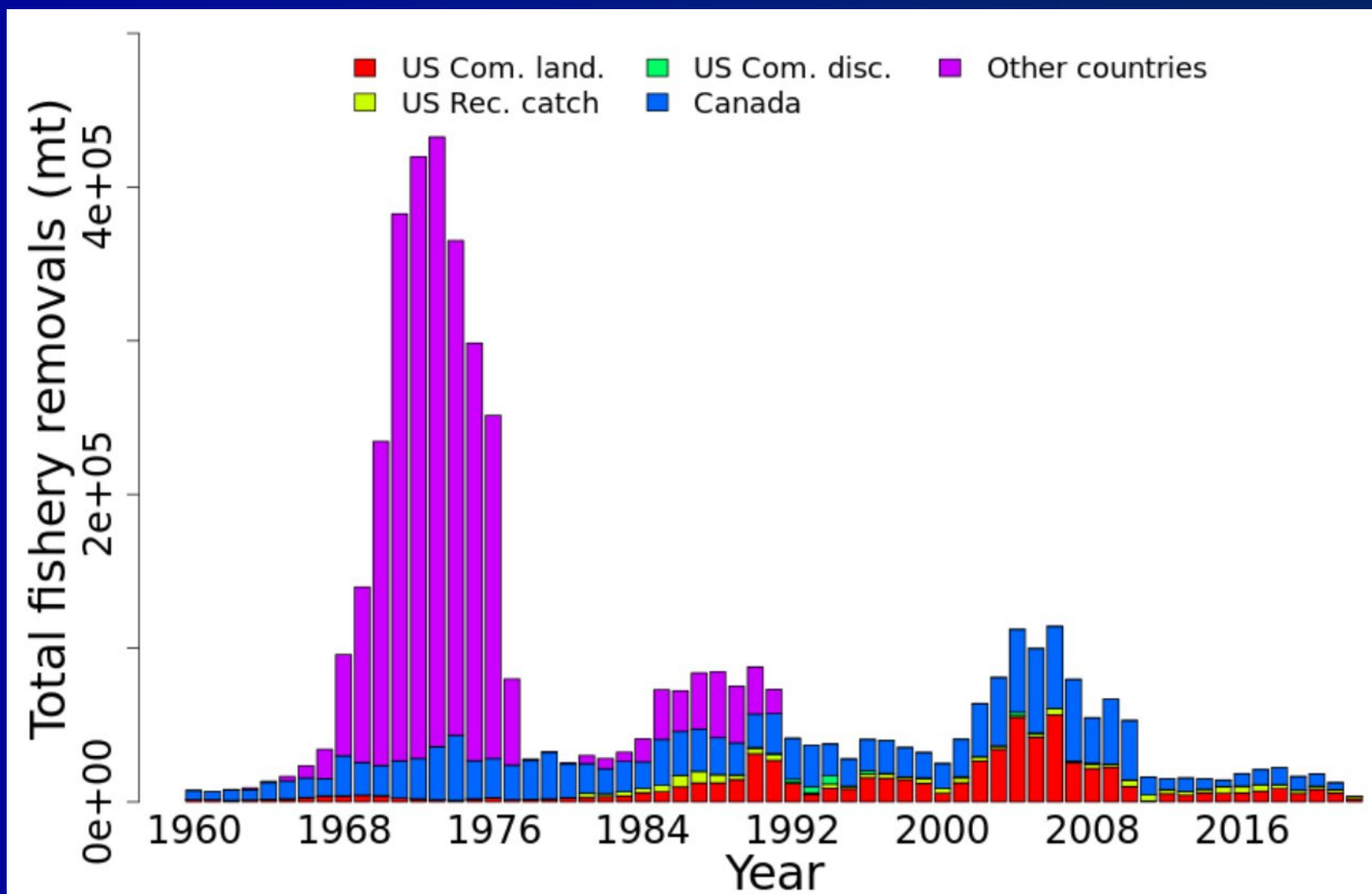
	Catch (MT)	Biomass (MT)
2023	8,094	80,745
2024	9,274	91,738
2025	10,540	103,756
2026	11,906	116,857
2027	13,408	131,291
2028	15,004	146,553
2029	16,631	162,239
2030	18,261	177,731
2031	19,814	192,045
2032	21,215	204,796

2023 Specifications

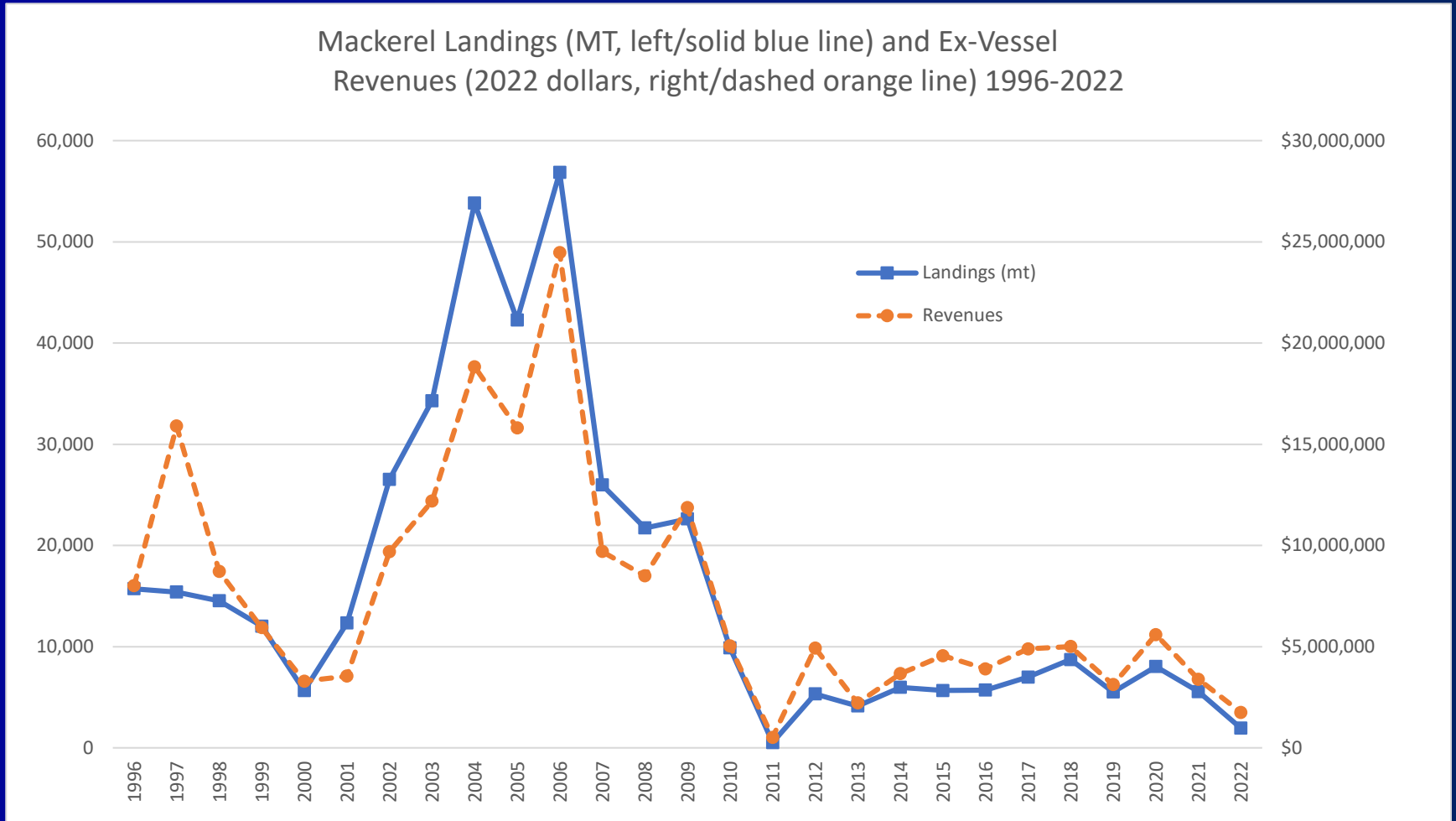
Table 9. The proposed new specifications and closure provisions for the preferred rebuilding alternative (RPA 4)

ABC/ACL	8,094	a
Canadian Catch Deduction	2,197	b
Rec Catch Deduction	2143	c
Commercial Discards	115	d
Commercial Quota	3,639	$e=a-b-c-d$
Before May 1 First Closure Threshold (-886 MT)	2,753	$f=e-886$
May 1/after First Closure Threshold (-443 MT)	3,196	$g=e-443$
Final Closure Threshold (-100 MT)	3,539	$h=e-100$

Catch 1968-2022

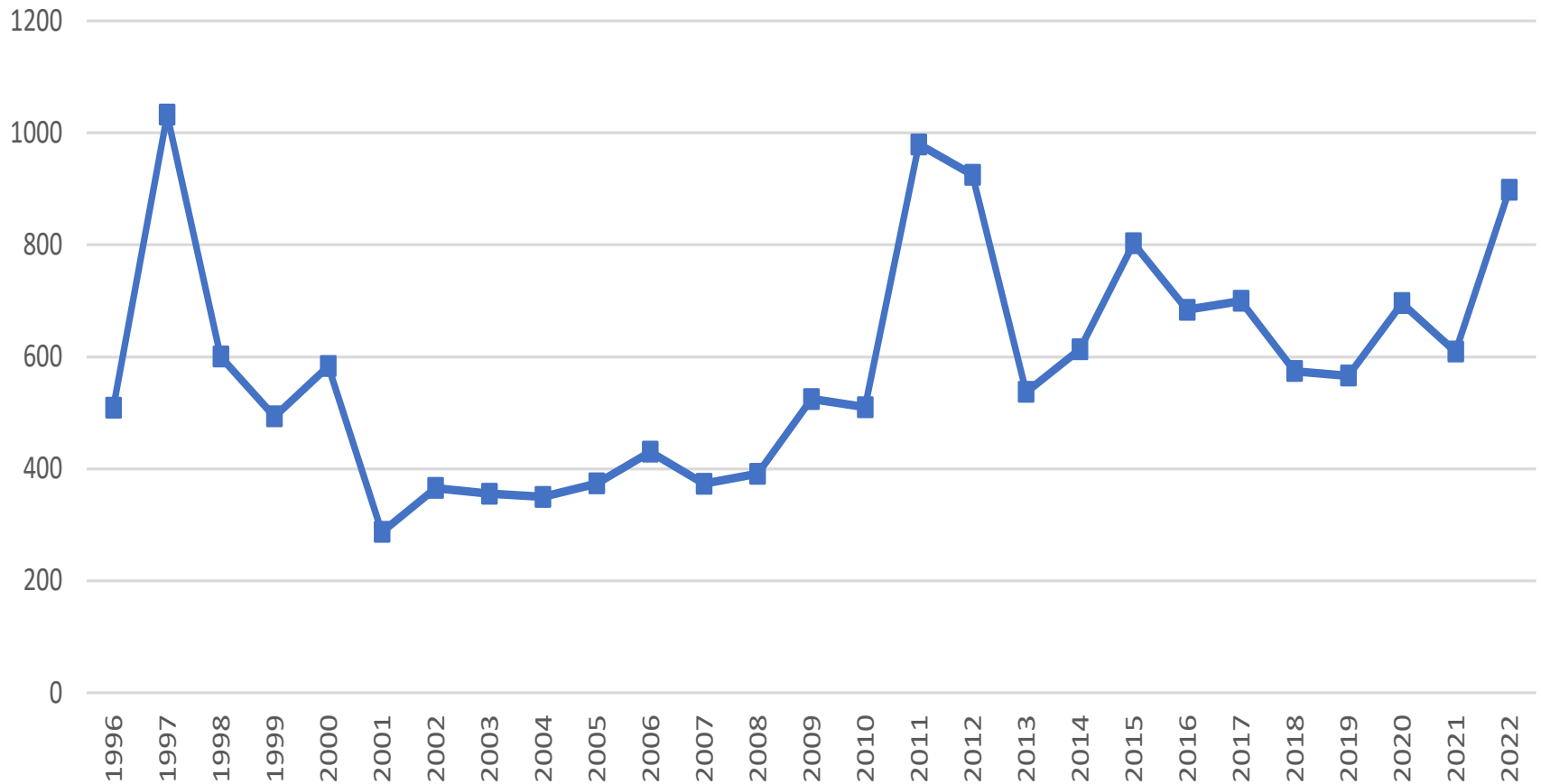


Landings/Revenues 1996-2022

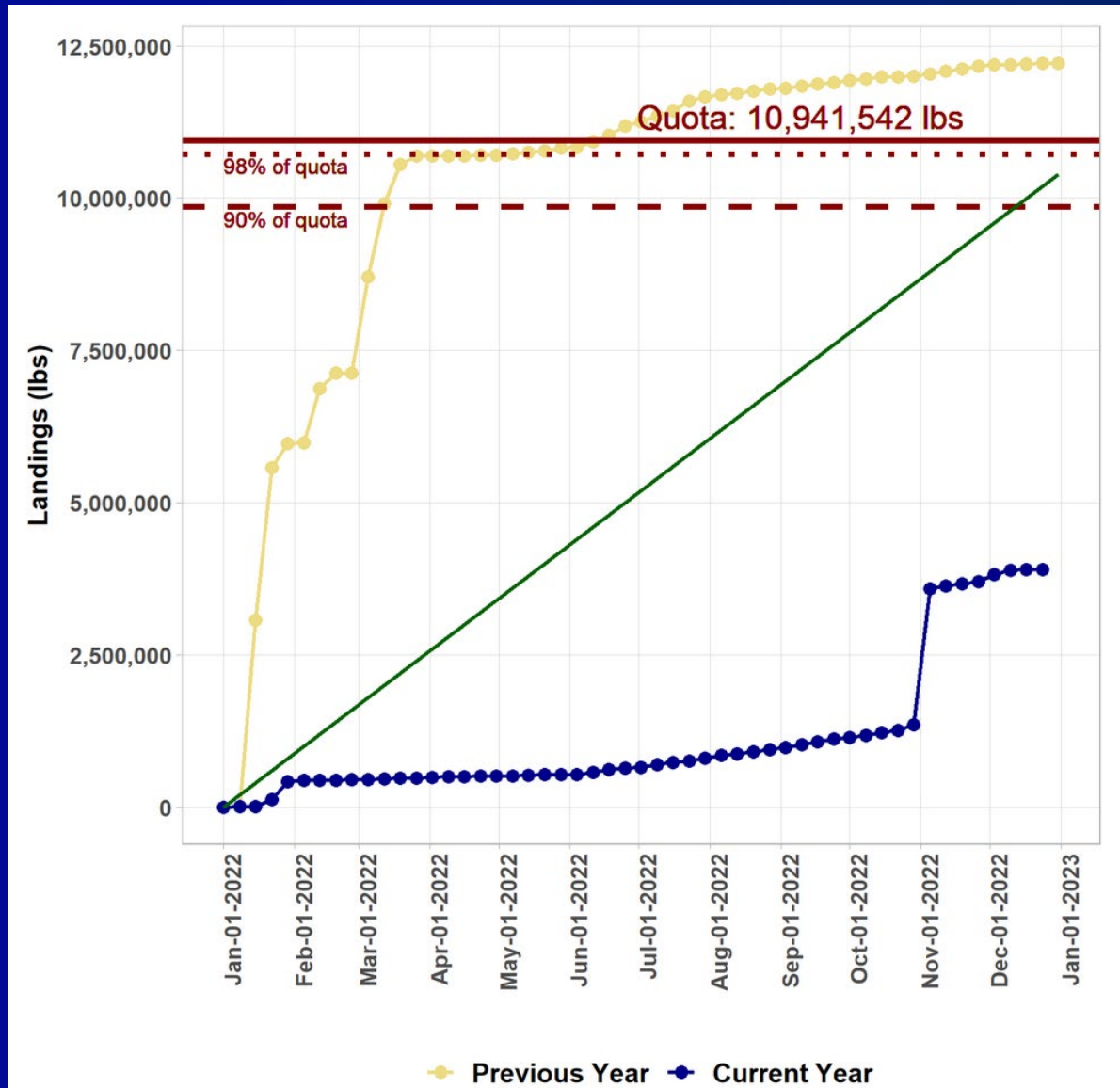


Prices 1996-2022

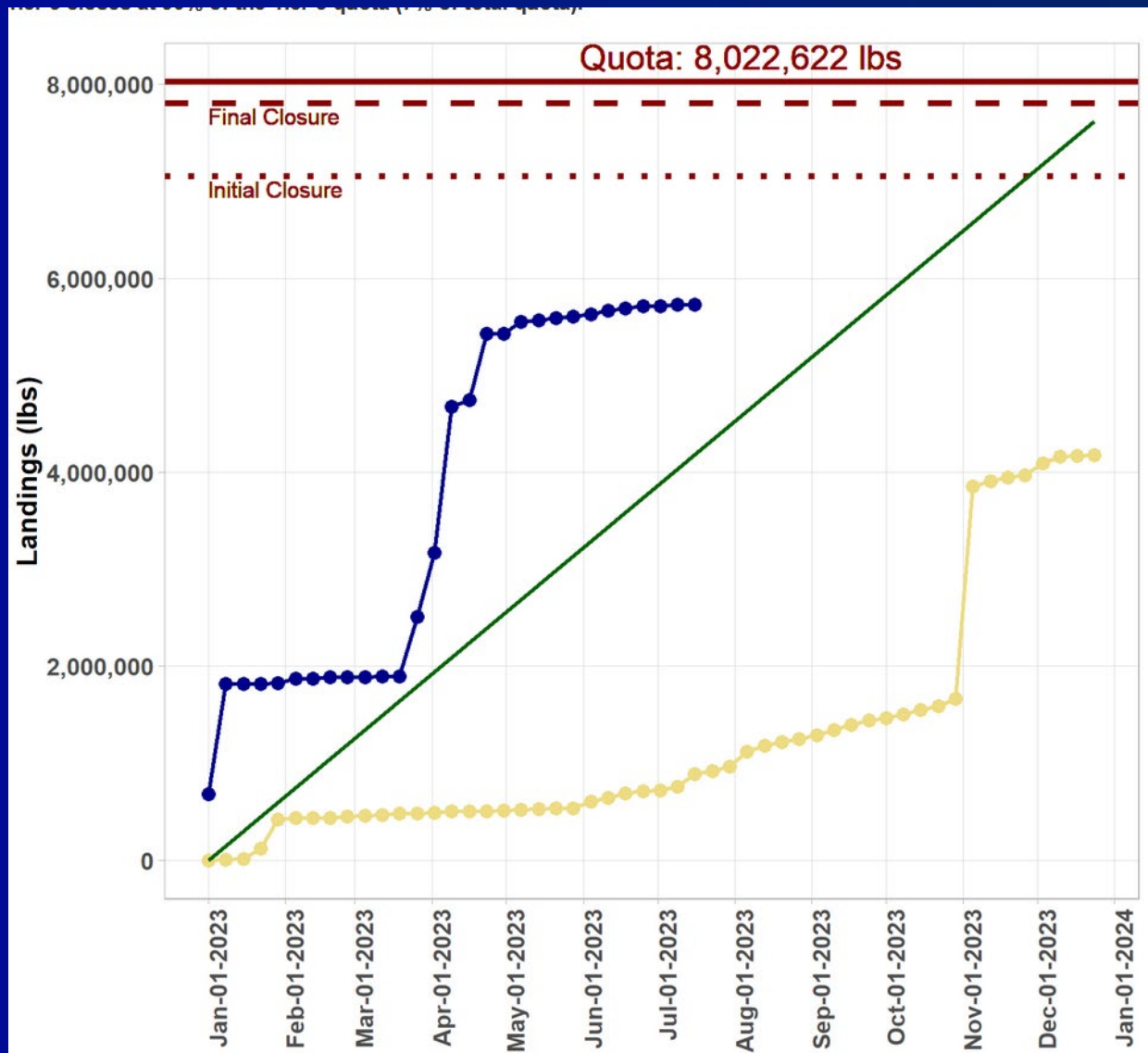
Mackerel Inflation-Adjusted Price \$/MT



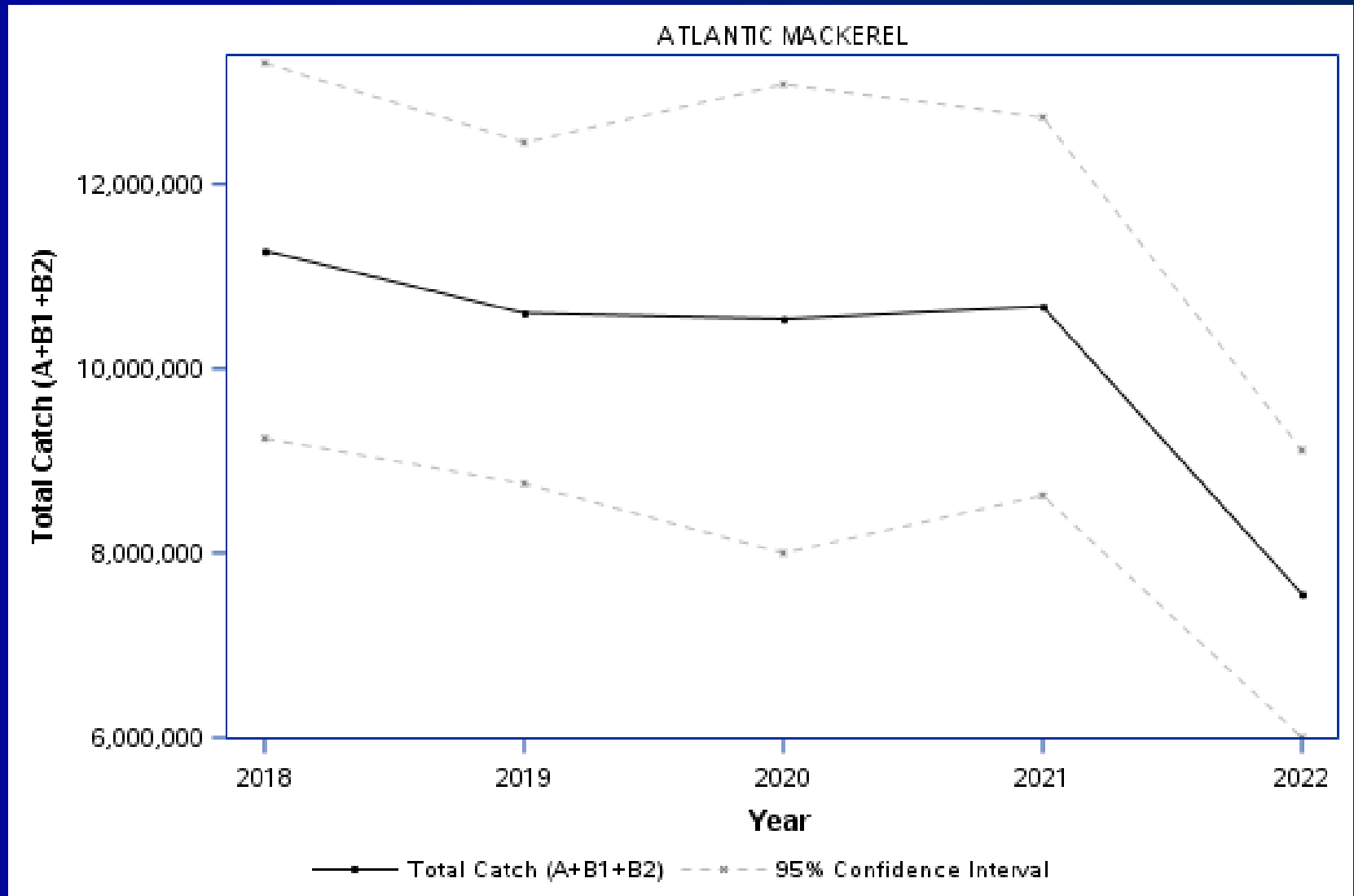
2022/2021



2023/2022



Recreational Catch



Discussion Questions

- What factors influence catch and landings?
- What other issues or concerns do you want to highlight?
- Recommendations for 2024 regulations?
- Research recommendations?

Mackerel – FPR

- Demand/markets not a limiting factor
- No unusual environmental observations
- NEFMC inshore mid-water trawl buffer affected landings 2/10/21 - 3/29/22
- Horsepower restrictions, and resulting speed limitations, may affect the size of the fish in commercial catch

Mackerel – FPR

- Lack of herring RSA quota limited mackerel landings later in the year in recent years
- But trawl boats are allowed to catch herring in the third trimester in area 1A which does allow trawled herring/mackerel catch

Mackerel – FPR

- Criticism of the mackerel fishery has made the creation of a fishery performance report moot
 - in the current situation we can't catch the quota we have, and therefore can't provide fishery-dependent information which will increase assessment uncertainty.

Mackerel – FPR

- Recreational catch and its precision and impact on biomass remain a concern.
 - Drop in 2022 – mostly from Massachusetts' private/rental boat mode: reported but not observed harvests (MRIP B1s) and reported discards (MRIP B2s).
- Concern about mid-water trawl gear and selectivity

Staff ABC Recommendation

- Twice stock has not behaved as projected...
 - Good 2022 recruitment: more of same?
- An ABC of 3,314 MT would allow incidental landings and recreational catch
 - Assuming minimal Canadian catch
- Alternate projection suggests catch around 3,314 MT allows rebuilding (2032) even with 65% pruning of fish that were 1s in 2022

Staff to Council

- Likely recommend that the Council request NMFS take emergency action to close directed mackerel fishing for the remainder of 2023 given that the anticipated F in the alternative projection = overfishing if the full 2023 quota is caught (predicted $F_{2023-Alt}=0.23$)

Big picture...

- result of 35 years straight of overfishing (plus more in the 1970s), often substantial, due to mis-estimation and more recently, mis-projecting (e.g. 1997 catch limit was 10 times the current 1997 biomass estimate)
- Probably not going to be suddenly perfect...
- Seems possible that it might take a while going back the other way...

Questions?