



## Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

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Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director

# MEMORANDUM

**Date:** July 14, 2023  
**To:** Chris Moore, Executive Director  
**From:** Jason Didden, staff  
**Subject:** Status quo recommended for 2024-2026 Longfin Squid ABCs

## **Current Measures and Review of Prior SSC Recommendations**

The primary measures used in the longfin squid fishery to control catch include a discard set-aside, limited access (tiered), and weekly monitoring that is coupled to closure triggers and post-closure trip limits.

The current Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) of 23,400 metric tons (MT) is based on catch in the year of the highest exploitation ratio (1993) from the 2010 assessment. That year is still the highest ratio, but catch in 1993 is now estimated to have been 23,950 MT (due to revised discards). The SSC concluded a 23,400 MT annual catch appears to be sustainable based on empirical evidence. They have noted that considering exploitation on a seasonal basis (rather than annual) may call into question whether stock exploitation has been persistently low.

## **Recent Catch and Landings**

Recent landings have been typically variable but 2022 landings were higher than any since 1999. Discards are consistently a very small component of catch.

## **Stock Status and Biological Reference Points**

There is no overfishing reference point. Biomass has never declined below the overfished threshold. While the meaningfulness of the stocks reference point may be questioned, there appears to be no long-term trend in annualized biomass and the terminal year's (2022) biomass was relatively high.

## **Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends the current ABC of 23,400 MT be maintained until there is an assessment to justify a change. Staff also notes that the sources cited in regard to “two” cohorts (Brodziak and Macy, 1996; Macy and Brodziak, 2001) suggest several assessments may be needed throughout the year to capture the large number of possible micro-cohorts resulting from continuous spawning. Additional information on fishery performance and management measures can be found in the 2023 Fishery Information Document and the 2023 Fishery Performance Report developed by the Mackerel-Squid-Butterfish (MSB) Advisory Panel (AP).