

indicate that VA is the only state required to reduce summer flounder landings (by 11 percent) in 2003. States other than VA (from ME to NC) do not require any reductions in recreational summer flounder landings if their current regulations are maintained. If the preferred conservation equivalency alternative is effective at achieving the recreational harvest limit, then it is likely to be the only alternative that minimizes economic impacts, to the extent practicable, yet achieves the biological objectives of the FMP. Because states have a choice, it is more rational for the states to adopt conservation equivalent measures that result in fewer adverse economic impacts than to acquiesce to the much more restrictive measures contained in the precautionary default alternative.

The impacts of the non-preferred summer flounder coastwide alternative (in Alternative 2), which proposes a 17-inch (43.2-cm) minimum fish size, a possession limit of four fish per person, and no closed season, were evaluated using the quantitative method described above. Impacted trips were defined as individual angler trips taken aboard party/charter vessels in 2002 that landed at least one summer flounder smaller than 17 inches (43.2 cm), or that landed more than four summer flounder. The analysis concluded that the measures would affect 1 percent or less of the party/charter trips in most states, with state revenue losses identified for MA (\$927), Rhode Island (RI) (\$15,850), NY (\$155,636), NJ (\$22,208), DE (\$570), MD (\$570), VA (\$7,362), and NC (\$161). (These figures are for all vessels operating in each state rather than for each vessel.) No state revenue losses were identified for ME, New Hampshire (NH), or Connecticut (CT).

The average maximum gross revenue loss per party/charter vessel was estimated to be \$9 in MA, \$634 in RI, \$2,993 in NY, \$347 in NJ, \$285 in DE, \$190 in MD, \$409 in VA, and \$23 in NC. For the reasons noted above (alternative species, catch and release fishing, etc.), it is very likely that some anglers would continue to take party/charter vessel trips, even if the restrictions limit their landings. Therefore, this method is likely to overestimate the potential revenue impacts of the proposed measures. In addition, an average of 8 percent of recreational summer flounder landings were derived from the EEZ in 2001. Federal coastwide measures would apply to federally permitted vessels wherever they fish. However, the states could potentially implement different recreational measures for summer flounder.

Precautionary default measures are defined as measures that would achieve at least the overall required reduction in landings for each state. The precautionary default measures specified by the Council and Board (in Alternative 3) consists of an 18-inch (45.72-cm) minimum fish size, a possession limit of one fish per person, and no closed season.

The precautionary default measures would reduce state specific landings by a range of 41 percent (DE) to 88 percent (NC). As specified by Framework 2 to the Federal FMP, states that fail to implement conservation equivalent measures would be required to implement precautionary default measures. The state-specific landings reductions associated with the precautionary default measures are substantially higher than the reductions that would be implemented using conservation equivalency. As such, it is expected that states will avoid the impacts of precautionary approach measures by establishing conservation equivalent management measures. Therefore, the precautionary default provision that is included in the conservation equivalency proposal was not analyzed as a separate provision.

Impacts of Scup Alternatives

The proposed action for scup would limit coastwide landings to 4.01 million lb (1,819 mt) and reduce landings by at least 27 percent compared to 2001.

For the preferred scup alternative (in Alternative 1), impacted trips were defined as individual angler trips taken aboard party/charter vessels in 2002 that landed at least one scup smaller than 10 inches (25.4 cm), that landed more than 50 scup, or that landed at least one scup during the proposed closed seasons of March 1 through June 30, and December 1 through December 31. The analysis concluded that the measures would affect 10 percent of the party/charter trips in MA and 1 percent or less of the party/charter trips in five states, with statewide revenue losses identified for MA (\$421,057), RI (\$2,324), NY (\$1,829), NJ (\$6,475), MD (\$25,450), and NC (\$8,064).

The average maximum gross revenue loss per party/charter vessel associated with the preferred scup alternative was estimated to be \$8,593 in MA, \$166 in RI, \$59 in NY, \$185 in NJ, \$25,450 in MD, and \$2,688 in NC.

For the scup no action alternative (in Alternative 2), impacted trips were defined as individual angler trips taken aboard party/charter vessels in 2002 that landed at least one scup smaller than 10 inches (25.4 cm), that landed more than 20 scup, or that landed at least one scup

during the periods of March 1 through June 30, and October 3 through December 31. The analysis concluded that the measures would affect 11 percent of angler trips taken aboard party/charter boats in MA, 4 percent in RI, 5 percent in NY, and less than 1 percent in NJ, DE, MD, and NC, with statewide revenue losses identified for MA (\$486,423), RI (\$55,664), NY (\$702,429), NJ (\$67,060), MD (\$25,450), and NC (\$8,064). No state revenue losses were identified for ME, NH, CT, DE, or VA.

The average maximum gross revenue loss per party/charter vessel associated with this alternative was estimated to be \$9,927 in MA, \$3,976 in RI, \$22,659 in NY, \$1,916 in NJ, \$25,450 in MD, and \$2,688 in NC.

For the scup measures considered in Alternative 3, impacted trips were defined as individual angler trips taken aboard party/charter vessels in 2002 that landed at least one scup smaller than 10 inches, that landed more than 50 scup, or that landed at least one scup during the period of March 1 through July 13. The analysis concluded that the measures in this alternative would affect 11 percent of the party/charter trips in MA and 1 percent or less of the party/charter trips in most states, with statewide revenue losses identified for MA (\$469,518), RI (\$9,576), NY (\$81,902), NJ (\$19,880), MD (\$25,450), and NC (\$8,064). No state revenue losses were identified for ME, NH, CT, DE, or VA.

The average maximum gross revenue loss per party/charter vessel associated with this alternative was estimated to be \$9,582 in MA, \$684 in RI, \$2,642 in NY, \$568 in NJ, \$25,450 in MD, and \$2,688 in NC.

Impacts of Black Sea Bass Alternatives

The proposed action for black sea bass would limit coastwide landings to 3.43 million lb (1,557 mt) and reduce landings by at least 27 percent compared to 2002.

For the preferred black sea bass alternative (in Alternative 1), impacted trips were defined as individual angler trips taken aboard party/charter vessels in 2002 that landed at least one black sea bass smaller than 12 inches (30.48 cm), that landed more than 25 black sea bass, or that landed at least one black sea bass during the proposed closed seasons of September 2 through September 15, and December 1 through December 31. The analysis concluded that the measures would affect 3 percent of the party/charter trips in NJ, 4 percent in DE, and 1 percent or less in most states, with statewide revenue losses identified for MA (\$1,805), RI