

Summary of Georges Bank Atlantic cod in New Jersey MRIP records – revisited  
May 2023  
M Celestino

## Introduction

Staff presented an overview of Atlantic cod MRIP records at the March 2023 meeting of the New Jersey Marine Fisheries Council. In response to some Council questions, staff re-examined MRIP records to more finely estimate an anticipated reduction in removals by implementing a 23-inch minimum size limit, 5 fish bag limit, and closed season of June-August, inclusive.

## Results

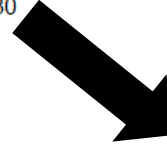
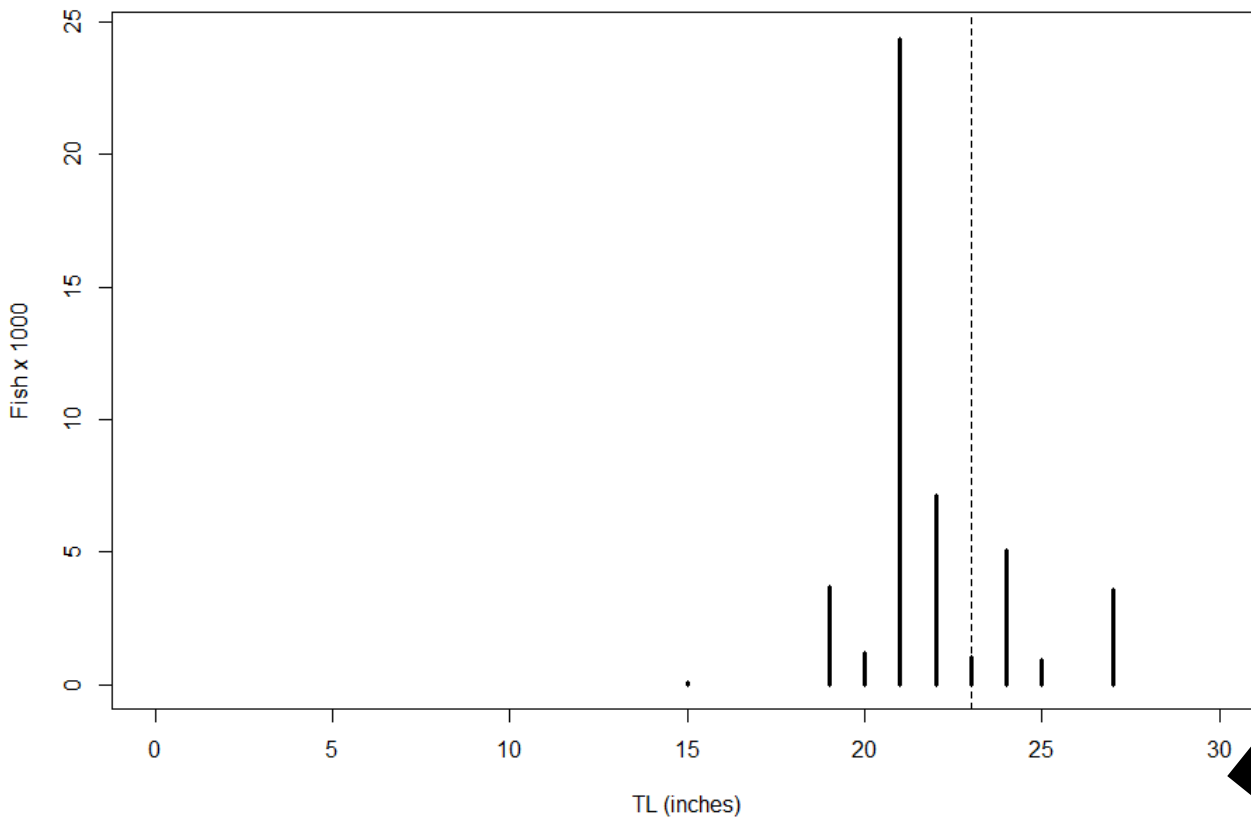
Regarding the 23-inch size limit, the results of the re-examination indicated that two fish recorded in 2021 that were expanded to 19,000 fish were initially driving the results. When 2021 is omitted, as would likely occur in a Technical Committee analysis, the expected reduction becomes more modest (slide 1). While a range of reductions are possible, the most likely to be used in a Technical Committee analysis would be reductions of 43% (most recent 10 years that omits 2021 and fish from Jun-Aug) and 23% (the most recent 5 years that omits 2021).

There is almost no impact to anglers in NJ due to a closed season of June through August (slide 2). The anticipated reduction is 1%.

Regarding the bag limit, based on data from the last 10 years, we expect very little impact in NJ waters (slide 3).

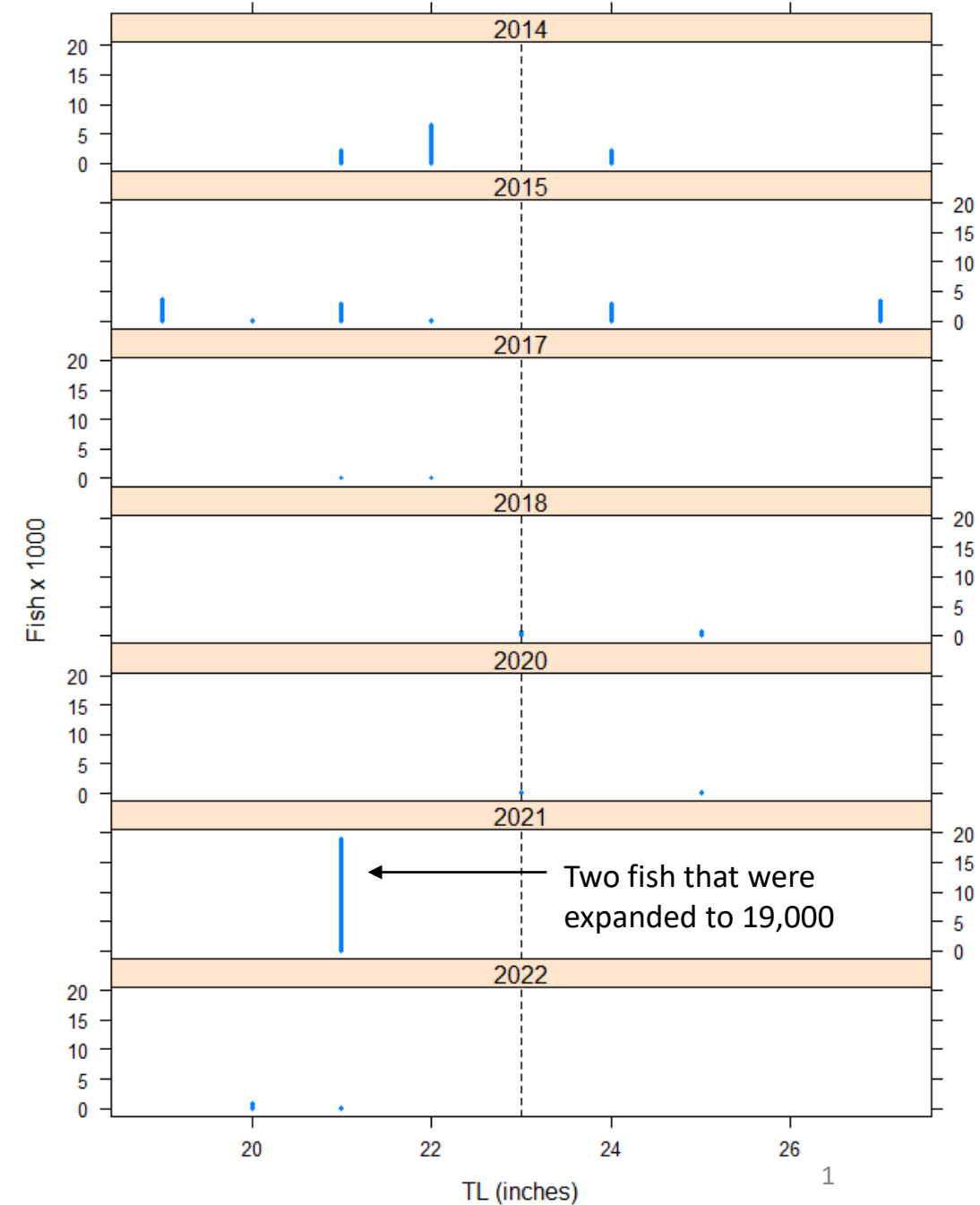
**The range of total reductions we might expect from the proposed size, season, and bag limit, ranges from 26%** (assuming a 23% reduction due to size limit) **to 46%** (assuming a 43% reduction due to size limit) (slide 4).

Pooled length frequency (2013-2022)



- 64% reduction based on 2018-2021\* (but see 2021)
- 55% reduction based on 2013-2022\* (omitting handful of fish from Jun-Aug)
- 43% reduction based on 2013-2022\* (omitting 2021 & handful of fish from Jun-Aug)
- 23% reduction based on 2018-2022\*, without 2021

\*No cod measured in 2013 or 2019



Almost no impact in NJ waters to closing June-Aug  
except in 2017, and note scale of estimated removals in  
that year (~40 fish); state waters removals only.

	Removals		
	current	proposed	% change
2022	4,112	4,112	0%
2021	21,389	21,389	0%
2020	743	743	0%
2019	0	0	0%
2018	2,010	2,010	0%
2017	38	20	-48%
2016	19,339	19,053	-1%
2015	15,752	15,752	0%
2014	11,410	11,245	-1%
2013	0	0	0%
sum	74,793	74,324	-1%
avg	7,479	7,432	-1%
wtd avg			-1%

Shown at March 2023  
MFC mtg

Trips  
impacted by 5  
fish bag limit

Harvest summary (NJ state waters only)

Year	harvest_1	harvest_2	harvest_3	harvest_4	harvest_5	harvest_6
2022	2					
2021		1				
2020		1				
2019						
2018		1				
2017	2					
2016						
2015	5	2				
2014	3					1
2013						

Expected  $\Delta$  from bag limit= -4%

# Total reduction

- Size, season, bag limit (low estimate) = 26%
- Size, season, bag limit (high estimate) = 46%