

Blue Crab Traffic Light Update



N.C. Marine Fisheries Commission

Aug. 20, 2015



Blue Crab Traffic Light Overview

- Implemented in Amendment 2 (November 2013)
- Divided into three characteristics
 - Adult Abundance
 - Recruit Abundance*
 - Production
- Adult Abundance and Production used to trigger management action

*Recruit Abundance not used to trigger management action



Blue Crab Traffic Light Overview

- Management Thresholds
 - 50 percent red (Moderate Management Level)
 - 75 percent red (Elevated Management Level)
- Overfished if Production \geq 75 percent red for three consecutive years



Blue Crab Traffic Light Overview

- Moderate Management Triggered
 - Adult Abundance or Production \geq 50 percent red for three consecutive years
- Elevated Management Triggered
 - Adult Abundance or Production \geq 75 percent red for two of three consecutive years
- Recruit Abundance used to supplement management if needed



Blue Crab Traffic Light Overview

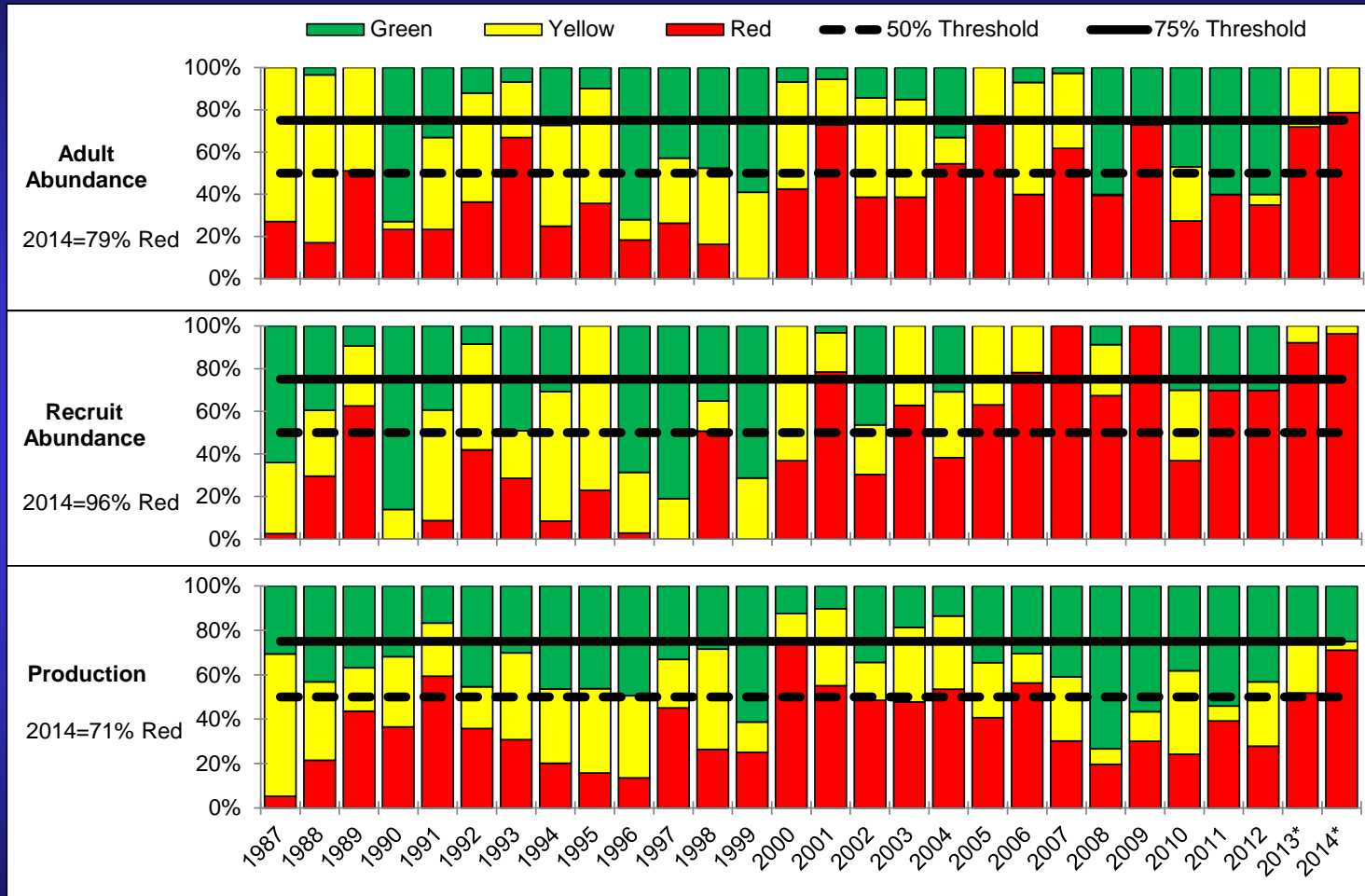
Why was the three year time frame chosen?

Division recommended and Marine Fisheries Commission agreed to three years to:

- Prevent action due to annual variability
- Action based on short but continued negative trend



Blue Crab Traffic Light Results



Blue Crab Traffic Light Results

- Second consecutive year Adult Abundance has exceeded 50 percent threshold
- Second consecutive year Production has exceeded 50 percent threshold
- First year Adult Abundance has exceeded 75 percent threshold



Blue Crab Traffic Light Results

- Fourth consecutive year Recruit Abundance has exceeded 50 percent threshold
- Second consecutive year Recruit Abundance has exceeded 75 percent threshold



Next Steps

- Update Traffic Light with 2015 data once available (February-March 2016)
- If Adult Abundance or Production \geq 50 percent red or Adult Abundance \geq 75 percent red
 - Blue Crab Plan Development Team will develop suite of possible management options
 - Present options to Shellfish/Crustacean Advisory Committee March-April 2016
 - Present to Marine Fisheries Commission for action May 2016



Questions?

