



# Allocation as a Fisheries Management Tool

*Department of Environmental Quality  
Marine Fisheries*

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# Overview

- What is allocation?
- Types of allocations
- How allocations are set
- Considerations for using allocation as a management tool



## *Disclaimer*

- I'm not an allocation expert—nobody is!
- Experience with reallocation actions for several MAFMC & ASMFC-managed species over the last 7-8 years
- Evolving process
- Controversial, some more than others



# *What is Allocation?*



- Distributing a catch limit or quota among sectors in a fishery
- Examples:
  - Commercial & Recreational Allocations
  - Commercial State/Regional Allocations (including gear allocations)
  - Time Period Allocations
  - Individual Allocations
- Federally managed fisheries require annual catch limits
  - Allocations common
- ASMFC & state FMPs do not require annual catch limits
  - Allocations not as common



# *Fisheries Managed Under Allocations*



## South & Mid-Atlantic Councils

Summer Flounder\*, Scup\*, Black Sea Bass\*, Bluefish\*, Blueline Tilefish, Spanish Mackerel\*, King Mackerel, Spiny Dogfish\*, Dolphin, Wahoo, Most Snapper-Grouper Complex Species

## ASMFC

Cobia, Atlantic Menhaden, Striped Bass, American Eel

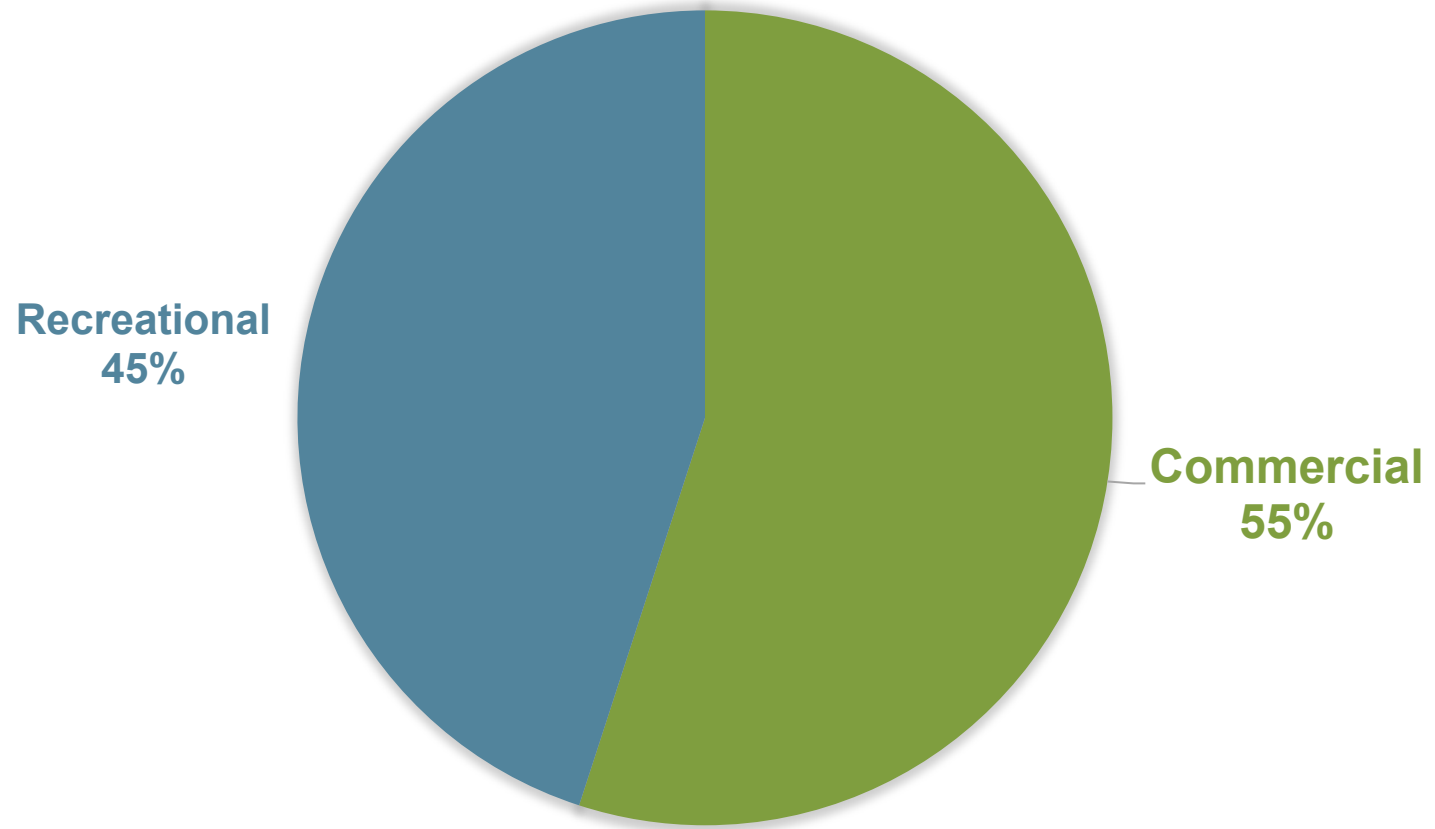
## North Carolina

Striped Bass (Albemarle-Roanoke), Southern Flounder

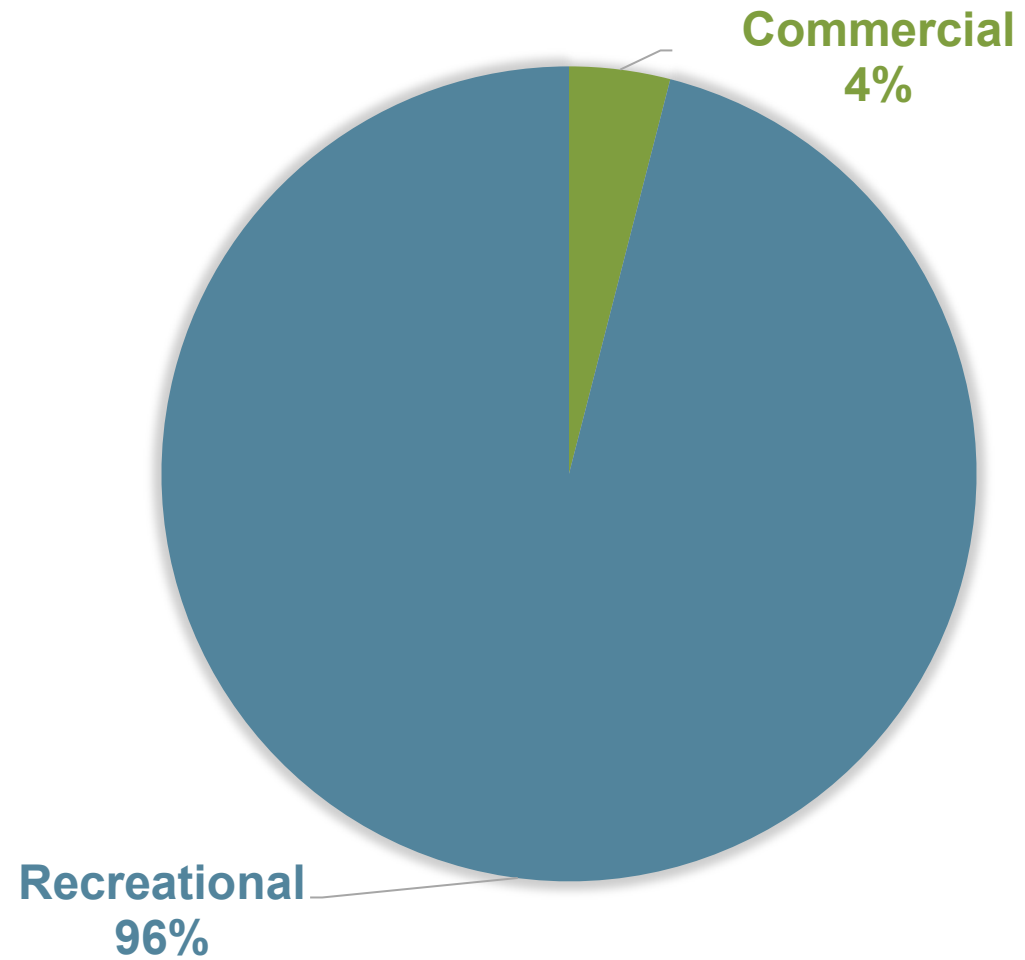
\* Co-managed with ASMFC



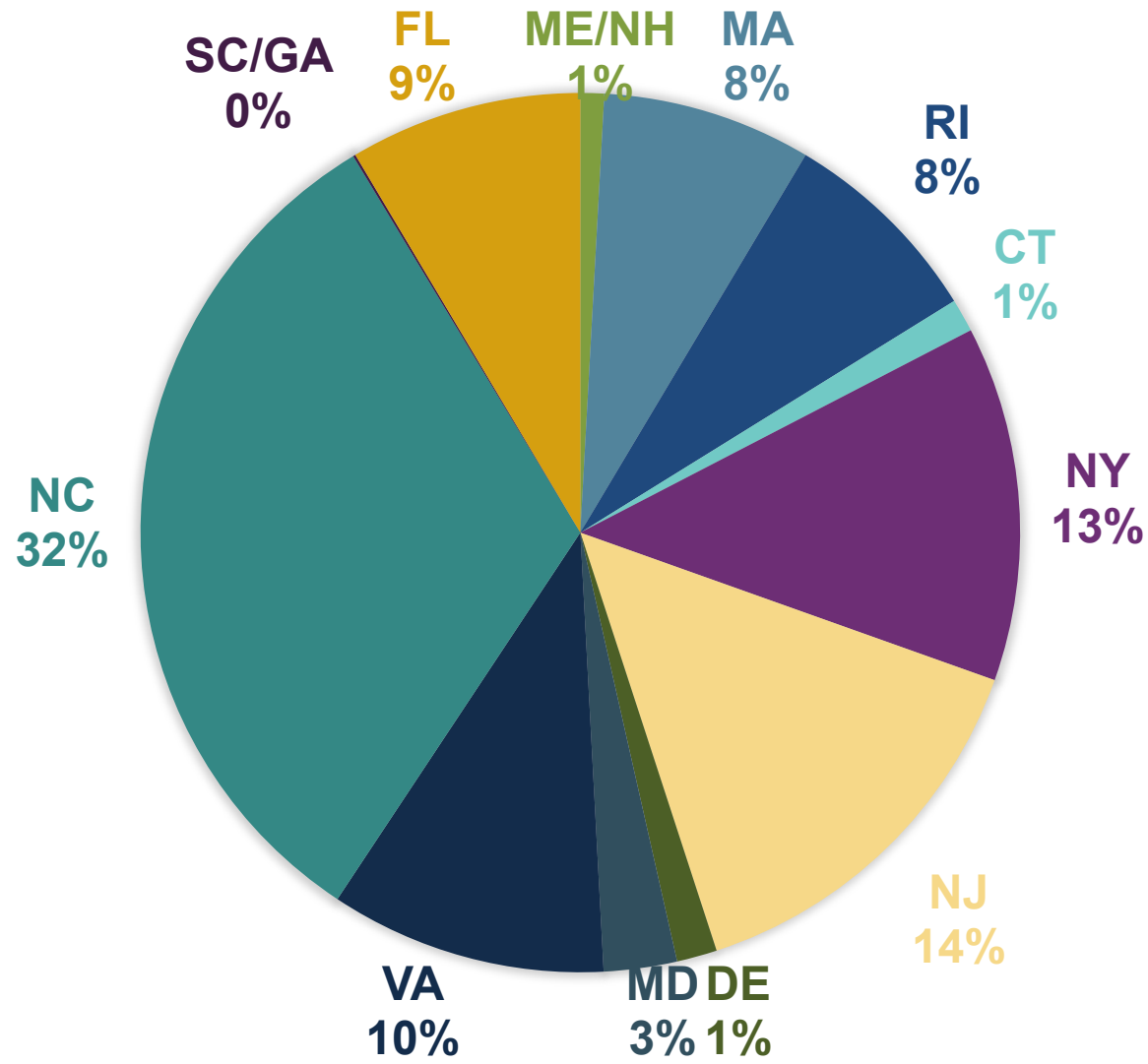
# Recreational/Commercial Summer Flounder Allocations



# Recreational/Commercial Cobia Allocations



# Commercial State Bluefish Allocations





# How Are Allocations Set?



- **Base Years**
  - Most common method
  - Based on landings/catch before management
  - Most recent years
  - Combination of historic and recent years
  - Used for both recreational/commercial & commercial allocations
- **Equal Amounts**
  - Equal allocations without considering past landings
  - Used for both recreational/commercial & commercial allocations
  - Not commonly used
- **Species Distribution**
  - Allocations determined by relative abundance of species across its range
  - Most often used for state/regional commercial allocations
  - Fisheries-independent surveys needed, inherent uncertainty



# Allocation Considerations



- Management Objectives
- Available Resources (Quota Monitoring, Available Data)
- Management Strategy
  - Total Allowable Catch/Total Allowable Landings
  - F-Based Management (ex.: weakfish, black drum, spotted sea trout)
  - Trigger-Based Management (spot, Atlantic croaker, red drum)
  - Allocations not needed for F-based & Trigger-based management
- Management Flexibility (less of it with fixed allocations)
- Economics (recreational & commercial shoreside infrastructure)

# Allocation Considerations



- Allocations should be established with public input
  - Management Options in an FMP amendment
- Clear basis for allocations (base years, species distribution, historical reliance etc.)
- Allocations should be reviewed/updated on a regular basis
  - Reviews & reallocations address changing conditions and fishery patterns
  - Federal Councils generally review allocations at least every 10 years, some sooner
- The longer that allocations are in place, the more challenging and controversial reallocation decisions become
  - Summer flounder commercial state allocations a prime example



# Summary



- Allocation is a fisheries management tool, but it's not always necessary
- Allocations require a clear set of parameters to serve as a basis
- Public input is needed in the allocation decision-making process (ex. FMP management options)
- Allocations should be reviewed periodically



# Questions?

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