

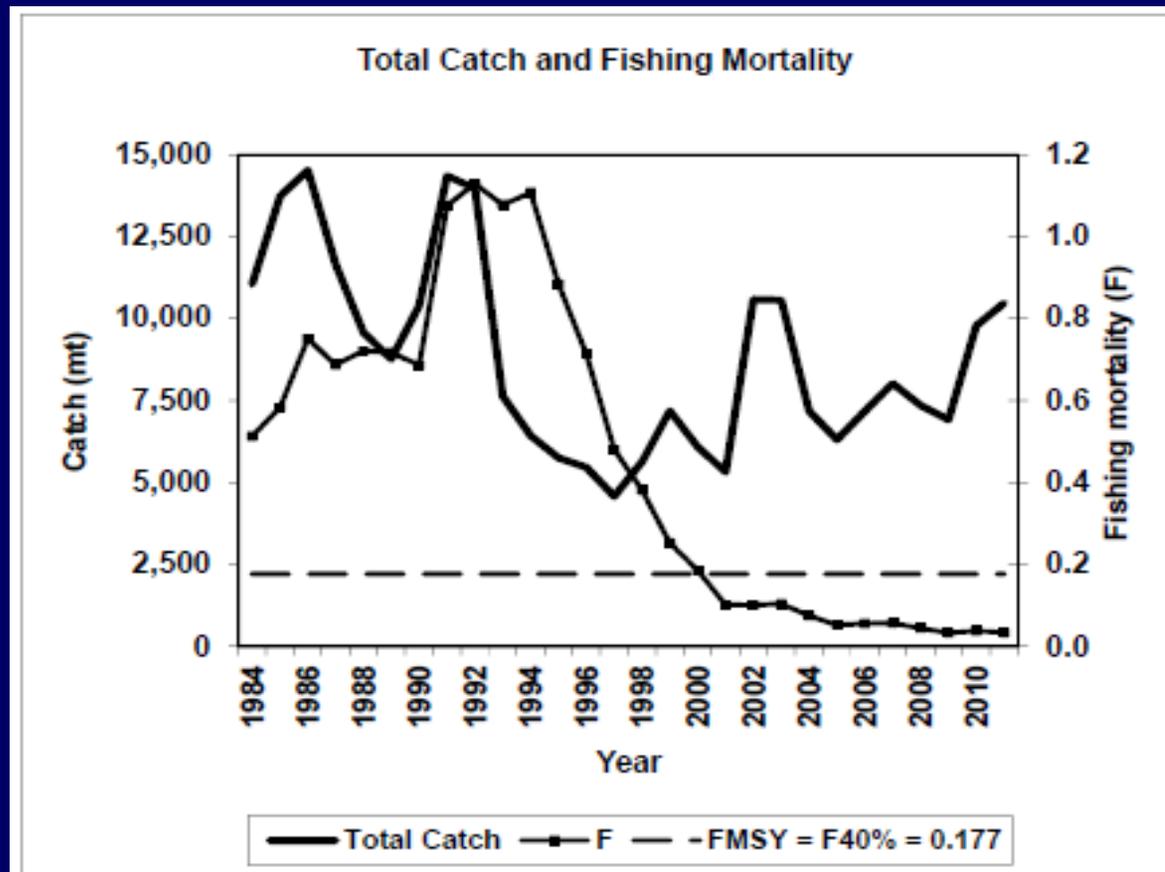
**Summary of Rhode Island Scup
and Black Sea Bass Stock
Status, 2012 Commercial Scup
and Black Sea Bass Fishery
Performance, and Division of
Fish and Wildlife
Recommendations for 2013**



Scup Stock Status

Stock Status:

- Relative to the DPSWG biological reference points, the stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring.
- There is a 50% probability that F in 2011 was between 0.026 and 0.042 . The fishing mortality threshold is $FMSY = 0.177$.

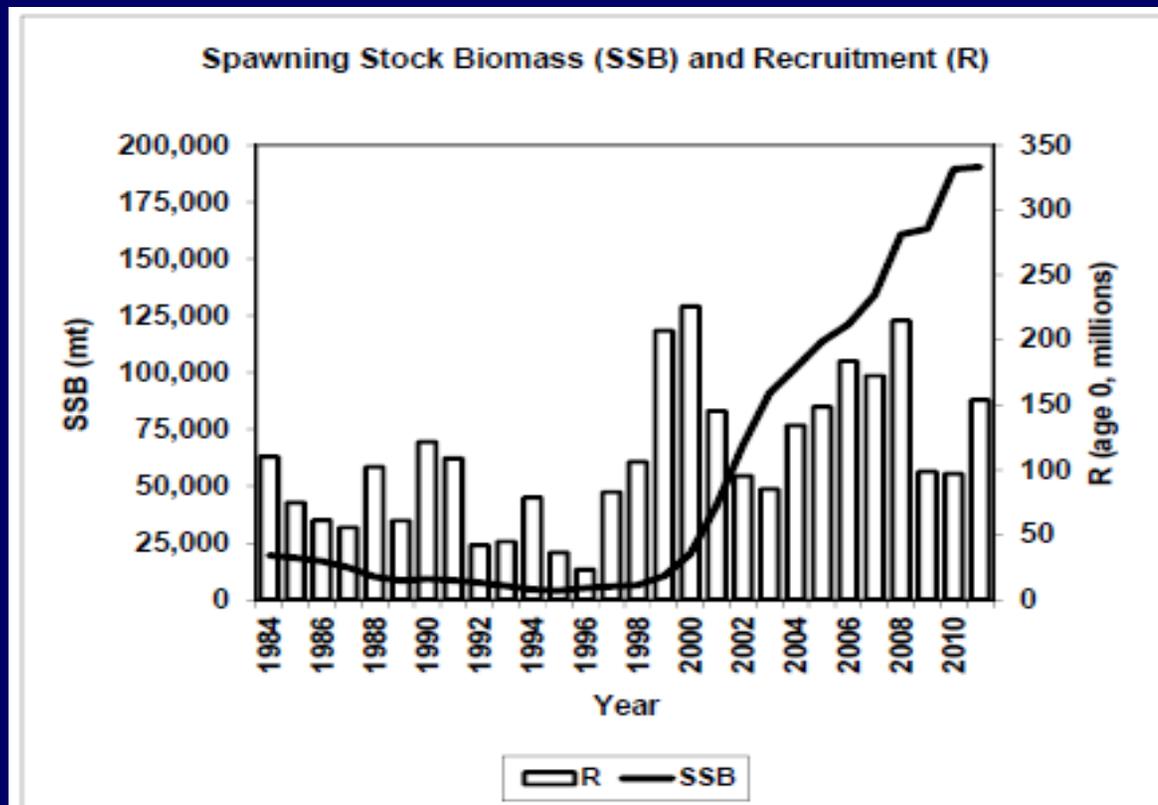


Scup Stock Status

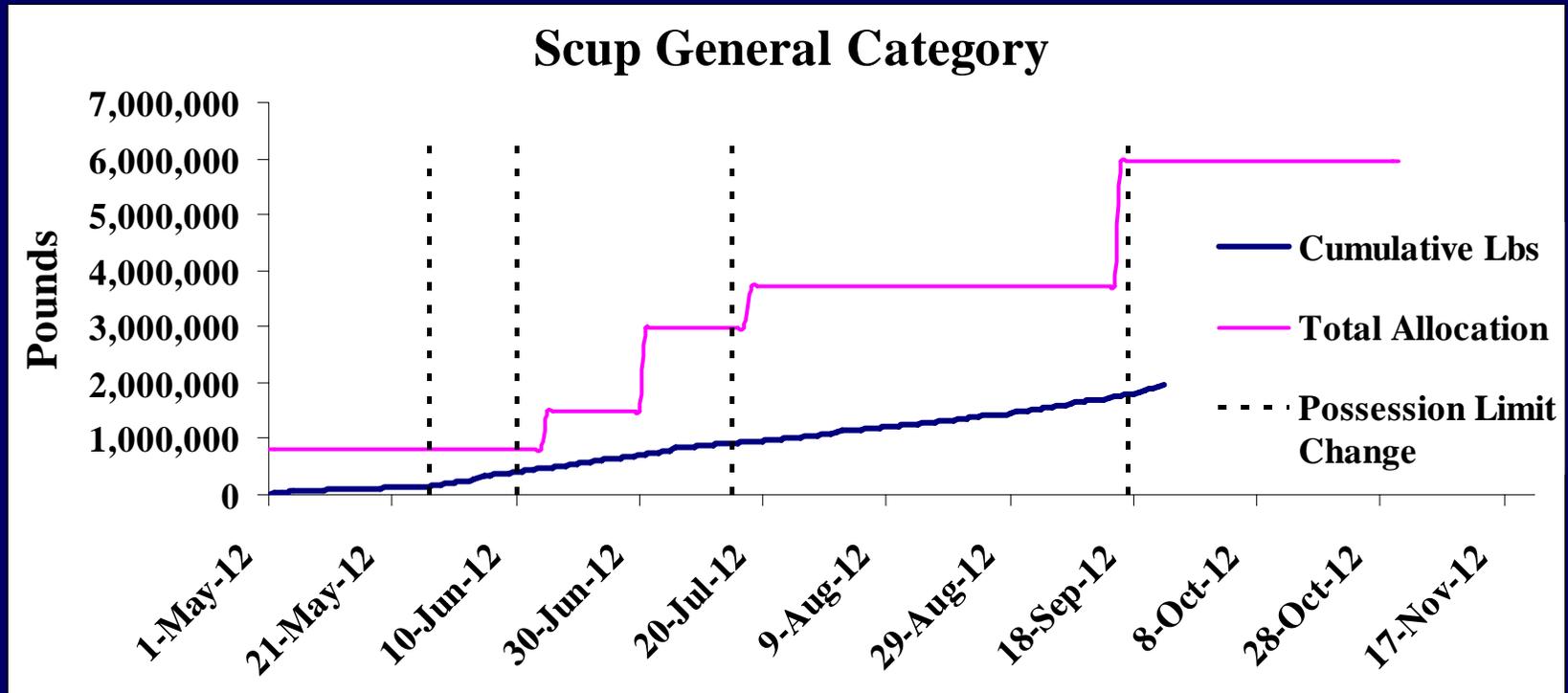
Stock Status:

SSB has steadily increased to about 418.8 m lbs in 2011 (slightly down from 2008). The SSB reference point is $SSB_{MSY} = 202.9$ m lbs. The minimum stock size threshold, one-half SSB_{MSY} , is estimated to be 101.5 m lbs.

Recruitment exceeded the 1984-2011 average of 104 million in 2011.



Commercial Landings – Scup General Category



Possession Limit Changes:

5/1/12 - 5000 lbs/wk

5/27/12 - 10000 lbs/wk

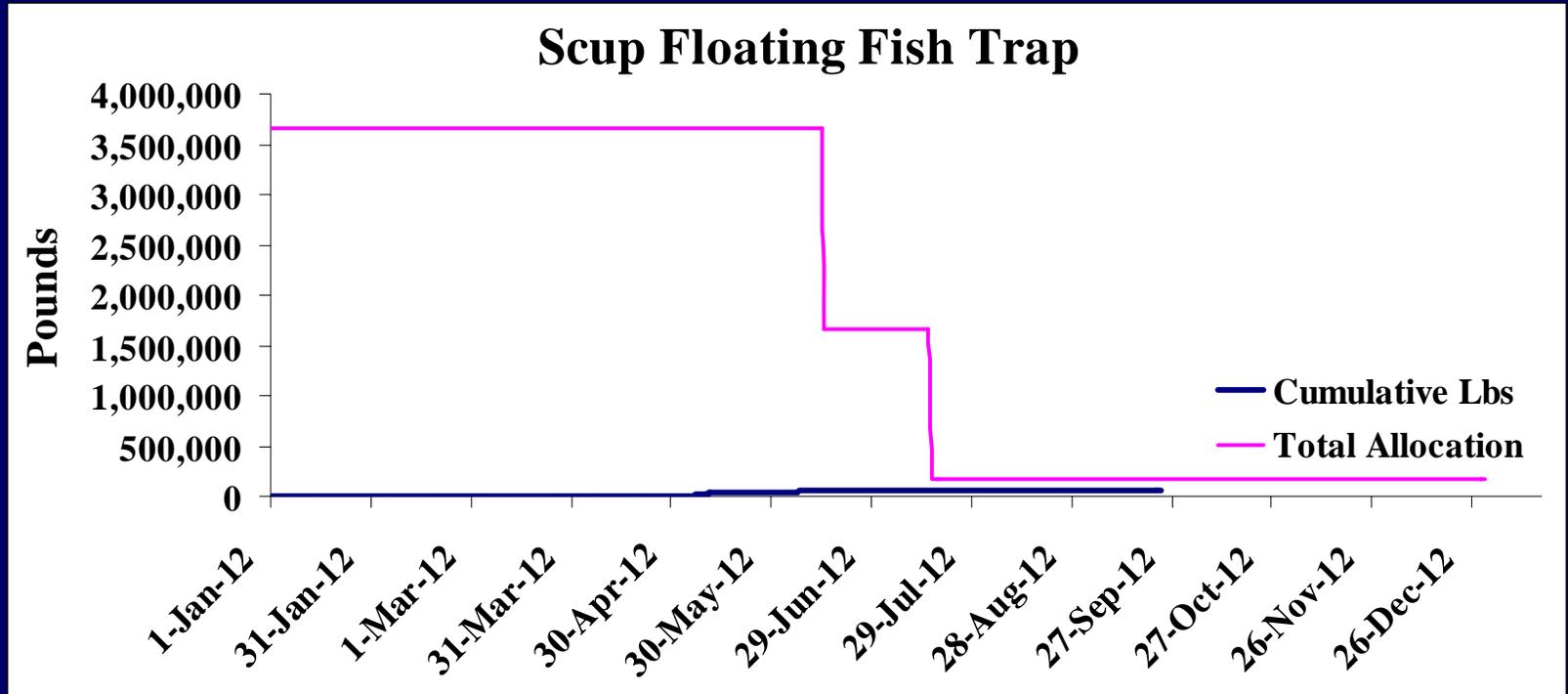
6/10/12 - 20000 lbs/wk

7/15/12 - 30000 lbs/wk

9/17/12 - 50000 lbs/wk



Commercial Landings – Scup Floating Fish Traps



Trap Rollovers:

6/15/12 – 2,000,000 lbs

7/18/12 – 1,500,000 lbs



Commercial Landings – Compliance with the Aggregate program

- Total participation was 412 vessels to date (w/o unknown or from shore)
- Total times participants landed over the weekly aggregate amount were 3 to date
- The total additional pounds landed for entire state period (to date) were 32,027 lbs (less than 1% of Gen. Cat. Allocation)



Scup Management Measure Recommendations 2013

•MAFMC and ASMFC Management Board Recommendations for 2013:

- A Coastwide commercial quota of 23.53 m lbs
- ##Maintain current possession limits. (Winter I: 30,000 lbs per wk/1,000 lbs at 80% quota; Winter II: 2,000 lbs/1,000 lbs at 80% quota, unless trip limits increased by Winter I rollovers)##
- Maintain current minimum fish size and net mesh requirements. (9 inch-TL; 5 inch mesh at trigger)
- Maintain current GRAs.
- Maintain current escape vent requirements in scup pots.



Preliminary 2013 Commercial Allocations

- Coastwide Commercial Quota = 23,530,000 lbs
- Coastwide Summer Allocation (38.95% of total, RSA not removed) = 9,164,935 lbs
- RSA assumed to be roughly 3% of quota
- Coastwide Summer Allocation (assumed RSA removed) = 8,889,987 lbs
- RI 2013 Commercial Quota (56.19%, estimated RSA removed) = 4,995,284 lbs (16% decr from 2012 quota)
- 2013 Floating Fish Trap allocation = 2,997,170 lbs
- 2013 General Category = 1,998,113 lbs
 - May 1 – June 30 = 666,038 lbs
 - July 1 – Sept 15 = 666,038 lbs
 - Sept 16 – Oct 31 = 666,037 lbs



Division of Fish and Wildlife Proposed Changes

•The RI Division of Fish and Wildlife proposes increasing the starting aggregate limits in an effort to keep up with the high level of quota. The Division recommends the following:

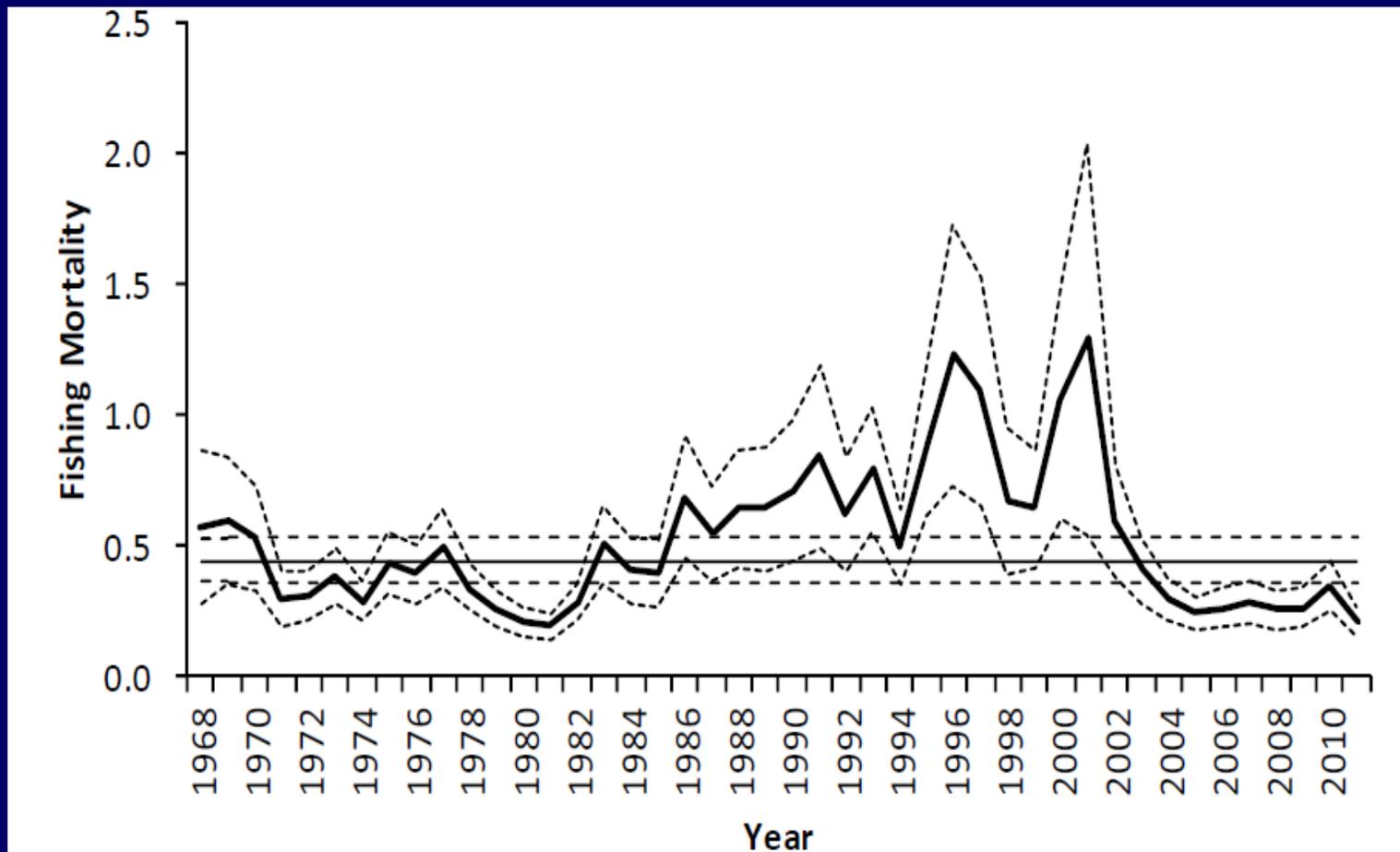
- May – June 30 = 10,000 lbs/wk
- July 1 – Sept 15 = 10,000 lbs/wk
- Sept 16 – Oct 31 = 10,000 lbs/wk



Black Sea Bass Stock Status

Stock Status:

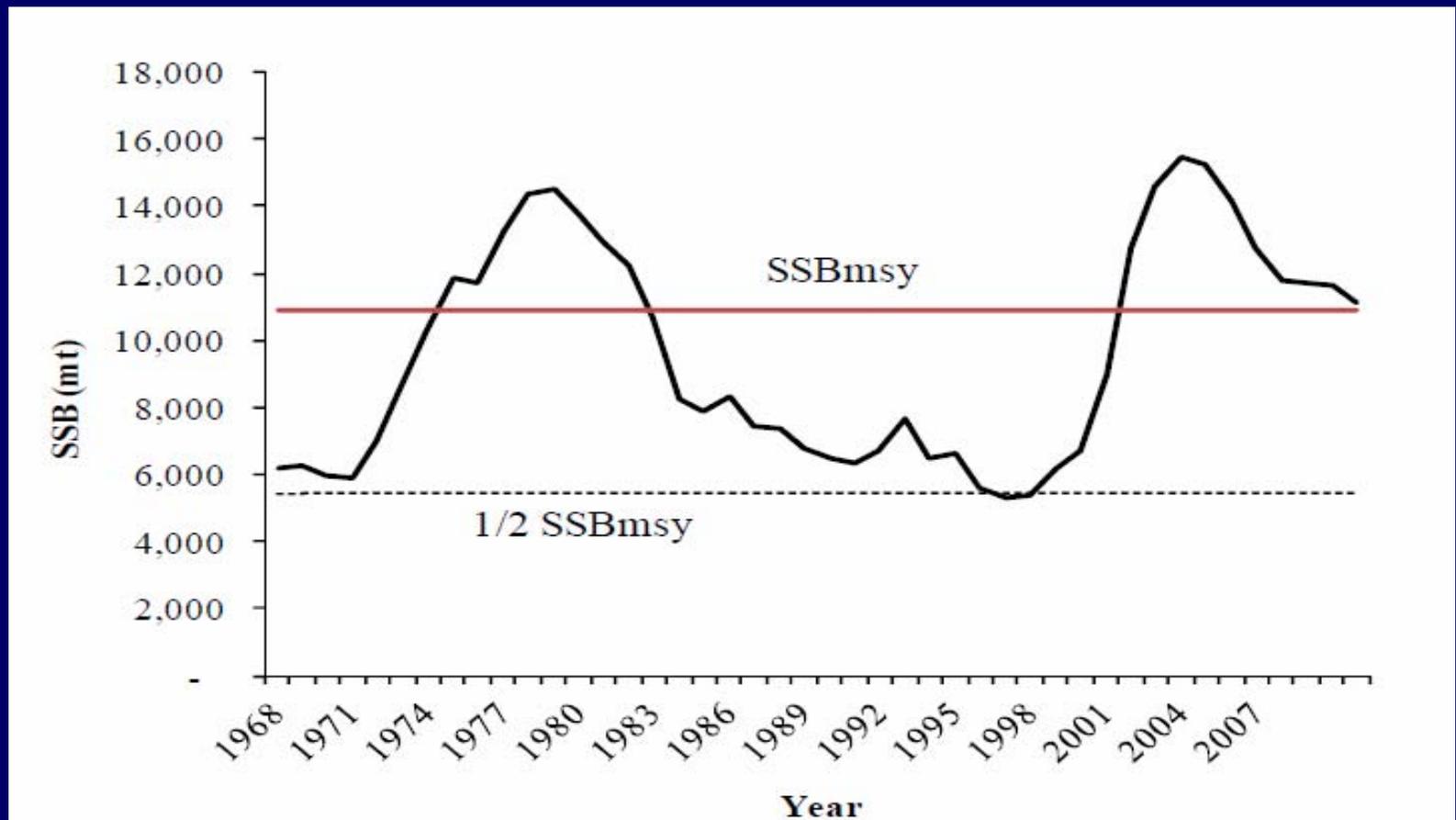
- Relative to the DPSWG biological reference points, the stock is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring.
- Fishing mortality $F = 0.21$ in 2011, less than the threshold $F = 0.44$



Black Sea Bass Stock Status

Stock Status:

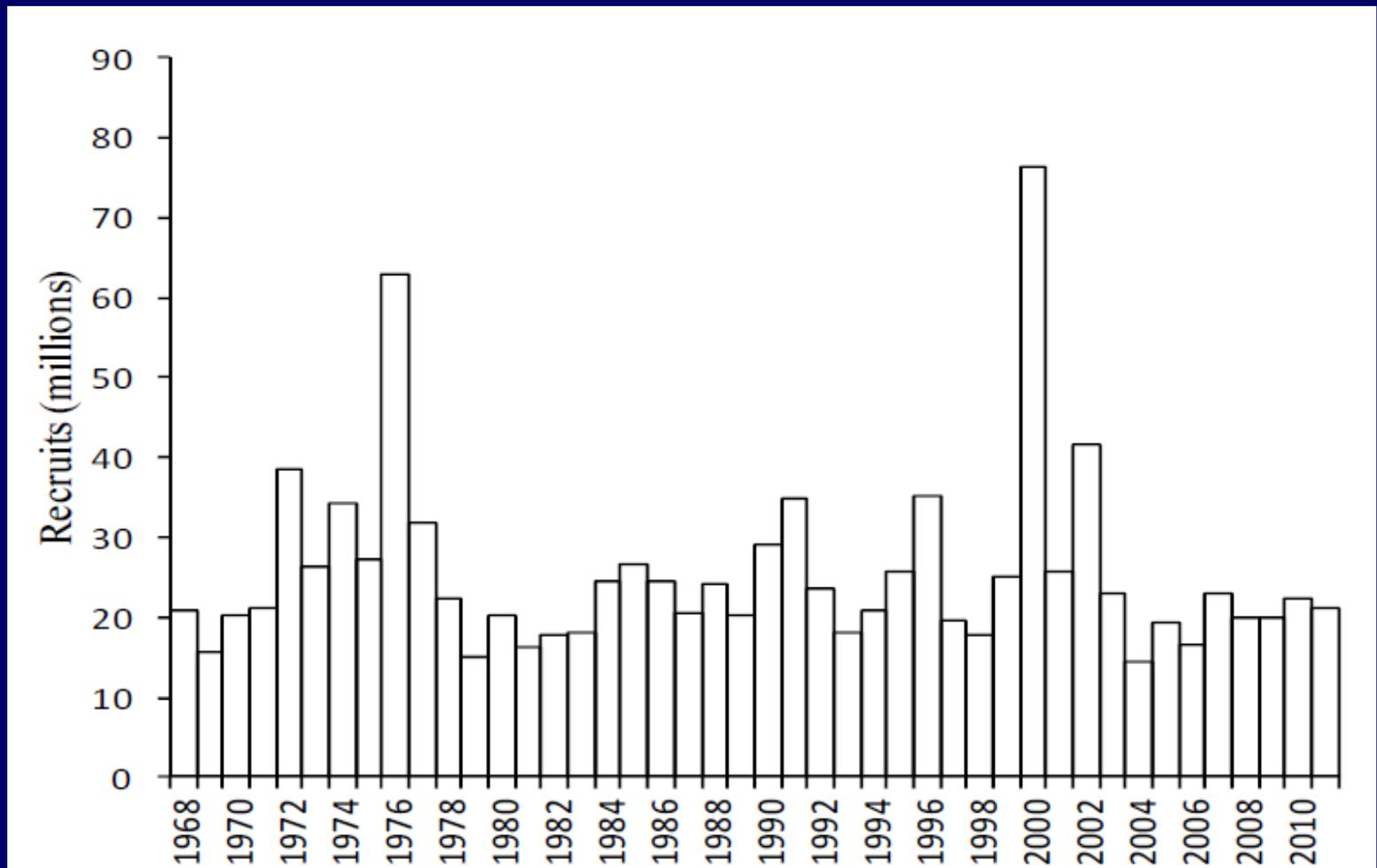
SSB was 24.6 million lbs in 2011. The SSB reference point is $SSB_{MSY} = 24.9$ million lbs. The minimum stock size threshold, one-half SSB_{MSY} , is estimated to be 12.5 million lbs.



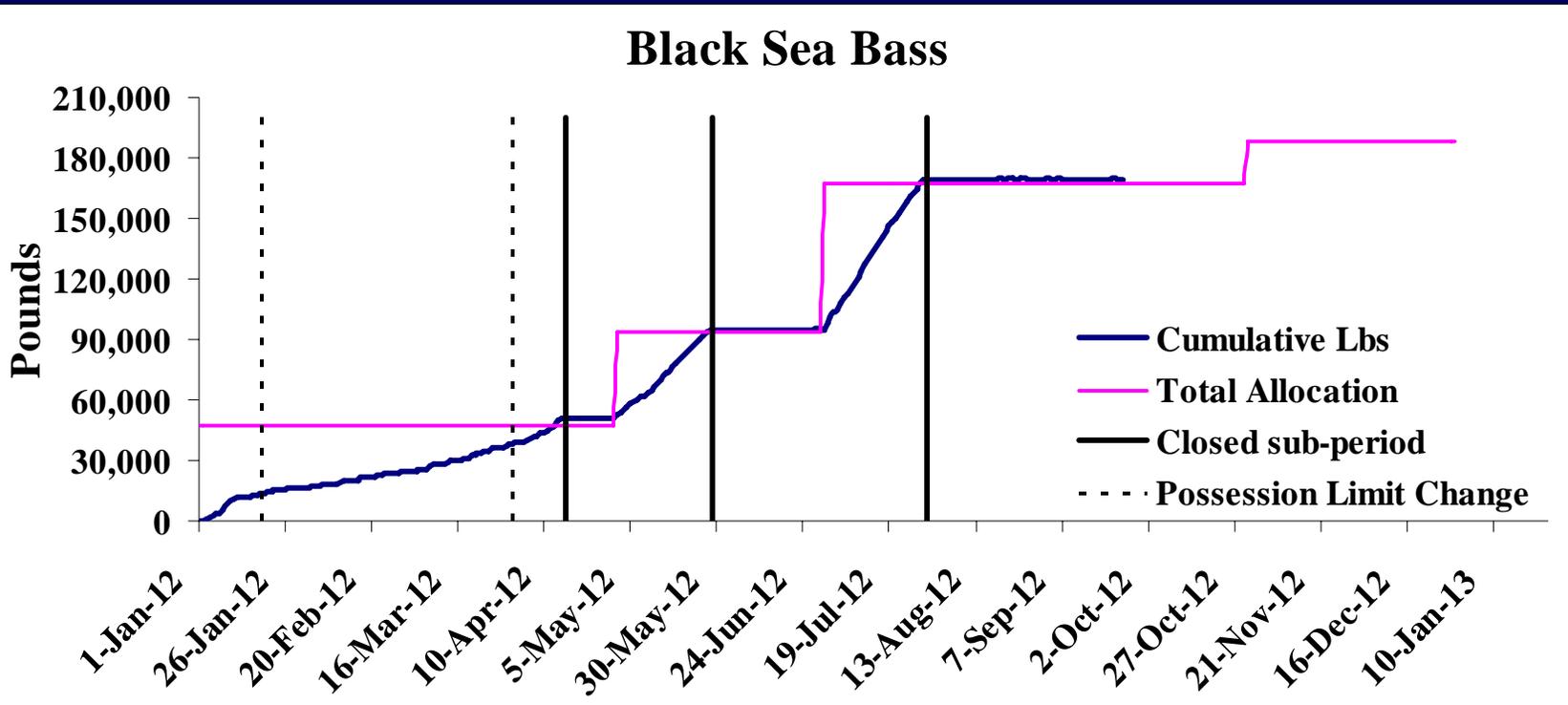
Black Sea Bass Stock Status

•Stock Status:

•2011 recruitment was 21 million fish, recent years have been near average.



Commercial Landings – Black Sea Bass



Possession Limit Changes:

1/1/12 - 750 lbs/day

1/19/12 - 500 lbs/day

4/1/12 - 250 lbs/day

4/16/12 - CLOSED

5/1/12 - 50 lbs/day (new sub period)

5/29/12 - CLOSED

7/1/12 - 50 lbs/day (new sub period)

7/30/12 - CLOSED



Black Sea Bass Management Measure Recommendations 2013

•Monitoring and SSC Recommendations for 2013:

•The SSC recommended remaining at status quo for 2013, citing significant uncertainty in the stock assessment.

•Coastwide commercial quota (RSA not removed) = 1,780,000 lbs

•RSA assumed to be roughly 3% of quota

•Coastwide commercial quota (assumed RSA removed) = 1,725,700 lbs

•RI 2013 Commercial Quota (11%, estimated RSA removed) = 189,827 lbs (1% incr from 2012 quota)

•2013 Sub period allocations

•January 1 – April 30 = 47,457 lbs

•May 1 – June 30 = 47,457 lbs

•July 1 – Oct 31 = 74,033 lbs

•November 1 – December 31 = 20,880 lbs



Division of Fish and Wildlife Proposed Changes

- The RI Division of Fish and Wildlife proposes no changes to the black sea bass commercial fishery in 2013.
- The RI Division of Fish and Wildlife believes that this stock can accommodate more harvest than is currently being removed from the stock, and will continue to work on improving the uncertainty estimates in the stock assessment as well as continuing to improve the stock assessment itself, so that harvest levels can be increased in the future.

