

When are ACLs and AMs required?

- ACLs and AMs are required to be implemented in 2010 for species that are subject to overfishing.
- ACLs and AMs are required for all other species in 2011.



Which Caribbean species will have ACLs and AMs in 2010?

- Snapper Unit 1
 - * Silk, Black, Vermilion, Blackfin, Wenchman
- Snapper Unit 2
 - * Queen, Cardinal
- Grouper Unit 1
 - * Nassau
- Grouper Unit 2
 - * Goliath
- Grouper Unit 3
 - * Red hind, Coney, Rock hind, Graysby
- Grouper Unit 4
 - * Red, Tiger, Yellowfin, Black
- Grouper Unit 5
 - * Yellowedge, Misty
- Parrotfish Unit
 - * Blue, Midnight, Princess, Queen, Rainbow, Redfin, Redtail, Stoplight, Redband, Striped
- Queen Conch

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Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures



An overview of the new provisions set forth by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

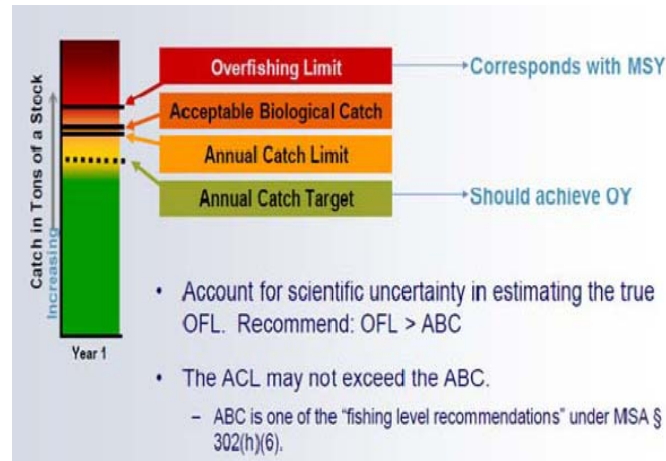


What are annual catch limits (ACLs) and why are they required?

- An ACL is the level of annual catch of a stock or stock complex that if met or exceeded triggers accountability measures, such as a seasonal closure or a quota closure, which is referred to as an accountability measure (AM). The reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) requires ACLs be set at levels that prevent overfishing from occurring.
- ACLs may incorporate management and scientific uncertainty, and take into account the amount of data available and level of vulnerability to overfishing for each species.
- Separate ACLs may be established for each sector of a fishery, i.e., commercial, and recreational. However, the combined total of all sector ACLs may not exceed the total ACL for a species or species complex.

What are Accountability Measures (AMs) and why are they required?

- AMs are management controls to prevent ACLs from being exceeded, and to correct overages of ACLs if they occur.
- Examples of inseason AMs are: quota closures, trip or bag limit changes, gear restrictions, individual fishing quotas, or catch shares.
- Examples of postseason AMs are: seasonal closures, reduced trip or bag limits, or shortening of the fishing season implemented in the subsequent year.



How are ACLs determined?

- Fishery management councils use a multi-step process for specifying and implementing ACLs and AMs.
- In general the steps are:
 - 1) The Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee establishes the allowable biological catch (ABC) and overfishing limits for a species or species complex.
 - 2) The Council establishes an ACL lower than or equal to the ABC taking into account scientific and management uncertainty.
 - 3) If necessary, the Council divides the ACL into sector ACLs, e.g., commercial and recreational.
 - 4) The Council has the option of specifying ACTs, a level of harvest typically set lower than the ACL in order to help prevent ACL overages, and may also divide these into sector specific ACTs. ACTs will not be set in the U.S. Caribbean.
 - 5) The Council determines management measures to restrict harvest to sector ACLs.
 - 6) The Council identifies AMs to prevent ACLs from being exceeded and/or to respond to overages of the ACL.
 - 7) The Council determines necessary data to implement and monitor ACLs, AMs, and management measures.

Can ACLs be changed?

- Yes. This may be done through a "framework action" which is based on a framework procedure established for a fishery management plan. Framework procedures are a means to more quickly modify or establish fishery regulations.
- ACLs and AMs may also be changed through the traditional amendment process when needed.

Are there any exceptions to the ACL requirement?

- Yes. There are several exceptions to the requirement to establish ACLs. Those exceptions include:
 - * Species that have a life cycle of one year or less.
 - * Stocks subject to management under an international fishery agreement.
 - * Ecosystem component species; i.e., species that are federally managed but are non-target species; not subject to overfishing or overfished nor likely to become so; and are generally not retained for sale or personal use.

For further information, contact:

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