

QUARTERLY PROGRESS MEETING
Chesapeake Bay Program

December 2023



Blue Crab Abundance

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Blue Crab Abundance Outcome

Maintain a sustainable blue crab population based on a target of 196* million adult females. Refine population targets through 2025 based on best available science.

*The original target of 215 million was revised in November 2020 based on the best available science, as outlined in the outcome language.



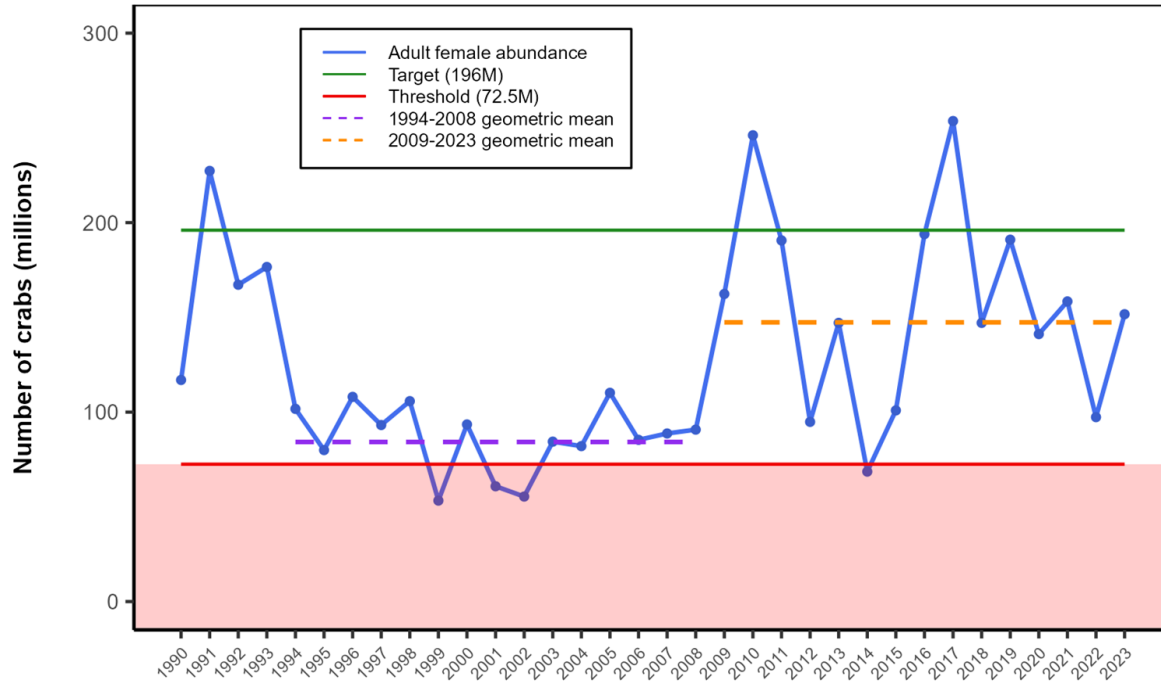
Key Accomplishments



- Organized a blue crab science workshop
- Funded a population simulation modeling project
- Developed and distributed the annual Blue Crab Advisory Report
- Planned and secured funding for a benchmark stock assessment



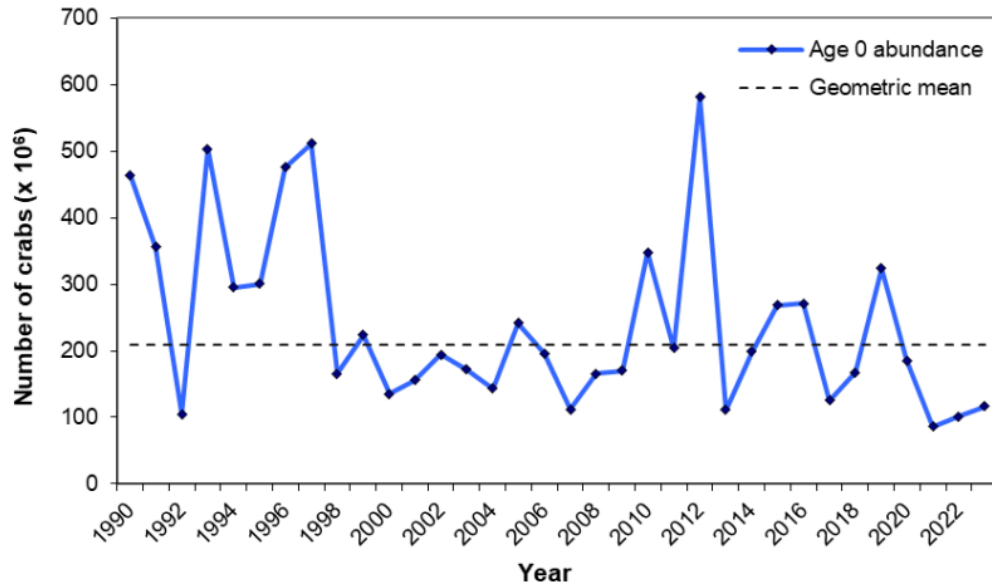
Evaluating Progress



- Outlook: On course
- Population is sustainable based on current management framework



Evaluating Progress



- Juvenile blue crab (age 0) abundance still a concern
- Low recruitment



Lessons Learned



- Environmental and ecological factors affect blue crab population dynamics
 - Climate change affecting coastal conditions (e.g., currents, wind, freshwater flow)
 - Habitat availability (e.g., seagrass, marsh, hardened shorelines)
 - Predator and prey abundance (blue catfish, red drum)
- Funding required to conduct research addressing these factors and fill data gaps



Future Priorities



- Complete the benchmark stock assessment
 - This will determine the management framework
- Shallow water enhancement and CESR
- Fund science needs and develop partnerships related to environmental change
 - Science workshop revealed knowledge gaps around blue crab population dynamics

Questions?