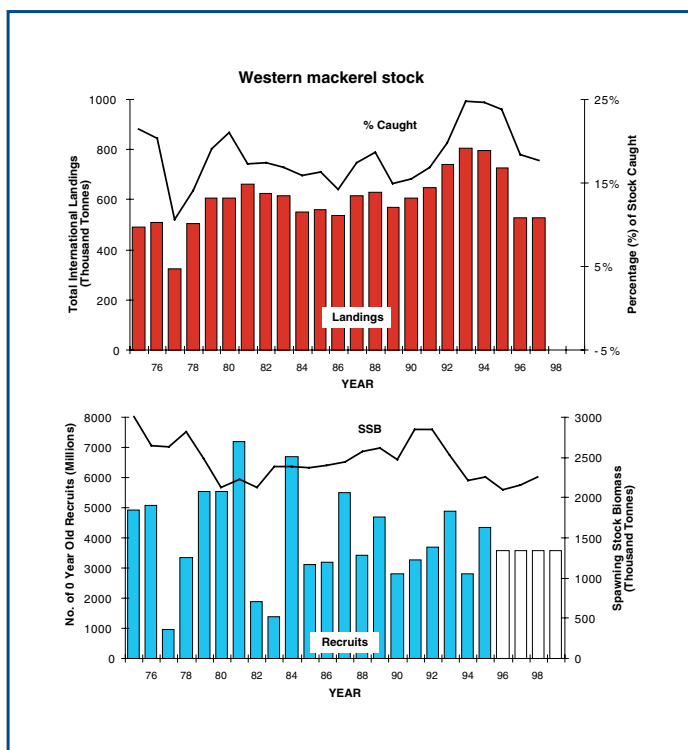


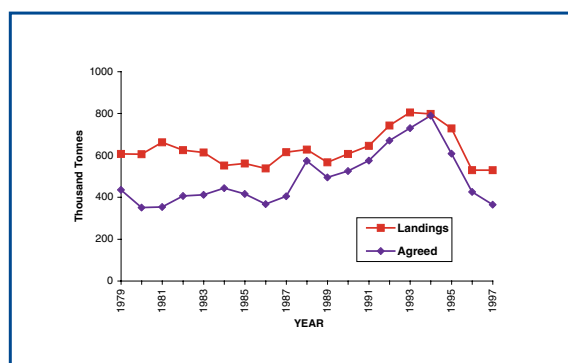
WESTERN MACKEREL STOCK



International landings and fishing mortality increased rapidly in the early 1990's, with a subsequent decline in the Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB).

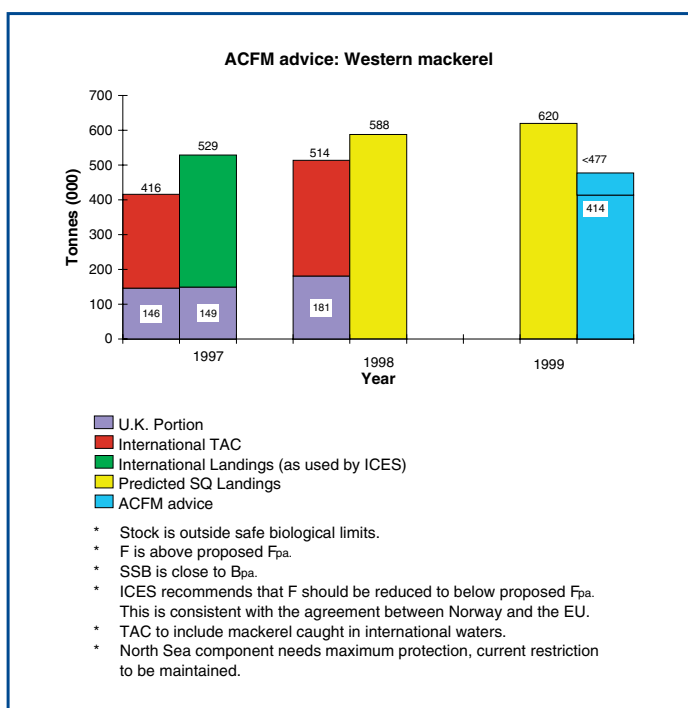
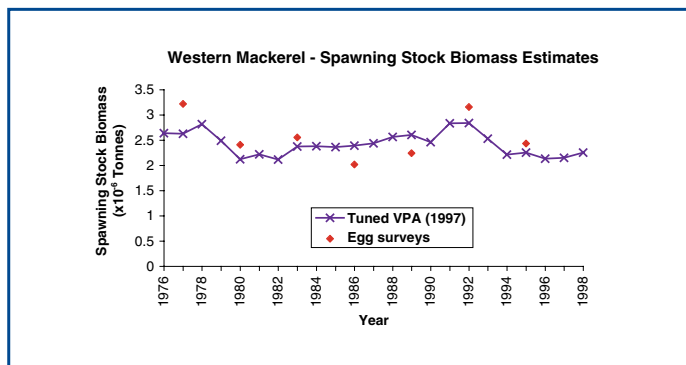
A reduction in Total Allowable Catch (TAC) followed.

This led to both landings and fishing mortality being considerably reduced by 1996.



Fishery independent egg surveys have been carried out every three years since 1977 and these are used to 'tune' the VPA assessments of SSB.

Results of the most recent egg survey, carried out in 1998, will be available in May 1999.



The decline in SSB in the early 1990's has now been arrested with lower TAC's and reduced fishing mortality in 1996 and 1997.

This, combined with the production of an above average year class in 1995 has allowed the recommended TAC to be raised from 416,000 t in 1997 to 514,000 t in 1998.