



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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MARCH 6-10, 2017 COUNCIL MEETING REPORT JEKYLL ISLAND, GEORGIA

The following summary highlights the major issues discussed and actions taken at the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council’s March 2017 meeting in Jekyll Island, Georgia.

Briefing materials, presentations, and public comments are available on the Council’s website at: <http://safmc.net/briefing-books/03-2017-council-meeting/>. Final Committee Reports contain more details of what was accomplished for each committee and the motions made; Committee Reports are located on the March briefing book page (see link above). In addition, the Summary of Motions on the Council’s website includes all motions from the meeting. Read further details and see images and other links at the March 2017 Council Meeting Round-up Story Map: <http://arcg.is/2mTfmKD>. The Meeting News Release is available at: <http://safmc.net/news-releases/3102017-safmc-news-release-march-2017-council-meeting>.

Issue:	Action Taken:	Schedule:
Experimental Fishing Permits (EFPs): 1. Lionfish 2. Pelagic Longline 3. SA Collaborative	The Council will develop procedures to consider future EFPs and specify at which point during the process the request should be sent to the Council. 1. Recommended to the Regional Administrator that the Lionfish EFP be permitted. 2. Send letter to HMS Division Chief noting concerns regarding interaction with the royal red shrimp & golden tilefish fisheries; cap on dolphin harvest; user conflicts & discards; concern that only one company is involved; and ensuring that the minimally necessary sets and time needed to be scientifically valid. Include the fact that a vote was taken and the Council was evenly divided on approval/disapproval. 3. The applicant withdrew the request.	1. Letter will be sent within 2 weeks. 2. Letter will be sent within 2 weeks. 3. The application will be resubmitted at some future date once it is revised and the documentation is complete.
For-Hire Limited Entry	The Council discussed the White Paper but took no action.	Discuss at the June 2017 meeting.

Issue:	Action Taken:	Schedule:
Gulf For-Hire Reporting	<p>The Council approved the Gulf Council’s amendment that would establish/modify electronic reporting for headboats & charter vessels: reports must be submitted prior to offloading fish; require a hail out with return time & location; and require vessel operators to submit fishing records via NMFS approved hardware/software with GPS capabilities that, at a minimum, archive vessel position data to NMFS. The GPS portion of the hardware is permanently affixed to the vessel.</p> <p>The Council approved requesting that the Gulf Council consider an exemption to the Gulf for-hire trip level reporting requirements for vessels with Gulf and South Atlantic permits when taking a trip solely in South Atlantic waters, and to allow vessels taking such trips to report according to the South Atlantic requirements.</p>	Letter will be sent to the Gulf Council about approval and the request for an exemption within 2 weeks.
Red Snapper	Amendment 43: Provided guidance to staff to continue work on Amendment 43 but focus on best fishing practices items pending resolution on obtaining an ABC for red snapper. Removed the large area closures from the amendment.	<p>Review & approve best fishing practices items for public hearings at June 2017 meeting.</p> <p>Continue working on remaining items as identified.</p>
Spiny Lobster	<p>Regulatory Amendment 4: Provided guidance to staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACL = ABC as recommended by the Gulf and South Atlantic SSCs using the mean landings from the years 1991/92-2015/16 plus 1.5 standard deviations (9.6 million pounds). The ACT is 90% of the new ACL (8.64 million pounds). • Prohibit the use of traps for recreational harvest of spiny lobster in the South Atlantic EEZ. 	<p>Schedule a Webinar Public Hearing.</p> <p>Final review & approval at the June 2017 meeting.</p>
Recreational Visioning Amendment	Regulatory Amendment 26: Provided guidance to staff.	Review & approve for public hearings at the June 2017 meeting.
Commercial Visioning Amendments	Regulatory Amendment 27: Provided guidance to staff.	Review & approve for public hearings at the June 2017 meeting.
Yellowtail Snapper	Amendment 44: Suspend work until the revised MRIP data are available.	Resume work in late 2018 or early 2019.

Issue:	Action Taken:	Schedule:
Golden Tilefish	Amendment 45: Requested the SSC consider establishing an interim ABC at 75% F_{MSY} . The Council requested a SEDAR standard assessment of tilefish for late 2017, to be provided to the SSC for consideration in April 2018, with a 2016 terminal year.	The Council will review the ABC recommendation at the June meeting. Continue work on golden tilefish after the June 2017 meeting once Spiny Lobster if completed.
Mackerel/Cobia	The Council received updates from the ASMFC and States on cobia management progress. The Council postponed Amendment 29 indefinitely to concur with the Gulf Council.	Gather input from the Advisory Panel in April and bring back to the Council in June 2017.
Dolphin	Amendment 10: Suspend work until the revised MRIP data are available.	Resume work in late 2018 or early 2019.
Citizen Science	Provided guidance on Year 1 Plan of Work and the Proposed Transition Team	Continue to implement the Council's Citizen Science Program

For details on any item, please refer to the Final Committee reports available on the Council's website at: <http://safmc.net/briefing-books/03-2017-council-meeting/>.