



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North Charleston SC 29405
 Call: (843) 571-4366 | Toll-Free: (866) SAFMC-10 | Fax: (843) 769-4520 | Connect: www.safmc.net

Charlie Phillips, Chair | Captain Mark Brown, Vice Chair
 Gregg T. Waugh, Executive Director

DECEMBER 4-8, 2017 COUNCIL MEETING REVISED REPORT ATLANTIC BEACH, NORTH CAROLINA

The following summary highlights the major issues discussed and actions taken at the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council’s December 2017 meeting in Atlantic Beach, North Carolina.

Briefing materials, presentations, and public comments are available on the Council’s website at: <http://safmc.net/2017-december-council-meeting/>

Final Committee Reports contain more details of what was accomplished for each committee and are located on the December briefing book page. 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 December 2017 Council Meeting Round-up Story Map: <https://arcg.is/0X9XOq>. The Meeting News Release is available at: <http://safmc.net/news-releases/12-08-17-safmc-news-release-federal-fishery-managers-address-multiple-issues-at-december-meeting/>

Issue:	Action Taken:	Schedule:
Red Snapper	<p>Amendment 43 is currently under review by NMFS.</p> <p>The Council provided guidance on actions to include in Amendment 46:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Recreational Permit • Private Recreational Electronic Reporting • Require use of Best Fishing Practices (e.g., descending devices, venting, hook type) • Adjust Powerhead Prohibitions in the South Atlantic (allow in the EEZ off SC or prohibit use of powerheads in entire EEZ) 	<p>If approved, the recreational season would begin on July 13, 2018 and the commercial season on July 9, 2018. Recreational bag = 1 with no size limit. Commercial trip limit = 75 pounds gutted weight with no size limit.</p> <p>Review actions and approve for scoping at the March 2018 meeting. Scoping April/May and review comments at June 2018 meeting. Public hearings in fall and goal is to finalize at the December 2018 meeting.</p>

Issue:	Action Taken:	Schedule:
Recreational Visioning Amendment	Regulatory Amendment 26: Provided guidance and revised Actions & Alternatives. Alternatives include options for modifications to bag limits, seasons for deep-water species and shallow-water groupers, and size limits for deep-water species and triggerfish that would help streamline the regulations for anglers, law enforcement, and managers.	Review analyses, select preferred alternatives, and approve for public hearings in June 2018. Review public comments, modify document, and approve all actions in June 2018. Review and approve for formal review in September 2018.
Commercial Visioning Amendment	Regulatory Amendment 27: Provided guidance and revised Actions & Alternatives for trip limits, size limits, split seasons, seasons, and other measures.	Approved the same timing as shown above for the Recreational Visioning Amendment.
For-Hire Moratorium Amendment	The Council discussed the Purpose and Need for the Amendment.	Staff will prepare a simplified version of the options paper for the March 2018 meeting.
Golden Tilefish	<p>The Council received an update from NMFS that the interim measures to reduce overfishing by setting the ACL for 2018 at the projected yield at 75%F_{MSY} (323,000 pounds gutted weight) is on schedule.</p> <p>The SSC reviewed the revised assessment runs at their October 2017 meeting and determined them to be unsuitable for management. Therefore, the ABC is unchanged and the ACL of 323,000 pounds gutted weight remains.</p>	<p>The goal is to implement the new ACL prior to the start of the 2018-fishing season.</p> <p>Staff will prepare a draft framework document for the March 2018 meeting to reduce the ACL to 302,000 pounds gutted weight or lower depending on revised projections and consider changes to the trip limits/other management measures. Intent is to finalize at June 2018 meeting.</p>
Red Grouper	The Council approved the expedited framework to reduce the red grouper ABC & ACL from 780,000 pounds whole weight to 139,000 pounds whole weight in 2018, increasing to 150,000 in 2019 and to 162,000 in 20120. The reductions are substantial given red grouper are overfished and undergoing overfishing.	The expedited framework will be sent to NMFS for formal review in December. The intent is to implement these measures ASAP in 2018.

Issue:	Action Taken:	Schedule:
Mackerel Cobia	<p>The Council provided guidance on Actions & Alternatives in CMP Amendment 31 and selected Alternative 2 as preferred: Remove Atlantic cobia from the CMP Fishery Management Plan.</p> <p>The Council provided guidance on Actions & Alternatives in a framework amendment to change the Atlantic king mackerel commercial trip limit.</p>	<p>Public hearings will be held January 22-24, 2018. Public comments are requested on when final action on the amendment should be taken relative to the Cobia stock ID workshop (April 10-12th) and the benchmark assessment (during 2019 with completion at the end of 2019).</p> <p>The Council will review the revised framework and consider approving for scoping at the March 2018 meeting.</p>
Spiny Lobster	The Council provided guidance on Action & Alternatives in Spiny Lobster Amendment 13 (Modifications to Gear Requirements & Cooperative Management Procedure) and approved for scoping.	Scoping webinars will be held January 8-9, 2018. This is a joint Amendment with the Gulf Council. Draft timing: Public hearings are expected in July with final approval by the Gulf in August and the South Atlantic in September.
Habitat and Ecosystem Based Management	The Council provided guidance on the Draft FEP II Implementation Plan & Roadmap.	Prepare materials for final review and approval at the March 2018 Council meeting.
Citizen Science Program	The Council received an update from the five Action Teams busy developing the program.	Once final funding is available, the first Citizen Science project will begin in early 2018. Scientists and fishermen will work together to address discards of scamp grouper using a mobile application.
For-Hire Recreational Reporting	The Council received an update on the amendment: For-Hire Reporting Amendment is in the review process and a proposed rule is expected in early 2018. Council staff briefed the Council on the pilot project and For-Hire Outreach efforts.	The proposed rule and notice of availability of the amendment is expected in early 2018. The goal is to have regulations effective this summer. For-Hire Outreach training and outreach will continue in 2018.
Recreational Reporting Workshop	The Council held a recreational reporting workshop to learn about fishery efforts in the Gulf of Mexico and in NC for game species. The Council's own work on a pilot application was also presented.	The Council's pilot project (MYFishCount) will continue and the phone app should be available in 2018 for testing. The Council will continue discussions about private recreational reporting in Snapper Grouper Amendment 46.

Issue:	Action Taken:	Schedule:
SEDAR	The Council appointed panelists for SEDAR 59 (Greater Amberjack), SEDAR 60 (Red Porgy), and the Cobia Stock ID process. Bill Gorham (NC) and Ira Laks (FL) were appointed from the Advisory Panel to the Cobia Stock ID workshop.	The list of panelists and schedules are available on the SEDAR website. The Cobia Stock ID workshop will be held in Raleigh, NC from April 10-12, 2018 and the stock ID report will be distributed by May 18 th . The Cobia Stock ID Review Workshop will be held in Charleston, SC or Raleigh, NC from June 5-7, 2018 and the report will be distributed by July 11 th . A cobia stock ID cooperators technical review webinar will be held in late July/August. If needed, a stock ID management leadership call will be held in August. Final resolution of stock ID by August 31, 2018 at the latest.