

SUMMARY REPORT
FROM THE SNAPPER GROUPEE COMMITTEE MEETING
Wilmington, NC
December 3rd & 4th, 2008

The Snapper Grouper Committee met on December 3rd and 4th, 2008 in Wilmington, NC.

1. Presentations

The Committee received the following presentations: *Oculina* Update (Kim Iverson) and Gray's Reef (Dr. Sedberry).

2. SSC Report on Vermilion Snapper SEDAR Assessment, Red Snapper Addendum and Snapper Grouper Amendment 17

The Committee received the SSC recommendations on the vermilion snapper SEDAR, the red snapper addendum, and Amendment 17 to the Snapper Grouper FMP. The Southeast Science Center completed an addendum to the red snapper assessment because: (1) 2 years of data were transposed and; (2) the review panel was concerned about a poor stock recruitment relationship. The Science Center completed new projections based on a 40% SPR proxy for FMSY and a fixed steepness of 0.68 but concerns were raised by Council staff. The SSC recommended new short-term projections be produced based on a steepness of 0.95 and a 40% SPR proxy for FMSY.

The SSC adopted the base run of the vermilion snapper assessment which uses a fixed steepness of 0.56 associated with a F40% SPR. The current MFMT proxy for vermilion snapper is F30% SPR. There was considerable Committee discussion on the steepness values for both species. The SSC determined that the vermilion snapper assessment and the red snapper addendum were based upon the best available science.

3. Vermilion Snapper Actions in Amendment 16, Gregg Waugh, SAFMC Staff

The Committee reviewed the action in Amendment 16 that institutes a measure that allows the NMFS Regional Administrator to determine the actual vermilion regulations based on the results of the assessment.

4. Amendment 17, Rick DeVictor, SAFMC Staff

The Committee provided direction to staff in terms of Amendment 17. The Committee felt that the no action alternative should be expanded to include Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures already in place. Certain items were moved into a newly formed Amendment 18 (the list of actions are in a motion). The actions in Amendment 18 will be taken to scoping in late January/early February.

5. Red Snapper Interim Rule, Gregg Waugh, SAFMC Staff

The Committee decided to not move forward to submit a red snapper interim rule request to NMFS at this time. However, the Council will revisit this item at the next Council meeting.

6. Comprehensive ACL Amendment, Rick DeVictor, SAFMC Staff

The Committee reviewed the list of actions in the Comprehensive ACL Amendment.

7. Other Actions

The Committee reviewed a letter from Dr. Pat Harris. Concerns were outlined in that letter concerning research projects and the inclusion of catch in the consideration of future catch shares. The Committee directed staff to develop a letter to Dr. Pat Harris to explain that any number of records may be used in the consideration of a LAPP and it is not the Council's intent to discourage future cooperative projects.

The committee approved the following motions:

Motion 1: Recommend to the Council the request of a black sea bass control date of Dec. 4, 2008 for the commercial pot fishery.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

Motion 2: Take the following items to scoping to be included in Amendment 18.

- (1) Limit participation and effort in the golden tilefish fishery (possibly endorsements or limited access program)**
- (2) Limit participation and effort in the black sea bass fishery**
- (3) Extend FMU range & designate EFH in the new areas**
- (4) Separate snowy grouper quota into regions/states**
- (5) Change golden tilefish fishing year**
- (6) Improvements to data reporting**

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

MOTION 3: Do not forward an interim rule request for red snapper to NMFS at this time.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE