



MUTTON SNAPPER AND YELLOWTAIL SNAPPER STOCK ASSESSMENT REVIEW

**April 2025
Meeting
Report**

THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

**Scientific and Statistical
Committee**

MUTTON AND YELLOWTAIL SNAPPER

JOINT SSC REVIEW

- February 25 – 26, 2025, Tampa, Florida.
- 7 SA and 15 Gulf SSC members.
- Decisions by consensus.
- SA ABC CR.



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JOINT SSC REVIEW

Both species

- Assessment is consistent with BSIA and appropriate for management advice.
- Stocks are **not undergoing overfishing** and are **not overfished**.
- Based on the currently adopted SPR-based F_{MSY} proxy of $F_{30\%SPR}$.
- Alternative ABC CR approach => differences in characterization of uncertainty in OFL.
- OFL based on $F_{30\%SPR}$.
- ABC based on 75% of $F_{30\%SPR}$, for 2026 – 2028 projections.



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Justification for $SPR_{30\%}$

- Both stocks were managed at $SPR_{30\%}$ and saw increases in stock biomass and landings have not exceeded ACLs in recent years.
- Age composition showed that older fish are still present.
- Several closed areas may provide refuge for population, contributing to recruitment.
- Life history (incl. gonogorism & subtropical species) may indicate that $SPR_{30\%}$ may be more appropriate than $SPR_{40\%}$.



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Recruitment

Recommendation: Use geometric (Mutton) and arithmetic (yellowtail) mean of the most recent five years of recruitment (2019 – 2023) to inform OFL and ABC projections.

Justification: Management likely not be in place until 2026. Fishing levels in 2024 and 2025 were below the new ABC and added the unexploited biomass.

Update assessments no later than 5 years (every 5 years).

Monitor stocks (incl. landings, index values, input from AP/ stakeholders, etc.) for signs of concern.

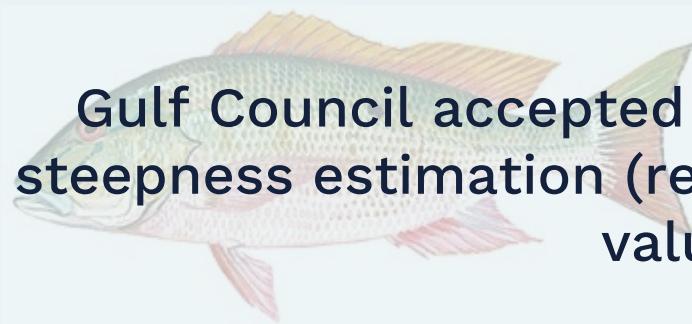


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Extensive discussion about stock recruit relationship uncertainty and proxies.

“Need to collectively address the required precision to estimate steepness and discussion of SPR proxy values given a range of life history values among fish species. Recommend a follow up joint meeting to address these topics. Essential to the consistent application of an agreed decision-making paradigm for present and future stock assessments.”

Update April 9:



Gulf Council accepted a motion to develop a joint working group to look at steepness estimation (required precision for mgmt. advice, etc.) and SPR proxy values given the species life history.

