

FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT
SNAPPER GROUPER COMMITTEE
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
September 12-15, 2022

The Committee approved the minutes from the June 2022 meeting and the agenda for the September 2022 meeting.

Status of Amendments under formal review – NMFS SERO

NMFS SERO provided an update on progress of Snapper Grouper Amendment 50 (Red Porgy Catch Levels and Rebuilding), which was formally submitted to NMFS SERO on May 3, 2022. The proposed rule published on September 9, 2022 with a comment period through November 8, 2022.

Exempted Fishing Permit Brief

NMFS SERO provided an overview of the exempted fishing permit submitted by Dr. David Portnoy with Texas A&M University for sampling of speckled hind to research population structure, connectivity, and life history.

MOTION 1: RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE EFP.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Release Mortality Reduction & Red Snapper (SG Reg Amendment 35)

NMFS SERO gave a presentation summarizing current information and potential strategies for addressing management of red snapper. Council staff presented a draft options paper that describes initially directed actions. Council staff also presented a report responding to the Council's June 2022 data request. The Committee made the following motions and gave the following guidance:

Action 1. Revise the South Atlantic red snapper overfishing limit, acceptable biological catch, total annual catch limit, and annual optimum yield

- Add alternative to Action 1 setting total ACL for red snapper equal to 0 (ABC would be set at the SSC-recommended level).

MOTION 2: CONTINUE WORK ON REGULATORY AMENDMENT 35 TO REDUCE SNAPPER GROUPER DISCARDS AND MODIFY THE RED SNAPPER ACL WITH THE GOAL OF TAKING FINAL ACTION NO LATER THAN MARCH 2023.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Action 2. Prohibit the use of automatic rod and reel for the snapper grouper recreational sector

- FWC can be a resource in writing American Disabilities Act-related exceptions for Action 2.
- Investigate the most appropriate terminology for 'automatic' rod and reel gear.

Action 3. Prohibit the use of more than one hook per line for the snapper grouper recreational sector

- Explore additional options for Actions 2 and 3 with the goal of maximizing efficiency in ending overfishing of red snapper, while minimizing interference with fishing activities for other species.
 - o Investigate gear usage by area if possible. Reference catch and abundance of red snapper by area.
 - o Investigate catch rate differences as possible, noting Council staff's ongoing research on single and double hook catch rates.
 - o Note that several species caught in federal waters with snapper grouper species do not have federal regulations (e.g. sheepshead).
 - o Consult the Office of Law Enforcement for input on enforceability.
 - o Request input from the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel and SSC.
- Investigate changes to launch schedule at Kennedy Space Center, associated fishing regulations, and potential effects on catch, fishing mortality, and rebuilding for red snapper in that area.

MOTION 3: ADD AN APPENDIX TO REGULATORY AMENDMENT 35 TO PROMOTE BEST FISHING PRACTICES THAT REDUCE RECREATIONAL DEAD RELEASES IN THE SNAPPER GROUPE FISHERY.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

- Direct staff to develop a program to expand Best Fishing Practices education and outreach for the snapper grouper recreational fishery and include in Regulatory Amendment 35 as an appendix.
 - o Include cost estimation –
 - o ADDITIONAL DIRECTION:
 - Include work by the new Descending Device Coordination Team and discuss potential cost associated with some of the activities suggested by that group.
 - Also important to catalogue what has been done by other entities and regional partners
 - Include work that has been done through Sea Grant fellowship and future activities through that effort
 - Reach out to industry groups as well and obtain feedback from the Outreach and Communication Advisory Panel (AP)
 - Ensure the public has clear statement/understanding of the problem – the increased extractive capacity of current fisheries resulting from advances in technology, etc. – and the role of stakeholders in addressing this issue.
- Direct IPT to look at trend of descending devices usage since the SSC evaluated it in the last amendment.
 - o See if improvement has matched or exceeded previous projections
- Add a mandatory best fishing practices education component to another amendment (possibly Snapper Grouper Amendment 46?).
 - o People who complete required education could be the beginning of quantifying the recreational universe.

- o The Council directed that the Technical Recreational Permit AP would discuss how mandatory education components connected to a recreational fishing permit should be administered.

MOTION 4: TO REQUEST THE SEFSC PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING SOUTH ATLANTIC RED SNAPPER STOCK ASSESSMENT SENSITIVITY RUN AT THE DECEMBER 2022 COUNCIL MEETING:

- REDUCE ANNUAL DISCARD ESTIMATES BY 50% RELATIVE TO CURRENT ESTIMATES USED IN THE ASSESSMENT.
- ASSUME 100% COMPLIANCE WITH DESCENDING DEVICE REQUIREMENTS.

THIS SENSITIVITY RUN IS HYPOTHETICAL BUT INTENDED TO INFORM THE COUNCIL ON HOW REDUCED DISCARDS AND DISCARD MORTALITY ESTIMATES WOULD AFFECT STOCK STATUS AND MANAGEMENT BENCHMARKS.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION 5: TO DIRECT STAFF TO BEGIN DEVELOPMENT A WHITE PAPER, FOR REVIEW AT THE MARCH 2023 COUNCIL MEETING, TO EVALUATE ADDITIONAL LONGER-TERM OPTIONS TO FURTHER AVOID/MINIMIZE, TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, DISCARDS OF SNAPPER-GROUPER SPECIES IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE STOCK REBUILDING GOALS, REDUCE WASTE, PROTECT MARINE ECOSYSTEMS, INCREASE SOCIO-ECONOMIC BENEFITS, ENHANCE ANGLER OPPORTUNITIES, AND/OR PROMOTE MORE EFFECTIVE UTILIZATION OF THE RESOURCE (E.G, SHIFT DEAD DISCARDS TO LANDED CATCH).

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

- The Council additionally directed staff to incorporate topics above as appropriate during the MSE discussion at the Snapper Grouper AP's October 2022 meeting.

Private Recreational Permitting and Reporting (SG Amendment 46)

At the June 2022 meeting the Council established membership for the Snapper Grouper Private Recreational Permitting and Reporting Technical Advisory Panel (AP). The Committee received a summary report of the AP's first meeting which took place in August 2022 and was asked for guidance on how the AP should proceed at its next meeting. Additionally, the Committee was asked for feedback on the intended outcomes of implementing a potential private recreational permit and reporting requirement. The goal is for staff to develop an options paper for the December Council meeting. In response, the Committee provided the following vision statement and guidance:

Vision Statement: A permit for the private recreational sector of the South Atlantic Snapper Grouper fishery will facilitate the collection, validation, and analysis of harvest and discard data to improve the catch and effort estimates used for fisheries science and management decision-making.

Discussion topics for the AP:

Permit

- How can a permit without a reporting requirement potentially be integrated into the existing MRIP sampling framework and the Florida State Reef Fish Survey to improve the accuracy of landings and discards estimates?
- Discuss the pros and cons of a vessel permit versus an individual permit.
- How can a permit be developed for potential use in other regions (Gulf of Mexico or Mid-Atlantic) to ensure consistency and standardizations?
- What are the desirable terms and frequency of permit renewal?
- Weigh in on efficacy of an education certification as a proxy for a permit.
 - Discuss mandatory versus voluntary measures.
- Does charging a nominal fee effectively reduce oversubscription? What sort of information may be available on the topic?

Reporting

- Would there be utility in implementing a permit without a reporting requirement?
- What are the considerations for implementing a reporting requirement that can be validated?
- Discuss the pros and cons of a mandatory versus a voluntary reporting requirement.

Yellowtail Snapper (SG Amendment 44)

The Committee received an overview of the SEDAR 64 Interim Assessment. The Committee then reviewed the SSC report overview and the fishery overview. The Committee made the following motion:

MOTION 6: REINITIATE SNAPPER GROUPE AMENDMENT 44.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Gag (SG Amendment 53)

The Committee reviewed a decision document. The Committee made the following motions and gave the following guidance:

MOTION 7: APPROVE THE PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENT, AS REVISED

The *purpose* of this fishery management plan amendment is to establish a rebuilding plan, set an acceptable biological catch, revise annual catch limits, and sector allocations, and make modifications to management measures and accountability measures for South Atlantic gag based on the results of the most recent stock assessment.

The *need* for this fishery management plan amendment is to end overfishing of South Atlantic gag, rebuild the stock, and achieve optimum yield while minimizing, to the extent practicable, adverse social and economic effects.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

- The purpose and need statement will be further edited due to the directed incorporation of black grouper (MOTION 9). Revisions will be reviewed by the Council in December 2022.

Action 4. Modify the commercial management measures for gag

Sub-Action 4a. Reduce the commercial trip limit for gag.

- Include draft Alternative 6 under Sub-Action 4a.

Draft Alternative 6: Reduce the gag commercial trip limit to 300 pounds gutted weight in 2023 then increase the commercial trip limit to 500 pounds gutted weight in 2026, and 1,000 pounds gutted weight in 2027 where the trip limit would remain 1,000 pounds gutted weight until modified.

MOTION 8: RETAIN ALTERNATIVE 1 AS PREFERRED UNDER SUB-ACTION 4B FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS.

Sub-Action 4b. Modify the commercial spawning season closure for gag.

Preferred Alternative 1 (No Action): The annual commercial gag spawning season closure is from January 1 through April 30.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

- Gather input on adding May to the spawning season closure.
- Gather input on region-specific spawning season closure adjustments.

MOTION 9: INCLUDE ACTIONS THAT WOULD MODIFY THE BLACK GROUPER VESSEL LIMIT, SPAWNING SEASON CLOSURE, AND CAPTAIN AND CREW BAG LIMIT AND ALTER THE PURPOSE AND NEED ACCORDINGLY.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

- MOTION 9 was intended to consider changes to black grouper measures for the recreational sector only.

MOTION 10: REMOVE ALTERNATIVE 4 FROM SUB-ACTION 5A.

Action 5. Modify the recreational management measures for gag

Sub-Action 5a. Establish a recreational vessel limit for gag.

Alternative 4. Retain the current bag limit. Establish a recreational gag vessel limit of 6 fish per vessel per day, not to exceed the daily bag limit, whichever is more restrictive, for the:

Sub-Alternative 4a. private recreational component.

Sub-Alternative 4b. for-hire component.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION 11: ADD AN ALTERNATIVE UNDER SUB-ACTION 5A TO PROHIBIT THE RETENTION OF THE BAG LIMIT FOR CAPTAIN AND CREW

Sub-Action 5a. Establish a recreational vessel limit for gag

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

- **DIRECTION TO STAFF:** Modify the suite of alternatives to include vessel limit options per day for the private recreational sector and per trip for the commercial sector. Staff put together the following alternatives:

Sub-Action 5a. Establish a recreational vessel limit for gag.

Alternative 1 (No Action). There is no recreational vessel limit for gag or black grouper. The recreational gag bag limit is 1 fish per person per day within the 3 shallow water grouper aggregate (no more than 1 grouper may be gag or black grouper).

Alternative 2. Establish a private recreational vessel limit for gag of:

Sub-Alternative 2a. 2 fish per vessel per day

Sub-Alternative 2b. 4 fish per vessel per day

Alternative 3. Establish a for-hire recreational vessel limit for gag of:

Sub-Alternative 2a. 2 fish per vessel per trip

Sub-Alternative 2b. 4 fish per vessel per trip

Alternative 4. Do not allow retention of gag by captain and crew on for-hire trips.

- The Council clarified for the above action that “for-hire” should not be separated into charter and head boat components.

MOTION 12: RETAIN ALTERNATIVE 1 AS PREFERRED UNDER SUB-ACTION 5B FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS.

Sub-action 5b. Modify the recreational spawning season closure for gag.

Preferred Alternative 1 (No Action): The annual recreational gag spawning season closure is from January 1 through April 30.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

DIRECTION TO STAFF:

- Gather input on adding May to the spawning season closure for both sectors for gag and black grouper
 - NOTE: If only the recreational spawning closure is modified for black grouper, then the commercial and recreational spawning seasons will not match. The commercial sector would be able to catch black grouper before the recreational sector.
- Gather input on region-specific spawning season closure adjustments.

MOTION 13: APPROVE AMENDMENT 53 AND ALL ACTIONS, AS REVISED, FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Wreckfish (SG Amendment 48)

A review of the Wreckfish ITQ Program was completed in 2019 and included recommendations for improvement, particularly with respect to confidentiality issues and related constraints; moving away from a paper coupon-based program to an electronic program; cost recovery; wreckfish permit requirement; allocation issues; offloading sites and times; and economic data collection. Staff presented a decision document and recommendations from the wreckfish shareholders.

The Council provided the following direction to staff:

- Develop additional actions necessary to consider development of a VMS requirement.
- Discuss offloading time requirements with the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel.
- Have the NMFS IFQ team discuss the cost recovery process and VMS.

The Council made the following motions:

NOTE: NOAA GC WILL CLARIFY AT THE MARCH MEETING THE HISTORY OF THE ASSESSMENT THAT WAS CONDUCTED FOR WRECKFISH

MOTION 14: APPROVE THE PURPOSE AND NEED AS MODIFIED.

Purpose: The *purpose* of this action is to modernize the wreckfish individual transferable quota (ITQ) program, revise management measures.

Need: The *need* for this action is to improve program monitoring and enforcement, as well as data collection and management, provide more flexibility for fishers and increase profitability in the wreckfish ITQ program.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION 15: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS PREFERRED UNDER ACTION 1.

Action 1. Revise sector allocations and sector annual catch limits for wreckfish.

Alternative 2. Allocate 98% of the total annual catch limit for wreckfish to the commercial sector. Allocate 2% of the total annual catch limit for wreckfish to the recreational sector

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE (6-5-1)

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION 16: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS PREFERRED UNDER ACTION 2.

Action 2. Implement an electronic reporting system for the wreckfish individual transferable quota (ITQ) program

Alternative 2. Implement an electronic system of reporting for the wreckfish ITQ program to electronically track ownership and transfers of quota shares, distribution, and transfers of annual allocation (quota pounds), and electronically record wreckfish landing information.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION 17: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS PREFERRED UNDER ACTION 3.

Action 3. Modify the requirement to possess a commercial vessel permit for wreckfish.

Alternative 3. To commercially harvest or sell wreckfish, a commercial permit for South Atlantic snapper grouper (unlimited) must have been issued to the vessel, the permit must be on board, and the permit holder must be a wreckfish shareholder.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION 18: ADD AN ALTERNATIVE THAT ALLOWS FOR HARVEST OR SALE OF WRECKFISH WITH A PERMIT FOR SOUTH ATLANTIC SNAPPER GROUPEr, REMOVING THE REQUIREMENT TO BE A WRECKFISH SHAREHOLDER.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION 19: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS PREFERRED UNDER ACTION 4.

Action 4. Modify the commercial fishing year for wreckfish.

Alternative 2. The commercial fishing year for wreckfish begins on January 1 and ends on December 31. From January 15 through April 15, each year, no person may harvest or possess wreckfish on a fishing vessel, in or from the exclusive economic zone.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION 20: MOVE ACTION 5 TO THE CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED APPENDIX.

Action 5. Modify the spawning season closure for wreckfish.

Alternative 1 (No Action). From January 15 through April 15, each year, no person may harvest or possess wreckfish on a fishing vessel, in or from the exclusive economic zone.

Alternative 2. From January 1 through April 1, each year, no person may harvest or possess wreckfish on a fishing vessel, in or from the exclusive economic zone.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION 21: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS PREFERRED UNDER ACTION 8.1.

Sub-Action 8-1. Implement a cost recovery plan for the wreckfish individual transferable quota program.

Alternative 2. Implement an individual transferable quota cost recovery plan. The transferable quota shareholder landing wreckfish would be responsible for collection and submission of the cost recovery fee to NMFS.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION 22: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS PREFERRED UNDER ACTION 8.2.

Sub-Action 8-2. Collection of wreckfish individual transferable quota program cost recovery fees.

Alternative 3. Fees will be collected upon the sale of such fish during a fishing season.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION 23: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 4 AS PREFERRED UNDER ACTION 8.3.

Sub-Action 8-3. Frequency of wreckfish individual transferable quota program cost recovery fee collection.

Alternative 4. Cost recovery fee will be submitted four times per year.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION 24: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS PREFERRED UNDER ACTION 8.4.

Sub-Action 8-4. Determination of wreckfish individual transferable quota program cost recovery fees.

Alternative 3. The cost recovery fee will be based on standard** ex-vessel value of the wreckfish landings as calculated by NMFS.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION 25: APPROVE SNAPPER GROUPER AMENDMENT 48 FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS AT THE MARCH 2023 COUNCIL MEETING.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Golden Tilefish and Blueline Tilefish (SG Amendment 52)

Public comments were received online and hearings were held via webinar on September 6 and 7, 2022. An additional in-person public hearing was held as part of the Council's public comment session on September 14, 2022. Council staff reviewed public comments and a decision document. The Committee approved all actions in the amendment and provided direction to staff for completion of the amendment as noted below:

Action 2. Revise sector allocations and sector annual catch limits for golden tilefish

- Include a discussion in the amendment that there is limited recreational effort in deep water where golden tilefish are caught, so no need for a large recreational allocation. Also add in discussion of why the Council did not look at a broader range of years for the alternatives.

Action 3. Modify the fishing year for the commercial golden tilefish hook and line and longline sectors

- Clarification was requested on analysis for predicted closure for the commercial hook and line component. Analyst clarified that the data used in the analysis is limited due to many regulatory closures. IPT to look further into this issue and make sure it is clear in the amendment.

Action 4. Modify recreational accountability measures for golden tilefish.

- The Council clarified that in-season AMs will not be retained for golden tilefish given the current preferred where NMFS predicts the season length.

	Post-Season Recreational AMs	
	Trigger	Accountability Measure
Preferred Alternative 3	NMFS will annually announce the length of the recreational fishing season based on catch rates from the previous season. The fishing season will start on January 1 and end on the date National Marine Fisheries Service projects the recreational annual catch limit will be met.	

Action 5. Modify blueline tilefish recreational bag limit.

- Committee discussed future need to consider regional quotas given the distribution of catches. Data from SEFHIER will be informative since most of the recreational catch comes from the for-hire component.

MOTION 26: CHANGE THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE UNDER ACTION 6 TO ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION).

Action 6. Modify blueline tilefish recreational season.

Preferred Alternative 1 (No Action). Do not modify the blueline tilefish recreational season. The current recreational season is May 1-August 31

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Action 7. Modify recreational accountability measures for blueline tilefish.

- The Council clarified that in-season AMs will not be retained for blueline tilefish given the current preferred where NMFS predicts the season length.

	Post-season Recreational AMs	
Preferred Alternative 3	NMFS will annually announce the length of the recreational fishing season based on catch rates from the previous season. The fishing season will start on May 1 and end on the date National Marine Fisheries Service projects the recreational annual catch limit will be met.	

MOTION 27: APPROVE ALL ACTIONS FOR SNAPPER GROUPER AMENDMENT 52.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Snowy Grouper (SG Amendment 51)

The Committee reviewed public hearing comments from the webinar public hearing held in September 2022. Staff then reviewed a decision document. The Committee made the following motions and gave the following guidance:

MOTION 28: APPROVE ALL ACTIONS AS MODIFIED IN SNAPPER GROUPE AMENDMENT 51.

APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE
APPROVED BY COUNCIL

- The Council clarified that they chose not to align AMs for blueline tilefish (SG Amendment 52) and snowy grouper. Therefore, the Council directed no further modifications to alternatives considering changes to snowy grouper AMs.

Greater Amberjack (SG Amendment 49)

Staff presented the draft amendment, including draft rationale for each action. The Committee reviewed the draft amendment, made the following motions, and gave the following guidance:

MOTION 29: APPROVE THE PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENTS AS REVISED.

Purpose: The *purpose* of this amendment is to revise the acceptable biological catch and catch limits for greater amberjack in the South Atlantic based on the results of the latest stock assessment; revise sector allocations, the commercial minimum size limits, commercial trip limits, and the April spawning closure for greater amberjack; and remove recreational annual catch targets for the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan.

Need: The *need* for this amendment is to ensure catch limits are based on the best scientific information available and to ensure overfishing does not occur for the South Atlantic greater amberjack stock, while increasing social and economic benefits through sustainable and profitable harvest of South Atlantic greater amberjack, consistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and its National Standards. This amendment is also needed to make administrative efforts more efficient by removing recreational annual catch targets, which are not actively used in management, from the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE
APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION 30: APPROVE MODIFIED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVE LANGUAGE IN ACTION 1.

Action 1. Revise the greater amberjack acceptable biological catch, total annual catch limit, and annual optimum yield

Alternative 1 (No Action). The current overfishing limit for greater amberjack is 2,005,000 pounds whole weight. The total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield for greater amberjack are equal to the **current** acceptable biological catch (1,968,001 pounds whole weight). The current acceptable biological catch is inclusive of recreational estimates from the Marine Recreational Information Program’s Marine Recreational Fishery Statistics Survey.

Preferred Alternative 2. Revise the acceptable biological catch and set it equal to the most recent recommendation from the Scientific and Statistical Committee. Revise the total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield for greater amberjack and set them equal to the **recommended** acceptable biological catch. The recommended acceptable biological catch is inclusive of recreational estimates from the Marine Recreational Information Program’s Fishing Effort Survey. The 2026/2027 total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield would remain in place until modified.

Alternative 3. Revise the acceptable biological catch and set it equal to the most recent recommendation from the Scientific and Statistical Committee. Revise the total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield for greater amberjack and set them equal to 90% of the **recommended** acceptable biological catch. The recommended acceptable biological catch is inclusive of recreational estimates from the Marine Recreational Information Program’s Fishing Effort Survey. The 2026/2027 total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield would remain in place until modified.

Alternative 4. Revise the acceptable biological catch and set it equal to the most recent recommendation from the Scientific and Statistical Committee. Revise the total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield for greater amberjack and set them equal to 80% of the **recommended** acceptable biological catch. The recommended acceptable biological catch is inclusive of recreational estimates from the Marine Recreational Information Program’s Fishing Effort Survey. The 2026/2027 total annual catch limit and annual optimum yield would remain in place until modified.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION 31: CHANGE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE UNDER ACTION 3 TO ALTERNATIVE 2 (34 INCH COMMERCIAL MINIMUM SIZE LIMIT).

Action 3. Reduce the commercial minimum size limit for greater amberjack

Preferred Alternative 2. Reduce the commercial minimum size limit to 34 inches fork length.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION 32: APPROVE AMENDMENT 49 TO THE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE SNAPPER GROUPER FISHERY OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC REGION FOR FORMAL SECRETARIAL REVIEW AND DEEM THE CODIFIED TEXT AS NECESSARY AND APPROPRIATE. GIVE STAFF EDITORIAL LICENSE TO MAKE ANY NECESSARY EDITORIAL CHANGES TO THE DOCUMENT/CODIFIED TEXT AND GIVE THE COUNCIL CHAIR AUTHORITY TO APPROVE THE REVISIONS AND RE-DEEM THE CODIFIED TEXT.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL (UNANIMOUS)

Approve Topics for Snapper Grouper AP Meeting

The Snapper Grouper AP is scheduled to convene on October 18-20, 2022. The Committee discussed and approved the following list of topics to develop the AP's agenda:

- Input for the Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE)
- Commercial electronic logbook amendment
- Reg Amendment 35 (Red Snapper and Release Mortality)
- FL Keys Sanctuary Restoration Blueprint
- NOAA Proposed Vessel Speed Regulations and Ropeless Gear Roadmap to Boost Protection of North Atlantic Right Whales
- Amendment 53 (Gag Grouper)
- Amendment Updates: Amendment 46 (Recreational Permitting/Reporting), Amendment 44 (Yellowtail Snapper), Amendment 48 (Wreckfish), Amendment 49 (Greater Amberjack), Amendment 51 (Snowy Grouper), Amendment 52 (Golden Tilefish and Blueline Tilefish)
 - Amendment 48 (Wreckfish) - Include an update about the newly added alternative that considers allowance of harvest and sale of wreckfish with a South Atlantic snapper grouper permit, removing the requirement to be a wreckfish shareholder.
- Other Updates: Citizen Science, SEDAR, Climate Change Scenario Planning
- At this or a future meeting, provide an update on the South Atlantic Red Snapper Abundance Estimation that includes an explanation or resources explaining sampling methods
 - Investigate whether a webpage with this information is available.

Approve Topics for Golden Tilefish Longline Endorsement Holders Meeting

The Committee determined that for the Council to convene a meeting of golden tilefish longline endorsement holders, it would need to establish that group as an advisory panel (AP) or subgroup of the Snapper Grouper AP, with members going through the same nomination and approval process as other APs. The Council's next consideration of AP membership is scheduled for December 2022, and there are no management actions specific to the commercial longline component that are currently under consideration. Therefore, the Committee postponed consideration of a meeting of the golden tilefish commercial longline endorsement holders.

Timing and Tasks:

MOTION 33: DIRECT STAFF TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Continue to develop actions for Regulatory Amendment 35 (Snapper Grouper Release Mortality Reduction and Red Snapper Catch Levels) for the Committee’s consideration of approval for public hearings at the December 2022 meeting.
- Remove overfishing limits from purpose and need and action language in amendments considering revisions to catch levels, including Amendment 49 (Greater Amberjack), Amendment 51 (Snowy Grouper), Amendment 52 (Golden Tilefish and Blueline Tilefish), Amendment 53 (Gag Grouper), and Regulatory Amendment 35 (Red Snapper and Release Mortality Reduction).
- Conduct public comment for Amendment 53 (Gag Grouper) prior to the December 2022 Council meeting. Coordinate with states to conduct hearings via listening stations.
- Develop Amendment 48 (Wreckfish) in preparation for public hearings to be held at the March 2023 Council meeting.
- Prepare Amendment 51 (Snowy Grouper) and Amendment 52 (Golden Tilefish Blueline Tilefish) for consideration of final approval at the December 2022 Council meeting.
- Convene a meeting of the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel in October.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Other Business

- Consideration of retention of multiple commercial trip limits for snowy grouper
- Creation of artificial reefs – state programs are already coordinating efforts