



Gag and Black Grouper
Recreational Vessel
Limits and Black Sea
Bass On-Demand Gear

THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 36

Scientific and Statistical Committee - August 2024

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BACKGROUND – GAG & BLACK GROUPER



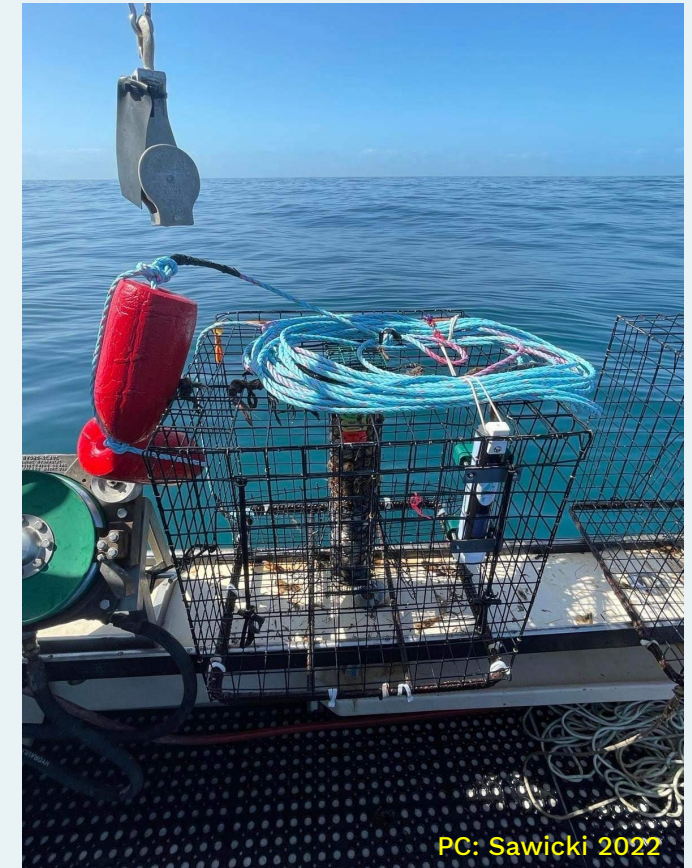
- SG Amendment 53 established recreational vessel limits of 2 gag and 2 black grouper per vessel per day (private) or trip (charter/headboat), implemented in October 2023
- The Council intended these limits to be aggregate limits of 2 fish (gag OR black grouper) per vessel per day/trip
 - Aggregate vessel limits would align with the current aggregate bag limit of 1 fish (gag OR black grouper) per person per day
 - Aggregate vessel limits would also help efforts to rebuild the overfished gag stock



BACKGROUND – ON-DEMAND BLACK SEA BASS POTS



- On-demand (a.k.a. ‘ropeless’) pots are black sea bass pots that are fished without a vertical line remaining in the water column
 - On-demand gear was developed to reduce whale entanglements
- Council reviewed current regulations and found that the use of on-demand gear is not prohibited in times/areas where roped gear is already allowed, as long as all applicable gear requirements are met
- Pot endorsement holders informed the Council during scoping that revision of stowage requirements while transiting some closed areas would make transportation with on-demand pots more practical



ACTION 1 – GAG AND BLACK GROUPER REC VESSEL LIMITS



For all vessel limits in all alternatives: “not to exceed the daily bag limit of 1 gag or black grouper per person per day, whichever is more restrictive.”

Alternative 1 (No Action). Current recreational vessel limits:

- Private: 2 gag/vessel/day and 2 black grouper/vessel/day
- For-Hire (Charter and Headboat): 2 gag/vessel/trip and 2 black grouper/vessel/trip

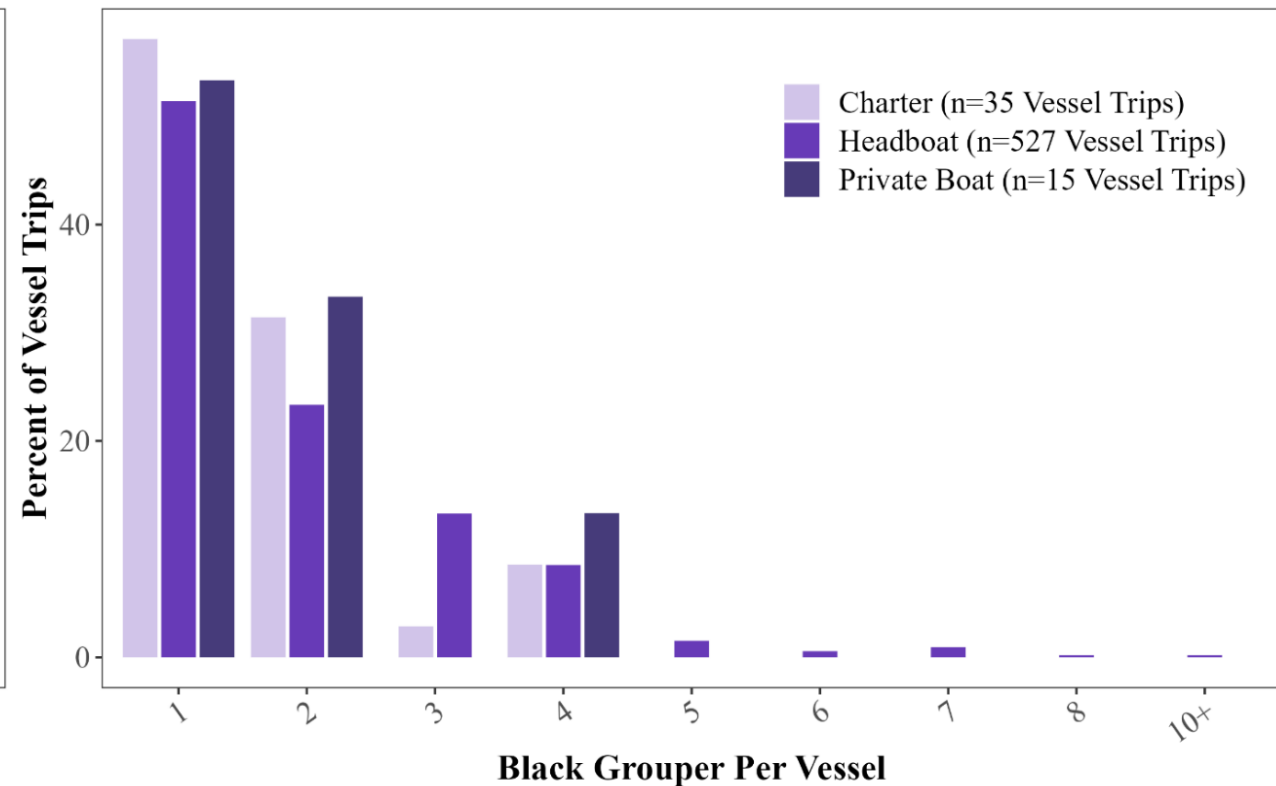
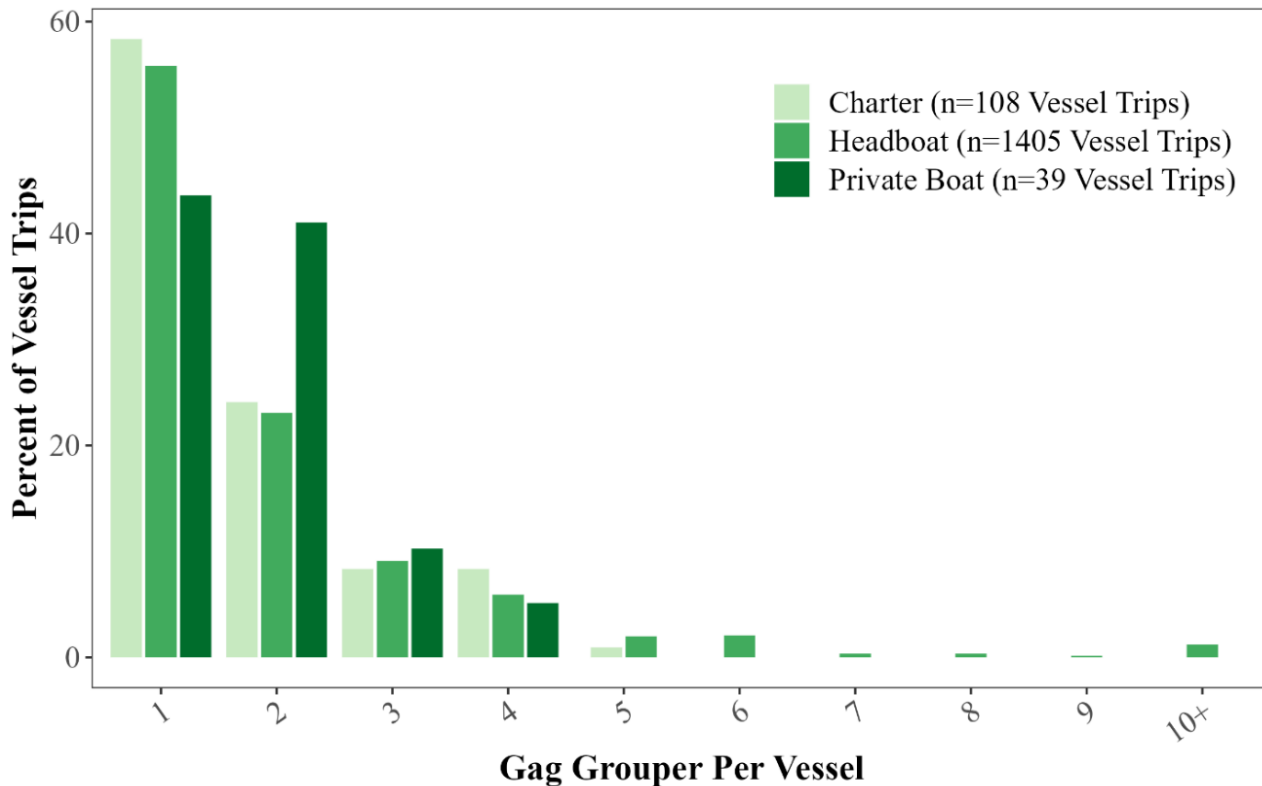
Preferred Alternative 2. For the private recreational component:

- Aggregate limit of 2 gag or black grouper/vessel/day

Preferred Alternative 3. For the for-hire (charter and headboat) recreational component:

- Aggregate limit of 2 gag or black grouper/vessel/trip

ACTION 1 – GAG AND BLACK GROUPER REC VESSEL LIMITS



Developed from S Atlantic dockside intercept and headboat logbook data, 2018-2022

ACTION 2 – BSB ON-DEMAND POT TRANSIT



Under all alternatives: BSB pots must be appropriately stowed while transiting a marine protected area (MPA), special management zone (SMZ), or spawning SMZ

- Transit: direct, non-stop progression through the area

Alternative 1 (No Action). 'Appropriately stowed' (all pot types) means:

- sea bass pots are not baited
- all buoys must be disconnected from the gear
- buoys may remain on deck.

Preferred Alternative 2. 'Appropriately stowed' for pots equipped with on-demand gear means:

- pots are not baited
- buoys may remain connected to the gear

Alternative 3. 'Appropriately stowed' for pots equipped with on-demand gear means:

- pots are not baited
- all buoys must be disconnected from the gear or stowed within the sea bass pots

SSC COMMENTS/DISCUSSION



Any scientific recommendations for/against any of the considered alternatives?

