



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

# Update on Snapper Grouper Recreational Management Issues:

## Accountability Measures, Private Recreational Reporting, and Section 102 Workgroup

Prepared for the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel  
November 2020



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Regulatory Amendment 31 to the Snapper Grouper FMP

# RECREATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES



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# What are Accountability Measures?

Accountability measures (AMs) are generally short-term regulations that try to keep the total fish catch under the annual catch limit (ACL). AMs can be:

- a) in-season measures such as closures
- b) post-season measures that correct overages (catch exceeding the ACL) in a subsequent season, shortened seasons, reduced bag or vessel limits





# Purpose and Need

## Purpose for Actions

Revise accountability measures for the recreational sector for species in the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan to address uncertainty in the estimates of recreational catch and increase standardization of accountability measures across species, as well as improve predictability and stability of fishing seasons.

## Need for Actions

Maintain optimum yield in recreational fisheries while limiting discard losses and promoting social and economic benefits to recreational anglers.



Photo credit: Don DeMaria





## What about other species?



Photo credit: NOAA Fisheries

- The Council decided not to include CMP species from the beginning because AMs are handled differently, and they are jointly managed with the Gulf Council.
- Dolphin and Wahoo were originally considered, but actions for those species were moved into Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10.
- The Council is actively working on modifying recreational AMs for Dolphin and Wahoo.





# Actions in Reg Amend 31

**Action 1:** Considers removing in-season closures for all SG species or keeping them just for species reported to Congress as overfished.

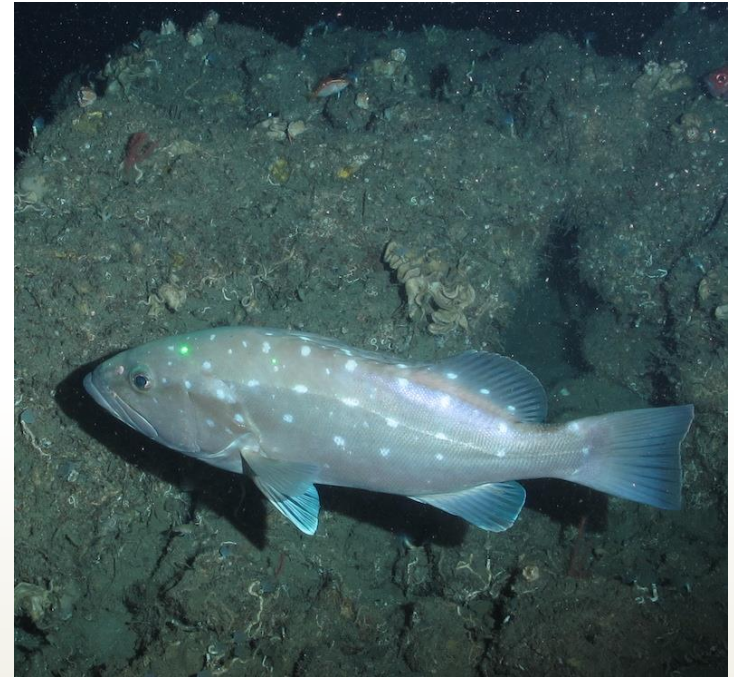


Photo credit: NOAA Teacher At Sea





# Actions in Reg Amend 31

## Action 2: Considers revising post-season AMs

- Remove all post-season AMs
- Replace any existing post-season AM triggers. For example:
  - The 3-year average exceeds the ACL
  - The sum of the past 3 years' landings exceed the sum of the last 3 years' ACLs
  - The combined comm + rec landings exceed total ACL
- If post-season AM is triggered, monitor for persistence in increased landings and reduce the ACL by
  - The amount of the overage in the following fishing season
  - The amount needed to keep the rec ACL from being exceeded





## Actions in Reg Amend 31

**Action 3:** Considers requiring specific start and end dates for additional species other than just black sea bass and red snapper based on whether the ACL was exceeded at least one time in the past three years.







## Timeline

- Amendment began in March 2018
- Taken out for Scoping in January 2019
- Work paused in December 2019 until more could be known about how MRIP revisions would affect ACLs and allocations
- Next Steps...
  - Prepare draft amendment
  - Further develop actions and alternatives





## Recap of Past AP Input

- AP received an update on status of Reg 31 in April 2019. The AP reiterated the need for recreational permit to improve accountability.
- AP received another brief update in October 2019 but Council has not resumed work on this amendment.





## Discussion Questions for SG AP

- Is it better to have consistent regulations between species even if it might result in more conservative measures, like lower catch levels?
- Is less consistency in AMs better if it results in fewer year-to-year changes in bag limits, seasonal closures or paybacks for overages?
- MSA requires AMs. If the Council gets rid of in-season AMs they must have post-season AMs or vice versa. Does the AP have a preference?
- How important is it to know at the start of a fishing season exactly when it will close? Is it needed for all SG species?





Amendment 46 to the Snapper Grouper FMP

# PRIVATE RECREATIONAL REPORTING





# Why Consider Action?

- A permit and/or reporting requirements for snapper grouper species would improve estimates of catch and effort from the recreational sector.
- A permit could:
  - narrow the sampling unit from all coastal recreational fishermen to only those targeting snapper grouper species
  - Help increase sampling effort to improve the number of intercepts per wave and state for rare event species.
- Respond to input from stakeholders during development of the Vision Blueprint.





## Possible Actions

**Action 1.** Establish a private recreational permit to fish for, harvest or possess snapper grouper species in the South Atlantic region

- Permit options: angler, vessel
- Species: red snapper, all SG, deep-water species
- Request permit program/endorsement/license for private anglers be developed by states





## Possible Actions

### Action 2. Modify reporting requirements for private recreational fishermen or vessels

- SRD selects % of permitted vessels or individuals to report
- Promote voluntary reporting
- Options for frequency of reporting





## Timeline

- March 2018 – split out best fishing practices actions and develop in Reg 29.
- June 2018 – Committee reviewed options paper and provided guidance. Council approved for scoping.
- Scoping was not conducted due to other priorities and amendment development was suspended.







## Recap of Past AP Input

- April 2017: motion to recommend options for percentages of recreational anglers selected to electronically report their catch each year.
- April 2018: motion to recommend the Council address accountability in the recreational sector by requiring a stamp or permit.
- December 2019: motion strongly recommending prioritization of Amendment 46.





## Discussion Questions for SG AP

- Would you prefer permit/endorsement or mandatory reporting? Or both?
- What would be a reasonable reporting frequency?
- Do you have any specific recommendations on a permit/reporting program for the Council to consider?





Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Management Act of 2018

# SECTION 102 WORKGROUP UPDATE



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## Background

- Workgroup is joint effort by South Atlantic and Gulf Councils to address recreational management flexibility as identified in the Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Act of 2018 (MFA).
- Workgroup has met twice this year: May 18 and September 10
- Charge: To explore alternative management approaches to suit regional/fishery needs, including data collection improvements, to improve recreational fishing opportunities





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# Draft Goals

- Greater accessibility for recreational fishermen in the red snapper fishery
- Stability in management annually
- Avoidance of in-season closures, when possible
- Accounting for uncertainty in MRIP
- Flexibility in management techniques
- Improving data collection on harvest and discards
- Managing public expectations and striving for high levels of public buy-in



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## Discussion Questions for SG AP

Please share any experiences with *alternative approaches* in other fisheries that would still keep the fishery within catch limits



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