Outline for a Socio-Economic Profile of the Commercial Snapper Grouper Fishery in the South Atlantic

Synopsis: As part of Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 (Commercial Management Measures), the public was asked to comment on management approaches that would meet the needs of "traditional bandit boats." Several ideas were submitted for the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) to consider; however, such items would have to be developed through a full amendment to the Snapper Grouper FMP (as opposed to a regulatory amendment) and would take substantial time. In addition, the Council expressed the need for an in-depth characterization of the fishery before considering substantial changes to how the fishery is managed. Hence, in March 2017 the Council directed staff to begin work on a socio-economic characterization of the commercial Snapper Grouper (SG) fishery that would address items such as descriptive statistics (location, permit portfolios, corporation v. individual, demographics, etc.) about SG permit holders and changes over time; leased permits (via vessel leasing); latent permits; vessel characteristics (for evaluation of a 'traditional bandit boat' definition); qualitative descriptions of fishing communities; SG participant catch portfolios; SG dealer information; economic importance of the total fishery and by species sub-complex; seasonality and regional distribution of landings; and growth potential analysis. Council staff will provide an overview of the work plan, timing for the project, and preliminary results as available.

A. **Description of fishing communities-** this section will include a qualitative description of major commercial SG fishing communities in each region along with a ranking of these communities based on a "regional quotient" of commercial SG landings by weight and ex-vessel value. This section will also include information on engagement and reliance on commercial fishing for these communities based on the most recent year of available data. The regions that will be examined are:
   1. North Carolina
   2. South Carolina
   3. Georgia
   4. North Florida to Palm Beach Inlet
   5. Palm Beach Inlet to Key West

Question for the AP:

- Is this geographic division of regions sufficient? Should states/regions be consolidated? Should states/regions be further divided?

B. **Descriptive statistics of Snapper Grouper permit holders**
   1. Distribution of permit holders by region
   2. Business structure (corporation v. individual ownership)
   3. Demographics of permit holders
   4. Permit portfolios- What other South Atlantic and federal fishing permits do SG permit holders possess?

C. Permits and Permitted Vessel Characteristics
1. Leased permits
2. Latent permits
3. Permit cost and availability
4. Distribution of SG permitted vessels by region (based on hailing port city)
5. Vessel characteristics (age, length, horsepower, crew size, holding capacity, hull material, fuel type, use in for-hire fishing) with a specific focus on vessels fishing bandit gear.

Question for the AP:

- Are there additional vessel characteristic or statistics that could be used to better define a "traditional bandit boat"?

D. Participant information
1. Catch portfolio- species composition of landings for SG fishery participants by pounds and value
2. Dealer information (geographic distribution, business structure, and involvement in other fisheries such as Atlantic Shark or Domestic Swordfish)

E. Profile of Snapper Grouper Landings
1. Landings by ex-vessel value and weight for each species in the SG fishery by sub-complex - this will include shallow water grouper, deep water grouper, snappers, jacks, porgies, grunts, triggerfish, tilefish, and other (hogfish and spadefish)
2. Regional seasonality and distribution of landings by sub-complex
3. Landings (ex-vessel value and weight) by gear
4. Economic impacts of the commercial fishery
5. Growth potential analysis

Note: The above topics will be examined based on 2014 through 2016 data.

Question for the AP:

- Do you think that using data from 2014 through 2016 (i.e. three years) is sufficient for the purposes of this section?

General questions for the AP:

- Is there available information not included in the outline that could help better describe the social and economic characteristics of the commercial Snapper Grouper fishery?

- Is there utility in expanding this profile to include information on the recreational sector where data are available and as time allows?