



THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Snapper Grouper Committee Chair Advisory Panel Update

April 2026

Jessica McCawley

Snapper Grouper Committee
Chair



DEC 2025 & MAR 2026 HIGHLIGHTS



Black Sea Bass

- Council approved Regulatory Amendment 37
 - Catch for each sector will be managed to the following annual catch targets (ACT):
 - Recreational: 63,143 lbs ww
 - Commercial: 48,557 lbs ww
 - Annual spawning closure established for both sectors during February and March
 - Bag limit reduced to 3 fish/person

Blueline Tilefish

- Council approved Abbreviated Framework 5. Increased annual catch limits:
 - Recreational: 156,809 lbs ww
 - Commercial: 157,249 lbs ww

DEC 2025 & MAR 2026 HIGHLIGHTS



Exempted Fishing Permits (EFP)

- Council reviewed and provided comments on EFP applications for red snapper and black sea bass

Golden Tilefish

- Revised stock assessment (SEDAR 89) results presented; stock not overfished or experiencing overfishing
- Recommended ABC is very close to current levels
- ABC/ACL updates from this assessment will be included in another SG Amendment

DEC 2025 & MAR 2026 HIGHLIGHTS



Vermilion Snapper

- Council reviewed sector allocations and determined that changes to allocations do not need to be considered at this time

Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE)

- Council reviewed results of the angler preferences and fishing behavior study conducted by U of Florida

Innovative Approach to Management

- SG Committee finalized its Innovative Approach Document, which includes goalposts and principles that can guide management discussions

DEC 2025 & MAR 2026 HIGHLIGHTS



Blueline Tilefish

- SA Council is working with the Mid-Atlantic Council to determine a longer-term approach for collaborating in management of blueline tilefish, including allocation methods for the portion of the stock that is north of Cape Hatteras, NC
- A Sub-Committee of Council and SSC members from each Council has been formed and will meet during Spring/Summer of 2026

DEC 2025 & MAR 2026 HIGHLIGHTS



Newly-Initiated Amendments

- Council initiated the following amendments:
 - Reg Amendment 38 (Headboat Vessel Limits)
 - Reg Amendment 39 (Spawning Special Management Zones)
 - Reg Amendment 40 (Re-Open Nearshore Closed Areas for On-Demand Black Sea Bass Pots)

Ongoing Amendments

- Council continued developing the following amendments:
 - Amendment 44 (Yellowtail Snapper and Mutton Snapper)
 - Amendment 60 (Commercial Management Measures)
 - Amendment 61 (Fishery Management Unit Revision)

DEC 2025 & MAR 2026 HIGHLIGHTS



Other Council Activities/Discussions

- Lines of Communication: Conversations with the Council – Meetings will be conducted in 2 states per year
 - GA: Nov 2025
 - NC: Mar 2026
 - Fall 2026/Winter 2027: SC and FL meetings (order and dates not yet determined) – More information coming soon



TOPICS FOR THIS AP MEETING

Council staff will give updates from recent Council meetings and facilitate discussions for the following topics later in the meeting:

- Amendment 60 (Commercial Management Measures)
- Amendment 61 (Fishery Management Unit Revision)
- Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation (Angler Preferences and Behavior Study Results)
- Black Sea Bass Management
- Future of SG 2 (225-lb) Permit
- Spawning Special Management Zone Evaluation
- Updates: Florida EFP Project Results/State EFP Applications, Southeast Reef Fish Survey



QUESTIONS?