

**FINAL**  
**SUMMARY REPORT**  
**SNAPPER GROUPEL COMMITTEE**  
**SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**  
**June 14-15, 2022**

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

**Status of Amendments under formal review**

NMFS SERO provided an update on progress of Snapper Grouper Amendment 50, which was formally submitted to NMFS SERO on May 3, 2022.

**Release Mortality Reduction and Red Snapper Catch Levels (SG Reg Amendment 35)**

Regulatory Amendment 35 was initiated to revise red snapper catch levels to be based on the most recent acceptable biological catch (ABC) recommendations from the SSC and to reduce dead releases of snapper grouper species in response to concerns over red snapper dead releases. The Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel (AP) met in April 2022 meeting, and AP Chair Bob Lorenz provided the AP's comments and recommendations. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) also discussed this topic at their April 2022 meeting, and SSC Chair Dr. Jeff Buckel provided the SSC's comments and recommendations. The Committee Chair provided a statement about development of the amendment to date and potential future directions. Council staff presented a decision document that included information requested by the Council to develop actions to reduce snapper grouper releases. The Committee gave the following direction to staff:

- Develop Reg Amendment 35 with the following components:
  - **Red Snapper Catch Levels** – Develop draft action and alternative language to change the South Atlantic red snapper OFL, ABC, OY, and ACLs based on SEDAR 73 and the SSC's most recent recommendations.
    - Include ACL alternatives for 90-100% of ABC.
  - **Gear Modifications** – Develop draft action and alternative language for consideration of the following regulations:
    1. Disallow use of electric reels for the recreational sector while fishing for snapper grouper species
      - Include appropriate language to accommodate individuals with physical disabilities
    2. Require single hook rigs for the recreational sector while fishing for snapper grouper species
  - **Outreach/Education** – This effort will not require a formal action in Reg Amendment 35. However, expanded outreach/education efforts are expected to contribute to Regulatory Amendment 35's goals of reduced dead releases and ending overfishing of red snapper.

- Staff will summarize current/previous outreach and education efforts and provide some description of how future expanded efforts could reduce dead releases of snapper grouper species.
- Staff/IPT should consider how to measure “success” of changing behavior
  - Outreach efforts have gone on for several years
  - Most education campaigns have cumulative benefit
  - Descending device use is already incorporated into assessment, but release information can be improved through ongoing data collection, such as through the SAFMC Release application.
  - COVID effect – While the Council has been conducting outreach efforts for years, in-person contact has been limited over the last two years due to COVID-19. As in-person contact continues to increase, outreach efforts could become more effective.
- Suggestions of how to expand outreach/education include education/training on Best Fishing Practices (BFP), especially those other than descending device use.
  - While descending device use should continue to be encouraged when appropriate, other BFPs can also contribute to reducing dead releases by reducing catch of species that cannot be retained.
  - BFPs other than descending device use can also improve survival of released fish in situations when descending devices are not needed, such as during shallow water fishing when there are no physical signs of barotrauma.
  - Education could occur through an online video training requirement to obtain state recreational fishing permits (particularly Florida). After a federal recreational permit is developed through SG Amendment 46, a similar training should be required to obtain this permit.
- Potential additional benefits beyond discard mortality reduction, such as better species identification.
  
- **Time/Area** – Council, SEFSC, and SERO staff develop the analyses to inform discussion and consideration of time/area closures of the snapper grouper fishery at the September Council Meeting.
  - Consider alternative timing of the red snapper recreational season.
  - Consider a season with a recreational maximum depth limit.
  - Consider wave closures of private recreational bottom fishing
    - Possibly for hot spot area(s) only
    - Would need alternatives for which wave(s) and area(s)
    - Consider closure to align with Shallow Water Grouper Closure (Jan-Apr; Waves 1 and 2)
  - List of Requested Analyses:
    1. Commercial discards (numbers) for all stocks in the snapper grouper complex by wave for NC, SC, GA, north FL (Cape Canaveral north), central FL (Cape Canaveral to Jupiter), and south FL (south of Jupiter), 2005-2021.
    2. Private recreational discards (numbers) for all stocks in the snapper grouper complex by wave for NC, SC, GA, north FL, central FL, and south FL, 2005-2021.

3. Recreational charter discards (numbers) for all stocks in the snapper grouper complex by wave for NC, SC, GA, north FL, central FL, and south FL, 2005-2021.
  4. Head boat discards (numbers) for all stocks in the snapper grouper complex by wave for NC, SC, GA, north FL, central FL, and south FL, 2005-2021.
  5. Commercial landings (numbers and pounds) for all stocks in the snapper grouper complex by wave for NC, SC, GA, north FL, central FL, and south FL, 2005-2021.
  6. Private recreational landings (numbers and pounds) for all stocks in the snapper grouper complex by wave for NC, SC, GA, north FL, central FL, and south FL, 2005-2021.
  7. Recreational charter landings (numbers and pounds) for all stocks in the snapper grouper complex by wave for NC, SC, GA, north FL, central FL, and south FL, 2005-2021.
  8. Head boat landings (numbers and pounds) for all stocks in the snapper grouper complex by wave for NC, SC, GA, north FL, central FL, and south FL, 2005-2021.
  9. A discard-only projection ( $F_{\text{landed}}=0$ ) and ABC recommendation for red snapper. This projection would assume no landings occur and would give perspective on the minimum number of red snapper removals (in this case, all removals would be dead discards) that must be reduced to end overfishing.
  10. Analysis of discard hot spots as described by the SEFSC.
  11. FWC State Reef Fish Survey discard estimates to compare with MRIP discard estimates.
  12. Analyses and discussion of expected economic and social impacts resulting from reduced effort and catch of snapper grouper species.
  13. Discussion of stock assessment results and sensitivity runs.
- The Committee additionally discussed an aggregate snapper grouper bag limit, but did not direct it for inclusion in Regulatory Amendment 35.
  - The Committee noted that revisions to sector allocations are not needed at this time for red snapper. While most other species are considering changes to allocation due to the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) transition from the Coastal Household Telephone Survey to the Fishing Effort Survey, a large majority of the red snapper recreational landings estimates are from the Florida State Reef Fish Survey. Since the landings data did not change, the Committee did not feel the need to consider reallocation through this amendment.

### **Gag (SG Amendment 53)**

The Committee received an overview of the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel's April 2022 recommendations. Staff then presented a decision document. The Committee made the following motions and gave the following direction to staff:

**MOTION 1: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 4B AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR ACTION 3.**

**Action 3. Revise the gag sector allocations and sector annual catch limits**

**Preferred Alternative 4.** To determine allocations throughout the rebuilding plan, use the following method: Use the total commercial and Marine Recreational Information Program Fishery Effort Survey recreational landings (*Sub-alternatives 4a and 4b*) as a baseline for initial reductions; apply the percent reduction from the total landings scenarios to the 2023 total annual catch limit evenly between sectors; apply each subsequent annual increase in the total ACL evenly to each sector ACL for Year 2 and each year thereafter throughout the rebuilding plan. Sector annual catch limits in the terminal year of the rebuilding plan (2032) would remain in place until modified.

**Preferred Sub-Alternative 4b.** To determine allocations throughout the rebuilding plan, use the average commercial and recreational MRIP FES landings from 2015-2019 as the baseline (5-year average).

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION 2: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS THE PREFERRED FOR ACTION 4A.**

**Action 4a. Reduce the commercial trip limit**

**Alternative 3.** Reduce the commercial trip limit to 300 lbs gutted weight.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION 3: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION) AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR ACTION 4B, AND SELECT ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION) AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR ACTION 5B.**

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

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

**Action 5b. Modify the recreational spawning season closure for gag**

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

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION 4: REMOVE ACTION 6 FROM AMENDMENT 53.**

**Action 6. Revise the gag commercial accountability measures**

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION 5: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 4 AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR ACTION 7.**

**Action 7. Revise the gag recreational accountability measures**

**Alternative 4.** Retain the current recreational in-season accountability measures. If recreational landings exceed the recreational annual catch limit, reduce the length of the following year's recreational fishing season by the amount necessary to prevent the recreational annual catch limit from being exceeded in the following year. However, the length of the recreational season will not be reduced if the Regional Administrator determines, using the best scientific information available, that it is not necessary.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Direction to Staff:

- **Action 4a (Reduce the commercial trip limit)** – Direct the IPT to consider a commercial trip limit increase during the rebuilding plan and when such an increase would be optimal given the preferred ACL and allocations alternatives. Include additional alternatives which incorporate a commercial trip limit increase starting at 300 lbs gutted weight, increasing to 500 lbs ending at 1000 lbs gutted weight throughout the rebuilding plan.
- **Action 5a (Establish a recreational vessel limit)** – Direct the IPT to consider a recreational vessel limit increase during the rebuilding plan and when such an increase would be optimal given the preferred ACL and allocations alternatives. Include additional alternatives which incorporate a vessel limit increase from 2 fish to 4 fish, and 6 fish per vessel per day. Include alternatives that would exclude charter or headboats from a vessel limit.
- Gather input from the public on excluding charter/for-hire in the establishment of a recreational vessel limit (see direction above).
- Include the current black grouper bag limit into the alternative language for **Action 5a**.
- Remove **Alternative 5** from **Action 7**.

**Alternative 5.** Remove the current recreational in-season accountability measures. If recreational landings exceed the recreational annual catch limit OR landings exceed the total annual catch limit, reduce the length of the following year's recreational fishing season by the amount necessary to prevent the recreational sector's annual catch limit from being exceeded in the following year. However, the length of the recreational season will not be reduced if the Regional Administrator determines, using the best scientific information available, that it is not necessary.

**Golden Tilefish and Blueline Tilefish (SG Amendment 52)**

The Committee received an overview of the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel's April 2022 recommendations. Staff then presented a decision document. The Committee made the following motions and gave the following direction to staff:

**MOTION 6: APPROVE PURPOSE AND NEED AS MODIFIED.**

**Purpose:** The purpose is to revise the acceptable biological catch, overfishing limit, annual optimum yield, total annual catch limit and sector allocations for golden tilefish based on the most recent stock assessment. Additionally, the purpose is to consider modifications to management measures and accountability measures for golden tilefish and blueline tilefish.

**Need:** The need is to base conservation and management measures on the best scientific information available and achieve optimum yield, consistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Act and its National Standards.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION 7: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3, SUB-ALTERNATIVE 3A AS PREFERRED FOR ACTION 3.**

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

**Alternative 3.** Modify the fishing year for the commercial longline component.

**Sub-Alternative 3a.** Modify the fishing year to start January 15.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION 8: REMOVE ACTION 4 FROM AMENDMENT 52 TO CONSIDER AT A LATER TIME.**

**Action 4. Establish an incidental trip limit allowance for the golden tilefish longline sector once the longline quota is caught**

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION 9: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS PREFERRED FOR ACTION 5.**

**Action 5. Modify postseason recreational accountability measures for golden tilefish**

**Alternative 3.** NMFS would annually announce the recreational fishing season start and end. The fishing season will start on (date) and end on the date National Marine Fisheries Service projects the recreational annual catch limit will be met.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION 10: SELECT ALTERNATIVES 2 AND 4 AS PREFERRED FOR ACTION 6.**

**Action 6. Modify blueline tilefish recreational bag limit**

**Alternative 2.** Reduce recreational blueline tilefish bag limit to 2 fish per person per day.

**Alternative 4.** Do not allow retention of blueline tilefish by captain and crew.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION 11:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 4 AS PREFERRED FOR ACTION 7.

**Action 7. Modify blueline tilefish recreational season.**

**Alternative 4.** Modify blueline tilefish recreational season to May 1 through June 30.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION 12:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS PREFERRED FOR ACTION 8.

**Action 8. Modify postseason recreational accountability measures for blueline tilefish**

**Alternative 3.** NMFS will annually announce the recreational fishing season start and end.

The fishing season will start on (date) and end on the date National Marine Fisheries Service projects the recreational annual catch limit will be met.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION 13:** APPROVE SNAPPER GROUPER AMENDMENT 52 (GOLDEN TILEFISH AND BLUELINE TILEFISH) FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Direction to Staff:

- **Action 1** – Incorporate OFL into the action language.
- **Action 2** – Include clarification for the difference in allocation percentages being due to the MRIP transition from CHTS to FES. Recalculate recreational ACLs using 5.6 pound average weight (from SEDAR 66).
- **Action 3** – Include the Council’s intent to retain the January 1 start date for the hook and line component.
- **Action 5** – Clarify that **Alternative 3** is not technically a post-season AM. Also, include the Council’s intent to retain the January 1 start date for the recreational fishing year.
- **Action 7** – Explore whether regional seasons could be considered for blueline tilefish.
- **Action 8** – Clarify that the in-season AM would remain in place.

**Snowy Grouper (SG Amendment 51)**

The Committee received an overview of the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel’s April 2022 recommendations. Staff then reviewed a decision document. The Committee made the following motions:

**MOTION 14:** MOVE ACTION 3 TO CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED.

**Action 3. Reduce the snowy grouper commercial trip limit**

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION 15:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR ACTION 4

**Action 4. Modify the snowy grouper recreational season**

**Alternative 2.** The recreational snowy grouper season is May 1 to June 30.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION 16:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR ACTION 5

**Action 5. Modify the snowy grouper recreational accountability measures**

**Alternative 3.** If recreational landings exceed the recreational annual catch limit, reduce the length of the following year's recreational fishing season by the amount necessary to prevent the recreational annual catch limit from being exceeded in the following year. However, the length of the recreational season will not be reduced if the Regional Administrator determines, using the best scientific information available, that it is not necessary.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION 17:** APPROVE AMENDMENT 51 FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**Greater Amberjack (SG Amendment 49)**

Staff presented a decision document summarizing the draft amendment and analyses of the current actions. A public hearing for this amendment was held during the Council Meeting Public Comment session. The Committee postponed discussion of some actions until the Full Council session (after the public hearing). The Committee also made the following motions:

**MOTION 18:** MOVE ACTION 3 TO CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED.

**Action 3. Increase the recreational minimum size limit for greater amberjack**

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION 19:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 (32-INCH MINIMUM SIZE LIMIT) AS PREFERRED FOR ACTION 4.

**Action 4. Reduce the commercial minimum size limit for greater amberjack**

**Alternative 2.** Reduce the commercial minimum size limit to 32 inches fork length.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION 20:** ADD AN ALTERNATIVE THAT CONSIDERS A 34-INCH MINIMUM SIZE LIMIT FOR ACTION 4.

**Action 4. Reduce the commercial minimum size limit for greater amberjack**

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION 21:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3, SUB-ALTERNATIVE 3A AS PREFERRED FOR ACTION 5.

**Action 5. Increase the seasonal commercial trip limits for greater amberjack**

**Alternative 3.** Increase the September 1 through the end of February (Season 2) commercial trip limit for greater amberjack to be:

**3a.** 1,200 pounds gutted or whole weight.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL



**MOTION 22:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS PREFERRED FOR ACTION 6.

**Action 6. Revise the April spawning closure for greater amberjack**

**Alternative 2.** Specify during April each year, no person may sell or purchase, harvest or possess a greater amberjack from the South Atlantic exclusive economic zone and the harvest and possession limit is zero. This closure would apply to both the recreational and commercial sectors.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION 23:** APPROVE ALL ACTIONS IN SG AMENDMENT 49.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel input not covered in previous agenda items (*SG AP Report*)**

The AP Chair presented the AP's comments on additional items discussed during their April 2022 meeting, including the continued need for a federal recreational snapper grouper permit (currently being addressed through SG Amendment 46), consideration of including barrelfish in the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan, and initial questions about the Southeast Observer Program expansion.

**South Atlantic Reef Observer Coverage Expansion**

Starting in July 2022 the Southeast Observer Program will increase coverage in the South Atlantic snapper grouper fishery. The Committee received a presentation on the program's expansion from the Southeast Observer Program Branch Chief, Scott Leach.

**Exempted Fishing Permit Brief**

The Committee reviewed an EFP application for a project testing of Subsea Buoy Retrieval Systems (SBRS) in commercial black sea bass pots.

**Other Business**

The Committee further discussed the possibility of a federal recreational permit for the deep water component of the South Atlantic snapper grouper fishery. The committee discussed how the new Recreational Reporting and Permitting and Technical AP could make this a priority.

**Timing and Tasks:**

**MOTION 24:** DIRECT STAFF TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Develop actions and analyses for Regulatory Amendment 35 (Snapper Grouper Release Mortality Reduction and Red Snapper Catch Levels) for the Committee's consideration at the September 2022 meeting.
- Convene a meeting of the golden tilefish longline endorsement holders by December 2022 to discuss alternative ways to manage that fishery.
- Conduct public comment for Amendment 51 (Snowy Grouper) and Amendment 52 (Golden Tilefish and Blueline Tilefish) via webinar before the September 2022 Council meeting and during the public comment session at the September meeting.
- Prepare Amendment 49 (Greater Amberjack) for consideration of final approval at the September 2022 Council meeting.

- Prepare Amendment 53 (Gag) for consideration of approval for public hearings at the September 2022 Council meeting.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**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 GROUPEL 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 GROUPE, 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.

|                                | <b>Post-Season Recreational AMs</b>   |                               |
|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|
|                                | <b>Trigger</b>  | <b>Accountability Measure</b> |
| <b>Preferred Alternative 3</b> | 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.

|                                | <b>Post-season Recreational AMs</b>   |  |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
|                                |   |  |
| <b>Preferred Alternative 3</b> | 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