



Content and Status of Active Amendments

October 3, 2016

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Snapper Grouper

Recently implemented:

- *Snapper Grouper Amendment 35 – removed black snapper, dog snapper, mahogany snapper, and schoolmaster from the FMP and clarified regulations pertaining to Golden Tilefish Longline Endorsements – effective June 22, 2016*
- *Regulatory Amendment 25 -- adjusted the annual catch limits, optimum yield, and commercial and recreational management measures for the blueline tilefish stock, changed the fishing year for yellowtail snapper, and increased the recreational bag limit for black sea bass – actions pertaining to blueline tilefish were effective July 13, 2016; remainder were effective August 12, 2016.*

Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 16 (black sea bass pot closure and gear markings) Council lead: Brian

The amendment contains two actions: the first addresses the prohibition on the use of black sea bass pots that was implemented through Regulatory Amendment 19 and became effective on October 23, 2013; the second action specifies potential new black sea bass pot gear modifications that aid in gear identification in the event of a whale entanglement. The Council reviewed public hearing comments and made final decisions for the document at their September 2015 meeting. The Council approved the document to send to the Secretary at the December 2015 meeting and submitted for Secretarial review on March 4, 2016.

Snapper Grouper Amendment 36 (Spawning Special Management Zones) Council lead: Gregg

Amendment 36 would specify a process for identifying spawning sites/aggregations for snapper grouper species, including speckled hind and warsaw grouper, based on the characteristics of sites important for spawning. Proposed regulations only prohibit fishing for and/or possessing snapper

grouper species in areas designated as Spawning Special Management Zones (SMZs) in the following Spawning SMZs: (1) South Cape Lookout (5 square miles)(NC), (2) Devil's Hole/Georgetown Hole (3.1 square miles)(SC), (3) Area 51 (2.99 square miles)(SC), (4) Area 53 site (2.99 square miles)(SC), and (5) Warsaw Hole (4 square mile)(FL). The amendment would also revise the boundary of the Charleston Deep Reef MPA, and address transit and anchoring provisions within newly designated Spawning SMZs. A 10-year sunset provision whereby the Spawning SMZs designation would be discontinued unless spawning were documented is included, and a framework provision to reauthorize the Spawning SMZs is also included. At their December 2015, the Council approved all actions in Amendment 36. The amendment includes a System Management Plan (SMP) to specify the outreach, law enforcement, and monitoring/research projects necessary to effectively monitor and evaluate the Spawning SMZs. Scoping for this amendment took place in August 2014 and development continued in 2014. In 2015, two rounds of public hearing were held, respectively, in April (via webinar) and August (in-person). The Council reviewed public comments at their September meeting and approved all actions in December 2015. The Council approved the amendment for formal review at their March 2016 meeting.

System Management Plan (Amendment 14 MPAs) Council lead: Chip

Eight Deepwater MPAs were established through Snapper Grouper Amendment 14 in January 2009. The Council has developed a System Management Plan (SMP) that serves as the framework for resource protection, research and monitoring, outreach, administration, and evaluation of the MPAs. The SMP includes action items to assist in achieving the goals and objectives of the SMP and potential metrics for evaluating the management effectiveness of the MPAs. Eventually, the SMP will be expanded to encompass all the Council's managed areas, with sections for MPAs, Spawning SMZs, SMZs, and Coral HAPCs. The Council approved the SMP at their March 2016 meeting.

Snapper Grouper Amendment 37 (hogfish) Council Lead: Myra

Actions in Amendment 37 include modifying the FMU for hogfish (genetic evidence indicates three distinct stocks); revising MSY, MSST, ABC, ACLs, AMs and recreational ACT, as appropriate, for the two stocks in the SAFMC jurisdiction; establish a rebuilding plan for the Florida Keys/East Florida stock, and commercial and recreational management measures for each stock. The amendment was approved for scoping in June 2015. Scoping was held via webinar in August 2015. In September 2015, the Council reviewed scoping comments and reviewed actions/alternatives in the document. The Council requested revised projections for the FLK/EFL stock in September due to high recreational landings (recreational sector closed on August 24, 2015). At their September 2015 meeting, the Council requested that the SSC reconsider their ABC recommendation for the GA-NC stock and that a letter be sent to MRIP requesting an evaluation of hogfish landings in 2015. The SSC met in October 2015 and recommended no changes to the approach used to obtain an ABC for the GA-NC stock. The ABC for that stock was revised based on updates to the landings. Amendment 37 was approved for public hearings at the December 2015 Council meeting and hearings were held January-February, 2016. The SSC convened via webinar on March 4, 2016 to consider methodologies to specify ABCs for the FLK/EFL stock considering that the minimum size limit for that stock would likely increase and thus affect tracking of landings in pounds vs. numbers of fish. The Council reviewed the SSC recommendations and the public hearing comments at the March 2016 meeting. At their meeting on May 3-5, 2016 the SSC reviewed Decision Tools developed by the SERO and provided guidance on whether they should be used to complete effects analyses for the amendment. In June 2016, the Council reviewed the document and selected preferred alternatives for all actions. Amendment 37 was approved for formal review and submitted to NMFS on September 23, 2016.

Snapper Grouper Amendment 41 (mutton snapper) Council Lead: Myra

In June 2015, the Council directed staff to begin development of a new amendment that will include actions to revise the biological parameters, catch levels, and management measures for mutton snapper. At their December 2015 meeting, the Council approved Amendment 41 for scoping. Scoping hearings were held in January/February, 2016. The Council reviewed scoping comments at their March 2016 meeting. In June 2016, the Council approved the document for public hearings, which were held in August 2016. The Council reviewed public comment and made changes to preferred alternatives during their September 2016 meeting. Approval for formal review is scheduled for December 2016.

Snapper Grouper Amendment 44/ Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10 (allocations for dolphin and yellowtail) Council lead: John Hadley

In March 2016, the Council directed staff to begin development of a joint dolphin wahoo and snapper grouper amendment to examine different ways to allocate or share quota between the commercial and recreational sectors for dolphin and yellowtail snapper. Under consideration for yellowtail snapper are in-season allocations shifts as well as permanent re-allocation. In June 2016, the Council approved the amendment for scoping, which was held in August 2016. The Council is scheduled to review and approve the amendment for public hearings in December 2016. If approved, public hearings would be held in late January/early February 2017.

Snapper Grouper Amendment 43 (red snapper and recreational reporting) Council lead: Chip Collier

The Council requested that staff begin development of Amendment 43 in June 2016 to address items related to management of red snapper and other directly and indirectly related items that would ultimately result in an adaptive management approach and respond to items in the Vision Blueprint (i.e., recreational stamp, recreational season, time-area closures, etc.). In September 2016, the Council provided further guidance to staff on possible actions and alternatives and requested that a scoping document be prepared for review at the December 2016 meeting. If approved, scoping hearing would be held in late January/early February 2017.

Vision Blueprint Recreational Regulatory Amendment 26 Council lead: Myra

In June 2016, the Council directed staff to begin development of an amendment to address items identified in the Vision Blueprint addressing recreational management measures. In September 2016 the Council reviewed an options paper and directed staff to prepare a scoping document for review at the December 2016 meeting. Actions in the amendment may include re-evaluation of the shallow water grouper closure, re-evaluation of aggregate bag limits, removal of minimum size limits for deepwater species, and modification of the recreational minimum size limit for black sea bass. If approved, scoping hearings would be held in late January/early February 2017.

Vision Blueprint Commercial Regulatory Amendment 27 - Council lead: Myra

In June 2016, the Council directed staff to begin development of an amendment to address items identified in the Vision Blueprint addressing commercial management measures. In September 2016 the Council directed staff to prepare a scoping document for review at the December 2016 meeting. Potential actions include commercial split seasons for deepwater species (snowy grouper, yellowedge grouper, blueline tilefish, and golden tilefish (HL only)); commercial split season for red porgy (to line up with existing for vermilion snapper and gray triggerfish); re-evaluation of the shallow water grouper closure; trip limits and step-downs (especially as they pertain to traditional bandit boats, vermilion trip limit step-down in second season, restrictions on trip frequency), and fishing year changes (golden

tilefish hook-and-line). If approved, scoping hearings would be held in late January/early February 2017.

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Dolphin Wahoo

Recently implemented:

- *Snapper Grouper Amendment 33/Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 7 (transport of fillets from The Bahamas)* - effective on January 27, 2016
- *Snapper Grouper Amendment 34/Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 8 (AMs for snapper grouper species and sector allocations for dolphin)* - effective on February 22, 2016

Dolphin Wahoo Regulatory Amendment 1 (commercial trip limit for dolphin) Council lead: Brian

In September 2015, the Council directed staff to begin development of a regulatory amendment to consider commercial trip limits for dolphin. Public hearings were held via webinar in November 2015 and at the December 2015 Council meeting. The Council's preferred alternative would implement a 4,000 pound commercial trip limit once 75% of the commercial ACL has been caught. The Council approved the amendment for formal review at the December 2015 meeting and it was sent for formal review on February 16, 2016.

Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10/ Snapper Grouper Amendment 44 (allocations for dolphin and yellowtail) Council lead: John Hadley

In March 2016, the Council directed staff to begin development of a joint dolphin wahoo and snapper grouper amendment to examine different ways to allocate or share quota between the commercial and recreational sectors. Additionally, the Council wanted to consider creating allocations by gear type in the commercial dolphin fishery between longline and hook and line gears. In June 2016, the Council approved the amendment for scoping, which will be held in August 2016. Options being sent out for scoping include a common pool allocation, a reserve category, temporary or permanent shifts in allocation, combined annual catch limits, and creating gear allocations in the commercial dolphin fishery.

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Golden Crab

No amendments currently under development.

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Coral

No amendments currently under development.

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Mackerel

Joint Amendment 26 (king mackerel ACLs, re-designation of KM boundaries and mixing zone, and other king mackerel actions) Council lead: Kari

This amendment contains actions to update the Gulf and Atlantic king mackerel ACLs based on the results of SEDAR 38; modify the stock boundary to be consistent with the stock boundary used in SEDAR 38; updated zone/subzone commercial quotas for Gulf king mackerel; revised sector allocations for Gulf king mackerel; provision to allow bag limit sales of Atlantic king mackerel in the small coastal shark gillnet fishery; potential changes in management measures for the Florida East Coast subzone.

South Atlantic scoping was held January/February 2015 and Gulf scoping was held in April 2015. Public hearings were held in January/February 2016. The South Atlantic Council approved the amendment for Secretarial review in March 2016, and the Gulf Council approved the amendment in April 2016. The amendment was submitted for formal review on July 7, 2016.

Joint Amendment 29 (Gulf king mackerel quota sharing) Council lead: Kari

Amendment 26 included an action to revise commercial and recreational allocations of the Gulf king mackerel ACL. The Councils selected No Action for this action so that the amendment could be submitted for formal review, but the Gulf Council directed staff to begin development of an amendment to consider different ways to allocate quota for Gulf king mackerel. The amendment includes also includes an action to revise the recreational AMs for Gulf king mackerel and an action to modify the framework procedure, to align with the potential quota sharing/allocation system. The Gulf Council reviewed an options paper in June 2016. The South Atlantic Council will review the amendment in September 2016. The Gulf Council is expected to take final action in October 2016, and the South Atlantic Council in December 2016.

Framework Amendment 4 (Atlantic cobia) Council lead: Kari

In March 2016, the Council directed staff to develop an amendment with actions that could lengthen the recreational season for Atlantic cobia. In 2016, the recreational season will close on June 20 due to the landings in 2015 exceeding the recreational ACL. Actions may include changes to measures for bag limits, vessel limits, minimum size limit, accountability measures, and the start of the recreational fishing year. An additional potential action is a step-down for commercial harvest when commercial landings have reached a certain percentage of the commercial ACL.

Public input meetings were held in May 2016 to get additional recommendations from fishermen. The Council reviewed public comments and the potential actions/alternatives at their June 2016 meeting, and approved the amendment for public hearings to be held in August 2016. The Council is scheduled to approve the amendment for Secretarial review in September 2016.

Framework Amendment 5 (modify permit restrictions) Council lead: Kari

This amendment includes one action to modify regulations to remove restrictions on commercial king mackerel and Spanish mackerel permits that prohibit retaining the bag limit on recreational (non-commercial and non-charter/headboat) trips on federally permitted vessels when commercial harvest is closed in that zone. King mackerel and Spanish mackerel are the only two species with this restriction on federally permitted vessels. Initially this framework amendment included an action that would apply in the Gulf only. After June 2016, it is a joint framework amendment with actions applying to the Gulf, South Atlantic, and Mid-Atlantic regions. The Gulf Council is expected to take final action in August 2016, and the South Atlantic Council in September 2016.

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Generics

Joint Commercial Logbook Amendment Council lead: John

The amendment includes an action to consider modifying the timing of reporting requirements for commercial logbooks in fisheries for snapper grouper, coastal migratory pelagic resources, dolphin/wahoo, and golden crab fisheries, and providing an option for logbooks to be submitted electronically. Currently, logbook reports from commercial fishermen targeting snapper grouper, coastal migratory pelagic, and dolphin/wahoo must be submitted to the Science and Research Director postmarked no later than 7 days after the end of each fishing trip. Logbook reporting forms for golden crab must be submitted to the Science and Research Director postmarked no later than 30 days after sale of the golden crab offloaded from a trip. The amendment also considers requiring that the components of the commercial logbooks (landings, economic, and bycatch) be submitted within 21 days after the end of each trip. This would increase the timeline for snapper grouper, coastal migratory pelagic, and dolphin/wahoo fishermen to complete logbooks, and decrease the timeline for golden crab fishermen. Commercial electronic logbooks, as proposed in this amendment, would not be used to monitor annual catch limits; however, they could serve as a means to verify dealer reports and comply with the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program standards that require two sources for verification of quota-monitored species. It is the Council's intent that NMFS use the commercial logbook landings, with the new timing and compliance requirements specified in this amendment, to compare with commercial trip ticket landings to help ensure the commercial ACLs are not exceeded.

At their June 2013 meeting, the Council approved scheduling a NMFS SEFSC presentation on the details of the commercial electronic logbook pilot study at the September 2013 meeting. The Council receives updates at each Council meeting. SA Council staff will work with Gulf staff and NMFS staff to allow fishermen to voluntarily provide their data electronically and to plan for completion of the amendment incorporating results from year 1 of the pilot study. As of April 2016, voluntary reports may be provided through the ACCSP SAFIS system and available to the SEFSC.

Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment 3 (bycatch) Council lead: Chip

The action in CE-BA 3 considers improvements in bycatch/discard data collection methods to better quantify all sources of fishing mortality in South Atlantic fisheries. Alternatives consider expanding aspects of the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program's Release, Discard and Protected Species Module to coastal migratory pelagic (SA Council area only) and dolphin and wahoo fisheries; and also implementing a commercial observer program at 2-5% coverage levels for snapper grouper, coastal migratory pelagic (SA Council area only), dolphin and wahoo, and golden crab vessels.

Based on discussions at the September 2014 Council meeting, the SEFSC/SERO agreed to draft a comprehensive bycatch reporting system for the southeast. The SEFSC and SERO will provide an update on their efforts at each Council meeting. The Council's intent is that the bycatch reporting system would be specified and implemented through this amendment.

The Council reviewed the measures in CE-BA 3 in September 2015. The Council received a briefing from NMFS at the March 2016 meeting.

South Atlantic For-Hire Logbook Amendment Council lead: John C.

During the March 2015 meeting, the South Atlantic Council approved draft actions/alternatives that would require weekly electronic reporting by charter vessels. The actions/alternatives are patterned after the recently implemented headboat electronic reporting requirements. The South Atlantic and Gulf of

Mexico Councils reviewed the amendment at the Joint Council meeting in Key West in June 2015. In September 2015, the South Atlantic Council directed staff and the IPT to revise the amendment to be for South Atlantic charter vessels only. In December 2015, the Council approved the amendment for public hearings, which were held in January/February 2016. At the March 2016 meeting, the Council revised the expected timeline for the amendment, to allow time to develop core data elements, with potential formal approval in September 2016. The Council reviewed the revised amendment in June 2016, developed a list of core variables and scheduled final approval for December 2016 to allow consideration of preliminary feedback from the SAFMC-ACCSP electronic reporting pilot study.

Limited Entry for Charter/Headboat permits for Dolphin Wahoo, Snapper Grouper and Coastal Migratory Pelagics Council lead: Brian?

In June 2016, the Council approved a control date of June 15, 2016, for Dolphin Wahoo, Snapper Grouper, and CMP charter/headboat permits. The Council directed staff to start work on an amendment to consider a limited entry system for DW, SG and CMP charter/headboat permits. The Council will receive an options paper at the September 2016 meeting.

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