Amendment 32

to the Fishery Management Plan for the
Snapper Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region

DECISION DOCUMENT

Actions to End Overfishing and Rebuild the Blueline Tilefish (*Caulolatilus microps*) Stock in the South Atlantic

June 2014

Background

The health of the blueline tilefish stock in the South Atlantic was assessed in 2013. The results of the assessment indicate that the blueline tilefish stock in the South Atlantic is experiencing overfishing. Biomass is less the SSB_{MSY}, and is overfished according to the current definition of the minimum stock size threshold (**Figures 1-1** and **1-2**). However, blueline tilefish would not be considered to be overfished based on the overfished definition being considered in Regulatory Amendment 21 to the Snapper Grouper FMP. Ending overfishing would allow biomass to increase to SSB_{MSY}.

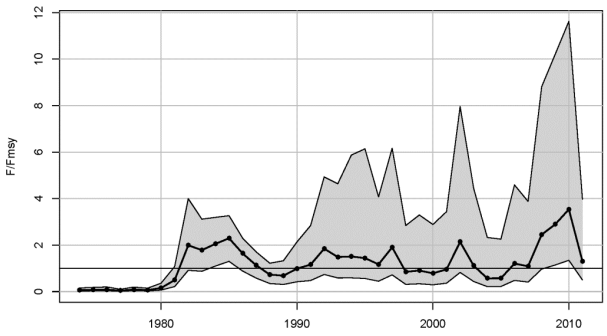

Figure 1-1. The overfishing ratio for blueline tilefish over time. The stock is undergoing overfishing when the F/F_{MSY} is greater than one (SEDAR 32 2013).

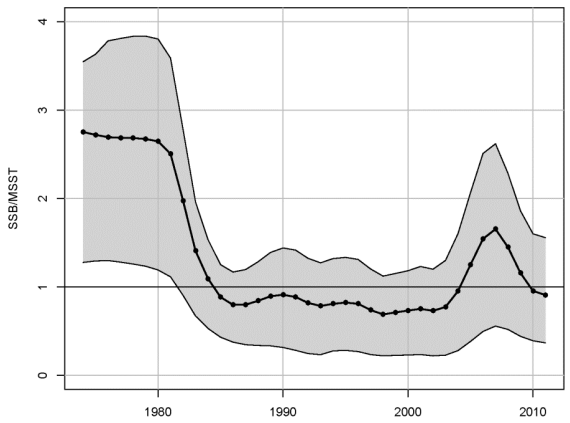

Figure 1-2. The overfished ratio for blueline tilefish over time. The stock is overfished when the SSB/MSST is less than one (SEDAR 32 2013).

NMFS notified the Council of the stock status in a letter dated December 6, 2013. As mandated by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), NMFS and the Council must, by December 6, 2015, prepare a plan amendment and implement regulations to end overfishing immediately and rebuild the stock. NMFS and the Council, through Amendment 32, plan to implement management measures to respond to the most recent scientific information. These management measures include changes to current fishing regulations that are expected to end overfishing immediately and rebuild the blueline tilefish stock.

At their December 2013 meeting, the Council initiated development of Amendment 32. At that same meeting, the Council determined that reducing overfishing of the stock while Amendment 32 is being developed was in the best interest of the fish stock and fishermen. As such, the Council sent their request for emergency action to reduce overfishing of blueline tilefish in a December 10, 2013, letter addressed to the NMFS.

The Council's goal through their request for emergency action is to minimize adverse biological effects to the blueline tilefish stock and adverse socio-economic effects to fishermen and fishing communities that utilize the blueline tilefish portion of the snapper grouper fishery. Although the actions in the emergency rule, which was implemented on April 17, 2014, are likely to have adverse socio-economic effects beginning in 2014, the Council determined that the short-term effects would be justified to minimize long-term reductions in harvest that may be required if the current levels of unsustainable harvest continue to reduce the biomass of the blueline tilefish stock. Landings in 2012 (477,126 pounds (lbs) whole weight (ww)) were significantly greater than the maximum sustainable yield at equilibrium (226,500 lbs ww). Continued exploitation at levels similar to the 2012 landings would negatively affect the health of the blueline tilefish stock.

What is an Emergency Rule?

If the Council determines that an emergency exists, NMFS may implement temporary regulations necessary to address the emergency. If the Council vote is unanimous, NMFS must implement the temporary actions. If the vote is not unanimous, NMFS may implement the actions. The Council voted 12 to 1 to request emergency action at their December 2013 meeting. The temporary regulations may remain in effect for no more than 180 days, but may be extended for an additional 186 days as described in section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

What Are the Proposed Actions in the Amendment?

The Council is proposing implementation or revision of the following items through this amendment:

1) composition of the Deep-Water Complex
2) maximum sustainable yield (MSY)
3) ACLs and optimum yield (OY)
4) recreational annual catch target (ACT)
5) commercial accountability measures (AM)
6) recreational AMs
7) commercial management measures
8) recreational management measures
9) rebuilding plan

For blueline tilefish, overfishing will be determined on an annual basis by the MFMT and OFL methods. The estimate of F_{MSY} (MFMT) for blueline tilefish from SEDAR 32 is 0.302, while the corresponding OFL values increase as the stock rebuilds (**Table 1-1**). If either the MFMT (during an assessment year) or the OFL method (during a non-assessment year) is exceeded, the stock will be considered to be undergoing overfishing.

SSC Recommendations for Blueline Tilefish

OFL
Yield at P*=50%

ABC
Yield at P*=30%

Maximum Overfishing Risk (P*)
30%

Minimum Probability of Rebuilding Success
70%

Table 1-1. Blueline tilefish estimates of F_{MSY} and OFL from SEDAR 32.

Year	OFL (yield P*=50% in lb whole weight)	Fishing Mortality Rate at F_{MSY} (MFMT)
2015	54,612	0.302
2016	77,289	0.302
2017	98,970	0.302
2018	117,863	0.302

Acceptable Biological Catch for Blueline Tilefish

Through Amendment 32, the Council is adopting the ABC recommendation from the SSC. The SSC's ABC recommendation is the yield at P*=0.30. The Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) provided projections at P*=0.30, dated November 25, 2013, to the. SEFSC provided two additional projections, as requested by the Council, which were reviewed by the SSC at their April 2014 meeting.

The projections used 2013 general recreational landings provided by the Southeast Fisheries Science Center and 2013 landings that were an imputed average of landings from 2010 and 2012. This was due to the fact that the landings in 2013 were an order of magnitude higher in 2013 than they were in recent years. Also, the landings of blueline tilefish are typically driven by landings north of Cape Hatteras, NC. However, the spike in recreational landings in 2013 was attributed to landings in FL. These factors suggested that there could be an issue with the 2013 landings provided by the Science Center, so the imputed average of 2010 and 2012 was used for comparison.

The SSC ultimately decided to use the landings estimate for the general recreational fleet generated by MRIP in the projections for ABC and OFL. It was determined that the trend line of the new projections would fall between the two projections already available since all other landings and discards would remain constant, and since the MRIP landings are intermediary between the Science Center's estimate and the imputed average. The SSC decided to interpolate the new projections using the new level of landings from MRIP and the already available projections. The methodology for this interpolation is described in **Appendix X**. **Table 1-2** presents the recommended ABCs based on the interpolated projections.

Table 1-2. ABC (lbs ww) for blueline tilefish recommended by the Council's SSC in April 2014.

Year	ABC
2015	36,359
2016	54,548
2017	72,928
2018	89,769

Proposed Actions and Alternatives

Action 1. Revise the Composition of the Deep-Water Complex and Adjust the Deep-Water Complex Annual Catch Limits, Optimum Yield, and Annual Catch Targets

Alternative 1. (No Action). Retain the current species composition of the Deep-Water Complex (blueline tilefish, yellowedge grouper, silk snapper, misty grouper, queen snapper, sand tilefish, black snapper, and blackfin snapper). Retain the values for the Deep-Water Complex annual catch limits, optimum yield, and recreational annual catch target.

	Species Contribution to the Deep-Water ACL and OY (pounds whole weight)			
Species	**Commercial Contribution**	**Recreational Contribution**	**Total Species Contribution**	**Percent composition**
Yellowedge grouper	27,431	2,790	30,221	4%
Blueline tilefish	316,098	315,243	631,341	89%
Silk snapper*	18,564	6,541	25,105	4%
Misty grouper	2,388	475	2,863	0%
Sand tilefish	1,770	6,213	7,983	1%
Queen snapper	8,756	710	9,466	1%
Black snapper	366	16	382	0%
Blackfin snapper	1,096	2,569	3,665	1%
Deep-water Complex ACLs and OY	376,469 (commercial)	334,556 (recreational)	711,025 (total)	n/a

NOTE: If Amendment 29 is approved and implemented, the ABC for silk snapper would change. This would affect the ACL for the Deep-Water Complex that would need to be changed in this amendment.

	Species Contribution to the Deep-Water ACT (pounds whole weight)	
Species	**Recreational Contribution**	**Percent composition**
Yellowedge grouper	1,395	4%
Blueline tilefish	187,443	89%
Silk snapper*	3,270	4%
Misty grouper	237	0%
Sand tilefish	3,107	1%
Queen snapper	355	1%
Black snapper	8	0%
Blackfin snapper	1,284	1%
Deep-water Complex Recreational ACT	197,100 (recreational)	n/a

The National Marine Fisheries Service has temporarily removed blueline tilefish from the Deep-Water Complex and established temporary catch limits for blueline tilefish in the South Atlantic through emergency action. Effective on April 17, 2014, the Deep-Water Complex catch limits are 60,371 and 19,313 pounds whole weight for the commercial and recreational sectors, respectively. The temporary measures will be in place for 180 days (through October 14, 2014) and may be extended for 186 additional days.

Alternative 2. Remove blueline tilefish from the Deep-Water Complex. Revise the Deep-Water Complex annual catch limits, optimum yield, and recreational annual catch targets to reflect the removal of blueline tilefish. The Deep-Water Complex total annual catch limit equals 79,684 pounds. The Deep-Water Complex annual catch limits and optimum yield would be 60,371 and 19,313 pounds whole weight for the commercial and recreational sectors, respectively. The Deep-Water Complex annual catch target for the recreational sector would be 9,657 pounds whole weight.

What are the Current ACLs for the Deep-Water Complex and Where Did They Come From?

The Council and NMFS established ACLs for the Deep-Water Complex on April 16, 2012, through the Comprehensive ACL Amendment. Fishery managers placed nine species, including blueline tilefish, into the deep-water complex. The Deep-Water complex ACL was determined using the ABC recommendation from the SSC and both the ACL and allocation formulas approved by the Council. The SSC summed the median or third highest landings (1999-2008) for each species in the Deep-Water Complex to determine an overall ABC recommendation for the complex. The ABC recommendation was 675,908 lbs ww. The overfishing level of the complex is unknown. The Council then set ACL equal to the ABC. The ACL for the Deep-Water Complex was later changed to 771,025 lbs ww through Regulatory Amendment 13 to incorporate updates to the recreational data as per the new Marine Recreational Information Program. Each species portion of the ACL was divided by the approved allocation formula and then summed. The commercial and recreational ACLs for the Deep-Water Complex are 376,469 and 334,556, respectively.

Preliminary Summary of Effects

Biological

Alternative 1 (No Action) would not change the current species composition of the Deep-Water Complex, which currently includes blueline tilefish. In 2012, blueline tilefish represented 96% of the landings of the Deep-Water Complex. The blueline tilefish portion of deep-water ACL is 89%. Therefore, landings of blueline tilefish have, by far, the greatest influence on triggering accountability measures (AMs) for the Deep-Water Complex if the annual catch limit is met in the commercial or recreational sector. As such, **Alternative 2** could have greater positive biological effects to species in the Deep-Water complex than **Alternative 1 (No Action)** because the latter is more likely to result in an in-season closure for all species in the Deep-Water Complex. In contrast, removal of blueline tilefish under **Alternative 2 (Preferred)** would make it less likely that an in-season closure of the Deep-Water Complex would occur because, besides blueline tilefish, species in the Deep-Water Complex are not generally targeted and their landings are minor. Regardless, since blueline tilefish represent such a large component of the deep-water complex, the differences in the biological effects between **Alternatives 1 (No Action)** and **2 (Preferred)** would be expected to be minor.

Economic

Blueline tilefish is the most harvested species within the Deep-Water Complex. In 2012 blueline tilefish accounted for approximately 90% (343,869 pounds ww) of commercial landings for the Complex, and blueline tilefish landings exceeded the commercial quota of 316,098

pounds ww that year. A recent stock assessment, however, indicated current harvest levels are unsustainable. **Alternative 1 (No Action)** would not reduce the allowable harvest of blueline tilefish and, in the long run, there would be diminished commercial landings of blueline tilefish and thus diminished economic benefits.

Alternative 1 (No Action) would continue to allow recreational landings of blueline tilefish to exceed the blueline tilefish contribution, which would reduce long-run recreational landings and associated economic benefits. Although **Alternative 2 (Preferred)** would reduce the recreational ACL for the Deep-Water Complex, it would not be expected to result in reduced recreational landings in 2014 unless additional action to establish an in-season recreational accountability measure for the Complex is taken (**Action 6**). If in-season recreational AMs are established for the Complex, and the estimate of 2013 recreational landings (498,399 pounds ww) is representative of baseline landings of the Complex, **Alternative 2 (Preferred)** would reduce the Deep-Water Complex annual recreational landings by approximately 96% (479,086 pounds ww) in the short run. The difference between the two ACLs is 315,243 pounds ww or 84%. If specification of a blueline tilefish ACL is approved under **Action 3**, the two ACLs are expected to continue to be exceeded based on recent recreational landings unless accountability measures are in place under **Action 6** for the recreational fishery. Dollar estimates of the losses of economic benefits from these short-run annual decreases in landings are currently unavailable since the value placed on blueline tilefish (the dominant species caught) by recreational fishermen is unknown. However, the expectation is that there would be a reduction in consumer surplus for private recreational fishermen and net operating revenues for charter and headboat fishermen.

Social

Changing the species included in the Deep-Water Complex is primarily administrative and would be expected to have little direct effects on fishermen and communities. **Alternative 1 (No Action)** could affect fishermen targeting blueline tilefish by removing some flexibility providing by inclusion of blueline tilefish the ACL for the Deep-Water Complex. However, **Alternative 2** will allow more precise management of blueline tilefish without affecting management of the other deepwater species, which would be expected to contribute to rebuilding of the blueline tilefish stock.

Snapper Grouper AP Recommendation:

MOTION: RECOMMEND ADDING AN ACTION TO AMENDMENT 32 TO SEPARATE BLUELINE TILEFISH FROM THE DEEPWATER COMPLEX
APPROVED BY AP

COMMITTEE ACTIONS:

- APPROVE INCLUSION OF ACTION 1 AND ALTERNATIVES.
- DETERMINE WHETHER THE DW COMPLEX AMs SHOULD BE REVISED IN THIS AMENDMENT OR LEAVE IN COMP AM AMENDMENT? Alternative 2, as currently worded, would only remove blueline tilefish from the DW Complex, but would not change the DW Complex AMs as listed below.

- SELECT PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

Current Accountability Measures for the Deep-Water Complex:

Commercial sector

In-season: If commercial landings for the deep-water complex, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for this complex for the remainder of the fishing year.

Post-season: If commercial landings exceed the ACL and at least one species overfished, reduce the ACL in following year by overage amount.

Recreational sector

In-season: none.

Post-season: If recreational landings for the deep-water complex exceed the recreational ACL then during the following fishing year, recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings and, if necessary, NMFS will reduce the length of the following recreational fishing season by the amount necessary to ensure recreational landings do not exceed the recreational ACL in the following fishing year.

Action 2. Re-define Maximum Sustainable Yield for Blueline Tilefish

Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) is the largest long-term average catch that can be taken continuously (sustained) from a stock or stock complex under average environmental conditions.

MSY for blueline tilefish was established through Amendment 11 to the Snapper Grouper FMP (SAFMC 1998). At that time, a stock assessment for blueline tilefish had not been conducted on the stock to obtain an MSY estimate. Therefore, the Council used a "proxy", or substitute, value for MSY at 30% of the Spawning Potential Ratio (SPR). Now that a stock assessment has been conducted that provides an estimate of MSY, the Council needs to take action to adopt the new value and continue to adopt recommended MSY values as they are obtained from the Southeast Data, Review, and Assessment (SEDAR) process and the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC).

	Equation	F_{MSY}	MSY Values (lb whole weight)
Alternative 1. No Action	Do not change the current definition of MSY for blueline tilefish. Currently, MSY equals the yield produced by F_{MSY}. $F_{30\%SPR}$ is used as the F_{MSY} proxy.	$F_{30\%SPR}$=0.356	not specified
Alternative 2. Preferred	MSY equals the yield produced by F_{MSY} or the F_{MSY} proxy. MSY and F_{MSY} are recommended by the most recent SEDAR/SSC.	0.302	226,500

Preliminary Summary of Effects

Biological

The maximum sustainable yield (MSY) is a reference point used by managers to assess fishery performance over the long term. As a result, redefined management reference points could require regulatory changes in the future as managers monitor the long term performance of the stock with respect to the new reference point. Therefore, these parameter definitions would affect subject stocks and the ecosystem of which they are a part, by influencing decisions about

how to maximize and optimize the long-term yield of fisheries under equilibrium conditions and triggering action when stock biomass decreases below a threshold level.

Alternative 2 (Preferred) would redefine the MSY proxy of the blueline tilefish stock based on the recommendation of the SEDAR 32 (2013) Review Panel and the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) to equal the value associated with the yield at F_{MSY} (226,500 lb whole weight). The implementation of a MSY equation would have beneficial effects on the blueline tilefish stock as it provides a reference point to monitor the long-term performance of the stock.

Economic

Specifying MSY establishes the platform for future management, specifically from the perspective of bounding allowable harvest levels. In this sense, MSY may be considered to have indirect effects on fishery participants. As a benchmark, MSY establishes a parameter that condition subsequent management actions, and as such, defining MSY takes special significance. Of the alternatives considered in this action, **Alternative 2 (Preferred)**, which is recommended in the most recent SEDAR and by the SSC, has a better scientific basis. Hence, it provides a more solid ground for management actions that have economic implications.

Social

Social effects of management specifications such as MSY for a stock will be associated with both the biological and economic effects of the MSY value in the rebuilding plan. An MSY level that reflects the best available information (**Alternative 2**) could result in lower F values in the rebuilding plan, and consequentially lower ACLs, which would likely affect fishermen targeting blueline tilefish. However an informed and relevant MSY is expected to contribute to the success of the rebuilding strategy, resulting in greater expected long-term benefits to the commercial fleet and recreational fishermen who target blueline target than under **Alternative 1 (No Action)**.

Snapper Grouper AP Recommendation:

MOTION: RECOMMEND ALTERNATIVE 2 UNDER ACTION 1 AS PREFERRED

Action 1. Re-define Maximum Sustainable Yield for Blueline Tilefish

Alternative 2. MSY equals the yield produced by FMSY or the FMSY proxy. MSY and FMSY are recommended by the most recent SEDAR/SSC

APPROVED BY AP (2 OPPOSED)

Action 3. Establish Annual Catch Limits and Optimum Yield for Blueline Tilefish ~~and Revise the ACL and OY for the Deep-Water Complex~~

Alternative 1 (No Action). Do not establish annual catch limits and optimum yield for blueline tilefish.

The National Marine Fisheries Service has temporarily removed blueline tilefish from the Deep-Water Complex and established the following annual catch limits for blueline tilefish for the commercial and recreational sectors: total ACL = 224,100 pounds whole weight (lbs ww); commercial ACL = 112,207 lbs ww; and recreational ACL = 111,893 lbs ww. The temporary measures will be in place for 180 days (through October 14, 2014) and may be extended for 186 additional days.

Note: Blueline tilefish is in the Deep-Water Complex and there is an annual catch limit for the complex. Action 1 proposes to separate blueline tilefish from the complex.

Alternative 2. ~~Separate blueline tilefish from the deep-water complex and e~~ Establish annual catch limits for blueline tilefish. The blueline tilefish ACL = OY = ABC. ~~Specify commercial and recreational ACLs based on existing sector allocations (50.07% commercial and 49.93% recreational). The deep-water complex ACL would remain at current levels with the current blueline tilefish portion removed.~~ Specify commercial and recreational annual catch limits for blueline tilefish for 2015, 2016, and 2017 and beyond. The annual catch limit for 2017 would remain in effect until modified. Annual catch limits in 2016 and 2017 will not increase automatically in a subsequent year if present year projected catch has exceeded the total annual catch limit. Specify commercial and recreational annual catch limits based on existing sector allocations (50.07% commercial and 49.93% recreational).

	Blueline Tilefish ACL (pounds whole weight)		
Year	**Total**	**Commercial**	**Recreational**
2015	36,359	18,205	18,154
2016	54,548	27,312	27,236
2017 and beyond until modified	72,928	36,515	36,413

Alternative 3. ~~Separate blueline tilefish from the deep-water complex and e~~ Establish annual catch limits for blueline tilefish. The blueline tilefish ACL = OY = 98%ABC. ~~Specify commercial and recreational ACLs based on existing sector allocations (50.07% commercial and 49.93% recreational). The deep-water complex ACL would remain at current levels with the current blueline tilefish portion removed.~~ Specify commercial and recreational ACLs for blueline tilefish for 2015, 2016, and 2017 and beyond. The annual catch limit for 2017 would remain in effect until modified. Annual catch limits in 2016 and 2017 will not increase

automatically in a subsequent year if present year projected catch has exceeded the total annual catch limit. Specify commercial and recreational annual catch limits based on existing sector allocations (50.07% commercial and 49.93% recreational).

	Blueline Tilefish ACL (pounds whole weight)		
Year	**Total**	**Commercial**	**Recreational**
2015	35,632	17,841	17,791
2016	53,457	26,766	26,691
2017 and beyond until modified	71,469	35,785	35,685

Alternative 4. ~~Separate blueline tilefish from the deep-water complex and e~~Establish annual catch limits for blueline tilefish. The blueline tilefish ACL = OY = 90%ABC. ~~Specify commercial and recreational ACLs based on existing sector allocations (50.07% commercial and 49.93% recreational). The deep-water complex ACL would remain at current levels with the current blueline tilefish portion removed.~~ Specify commercial and recreational annual catch limits for blueline tilefish for 2015, 2016, and 2017 and beyond. The annual catch limit for 2017 would remain in effect until modified. Annual catch limits in 2016 and 2017 will not increase automatically in a subsequent year if present year projected catch has exceeded the total annual catch limit. Specify commercial and recreational annual catch limits based on existing sector allocations (50.07% commercial and 49.93% recreational).

	Blueline Tilefish ACL (pounds whole weight)		
Year	**Total**	**Commercial**	**Recreational**
2015	32,723	16,384	16,339
2016	49,093	24,581	24,512
2017 and beyond until modified	65,635	32,864	32,772

Preliminary Summary of Effects

Biological

Alternatives 2 through **4**, which reduce harvest of blueline tilefish, would be expected to have positive biological effects on the stock since allowable harvest levels would be reduced from 2012 landings by XX to YY%. The harvest reductions are based on the results of the recent stock assessment and harvest level recommendation from the Council's SSC. **Alternative 4** would have greater positive effects to blueline tilefish compared to **Alternatives 2** and **3** as **Alternative 4** would establish lower allowable catch levels.

Reducing the blueline tilefish harvest would protect the blueline tilefish stock by reducing the fishing mortality levels, which would be expected to increase the number of older, larger fish in the population. A robust population with multiple year classes provides additional protections against recruitment failure since several years of poor environmental conditions can reduce survival of eggs and larvae. Reducing harvest of blueline tilefish and improving the age structure of the population would be expected to allow the stock to be less susceptible to adverse environmental conditions that might affect recruitment success.

Economic

Alternative 1 (No Action) does not incorporate the latest stock assessment information indicating that the blueline tilefish stock is undergoing overfishing and is overfished. Therefore, under **Alternative 1 (No Action)**, overfishing would continue resulting in long-term negative economic benefits. **Alternatives 2**, **3**, and **4** propose more conservative ACLs than that under **Alternative 1 (No Action)** and could result in short-term economic losses. However, **Alternatives 2**, **3**, **and 4** would potentially result in long-term economic benefits once the stock is rebuilt through higher landings and ex-vessel revenues for the commercial fishery and higher total consumer surplus and net operating revenues over time for the recreational sector.

Alternative 4 would likely have the greatest overall economic benefits in the long-term by establishing the lowest allowable catch levels because of expected higher landings in the future, higher ex-vessel revenues for the commercial sector, and higher consumer surpluses and net operating revenues for the recreational sector. That said, the differences among **Alternatives 2**, **3**, **and 4** are minimal whereas **Alternative 1 (No Action)** would have the smallest long-term economic benefits.

Social

Changes in the ACL for any stock would not directly affect resource users unless the ACL is met or exceeded, in which case AMs that restrict or close harvest could negatively impact the commercial fleet, for-hire fleet, and private anglers. AMs can have significant direct and indirect social effects because, when triggered, can restrict harvest in the current season or subsequent seasons. While the negative effects are usually short-term, they may at times induce other indirect effects through changes in fishing behavior or business operations that could have long-term social effects, such as increased pressure on another species, or fishermen having to stop fishing all together due to regulatory closures.

Snapper Grouper AP Recommendation:

MOTION: RECOMMEND ALTERNATIVE 3 UNDER ACTION 2 AS PREFERRED

Action 2. Establish an Annual Catch Limit (ACL) and Optimum Yield (OY) for Blueline Tilefish and Revise the ACL and OY for the Deep-Water Complex

Alternative 3. Separate blueline tilefish from the deep-water complex and establish annual catch limits for blueline tilefish. The blueline tilefish ACL = OY = 98%ABC. Specify commercial and recreational ACLs based on existing sector allocations (50.07%

commercial and 49.93% recreational). The deep-water complex ACL would remain at current levels with the current blueline tilefish portion removed.

APPROVED BY AP

COMMITTEE ACTIONS:

- APPROVE SUGGESTED EDITS TO ACTION 3 AND ALTERNATIVES.
- CLARIFY WHETHER ACL WILL BE HELD CONSTANT FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS OR INCREASE THE STOCK REBUILDS? IF THE LATTER, THEN DOES THE COUNCIL WANT TO INCREASE FOR 3 YEARS AND HOLD THE 3RD YEAR CONSTANT….OR SOME OTHER METHOD?
- SELECT PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE.

Action 4. Establish a Recreational Annual Catch Target for Blueline Tilefish ~~and Revise the Recreational ACT for the Deep-Water Complex~~

Alternative 1 (No Action). Do not establish an annual catch target for blueline tilefish for the recreational sector. ~~Retain the current recreational ACT for the deep-water complex (yellowedge grouper, blueline tilefish, silk snapper, misty grouper, queen snapper, sand tilefish, black snapper, and blackfin snapper) for the recreational sector. Do not specify a recreational ACT for blueline tilefish.~~

Alternative 2. ~~The recreational ACT for blueline tilefish equals the recreational ACL*(1-PSE) or ACL*0.5, whichever is greater.~~ Establish an annual catch target for blueline tilefish for the recreational sector that equals the recreational ACL*(1-PSE) or ACL*0.5, whichever is greater. ~~Adjust the recreational ACT for the Deep-water Complex to exclude blueline tilefish.~~

	Blueline Tilefish ACT (pounds whole weight)		
Year	**Action 3; Alternative 2 (ACL=ABC)**	**Action 3; Alternative 3 (ACL=98%ABC)**	**Action 3; Alternative 4 (ACL=90%ABC)**
2015	11,368	11,141	10,231
2016	17,055	16,714	15,350
2017 and beyond until modified	22,802	22,346	20,522

Note: Calculations use the most recent 5 years of recreational landings to obtain the PSE.

Alternative 3. ~~The recreational ACT for blueline tilefish equals 85% of the recreational ACL.~~ Establish an annual catch target for blueline tilefish for the recreational sector that equals 85% of the recreational annual catch limit. ~~Adjust the recreational ACT for the Deep-water Complex to exclude blueline tilefish.~~

	Blueline Tilefish ACT (pounds whole weight)		
Year	**Action 3; Alternative 2 (ACL=ABC)**	**Action 3; Alternative 3 (ACL=98%ABC)**	**Action 3; Alternative 4 (ACL=90%ABC)**
2015	15,431	15,122	13,888
2016	23,150	22,687	20,835
2017 and beyond until modified	30,951	30,332	27,856

Preliminary Summary of Effects

Biological

At present, ACTs are used as a management reference point to track performance of the management measures imposed on the recreational sector. No accountability measures are triggered if recreational landings reach the recreational ACL. Hence, biological effects are neutral for all alternatives considered, including **Alternative 1 (No Action)**.

Alternative 2 would have the greatest biological benefit among the alternatives considered by adjusting the ACL by 50% or one minus the Percent Standard Error (PSE) from the recreational fishery, whichever is greater. The lower the value of the PSE the more reliable the landings data. By using PSE in **Alternative 2**, more precaution is taken with increasing variability and uncertainty in the landings data.

Economic

At present, ACTs are used as a management reference point to track performance of the management measures imposed on the recreational sector. In the event they are used to trigger accountability measures for the recreational sector, economic effects would be similar in nature to those under **Action 3**, though not necessarily in magnitude. Under that scenario, **Alternative 1 (No Action)** would have the same economic effects as any of the ACL alternatives under **Action 3**.

Social

Establishment of a recreational ACT for blueline apart from the Deep-Water Complex recreational ACT would likely have little effects on recreational fishermen targeting blueline tilefish. A higher ACT could be more beneficial for fishermen, depending on the levels specified in **Alternatives 2** and **3**. Because the ACT is used for monitoring only, it is expected that the social effects of **Alternative 1 (No Action)**, **Alternative 2**, and **Alternative 3** would be the same.

Snapper Grouper AP Recommendation:

MOTION: RECOMMEND ALTERNATIVE 2 AS PREFERRED UNDER ACTION 3

Action 3. Establish a Recreational Annual Catch Target (ACT) for Blueline Tilefish and Revise the Recreational ACT for the Deep-Water Complex

> **Alternative 2.** The recreational ACT for blueline tilefish equals the recreational ACL*(1-PSE) or ACL*0.5, whichever is greater. Adjust the recreational ACT for the Deep-water Complex to exclude blueline tilefish.

APPROVED BY AP

COMMITTEE ACTIONS:

- APPROVE SUGGESTED EDITS TO ACTION 4 AND ALTERNATIVES.
- SELECT PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE.

Action 5. Specify Accountability Measures for Blueline Tilefish for the Commercial Sector

Alternative 1 (No Action). ~~Retain the current accountability measures for the deep-water complex (yellowedge grouper, blueline tilefish, silk snapper, misty grouper, queen snapper, sand tilefish, black snapper, and blackfin snapper) for the commercial sector. Do not specify new accountability measures for blueline tilefish for the commercial sector.~~
Do not specify accountability measures for blueline tilefish for the commercial sector.

The National Marine Fisheries Service has temporarily removed blueline tilefish from the Deep-Water Complex and established an in-season accountability measure for blueline tilefish for the commercial sector. The accountability measure is as follows: If commercial landings for blueline tilefish reach or are projected to reach the commercial annual catch limit, National Marine Fisheries Service will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for blueline tilefish for the remainder of the fishing year. The temporary measures will be in place for 180 days (through October 14, 2014) and may be extended for 186 additional days.

Note: Blueline tilefish is in the Deep-Water Complex and there is an accountability measure for the commercial sector for the complex. Action 1 proposes to separate blueline tilefish from the complex.

Alternative 2. Specify the following in-season and post-season accountability measures for blueline tilefish for the commercial sector: If blueline tilefish commercial landings as estimated by the Science and Research Director reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL, the Regional Administrator shall publish a notice to close the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year. On and after the effective date of such a notification, all sale or purchase is prohibited and harvest or possession of this species in or from the South Atlantic EEZ is limited to the bag and possession limit. This bag and possession limit applies in the South Atlantic on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper grouper has been issued as appropriate, without regard to where such species were harvested, i.e., in state or Federal waters. Additionally,

Sub-alternative 2a. If the commercial ACL is exceeded, the Regional Administrator shall publish a notice to reduce the commercial ACL in the following fishing year by the amount of the commercial overage, only if the species is overfished.

Sub-alternative 2b. If the commercial ACL is exceeded, the Regional Administrator shall publish a notice to reduce the commercial ACL in the following fishing year by the amount of the commercial overage, only if the total ACL (commercial ACL and recreational ACL) is exceeded.

Sub-alternative 2c. If the commercial ACL is exceeded, the Regional Administrator shall publish a notice to reduce the commercial ACL in the following fishing year by the amount of the commercial overage, only if the species is overfished **and** the total ACL (commercial ACL and recreational ACL) is exceeded.

Preliminary Summary of Effects

Biological

Alternative 1 (No Action) allows the Regional Administrator to close the commercial sector in-season if the ACL is met or projected to be met. However, this measure is only temporarily in place. **Alternative 2** would change the commercial payback provisions for blueline tilefish as proposed under **Sub-alternatives 2a-2c**. Currently, there is no built in mechanism to correct an ACL overage if one were to occur. Therefore, biological benefits would be realized under any of the three sub-alternatives considered. **Sub-alternative 2a** would only result in biological benefits if the species is overfished. **Sub-alternative 2b** is likely to have similar or greater beneficial biological impacts than **Sub-alternative 2a**, as the AM would be triggered when both the recreational and commercial ACLs have been exceeded regardless of overfished status. **Sub-alternative 2c** would be triggered the least frequently of all the sub-alternative payback AMs under consideration, because the payback would only be required if two criteria are met, blueline tilefish is overfished and the total ACL has been exceeded. The likelihood of both of these scenarios taking place at the same time is small. **Sub-alternative 2c** may implement a commercial payback under such infrequently encountered simultaneous events that it may lead to a payback provision not being triggered when it is actually biologically necessary. Therefore, **Sub-alternative 2c** may be associated with the lowest level of biological benefits compared to **Sub-alternatives 2a** and **2b**.

Economic

Alternative 1 (No Action) would economically benefit the commercial sector the most in the short-term but the least in the long-term since lack of an AM could result in continued overfishing. All options under **Alternative 2** would result in short-term ex-vessel revenue losses to the commercial sector compared to recent landings. Over the long-term, however, these alternatives would provide a better economic scenario for the commercial sector by addressing issues related to overfishing of the stock. With a relatively stable stock over time, future harvest would increase or at least would be stable. This stability could benefit the commercial sector financially by paving the way for more confident business planning with more predictable landings that could result in improvements in marketing and reliability of landings to dealers.

Social

In general, the most beneficial in the long term for the stock and for sustainable fishing opportunities is a combination of an in-season closure and a payback provision. However, some flexibility in how these AMs are triggered, such as conditions of the stock being overfished or the total ACL being exceeded, can help to mitigate the negative short-term impacts on fishermen and associated businesses and communities. **Alternative 1 (No Action)** would not be expected to result in effects on the commercial fleets of these fisheries because it would not be consistent with changes to blueline tilefish management. **Alternative 2** will likely benefit fishermen in the long term by maximizing effectiveness of the ACL and rebuilding strategy through in-season and post-season AMs. **Sub-alternatives 2a-2c** will provide some flexibility and specifics for triggering the AMs. **Sub-alternative 2c** would provide the most flexibility for triggering the payback AM, in that the most critical conditions must be met before the payback is triggered,

and would be expected to be most beneficial to commercial fishermen in that it will be less likely that a payback is required for an overage. Additionally, **Sub-alternative 2c** would be more consistent with AMs for other species such as king mackerel and Spanish mackerel.

Snapper Grouper AP Recommendation:

MOTION: RECOMMEND SUB-ALTERNATIVE 2C UNDER ACTION 4 AS PREFERRED:

Action 4. Specify Accountability Measures for Blueline Tilefish for the Commercial Sector

Sub-alternative 2c. If the commercial ACL is exceeded, the Regional Administrator shall publish a notice to reduce the commercial ACL in the following fishing year by the amount of the commercial overage, only if the species is overfished and the total ACL (commercial ACL and recreational ACL) is exceeded.

APPROVED BY AP

COMMITTEE ACTIONS:

- APPROVE SUGGESTED EDITS TO ALTERNATIVES UNDER ACTION 5
- SELECT PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE.

Action 6. Specify Accountability Measures for Blueline Tilefish for the Recreational Sector

Alternative 1 (No Action). Do not specify accountability measures for blueline tilefish for the recreational sector.

The National Marine Fisheries Service has temporarily removed blueline tilefish from the deep-water complex and established an in-season accountability measure for blueline tilefish for the recreational sector. The accountability measure is as follows: If recreational landings for blueline tilefish reach or are projected to reach the recreational annual catch limit, National Marine Fisheries Service will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for blueline tilefish for the remainder of the fishing year. The temporary measures will be in place for 180 days (through October 14, 2014) and may be extended for 186 additional days.

Note: Blueline tilefish is in the Deep-Water Complex and there is an accountability measure for the recreational sector for the complex. Action 1 proposes to separate blueline tilefish from the complex.

Alternative 2. Specify the following post-season accountability measures for blueline tilefish for the recreational sector: If blueline tilefish recreational landings, as estimated by the Science and Research Director, exceed the recreational ACL, then during the following fishing year, recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings.

Sub-alternative 2a. If necessary, the Regional Administrator shall publish a notice to reduce the length of fishing season and the recreational ACL in the following fishing year by the amount of the recreational overage, only if the species is overfished. The length of the recreational season and recreational ACL will not be reduced if the Regional Administrator determines, using the best scientific information available, that a reduction is unnecessary.

Sub-alternative 2b. If necessary, the Regional Administrator shall publish a notice to reduce the length of fishing season and the recreational ACL in the following fishing year by the amount of the recreational overage, only if the total ACL (commercial ACL and recreational ACL) is exceeded. The length of the recreational season and recreational ACL will not be reduced if the Regional Administrator determines, using the best scientific information available, that a reduction is unnecessary.

Sub-alternative 2c. If necessary, the Regional Administrator shall publish a notice to reduce the length of fishing season and the recreational ACL in the following fishing year by the amount of the recreational overage, only if the species is overfished **and** the total ACL (commercial ACL and recreational ACL) is exceeded. The length of the recreational season and recreational ACL will not be reduced if the Regional Administrator determines, using the best scientific information available, that a reduction is unnecessary.

Alternative 3. Specify the following in-season accountability measures for blueline tilefish for the recreational sector: If recreational landings for blueline tilefish reach or are projected to reach the recreational annual catch limit, National Marine Fisheries Service will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for blueline tilefish for the remainder of the fishing year.

Preliminary Summary of Effects

Biological

Sub-alternatives 2a, **2b**, and **2c**, would maintain the ability of the Regional Administrator to interpret landings data to determine whether a payback is needed. However, these sub-alternatives would all allow the payback to take the form of a recreational ACL reduction and a season length reduction, compared to Alternative 1 (No Action), which is an in-season closure if landings are projected to reach the ACL.

Sub-alternative 2a would allow the Regional Administrator to correct for a recreational ACL overage by reducing the length of the fishing season and the recreational ACL in the following fishing year by the amount of the recreational overage, but only if the species is overfished. Therefore, if the recreational ACL is exceeded and increased landings through the next fishing year are detected, but the species is not overfished, no corrective action to pay back the ACL overage would be required. This scenario could lead to negative biological impacts, especially if the recreational ACL is exceeded repeatedly without an overfished determination.

Sub-alternative 2b would allow the Regional Administrator to reduce the length of the fishing season and the recreational ACL following persistently high landings if the total ACL (commercial and recreational ACL combined) is exceeded. It is likely that overages of the total ACL would happen more frequently than exceeding the commercial ACL when a species is overfished. Furthermore, the definition of MSST for blueline tilefish could be changed if Regulatory Amendment 21 is approved, making it less likely for blueline tilefish to be determined to be overfished. Thus, it is expected that the AM under **Sub-alternative 2b** would be triggered more frequently and have a greater biological benefit than **Sub-alternative 2a**.

Sub-alternative 2c would only trigger a recreational ACL payback (in the form of a reduced recreational ACL and season length following an ACL overage) if a species is overfished and the total ACL is exceeded. This AM is the least likely to be implemented considering the infrequently encountered scenario of a total ACL being exceeded and a species being overfished in the same fishing year. Under **Sub-alternative 2c**, no action would be taken to correct for a recreational ACL overage unless both of those criteria are met. Therefore, **Sub-alternative 2c** may be the least biologically beneficial compared to the other **Alternative 2** sub-alternatives considered.

Economic

Alternative 1 (No Action) would economically benefit the recreational sector the most in the short-term because it could result in higher catches but the least in the long-term since lack of an AM could result in continued overfishing. All sub-alternatives under **Alternative 2** would result in short-term consumer surplus losses to the recreational sector compared to recent landings. Over the long-term, however, these alternatives would provide a better economic scenario for the recreational sector by addressing issues related to overfishing of the stock leading to higher future catches, consumer surplus, and net operating revenues.

Social

Accountability measures can have significant direct and indirect social effects because, when triggered, can restrict harvest in the current season or subsequent seasons. For the recreational sector, **Alternative 1 (No Action)** would have minimal effects but also would not establish necessary AMs for blueline tilefish, which could have negative social effects if the long-term health of the stock is affected. Blueline tilefish will have a reduced ACL under **Action 3**. For establishment of a payback provision for the recreational sector for stocks without a post-season AM under **Alternative 2** will create an increased likelihood that an overage by the recreational could reduce fishing opportunities in the following year. However **Sub-alternatives 2a-2c** provide some flexibility in how a post-season payback would be triggered, with **Sub-alternative 2c** being the least likely to trigger a payback and affecting recreational fishing opportunities in the subsequent year.

The in-season closure AM for the recreational sector in **Alternative 3** could have negative effects on recreational fishing opportunities and for-hire businesses because there has not been an in-season recreational AM in place for blueline tilefish. However, the in-season closure would likely help prevent the frequency of paybacks, along with additional protection for the blueline tilefish resource.

Snapper Grouper AP Recommendation:

MOTION: RECOMMEND SUB-ALTERNATIVE 2C UNDER ACTION 5 AS PREFERRED

Action 5. Specify Accountability Measures for Blueline Tilefish for the Recreational Sector

> **Sub-alternative 2c.** If necessary, the Regional Administrator shall publish a notice to reduce the length of fishing season and the recreational ACL in the following fishing year by the amount of the recreational overage, only if the species is overfished and the total ACL (commercial ACL and recreational ACL) is exceeded. The length of the recreational season and recreational ACL will not be reduced if the Regional Administrator determines, using the best scientific information available, that a reduction is unnecessary.

APPROVED BY AP

MOTION: RECOMMEND ALTERNATIVE 3 AS AN ADDITIONAL PREFERRED FOR ACTION 5

> **Alternative 3.** If recreational landings for blueline tilefish reach or are projected to reach the recreational annual catch limit, National Marine Fisheries Service will file a

notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for blueline tilefish for the remainder of the fishing year.

APPROVED BY AP

COMMITTEE ACTIONS:

- APPROVE INCLUSION OF ACTION 6 AND ALTERNATIVES (PREVIOUSLY THERE WAS A SINGLE ACTION TO ESTABLISH BOTH COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL AMs).
- CLARIFY WHETHER THE RECREATIONAL ACT SHOULD ALSO BE REDUCED AS PART OF SUB-ALTERNATIVE 2A. FOR EXAMPLE, THE AM FOR COBIA REDUCES THE ACL AND ACT.
- SELECT PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE(S).

Action 7. Establish ~~Management Measures~~ a Trip Limit for Blueline Tilefish for the Commercial Sector

Alternative 1 (No Action). ~~Retain the current management measures for blueline tilefish for the commercial sector.~~ Do not ~~implement~~ establish a trip limit for blueline tilefish for the commercial sector.

Alternative 2. Establish a commercial trip limit for blueline tilefish from January through April of 100 pounds whole weight (lbs ww).

Sub-alternative 2a. Establish a commercial trip limit from May onwards of 1,500 lbs ww until 80% of the ACL is projected to be met. Then reduce the trip limit to 100 lbs ww for the remainder of the fishing year until the ACL is met or is projected to be met.

Sub-alternative 2b. Establish a commercial trip limit from May onwards of 2,000 lbs ww until 80% of the ACL is projected to be met. Then reduce the trip limit to 100 lbs ww for the remainder of the fishing year until the ACL is met or is projected to be met.

Sub-alternative 2c. Establish a commercial trip limit from May onwards of 2,500 lbs ww until 80% of the ACL is projected to be met. Then reduce the trip limit to 100 lbs ww for the remainder of the fishing year until the ACL is met or is projected to be met.

Preliminary Summary of Effects

Biological

Results of the analyses show that a commercial ACL of 18,205 lbs ww would be landed in less than one month under **Alternative 1 (No Action)**. Starting off the fishing year with a trip limit of 100 lbs, increasing it in May, and reducing it again once the majority of the ACL has been landed, as proposed under **Alternative 2** and its sub-alternatives, would lengthen the season to at least the third week in May. Imposing a 100-lb trip limit on the commercial sector for the entirety of the fishing season, which is currently not an option being considered by the Council, would extend fishing for blueline tilefish up to the middle of June.

Economic

Given the relatively small difference between the estimated closure dates, it seems that commercial fishermen would benefit more from one of the sub-alternatives under **Alternative 2** than from the 100-pound trip limit because it would allow them much higher levels of ex-vessel revenue over the same period of time, approximately. The long-term economic benefits are similar under all alternatives since the ACL and AMs would prevent overfishing. The short-term economic benefits differ slightly among **Sub-alternatives 2a-2c**. **Sub-alternative 2c** results in one day less of fishing than what a larger trip limit would allow. Fishermen's input will be important in determining the preferred sub-alternative since sufficient information does not exist at this time regarding how large a trip limit has to be to make a blueline tilefish trip profitable.

Social

In general, commercial trip limits may help slow the rate of harvest, lengthen a season, and prevent the ACL from being exceeded. However, trip limits that are too low may make fishing trips inefficient and too costly if fishing grounds are too far away, which could affect business decisions and fishing behavior for commercial fishermen. The costs and benefits to fishermen when considering commercial trip limits depend on if a longer season with a consistent supply of blueline tilefish is more important than maximizing efficiency on fishing trips, even if the season is shorter in length. Overall, it would be expected that fishermen and crew working on vessels in Wanchese, NC, would be the most affected by the proposed trip limits in **Alternative 2**.

Snapper Grouper AP Recommendation:

MOTION: RECOMMEND SUB-ALTERNATIVE 2A UNDER ACTION 6 AS PREFERRED:

Action 6. Establish Management Measures for Blueline Tilefish for the Commercial Sector

Alternative 2. Establish a commercial trip limit for blueline tilefish from January to April of 100 pounds.

Sub-alternative 2a. Establish a commercial trip limit from May onwards of 1,500 pounds until 80% of the ACL is projected to be met. Then reduce the trip limit to 100 pounds for the remainder of the fishing year until the ACL is met or projected to be met.

APPROVED BY AP

COMMITTEE ACTION:

- APPROVE SUGGESTED EDITS TO ACTION 7 AND ALTERNATIVES
- SELECT PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE.

Action 8. Adjust the Bag Limit for ~~Establish Management Measures for~~ Blueline Tilefish for the Recreational Sector

Alternative 1 (No Action). ~~Retain the current management measures for blueline tilefish for the recreational sector. Blueline tilefish is included in the aggregate grouper bag limit of 3/person/day of: gag, black, snowy, misty, red, scamp, yellowedge, yellowfin, yellowmouth, golden tilefish, sand tilefish, coney, graysby, red hind, and rock hind.~~
Retain the current blueline tilefish aggregate grouper bag limit of 3/person/day. The aggregate group contains the following species: gag, black grouper, snowy grouper, misty grouper, red grouper, scamp, yellowedge grouper, yellowfin grouper, yellowmouth grouper, blueline tilefish, golden tilefish, sand tilefish, coney, graysby, red hind, and rock hind.

Alternative 2. Remove blueline tilefish from the aggregate grouper bag limit.

Alternative 3. Establish a bag limit of blueline tilefish of 1/person/day.

Alternative 4. Establish a vessel limit of blueline tilefish of 1/vessel/day.

Preliminary Summary of Effects

Biological

The ABC recommended by the SSC and the resulting recreational ACL, will be compared with the expected recreational catches to determine what level of bag limit is expected to keep the recreational sector at or below the recreational ACL. This section will be completed once analyses are available.

Economic

In general, the short-term economic effects of bag limit changes for the recreational fishery depend on the change in access to the resource. **Alternative 1 (No Action)** allows the recreational sector the greatest access to retain blueline tilefish with up to three blueline tilefish kept per trip. While this may result in higher catch rates by the recreational sector, it does not directly affect long-term economic benefits, which are largely ruled by the ACL and the ability of AMs to be enforced. **Alternative 2** alone would restrict any access to blueline tilefish by the recreational sector. This is the least economically beneficial alternative for the recreational fishery in the short-term. Combining **Alternatives 2** with **Alternatives 3** or **4** would result in short-term economic benefits in between those expected under **Alternative 1 (No Action)** and **Alternative 2**.

Social

In general, the social effects of modifying the recreational bag or vessel limit would be associated with the biological costs of each alternative, as well as the effects on current recreational fishing opportunities. The aggregate bag limit (**Alternative 1 (No Action)**) would

not contribute to directed management of blueline tilefish. **Alternative 2** could have negative long-term social effects associated with any biological effects of no bag limit for blueline tilefish, such as lower ACLs or limited access to the resource. **Alternatives 3** and **4** would limit recreational fishing opportunities for blueline tilefish but would also be expected to contribute to successful rebuilding of the stock.

Snapper Grouper AP Recommendation:

MOTION: RECOMMEND ALTERNATIVE 3 UNDER ACTION 7 AS PREFERRED:

Action 7. Establish Management Measures for Blueline Tilefish for the Recreational Sector

Alternative 3. Establish a bag limit of blueline tilefish of 1/person/day.

APPROVED BY AP (1 OPPOSED)

COMMITTEE ACTION:

- APPROVE SUGGESTED EDITS TO ACTION 8 AND ALTERNATIVES.
- SELECT PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE.

Action 9. Establish a Rebuilding Plan for Blueline Tilefish

Blueline tilefish is currently overfished as defined by the current definition of the minimum stock size threshold (MSST). The Council is currently developing Regulatory Amendment 21 that considers revisions to the MSST for certain species in the snapper grouper FMU, including blueline tilefish. Depending on approval of those actions and the timing of Regulatory Amendment 21 and Amendment 32, blueline tilefish may not be overfished and a rebuilding plan would not be required.

COMMITTEE ACTION: APPROVE AMENDMENT 32 FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS IN AUGUST 2014.