

4.9 Essential Fish Habitat and Essential Fish Habitat Areas of Particular Concern

4.9.1 Action X. Amend the Shrimp Fishery Management Plan (FMP) to designate new Essential Fish Habitat-Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (EFH-HAPCs).

Alternative 1. No action. Do not amend the Shrimp FMP to designate new Essential Fish Habitat-Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (EFH-HAPCs). The following existing designations would remain in effect.

Alternative 2. Amend the Shrimp FMP to designate the new Essential Fish Habitat-Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (EFH-HAPCs):

Sub-Alternative 2a. Cape Canaveral, Florida, scallop grounds (for rock shrimp)

Sub-Alternative 2b. Bulls Bay, South Carolina (for penaeid shrimp)

Sub-Alternative 2c. Ashepoo, Combahee and Edisto (ACE) Basin, South Carolina (for penaeid shrimp)

4.9.2 Action X. Amend the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan (FMP) to designate new Essential Fish Habitat-Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (EFH-HAPCs).

Alternative 1. No action. Do not amend the Snapper Grouper FMP to designate new Essential Fish Habitat-Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (EFH-HAPCs). The following existing designations would remain in effect.

Alternative 2. Amend the Snapper Grouper FMP to designate the following Essential Fish Habitat-Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (EFH-HAPCs):

Sub-Alternative 2a. Golden tilefish habitat (100m-300m)

Sub-Alternative 2b. Mouth of the Altamaha River including oyster reefs and marsh

Sub-Alternative 2c. All live bottom from shoreline out to 10 miles for black sea bass

Sub-Alternative 2d. All waters classified as Outstanding Resource Waters

Sub-Alternative 2e. North Carolina Strategic Habitat Areas

Sub-Alternative 2f. Bulls Bay, SC

Sub-Alternative 2g. Ashepoo, Combahee and Edisto (ACE) Basin, SC

Sub-Alternative 2jh Deepwater Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)

4.9.3 Action X. Amend the Coastal Migratory Pelagics Fishery Management Plan (FMP) to designate new Essential Fish Habitat-Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (EFH-HAPCs).

Alternative 1. No action. Do not amend the Coastal Migratory Pelagics FMP to designate new Essential Fish Habitat-Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (EFH-HAPCs). The following existing designations would remain in effect.

Alternative 2. Amend the Coastal Migratory Pelagics FMP to designate new Essential Fish Habitat-Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (EFH-HAPCs):

Sub-Alternative 2a. Mouth of the Altamaha River including oyster reefs and marsh

Sub-Alternative 2b. All waters classified as Outstanding Resource Waters

Sub-Alternative 2c. Lake Worth Lagoon, FL

Sub-Alternative 2d. Indian River Lagoon, FL

Sub-Alternative 2e. North Carolina Strategic Habitat Areas

Sub-Alternative 2f. Bulls Bay, SC

Sub-Alternative 2g. Ashepoo, Combahee and Edisto (ACE) Basin, SC

4.9.4 Action X. Amend the Coral, Coral Reefs and Live/Hardbottom Habitat Fishery Management Plan (Coral FMP) to designate new Essential Fish Habitat-Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (EFH-HAPCs).

Alternative 1. No action. Do not amend the Coral FMP to designate new Essential Fish Habitat-Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (EFH-HAPCs). The following existing designations would remain in effect.

Alternative 2. Amend the Coral FMP to designate new Essential Fish Habitat-Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (EFH-HAPCs):

Sub-Alternative 2a. Broward County (FL) staghorn coral stand.

Sub-Alternative 2b. Deepwater Coral Habitat Areas of Particular Concern

4.9.5 Action X. Amend the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for Pelagic *Sargassum* Habitat to designate new Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) and Essential Fish Habitat-Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (EFH-HAPCs).

Alternative 1. No action. Do not amend the *Sargassum* FMP to designate Essential Fish Habitat (EFH). The Council must designate EFH for all managed species including Pelagic *Sargassum* Habitat.

Alternative 2. Amend the *Sargassum* FMP (SAFMC 1998) to designate the following Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) and Essential Fish Habitat-Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (EFH-HAPCs):

Sub-Alternative 2a. EFH for Pelagic *Sargassum* encompasses the top ten meters of the water column in the South Atlantic EEZ.

Alternative 3. Amend the *Sargassum* FMP to designate the following Essential Fish Habitat-Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (EFH-HAPCs):

Sub-Alternative 3a. The Charleston Bump Complex

Sub-Alternative 3b. The Point, NC