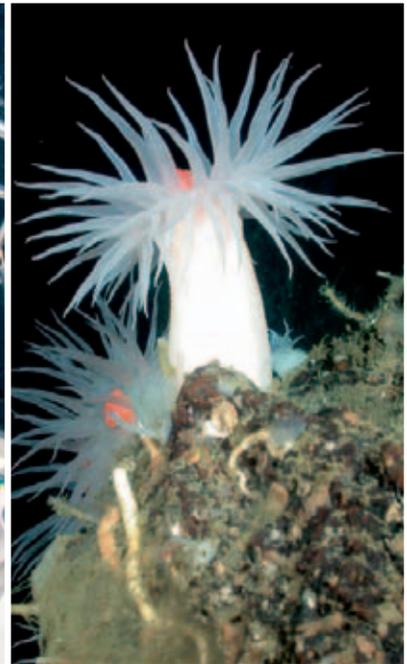


Fishing Regulations

FOR SOUTH ATLANTIC FEDERAL WATERS



as of June 2010

FOR SPECIES MANAGED BY THE
SOUTH ATLANTIC
FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

www.safmc.net



South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

To Conserve and Manage

The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional fishery management councils in the United States. In 1976, Congress passed the Magnuson Act to address concerns of foreign fishing fleets fishing close to U.S. shores. The Magnuson Act extended the U.S. jurisdiction of fisheries offshore to 200 miles and created a new form of regional government through the establishment of the eight fishery management councils. The role of the councils is to develop fishery management plans needed to manage fishery resources within the 200 nautical mile limit. This limit, sometimes referred to as the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) or "federal waters" ranges offshore from state waters (three miles in the South Atlantic) to 200 nautical miles.

In 1996, the Sustainable Fisheries Act (SFA) became law and amended the Magnuson Act (renamed the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act). Congress passed the SFA to protect marine fish stocks



with requirements to prevent and stop overfishing, minimize bycatch and protect habitat. The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act was reauthorized on January 12, 2007. The Reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Act mandates the establishment of Annual Catch Limits (including bycatch mortality) and Accountability Measures to end overfishing, and expands the role of the Scientific and Statistical Committee in setting the catch limits. The Act also emphasizes the use of limited access privilege programs, strengthens law enforcement, and promotes ecosystem approaches to management. (To learn more, visit www.nmfs.noaa.gov/msa2007.)

Headquartered in North Charleston, South Carolina, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council is responsible for the conservation and management of fish stocks within the 200 nautical mile limit off the coasts of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and the East Coast of Florida south to Key West.

The Council's primary function is to prepare fishery management plans and amendments to each plan for fisheries that require conservation and management in the region under its jurisdiction.

Council Members

Council members are citizens from each of the four southeastern states who are knowledgeable of some aspect of the fisheries. They serve three-year terms and are appointed by the Secretary of Commerce from lists of nominees submitted by the governors of the states. These appointed members may serve a maximum of three consecutive terms. In addition, the directors (or designees) of each states' marine resource management agency and the Southeast Regional Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries Service) serve on the Council as voting members. There are a total of 13 voting members. Non-voting members include representatives from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Department of State, and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

Public Participation

The Council meets four times each year, once in each of the southeastern states. Before final action on any management action is taken, the Council involves the public through public hearings and input at Council meetings. Proposed management changes are then sent to NOAA Fisheries Service for further review, public comment, and approval before being implemented. In addition, the Council receives input and recommendations from knowledgeable people from other state and federal agencies, universities and members of the public who serve on various committees and panels. These include:

ADVISORY PANELS: members may include recreational and commercial fishermen, headboat and charter operators, seafood buyers and sellers, conservationists, and consumers who are knowledgeable about a particular fishery. Members are appointed and serve three-year terms.

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE: members may include biologists, economists, sociologists and others who are knowledgeable in the technical aspects of fisheries in the South Atlantic.

SEDAR: A multi-step process for determining the status of fish stocks, the Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review process involves scientists, researchers, and fishermen.

Persons interested in participating in any of the above panels should contact the Council office for more information on how to apply.

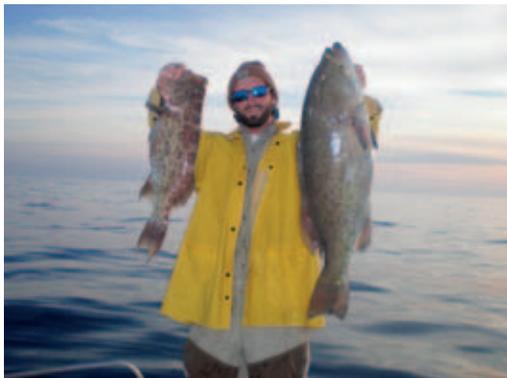
Fisheries Managed by the SAFMC

Coastal Migratory Pelagics
Coral
Dolphin/Wahoo
Golden Crab
Sargassum
Shrimp
Snapper Grouper
Spiny Lobster

Council Contact Information

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Suite 201
North Charleston,
SC 29405
843/571-4366 Phone
866/SAFMC-10 Toll Free
www.safmc.net

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This is an unofficial summary of the federal regulations prepared for the information and convenience of interested persons.

This summary has no legal force or effect. Since fishery regulations are subject to change this summary does not include changes to these regulations that may have occurred after June 2010.

Updates to these regulations in a downloadable format can be found on the Council's web site at: www.safmc.net.

For the official regulations, please refer to 50 C.F.R. Part 622 of the Consolidated Federal Regulations at <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/regulations/reg.htm>

PHOTO CREDITS:

Cover - NOAA/Dept.Commerce, yellowtail snapper; Christopher Page, dolphin; NOAA OE, anemone. SAFMC, map, inside cover; Gregg Swanson, fisherman, p.1; Ken Nedimyer, staghorn coral, p.5; SAFMC, map, p.6; Steve Ross, lophelia coral, p.6; NMFS SERO, map, p.7; Scott Lehrmann, fisherman with red snapper, p.7; warsaw grouper, p.7; Tina Udouj, FL FWRI, maps p.10-11; NOAA NURC, Oculina coral, p.12; SAFMC, map, p.12; Anna Martin, SAFMC, artificial reef p.12. All other photos: Kim Iverson, SAFMC.



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Snapper Grouper Recreational Regulations

(CHANGES IN RED)

Common Name	Local Names	Size Limit	Daily Bag Limits	Other Regulations
Black Grouper	Blackfin Grouper	24" TL	No more than (1) Black or Gag Grouper (but not both) (included in 3 grouper per person) - Closed January - April	
Black Sea bass	Sea bass, Blackfish	12" TL	15 per person	See "Allowable Gear"
Blackfin Snapper		12" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person limit	See "Allowable Gear"
Cubera Snapper	Cuban Snapper	12" TL	2 per person (not to exceed 2 per boat) for fish 30" TL or larger off East Florida. See "Retention Limits"	
Dog Snapper		12" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person limit	See "Allowable Gear"
Gag	Charcoal Belly	24" TL	No more than one (1) Black or Gag Grouper (but not both) (included in 3 grouper per person) - Closed January - April	
Gray Snapper	Mangrove Snapper	12" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person limit	See "Allowable Gear"
Gray Triggerfish	Triggerfish	12" TL off East Florida only	Included in 20 fish snapper grouper aggregate	See "Allowable Gear"
Greater Amberjack	Amberjack, A.J.	28" FL; no coring	1 per person/day. In April, (for-hire/charter vessels limited to 1 per person/day or 1/per person/trip.)	
Hogfish	Hog Snapper	12" FL	5 off east Florida only	See "Allowable Gear"
Goliath Grouper	Jewfish, Giant Sea bass	Closed to possession or harvest		
Lane Snapper	Redtail Snapper, Candy Snapper	8" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person limit	See "Allowable Gear"
Mahogany Snapper		12" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person limit	See "Allowable Gear"
Mutton Snapper	Muttonfish	16" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person limit	See "Allowable Gear"
Nassau Grouper		Closed to possession or harvest		
Queen Snapper		12" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person limit	See "Allowable Gear"
Red Grouper	Grouper	20" TL	Included in 3 grouper per person	Closed January - April See "Allowable Gear"
Red Porgy	Pink Porgy, Silver Snapper, Pink Snapper	14" TL	3 per person/day (or 3 per person/trip, whichever is more restrictive.)	
Red Snapper	Mules, Sow Snapper, Spot Snapper, American Snapper	20" TL	Closed 1/4/10 to 12/5/10 with a possible extension, see p. 7.	
Scamp	Broomtail	20" TL	Included in 3 grouper per person	Closed January - April See "Allowable Gear"
Schoolmaster		12" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person limit	See "Allowable Gear"
Silk Snapper	Yelloweye Snapper	12" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person limit	See "Allowable Gear"
Snowy Grouper	Snowflake	None	1 per person/day	Included in 3 grouper bag limit
Speckled Hind	Strawberry Grouper, Kitty Mitchell, Calico Grouper	None	1 per vessel per trip (included in 3 grouper per person). May not be sold or traded; no transfer at sea.	
Golden, Blueline, Sand Tilefish	Golden - Rainbow Tilefish; Blueline - Gray Tilefish	None	Included in 3 grouper bag limit. Golden Tilefish limited to 1 per person per day.	
Vermilion Snapper	Beeliner, Night Snapper	12" TL	5 (in addition to the snapper bag limit)	Closed Season November - March
Warsaw Grouper	Jewfish (Miscalled), Grouper	None	1 per vessel per trip (included in 3 grouper per person). May not be sold or traded; no transfer at sea.	
Wreckfish	Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) Program in place. No one other than shareholders or their designees may possess wreckfish.			
Yellowfin Grouper		20" TL	Included in 3 grouper per person	Closed January - April See "Allowable Gear"
Yellowtail Snapper		12" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person limit	See "Allowable Gear"
Yellowmouth Grouper	Yellowtail	20" TL	Included in 3 grouper per person	Closed January - April See "Allowable Gear"

NOTE: This table is for general informational purposes and has no legal force or effect. Fishery regulations are subject to change.

- The sale of snapper grouper harvested under the bag limits is prohibited unless the vessel owner has been issued a Federal Commercial Snapper Grouper Permit.
- Possession of a dehooking device is required on board a vessel when fishing for South Atlantic snapper grouper.
- For-hire and charter vessels must follow sea turtle and smalltooth sawfish release protocol. See p. 17.

NOTE: Regulations for snapper grouper species may be modified after printing of this publication. See p. 7 for details.

Snapper Grouper Recreational Retention Limits

Three (3) Grouper (including tilefish) per person/day includes:

- misty grouper, red grouper, scamp, tiger, yellowedge, yellowfin grouper, yellowmouth grouper, blueline, sand tilefish, coney, graysby, red & rock hind
- Max 1 gag or black grouper (but not both)
- Max 1 snowy grouper
- Max 1 golden tilefish
- Max of 1 speckled hind and 1 warsaw grouper per trip. May not be sold or traded; no transfer at sea.

GOLIATH GROUPEr - Closed to harvest or possession since 1990

NASSAU GROUPEr - Closed to harvest or possession since 1992

WRECKFISH - Only ITQ shareholders or their designees may harvest or possess wreckfish.

Shallow water grouper (spawning season) closure January - April:

prohibition on recreational and commercial harvest of gag, black grouper, red grouper, scamp, rock hind, red hind, coney, graysby, yellowfin grouper, yellowmouth grouper, and tiger grouper. For-hire and charter vessels' captain and crew have a bag limit of 0.

Ten (10) Snappers (excluding vermilion) per person/day with the following exceptions:

- The red snapper fishery is closed to both commercial and recreational harvest as of January 4, 2010. An interim rule is in effect until December 5, 2010 with a possible extension. See p. 7.
- Maximum of 2 cubera snapper per person for fish 30"TL or larger off east Florida. These 2 fish are not included in the 10 snapper bag limit. Cubera less than 30"TL are included in the 10 fish bag limit.

In addition, fishermen may retain:

- **GREATER AMBERJACK** - 1 per person
- **BLACK SEA BASS** - 15 per person
- **HOGFISH** - 5 per person off east Florida
- **RED PORGY** - 3 per person/day or per/trip, whichever is more restrictive.
- **VERMILION SNAPPER** - 5 per person.

Recreational closure for vermilion November through March. For-hire and charter vessels' captain and crew have a bag limit of 0.

Other Snapper Grouper Complex Species:

There is an aggregate bag limit of 20 fish per person/day inclusive of all fish in the snapper grouper management unit currently not under a bag limit, excluding tomtates and bluerunners. This means you may catch your bag limits, and in addition retain up to 20 other fish for which there is no bag limit.

List of Species in the South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Management Unit:

Snappers

Blackfin Snapper
Black Snapper
Cubera Snapper
Dog Snapper
Gray Snapper
Lane Snapper
Mahogany Snapper
Mutton Snapper
Queen Snapper
Red Snapper
Schoolmaster
Silk Snapper
Vermilion Snapper
Yellowtail Snapper

Groupers

Black Grouper
Coney
Gag
Goliath Grouper
Graysby
Misty Grouper
Nassau Grouper
Red Grouper
Red Hind
Rock Hind
Scamp
Snowy Grouper
Speckled Hind

Tiger Grouper
Warsaw Grouper
Wreckfish
Yellowedge Grouper
Yellowfin Grouper
Yellowmouth Grouper

Porgys

Grass Porgy
Jolthead Porgy
Knobbed Porgy
Longspine Porgy
Red Porgy
Saucereye Porgy
Scup
Sheepshead
Whitebone Porgy

Triggerfish

Gray Triggerfish
Ocean Triggerfish
Queen Triggerfish

Jacks

Almaco Jack
Banded Rudderfish
Bar Jack
Blue Runner
Creville Jack
Greater Amberjack

Tilefishes

Blueline Tilefish
Golden Tilefish
Sand Tilefish

Grunts

Black Margate
Blue Striped Grunt
Cottonwick
French Grunt
Margate
Porkfish
Sailors Choice
Smallmouth Grunt
Spanish Grunt
Tomtate
White Grunt

Spadefishes

Atlantic Spadefish

Wrasses

Hogfish
Puddingwife

Sea basses

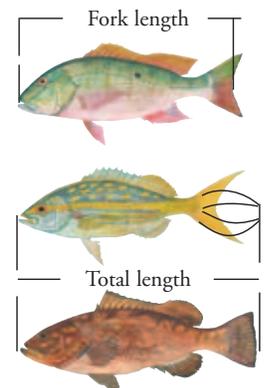
Bank Sea Bass
Black Sea Bass
Rock Sea Bass

Allowable Gear:

- Vertical hook-and-line including hand-held hook-and-line, and bandit gear.
- Spearfishing gear without rebreathers.
Note: spearfishing is prohibited in Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary.
- Powerheads, except where expressly prohibited in Special Management Zones (SMZs). In addition, the use of explosive charges, including powerheads is prohibited in the EEZ off South Carolina.

Note: All species in the snapper grouper management unit must be maintained with heads and fins intact. (Cobia, king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, dolphin, and wahoo must also be landed with heads and fins intact.) Goliath and Nassau grouper must be released by cutting the line and not removed from the water.

New: Possession of a dehooking device is required on board a vessel when fishing for South Atlantic snapper grouper.



TL = total length measure;
Tip of snout to tip of tail.
(excluding filaments)
FL = fork length measure;
Tip of snout to fork of tail.

Other Recreational Regulations

Species	Size Limit	Closed Season	Daily Bag/Possession Limit	Remarks
 Bluefish	None	None	15 per person	Recreational limits are reviewed and established annually. For more information, please contact the Mid-Atlantic Council 302/674-2331.
 Cobia	33" FL	None	2 per person Note: Florida state regulations only allow 1 per person.	One day possession limit. Must be landed with heads and fins intact. Charter/headboats require a permit for Coastal Migratory Pelagics.
 King Mackerel	24" FL	None	3 per person off Georgia through New York and 2 per person off Florida. (Bag limit in federal waters off Florida same as state bag limit.) Cannot combine state and federal bag limits.	Must be landed with heads and fins intact. Charterboat/headboat operators must possess a charter/headboat vessel permit for Coastal Migratory Pelagics and must comply with bag limits. Persons on charterboats on trips of more than 24 hours may possess up to 2 bag limits (see additional information below).
 Spanish Mackerel	12" FL	None	15 per person off Florida through New York. Cannot combine state and federal bag limits.	
 Spiny Lobster	More than 3" carapace	For Florida: Season closed 4/1 - 8/5 off the east coast of Florida. Special non-trap season off Florida is last Wed. & successive Thurs. in July to conform to Florida state regulations. Off NC, SC and GA harvesting allowed year-round.	6 per person off Florida. No transfer at sea between boats. Cannot combine EEZ and state bag limits. See "Special Nontrap Recreational Season for Spiny Lobster in EEZ off Florida". 2 per person off NC, SC & GA. Harvest prohibited in Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary.	Removal of tail prohibited at sea without the possession of a tailing permit. No spears, hooks or piercing devices. Poisons and explosives prohibited. No taking of berried spiny or berried slipper lobsters. Divers must measure spiny lobsters while in water. Undersized lobsters must be released unharmed immediately without removal from water. See commercial regulations brochure for trap use. See "Special Nontrap Recreational Season for Spiny Lobster in EEZ off Florida."
 Dolphin	20" FL off of FL and GA, no min. size limit north of GA.	None	10 per person/day, not to exceed 60 per boat/day. Headboats allowed 10/person per paying passenger/day.	Sale of recreational catch is prohibited (except for for-hire vessels with necessary state and federal commercial permits to sell recreational bag limit).
 Wahoo	None	None	2 per person/day	Sale of recreational catch is prohibited.

NOTE: This table is for general informational purposes and has no legal force or effect. Fishery regulations are subject to change.

King & Spanish Mackerel Multi-day Possession Limit

A person who is on a trip that spans more than 24 hours may possess no more than two daily bag limits, provided:

- Such trip is aboard a vessel operating as a charter vessel or headboat.
- The vessel has two licensed operators aboard.
- Each passenger is issued and has in possession a receipt issued on behalf of the vessel that verifies the length of the trip.

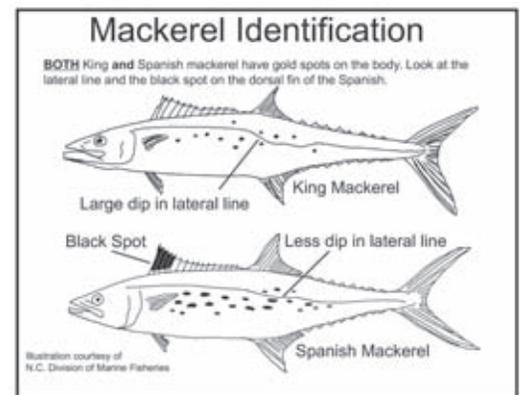
Snapper Grouper Multi-day Possession Limit

A person aboard a charter vessel or headboat on a trip that spans more than 24 hours may possess no more than 2 daily bag limits of species other than red porgy (red porgy limit is 3/day or 3/trip, whichever is more restrictive).

A person aboard a headboat on a trip that spans more than 48 hours and who can document that fishing was conducted on at least 3 days may possess no more than 3 daily bag limits of species other than red porgy (red porgy limit is 3/day or 3/trip, whichever is more restrictive).

Special Nontrap Recreational Season for Spiny Lobster in EEZ off Florida

- The special two-day nontrap recreational season in the EEZ off Florida is the last Wednesday and Thursday in July to conform to Florida state regulations.
- The daily bag and possession limit is 12 spiny lobsters per person, except off Monroe County (Florida Keys) where the limit is six.
- Harvest is limited to diving and the use of bully or hoop nets.
- Night diving for spiny lobster is prohibited off Monroe County (Florida Keys).



Coral/Live Rock/Sargassum Regulations

It is illegal to take, damage or possess, in or from the EEZ off the South Atlantic states: (1) prohibited corals except under a federal permit issued for scientific, educational, or restoration purposes; (2) wild live rock; (3) aquacultured live rock without the required federal permit; (4) octocorals north of Cape Canaveral, FL; or (5) sea fans. Octocorals (gorgonians), other than prohibited sea fans, may be taken with a valid federal or state permit. Total harvest of allowable octocorals in South Atlantic (south of Cape Canaveral, 28°35.1'N. latitude) and Gulf of Mexico federal waters is limited to 50,000 colonies per fishing year. Prohibited coral, allowable octocoral, or live rock taken as incidental catch must be returned immediately to the sea. In fisheries in which the entire catch is landed unsorted, prohibited coral, allowable octocoral, or live rock may be landed; however, no person may sell, trade, or barter such prohibited coral, allowable octocoral, or live rock.

Live Rock Aquaculture

A live rock aquaculture permit and management system was established under Amendment 3 to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Coral Plan (1982). No aquaculture site may exceed one acre, material

deposited on the site may not be placed on naturally occurring reef outcrops, limestone ledges, coral reefs, or vegetated areas. Aquacultured rock must be placed by hand or lowered under restraint from an anchored vessel, and must be geologically distinguishable from the naturally occurring substrate. In addition, aquacultured rock may be indelibly marked or tagged.

Gear Restrictions

A toxic chemical may not be used or possessed in a coral area in the EEZ. A power-assisted tool may not be used to take prohibited coral, allowable octocoral or live rock. Possession in the EEZ of coral resources harvested with a power assisted tool is prohibited.

Definitions

ALLOWABLE OCTOCORAL - An erect, nonencrusting species of the subclass Octocorallia, except the sea fans *Gorgonia flabellum* and *Gorgonia ventalina*, plus the attached substrate within one inch of the holdfast. Harvest allowed only south of Cape Canaveral, Florida (28°35.1'N. latitude).

AQUACULTURED LIVE ROCK - Live rock which is harvested under an aquacultured live rock permit.

LIVE ROCK - Living marine organisms, or an assemblage thereof, attached to a hard substrate, including dead coral or rock (excluding individual mollusk shells).

PROHIBITED CORAL - Coral belonging to the Class Hydrozoa (fire corals and hydrocorals); coral belonging to the Class Anthozoa (stony corals and black corals); The sea fans *Gorgonia flabellum* and *Gorgonia ventalina*; coral in a coral reef, except for allowable octocorals; or coral in a Habitat Area of Particular Concern (HAPC), including allowable octocorals.

Permits

Applications for permits may be obtained from: NOAA Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Ave. S, St. Petersburg, FL 33701, phone 727/824-5326.

Sargassum Regulations

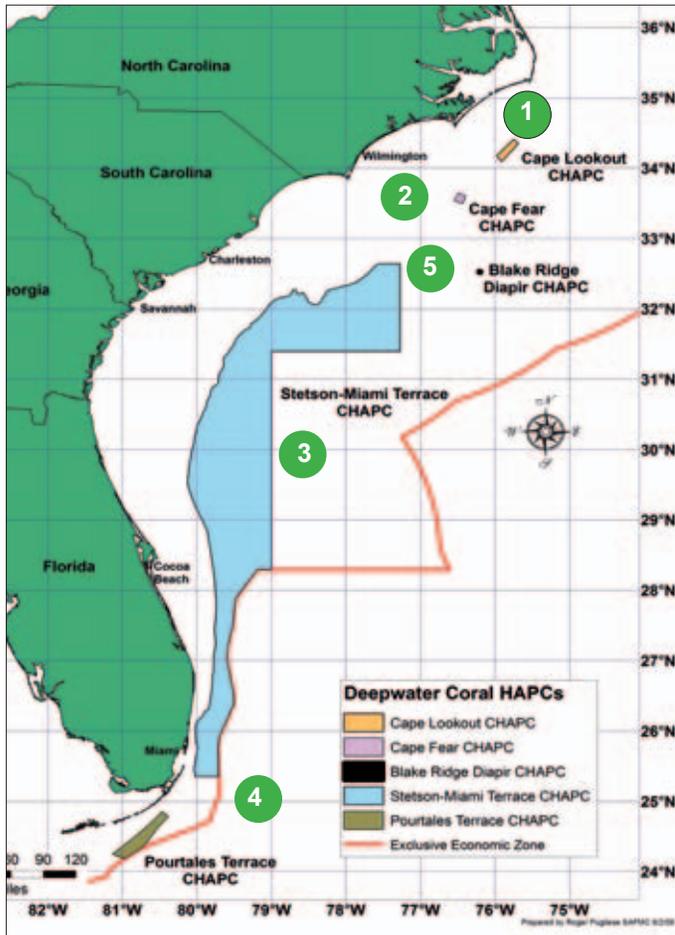
Sargassum is a free-floating seaweed that provides habitat to a wide variety of marine organisms including invertebrates, fish, sea turtles, and marine birds. The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council developed a fishery management plan (FMP) for *Sargassum* to limit commercial harvest of *Sargassum*. Approved in 2003, the FMP establishes the following restrictions for *Sargassum* in the South Atlantic EEZ: (1) harvest and possession of *Sargassum* is prohibited south of the latitude line representing the North Carolina/South Carolina border (34° North latitude), (2) all harvest is prohibited within 100 miles of shore between the 34° North latitude line and the line representing the North Carolina/Virginia border, (3) harvest is limited to the months of November through June, (4) official observers are required on any harvesting trip, (5) an annual quota of 5,000 pounds landed wet weight, and (6) nets used to harvest *Sargassum* be constructed of 4" stretch mesh or larger fitted to a frame no larger than 4 x 6 feet.



Ken Nedimyer

Staghorn coral, *Acropora cervicornis*

Deepwater Coral Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPCs)



The Council has designated five deepwater coral areas as Deepwater Coral HAPCs. The designation, outlined in Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment 1, creates the largest deepwater coral protected area off the Atlantic coast, encompassing over 23,000 square miles.

The amendment also establishes "allowable gear areas" to focus potentially damaging fishing activities away from known areas of deepwater coral systems. The Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment 1 was approved by the Council in September 2009 for submission to the Secretary of Commerce. Regulations to protect the deepwater corals are effective as of July 22, 2010.

Visit www.safmc.net for regulation updates.

Regulations in the Deepwater Coral HAPCs include:

- Possession of coral species and the use of bottom longline, trawl (mid-water and bottom), dredge, pot, or trap gear is prohibited.
- The use of anchor, anchor and chain, or grapple and chain is also prohibited.
- The fishery for wreckfish is not affected since the use of bottom tending hook-and-line gear used in that fishery is not prohibited in the HAPCs.
- The use of hook-and-line gear commonly used in the snapper grouper fishery is not prohibited.
- Four portions of one of the Deepwater Coral HAPCs are designated as Shrimp Fishery Access Areas to allow for continued fishing on the historical grounds for deepwater shrimp. In these areas, an owner or operator of a vessel for which a valid commercial vessel permit for rock shrimp (South Atlantic EEZ) has been issued is allowed to trawl for and possess shrimp.
- Five portions of the Deepwater Coral HAPCs allow for continued fishing on the historical grounds for golden crab. In these areas, an owner or operator of a vessel for which a valid commercial permit for South Atlantic golden crab has been issued is allowed to use a trap to fish for golden crab and use a grapple and chain while engaged in such fishing. Access to a specific area is contingent on the zone restrictions on the vessel's permit for South Atlantic golden crab.

CORAL HABITAT AREAS OF PARTICULAR CONCERN	
1 Cape Lookout Lophelia Banks	4 Pourtales Terrace
2 Cape Fear Lophelia Banks	5 Blake Ridge Diapir (methane seep)
3 Stetson Reefs, Savannah and East Florida Lithothermals and Miami Terrace	



Steve Ross

Squat lobster, *Eumunida picta*, on Lophelia coral

Looking Ahead/Proposed Regulations

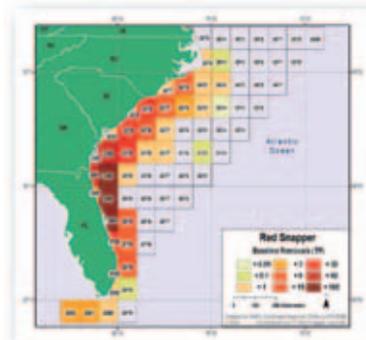
Regulations Proposed to Address Overfishing of Red Snapper

Fishermen should take note that new regulations impacting snapper grouper fishing may be in place by the end of 2010. Snapper Grouper Amendment 17A was approved by the Council in June 2010 to address overfishing of red snapper and rebuild the South Atlantic stock. If approved by the Secretary of Commerce, management measures in Amendment 17A will be effective in late 2010.

Amendment 17A contains the following:

- A continued closure of the red snapper fishery in federal waters (3 - 200 miles) throughout the South Atlantic.
- An area closure off of southern Georgia and northeastern Florida (from 98 - 240') where fishing for all snapper grouper species is prohibited (spearfishing and black sea bass pots allowed). Trolling for pelagics such as tuna, dolphin, and billfish will be allowed in the new snapper grouper area closure.
- Circle hooks required when fishing for snapper grouper species north of 28 degrees N. latitude.
- A fishery-independent monitoring program to track recovery of the red snapper stock.

During the Secretarial review process, the public will have the opportunity to comment on these proposed management measures. If the Secretary of Commerce approves the proposed measures they may be implemented in late 2010.



The graphic at left shows red snapper fishing mortality by area - the darker the color, the higher the mortality. The highest levels are off the coasts of Georgia and northeast central Florida, where an area closure is proposed.

Why is the Council proposing these additional management measures?

The red snapper stock is currently listed as overfished and undergoing overfishing. A closure of the red snapper fishery alone will not end overfishing. Red snapper bycatch mortality remains problematic as fishermen pursue other species in the snapper grouper complex. An area closure, where fishing for all snapper grouper species would be prohibited, is currently proposed to address this bycatch.



FISHERMEN SHOULD ALWAYS CHECK THE COUNCIL'S WEB SITE AT WWW.SAFMC.NET FOR THE LATEST REGULATION INFORMATION.

Proposed Measures in Snapper Grouper Amendment 17B - Includes deepwater closure



Warsaw grouper

In December 2009, the Council approved Amendment 17B for submission to the Secretary of Commerce. The amendment addresses overfishing of nine snapper grouper species by setting Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures for these species.

Amendment 17B contains the following:

- Prohibit the harvest and possession of speckled hind and warsaw grouper.
- Prohibit fishing for, possession, and retention of deepwater species (snowy grouper, blueline tilefish, yellowedge grouper, misty grouper, queen snapper, and silk snapper) seaward of 240 foot depth in South Atlantic federal waters.
- Reduce the recreational bag limit of snowy grouper to one fish per vessel per trip. Establish a commercial Annual Catch Limit (quota) = 82,900 lbs. gutted weight (gw) and recreational Annual Catch Limit (ACL) = 523 fish.
- Set an allocation for golden tilefish at 97% commercial and 3% recreational based on historic landings. Set a commercial ACL = 282,819 lbs. (gw) and recreational ACL = 1,578 fish.
- Establish ACLs for gag, black and red grouper.

ACLs and AMs for gag, black and red grouper:

Commercial

Retain the current commercial ACL (quota) for gag of 352,940 lbs. (gw) and prohibit commercial harvest of shallow water groupers when the quota is projected to be met.

Establish a combined ACL for gag, black grouper, and red grouper of 662,403 lbs. (gw) and prohibit the commercial possession of shallow water groupers when the gag or the combined gag, black grouper, and red grouper ACL is met.

Recreational

Retain the current recreational ACL for gag at 340,060 lbs (gw). If landings reach or are projected to reach the ACL, and gag are overfished, the recreational fishery will close for the remainder of the year. If recreational landings exceed the ACL, the amendment specifies methods to address overages using a running average.

Establish a combined recreational ACL for gag, black grouper, and red grouper of 648,663 lbs (gw). If recreational landings exceed ACLs, the amount of the overage will be reduced at the beginning of the following fishing year.

During the Secretarial review process, the public will have the opportunity to comment on these proposed management measures. If the Secretary of Commerce approves the proposed measures they may be implemented in late 2010.

South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Complex



QUEEN SNAPPER



SCHOOLMASTER



BLACKFIN SNAPPER



GRAY SNAPPER



SILK SNAPPER



DOG SNAPPER



CUBERA SNAPPER



LANE SNAPPER



VERMILION SNAPPER



MAHOGANY SNAPPER



YELLOWTAIL SNAPPER



BLUELINE TILEFISH



GREATER AMBERJACK



LESSER AMBERJACK



ALMACO JACK



HOGFISH



BANDED RUDDERFISH



OCEAN TRIGGERFISH



TOMTATE



MARGATE



GRAY TRIGGERFISH



QUEEN TRIGGERFISH



FRENCH GRUNT



BLACK MARGATE



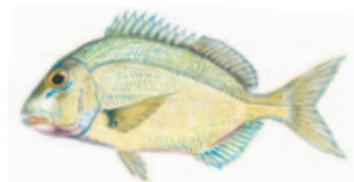
ATLANTIC SPADEFISH



BLUE STRIPED GRUNT



WHITE GRUNT



JOLTHEAD PORGY



RED SNAPPER



MUTTON SNAPPER



BLACK SNAPPER



TIGER GROUPE



RED HIND



BLACK GROUPE



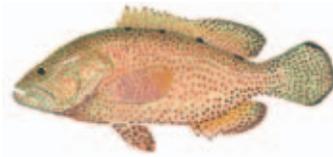
WARSAW GROUPE



NASSAU GROUPE



RED GROUPE



GRAYSBY



CONEY



GAG GROUPE



SCAMP



YELLOWEDGE GROUPE



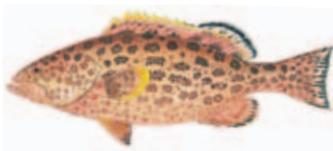
ROCK HIND



GOLIATH GROUPE



BLACK SEA BASS



YELLOWFIN GROUPE



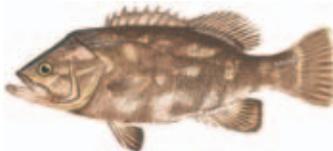
SPECKLED HIND



GOLDEN TILEFISH



SAUCEREYE PORGY



WRECKFISH



YELLOWMOUTH GROUPE



SHEEPSHEAD



SCUP



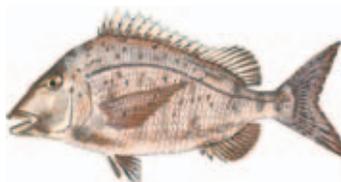
BANK SEA BASS



SNOWY GROUPE



KNOBBED PORGY



WHITEBONE PORGY



RED PORGY



ROCK SEA BASS

Deepwater MPAs

Effective February 13, 2009, a series of 8 deepwater Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) were implemented to protect deep-water snapper grouper species and associated habitat between North Carolina and the East Coast of Florida. Fishing for and/or possession of the 73 snapper grouper species within the Council's Snapper Grouper Complex is prohibited in the areas.

The MPAs are designed to protect the size, age, and genetic structure of populations of deepwater species that are susceptible to overfishing. These deepwater species include snowy grouper, misty grouper, speckled hind, yellowedge grouper, warsaw grouper, golden tilefish, and blueline tilefish. The potential benefits include protection of critical habitat, reduction in harvest by reducing fishing pressure, allowance of some types of fishing to continue, and protection of spawning locations.

Regulations Within The MPAs

- Fishing for or possession of snapper grouper species from the area is **prohibited**. Refer to pg. 3 for a listing of species.
- The use of shark bottom longline gear is **prohibited**.
- Vessels (both commercial and recreational) **may transit** (direct, non-stop progression) through the MPAs with snapper grouper species on board with fishing gear **appropriately stowed**.*
- Trolling for pelagic species such as tuna, dolphin, mackerel and billfish is allowed within the MPAs.

*Fishing Gear **Appropriately Stowed** means:

- **Terminal Gear** (i.e., hook, leader, sinker, flasher, or bait) used with an automatic reel, bandit gear, buoy gear, hand-line, or rod and reel must be disconnected and stowed separately from such fishing gear. A rod and reel must be removed from the rod holder and stowed securely on or below deck.
- A **longline** may be left on the drum if all gangions and hooks are disconnected and stowed below deck. Hooks cannot be baited. All buoys must be disconnected from the gear; however, buoys may remain on deck.
- A **trawl or net** may remain on deck, but trawl doors must be disconnected from such net and must be secured.
- A **gill net, stab net, or trammel net** must be left on the drum. Any additional such nets not attached to the drum must be stowed below deck.
- A **crustacean trap, golden crab trap, or sea bass pot** cannot be baited. All buoys must be disconnected from the gear; however buoys may remain on deck.

Snowy Grouper Wreck MPA

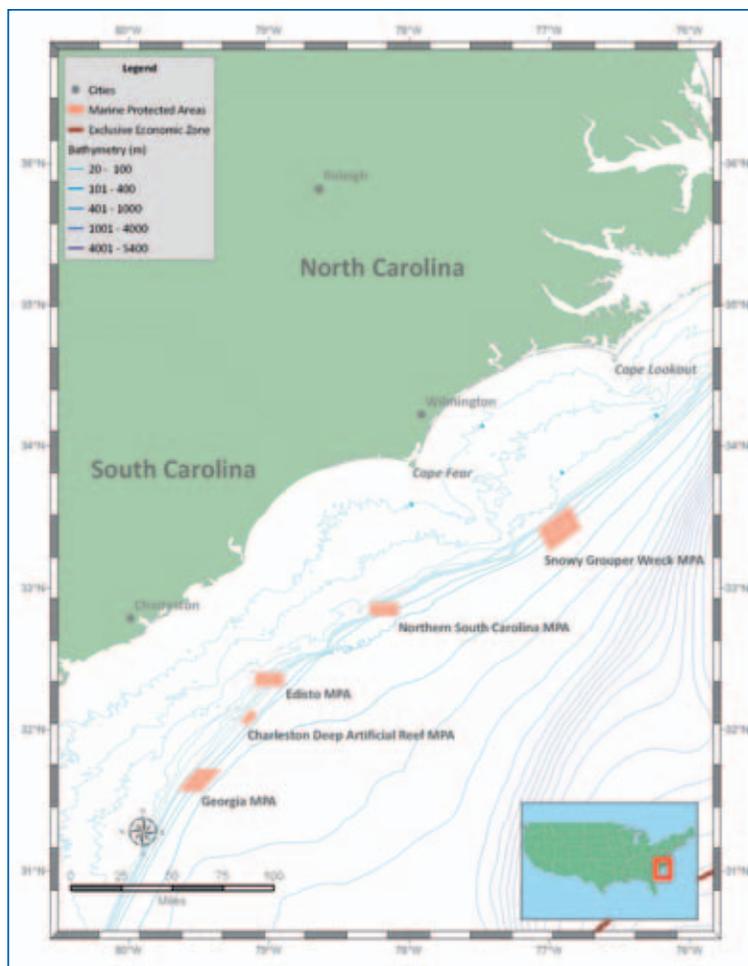
Coordinates: Northwest corner at 33°25'N, 77°4.75'W; northeast corner at 33°34.75'N, 76°51.3'W; southwest corner at 33°15.75'N, 77°W; and the southeast corner at 33°25.5'N, 76°46.5'W.

Location: 55 nautical miles southeast of Southport, NC.

Size: 15 X 10 nautical miles

Description: Depths range from 492 ft to 984 ft., with a shallow area ranging from 197 ft. to 328 ft. The area includes a wreck site known to have once held spawning aggregations of snowy grouper.

After discovery of the wreck in the 1990s, the area was quickly fished down. The Snowy Grouper Wreck MPA is a possible location of other smaller wrecks. This area is a popular location for fishermen trolling for tuna, marlin, dolphin, and wahoo.



Northern South Carolina MPA

Coordinates: Northwest corner at 32°53.5'N, 78°16.75'W; the northeast corner at 32°53.5'N, 78°4.75'W; the southwest corner at 32°48.5'N, 78°16.75'W; and the southeast corner at 32°48.5'N, 78°4.75'W.

Location: 54 nautical miles from Murrells Inlet, SC.

Size: 10 X 5 nautical miles

Description: Area of low relief ranging in depths from 164 ft. to 591 ft.. Fishermen refer to the area as "smurfville" because it holds many small vermilion snapper. The area also holds deepwater species such as snowy grouper and speckled hind as well as other snapper grouper species such as red porgy, triggerfish, and gag.

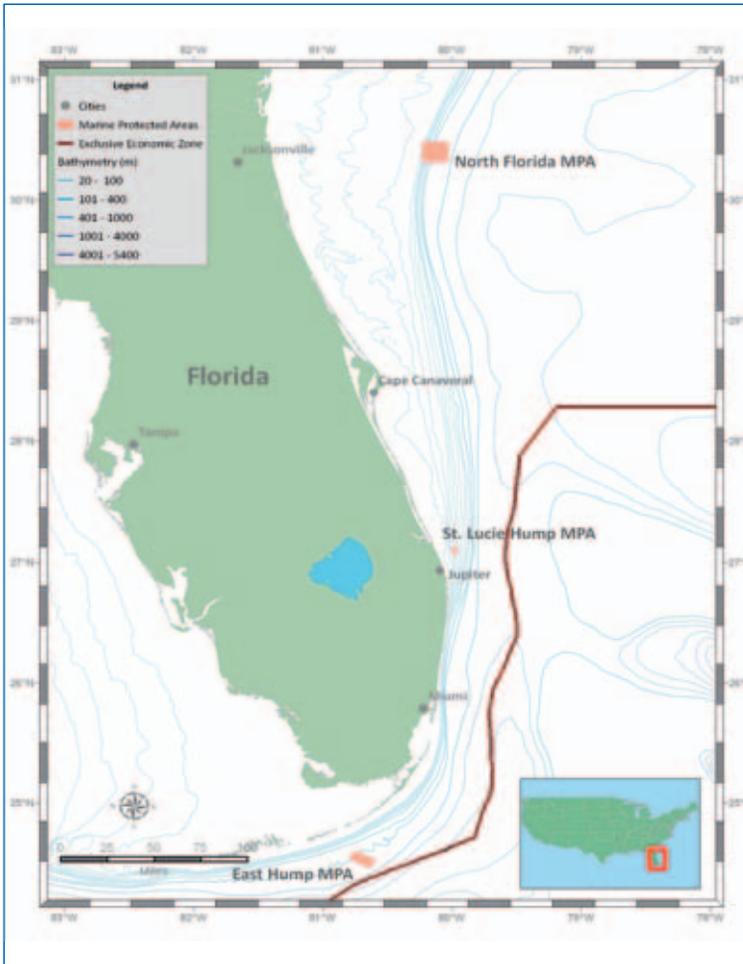
Edisto MPA

Coordinates: Northwest corner at 32°24'N, 79°6'W; the northeast corner at 32°24'N, 78°54'W; the southwest corner at 32°18.5'N, 79°6'W; and the southeast corner at 32°18.5'N, 78°54'W.

Location: 45 nautical miles southeast of Charleston Harbor, SC.

Size: 10 X 5 nautical miles

Description: Depths range from 148 ft. to 459 ft. The area is heavily fished and includes shelf-edge habitat. Includes both mid-shelf and deepwater species, including vermilion snapper, red porgy, and juvenile snowy grouper.



North Florida MPA

Coordinates: Northwest corner at 30°29'N, 80°14'W; the northeast corner at 30°29'N, 80°2' W; the southwest corner at 30°19'N, 80°14'W; and the southeast corner at 30°19'N, 80°2'W.

Location: 60 nautical miles off the mouth of the St. John's River near Jacksonville, FL.

Size: 10 X 10 nautical miles

Description: Depths range from 197 ft. to 656 ft. with a deeper area to 1,247 ft. Area includes shelf-edge reef. Snowy grouper and speckled hind have been sampled from this area. The area may also hold golden tilefish in the mud habitat.

St. Lucie Hump MPA

Coordinates: Northwest corner at 27°8'N, 80°W; the northeast corner at 27°8'N, 79°58'W; the southwest corner at 27°4'N, 80°W; and the southeast corner at 27°4'N, 79°58'W.

Location: 9 nautical miles southeast of St. Lucie Inlet, FL.

Size: 4 X 2 nautical miles

Description: Depths range from 216 ft. to 234 ft. A habitat-rich area with speckled hind, juvenile snowy grouper, warsaw grouper, and mid-shelf species including sea bass and red porgy. This area is heavily targeted by fishermen fishing for pelagics.

East Hump MPA

Coordinates: Northwest corner at 24°36.5'N, 80°45.5'W; the northeast corner at 24°32'N, 80°36'W; the southwest corner at 24°32.5'N, 80°48'W; and the southeast corner at 24°27.5'N, 80°38.5'W.

Location: 13 nautical miles southeast of Long Key, FL.

Size: 5 X 10 nautical miles

Description: Depths range from 636 ft. to 971 ft., with tops of the "humps" 509 ft. to 541 ft. A very habitat rich area located near the Islamorada Hump and proposed by the Islamorada Charterboat Association. Snowy grouper, golden tilefish and warsaw grouper plus other species are found in the area.

Charleston Deep Artificial Reef MPA

Coordinates: Northwest corner at 32°4' N, 79°12'W; the northeast corner at 32°8.5'N, 79°7.5'W; the southwest corner at 32°1.5'N, 79°9.3'W; and the southeast corner at 32°6'N, 79°5'W.

Location: 50 nautical miles southeast of Charleston Harbor, SC.

Size: 3.5 X 6 nautical miles

Description: This area is proposed as an experimental artificial reef as a result of public comment and support for creating artificial reef areas. The area ranges in depth from 328 ft. to 492 ft. There is a lack of hard bottom in the area. Any biological benefits to deepwater species would accrue after artificial reef material (such as sunken ships, tanks, or highway materials) was added to improve habitat and attract fish.

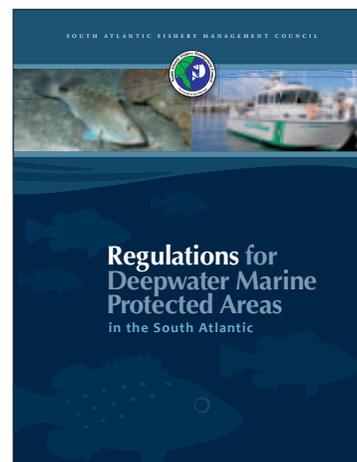
Georgia MPA

Coordinates: Northwest corner at 31°43'N, 79°31'W; the northeast corner at 31°43'N, 79°21' W; the southwest corner at 31°34'N, 79°39'W; and the southeast corner at 31°34'N, 79°29'W.

Location: 69 nautical miles southeast of the mouth of Wassaw Sound, GA.

Size: 10 X 10 nautical miles

Description: Depths range from 295 ft. to 984 ft. Golden tilefish are often caught within the area, although most fishing is for pelagic species such as tuna and dolphin. The area lies east of an area known as the "Triple Ledge", an important area for commercial fishermen.



Regulations Brochure for Deepwater Marine Protected Areas in the South Atlantic

In partnership with SC Sea Grant, the Council has produced a comprehensive summary about each of the 8 deepwater MPAs. The brochure includes a history of MPA development, a listing of snapper grouper species protected in the areas, detailed maps, coordinates, and descriptions of each MPA site.

To order your copy, contact the Council office.

You can also obtain a copy online at www.safmc.net.

Oculina Bank/Managed Areas

The Oculina Bank

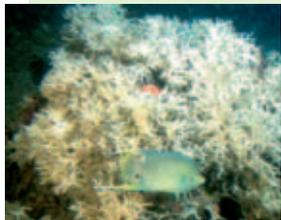
Oculina varicosa, or ivory tree coral, is distributed along the South Atlantic shelf with concentrations occurring off the central east coast of Florida. The deepwater form of this species provides essential habitat to numerous fish species including many managed under the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan.

The Oculina Bank, located approximately 15 nautical miles off the coast of Ft. Pierce, Florida has been designated a Habitat Area of Particular Concern (HAPC) by the Council. Restrictions are in place to protect fragile *Oculina* coral found in the area. Within the HAPC is an Experimental Closed Area with further restrictions to provide protection of snapper grouper populations and associated *Oculina* coral.

Habitat Area of Particular Concern (HAPC):

Coordinates

The Oculina Bank HAPC encompasses an area bounded on the north by 28°30' N., on the south by 27°30' N., on the east by the 100-fathom (183-meter) contour, as shown on the latest edition of NOAA chart 11460, and on the west by 80°00' W. long.



Oculina varicosa

Two satellite areas are adjacent, the first bounded on the north by 28°30' N., on the south by 28°29' N., on the east by 80°00' W., and on the west by 80°03' W. The second satellite is bounded on the north by 28°17' N., on the south by 28°16' N., on the east by 80°00' W., and on the west by 80°03' W. These satellite areas have been created to protect concentrated areas of *Oculina* coral.

Restrictions

In the HAPC, no person may:

1. Use a bottom longline, bottom trawl, dredge, pot or trap.
2. If aboard a fishing vessel, anchor, use an anchor and chain, or use a grapple and chain.
3. Fish for rock shrimp or possess rock shrimp in or from the area on board a fishing vessel.
4. Possess *Oculina* coral.



The Oculina Bank is located off the coast of Ft. Pierce, Florida. Fishing restrictions are in place to protect the *Oculina* coral and snapper grouper species found there.

Experimental Closed Area Inside the HAPC:

Coordinates

Located *within* the Oculina Bank HAPC, the experimental closed area is bounded on the north by 27°53' N., on the south by 27°30' N., on the east by 79°56' W., and on the west by 80°00' W. This area is designed to aid in the protection of snapper grouper species and their associated habitat, while providing researchers with an area to describe the effects of prohibiting fishing for snapper grouper species and the characteristics of an unfished resource area protected from habitat damage.

Restrictions

All restrictions within the HAPC apply. In addition, no person may fish for snapper grouper species in the area or retain snapper grouper in or from the area. Any snapper grouper taken incidentally by hook-and-line gear must be released immediately by cutting the line without removing the fish from water.

Special Management Zones

In the Council's Special Management Zone (SMZ) program, a person or agency possessing a Corps of Engineers permit for any artificial reef or fish attraction device (or other modification of habitat for the purpose of fishing) may request that the Council designate the modified area and an appropriate surrounding area as an SMZ. This zone may prohibit or restrict the use of specific types of fishing gear that are not

compatible with the intent of the permittee for the artificial reef or fish attraction device.

Currently, there are SMZs in the EEZ off of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. Please contact the Council for a listing of the artificial reefs managed under SMZ status and applicable regulations.

Visit www.safmc.net for more information.



Offshore artificial reef deployment off of South Carolina

Snapper Grouper Commercial Regulations

(CHANGES IN RED)

Common Name	Local Names	Size Limit	Trip Limits	Other Regulations
Black Grouper	Blackfin Grouper	24" TL	Shallow Water Grouper closed season January - April	
Black Seabass	Seabass, Blackfish	10" TL	Fishing year is June 1 - May 31. Annual Quota = 309,000 lbs. See p. 14 for sea bass pot restrictions.*	
Blackfin Snapper		12" TL	None	See "Allowable Gear"
Cubera Snapper	Cuban Snapper	12" TL	2 per person (not to exceed 2 per boat) for fish 30" TL or larger off Florida.	
Dog Snapper		12" TL	None	See "Allowable Gear"
Gag	Charcoal Belly	24" TL	Shallow Water Grouper closed season January - April; Annual Quota = 352,940 lbs.	
Gray Snapper	Mangrove Snapper	12" TL	None	See "Allowable Gear"
Gray Triggerfish	Triggerfish	12" TL off E. FL only	None	See "Allowable Gear"
Greater Amberjack	Amberjack, A.J.	36" FL; no coring	*1,169,931 lb. quota. 1,000 lb trip limit until quota is reached. No sale after quota is reached. No sale in April. In April, possession limited to 1/person/day or 1/person/trip, whichever is more restrictive.	
Hogfish	Hog Snapper	12" FL	None	See "Allowable Gear"
Goliath Grouper	Jewfish, Giant Seabass	Closed to possession or harvest		
Lane Snapper	Redtail Snapper, Candy Snapper	8" TL	None	See "Allowable Gear"
Mahogany Snapper		12" TL	None	See "Allowable Gear"
Mutton Snapper	Muttonfish	16" TL	During May and June, possession limited to 10 per person per day or per trip, whichever is more restrictive.	
Nassau Grouper		Closed to possession or harvest		
Queen Snapper		12" TL	None	See "Allowable Gear"
Red Grouper	Grouper	20" TL	Shallow Water Grouper closed season January - April See "Allowable Gear"	
Red Porgy	Pink Porgy, Silver Snapper, Pink Snapper	14" TL	*Annual Quota = 127,000 lbs. January through April sale or purchase prohibited and possession is limited to 3 per person/day or 3 per person/trip, whichever is more restrictive. Commercial trip limit of 120 fish per trip May through December.	
Red Snapper	Mules, Sow Snapper, Spot Snapper, American Snapper	20" TL	Closed 1/4/10 to 12/5/10 with a possible extension. See p. 7.	
Scamp	Broomtail	20" TL	Shallow Water Grouper closed season January - April See "Allowable Gear"	
Schoolmaster		12" TL	None	See "Allowable Gear"
Silk Snapper	Yelloweye Snapper	12" TL	None	See "Allowable Gear"
Snowy Grouper	Snowflake	None	*Annual quota = 82,900 lbs. 100 lb. trip limit until modified.	
Speckled Hind	Strawberry Grouper, Kitty Mitchell, Calico Grouper	None	1 per vessel per trip	May not be sold or traded; no transfer at sea.
Blueline, Sand Tilefish	Rainbow Tilefish; Blueline - Gray Tilefish	None	None	See "Allowable Gear"
Golden Tilefish	Golden	None	*Annual Quota = 295,000 lbs. with 4,000 lb. trip limit until 75% of quota is taken, then trip limit reduces to 300 lbs. (If 75% of quota has not been taken on or before Sept. 1, the trip limit will not be reduced).	
Vermilion Snapper	Beeliner, Night Snapper	12" TL	None	*See "Allowable Gear". Quota = 315,523 lbs. January through June; 302,523 lbs. July through December.
Warsaw Grouper	Jewfish (Miscalled), Grouper	None	1 per vessel per trip	May not be sold or traded; no transfer at sea.
Wreckfish	Individual Transferable Quota Program in place. No one other than shareholders or their designees may possess wreckfish. Spawning season closure: January 15-April 15.			
Yellowfin Grouper		20" TL	Shallow Water Grouper closed season January - April See "Allowable Gear"	
Yellowtail Snapper		12" TL	None	See "Allowable Gear"
Yellowmouth Grouper	Yellowtail	20" TL	Shallow Water Grouper closed season January - April See "Allowable Gear"	

NOTE: This table is for general informational purposes and has no legal force or effect. Fishery regulations are subject to change.

* After the commercial quota is met, all purchase and sale is prohibited and harvest and/or possession is limited to the recreational bag limit. This prohibition does not apply to fish harvested, landed, and sold prior to the quota being reached and held in cold storage by a dealer. Quotas are given in gutted weights.

- Commercial snapper grouper vessels must have on board NMFS approved sea turtle release gear and follow smalltooth sawfish release protocol found on p. 17.
- The sale of snapper grouper harvested under the bag limits is prohibited unless the vessel owner has been issued a South Atlantic Unlimited Snapper Grouper permit, or a South Atlantic 225-lb. Trip Limit Snapper Grouper permit.
- NOTE: Regulations for snapper grouper species may be modified after printing of this publication. See p. 7 for details.

Snapper Grouper Commercial Information

Limited Entry Program

- A limited entry program went into effect for the South Atlantic snapper grouper fishery on December 14, 1998. A control date of October 14, 2005 has been established for an additional limited access program for the commercial snapper grouper fishery (excluding wreckfish) in the South Atlantic EEZ. A control date of December 4, 2008 has been established for the black sea bass fishery.
- Those who did not meet the qualifying criteria must purchase two valid, transferable limited entry permits and exchange them for one new valid, transferable permit to gain entry into the fishery.
- Fishermen are encouraged to call NOAA Fisheries Service at 727/824-5326 to check the validity of permits before purchasing.

Shallow Water Grouper Closure January through April

- Prohibition on recreational and commercial harvest of gag, black grouper, red grouper, scamp, rock hind, red hind, coney, graysby, yellowfin grouper, yellowmouth grouper, and tiger grouper. For-hire and charter vessels' captain and crew have a bag limit of 0.

Allowable Gear for the Commercial Snapper Grouper Fishery

Only the following gear is allowed in this fishery:

- Vertical hook-and-line including hand-held hook-and-line and bandit gear
- Spearfishing gear without rebreathers
- Powerheads, except where expressly prohibited in Special Management Zones and in the EEZ off South Carolina
- Bottom longline, only in depths 50 fathoms or more, and only north of St. Lucie Inlet (27°10' N. lat.), Florida. (Bottom longline cannot be used for wreckfish.)
- Black sea bass pots except in SMZs and only north of Cape Canaveral, Florida (NASA Vehicle Assembly Building), (28°35.1' N. lat.)
- Sink net fishermen (NC only) can make multi-gear trips and all legal species harvested with black sea bass pots and/or vertical hook-and-line gear may be retained.
- Vessels with longline gear aboard may only possess snowy grouper, warsaw grouper, yellowedge grouper, misty grouper, and golden, blueline, and sand tilefish.

Possession of a dehooking device is required when fishing for South Atlantic snapper grouper.

List of Species in the South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Management Unit:

Snappers

Blackfin Snapper
Black Snapper
Cubera Snapper
Dog Snapper
Gray Snapper
Lane Snapper
Mahogany Snapper
Mutton Snapper
Queen Snapper
Red Snapper
Schoolmaster
Silk Snapper
Vermilion Snapper
Yellowtail Snapper

Groupers

Black Grouper
Coney
Gag
Goliath Grouper
Graysby
Misty Grouper
Nassau Grouper
Red Grouper
Red Hind
Rock Hind
Scamp
Snowy Grouper
Speckled Hind
Tiger Grouper

Warsaw Grouper

Wreckfish
Yellowedge Grouper
Yellowfin Grouper
Yellowmouth Grouper

Porgys

Grass Porgy
Jolthead Porgy
Knobbed Porgy
Longspine Porgy
Red Porgy
Saucereye Porgy
Scup
Sheepshead
Whitebone Porgy

Triggerfish

Gray Triggerfish
Ocean Triggerfish
Queen Triggerfish

Jacks

Almaco Jack
Banded Rudderfish
Bar Jack
Blue Runner
Crevalle Jack
Greater Amberjack

Lesser Amberjack
Yellow Jack

Tilefishes

Blueline Tilefish
Golden Tilefish
Sand Tilefish

Grunts

Black Margate
Blue Stripe Grunt
Cottonwick
French Grunt
Margate
Porkfish
Sailors Choice
Smallmouth Grunt
Spanish Grunt

Tomtate
White Grunts

Spadefishes

Atlantic Spadefish

Wrasses

Hogfish
Puddingwife

Sea Basses

Bank Sea Bass
Black Sea Bass
Rock Sea Bass

Black Sea Bass Pot Requirements

A black sea bass pot (or trap with six rectangular sides that does not exceed 25 inches in height, width, or depth) must be used or possessed in the South Atlantic EEZ between 35°15.19' N lat (due east of Cape Hatteras Light, NC) and 28°35.1' N. lat. (due east of the NASA Vehicle Assembly Building, Cape Canaveral, FL). In the South Atlantic EEZ, pots may not be used or possessed in multiple configurations, that is, two or more pots may not be attached one to another so that their overall dimensions exceed those allowed for an individual sea bass pot. This does not preclude connecting individual pots to a line, such as a "trawl" or trot line. A black sea bass pot used in the South Atlantic must meet the following additional requirements:

- 1) For sides other than the back panel: hexagonal mesh (chicken wire) — at least 1.5 inches between wrapped sides; square mesh — at least 1.5 inches between sides; OR rectangular mesh — at least 1 inch between the longer sides and two inches between the shorter sides.
- 2) For the entire panel, i.e., the side of the pot opposite the side that contains the pot entrance, mesh that is at least 2 inches between sides.
- 3) It must have an escape panel or door with an opening equal to or larger than the interior end of the trap's throat (funnel) placed on at least one side, excluding the top and bottom. Its hinges or fasteners must be made of one of the following degradable materials:

ungalvanized or coated iron wire no larger than 19 gauge or 0.041 inches diameter OR galvanic, timed release mechanisms with a letter grade no higher than J.

- 4) It must have an unobstructed escape vent opening on at least two opposite vertical sides (excluding top and bottom) meeting the following requirements: The escape vent opening must measure at least 1 1/8 X 5 3/4" for rectangular vents, 1.75 X 1.75" for square vents (inside measure), or 2" diameter circular vents.
- 5) Sea bass pots must be removed from the water in the South Atlantic EEZ when the quota is reached.

Restrictions mandated by the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP) final rule (72 FR 57104) apply to black sea bass fishermen in the South Atlantic. A fact sheet on this can be found at: www.nero.noaa.gov/whaltrp/plan/ALTRP%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf.



King & Spanish Mackerel Commercial Regulations

King & Spanish Mackerel

- An annual permit is required to fish under the commercial quota for king or Spanish mackerel. There is a permit moratorium on the issuance of king mackerel permits to prevent speculative entry into the fishery and provide stability. A control date of June 15, 2004 was established for both the king and Spanish mackerel fisheries in the South Atlantic EEZ.
- Charterboat/headboat operators must possess a charter/headboat vessel permit for Coastal Migratory Pelagics (cero, cobia, king mackerel, little tunny, and Spanish mackerel). For additional information contact NOAA Fisheries Service at 727/824-5326.

Retention and Sale of Cut-Off (damaged) King and Spanish Mackerel

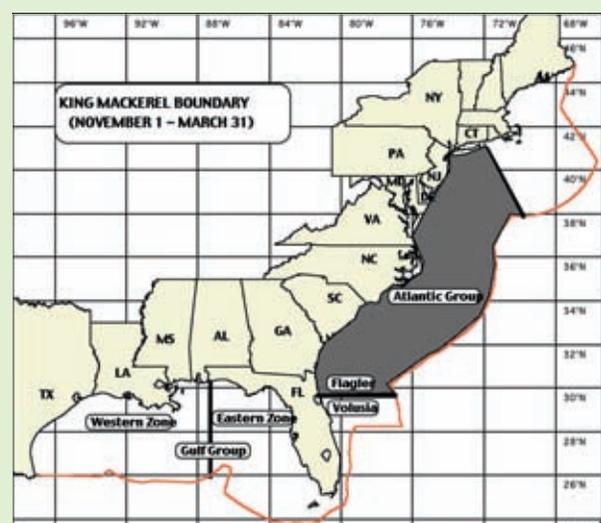
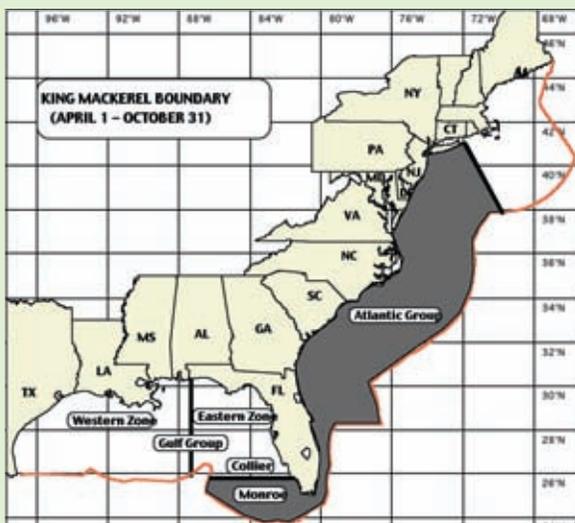
To reduce waste in the fishery, possession of cut-off king and Spanish mackerel that comply with the minimum size limits and the trip limits will be allowed in the Atlantic EEZ. Sale of such cut-off fish will be allowed. This is an addition to the existing allowance for possession and retention of a maximum of 5 cut-off king mackerel that are not subject to the size or trip limits, but that cannot be sold or purchased, nor counted against the trip limit.

Species	Permit Required	Size Limit	Gear Restrictions	Remarks	Fishing Year	Trip Limits
King Mackerel	Yes - A permit moratorium is in place.	24" FL Fishermen may possess undersized king mackerel less than or equal to 5% by weight of the king mackerel on board.	Authorized gear: For Atlantic king mackerel north of the Cape Lookout, NC Light (34° 37.3' N. lat.) all gear is authorized except for drift gill nets and long gill nets. South of the Cape Lookout Light the following gear is authorized: automatic reel, bandit gear, hand-line, rod & reel. A minimum size of 4.75" stretch mesh is required for run-around gill nets. No more than 400,000 lbs. may be harvested by purse seines.	Season opens 3/1 and closes end of February or when quota is filled. Fish must be landed with heads and fins intact. Quota = 3.71 million lbs.	The fishing year for Atlantic migratory group king mackerel is March 1 – end of February. For the area in Florida between the Volusia/Brevard and Miami-Dade/Monroe County boundaries, king mackerel are considered to be part of the Atlantic group from April 1 – October 31.	From NY to Flagler/Volusia County (FL) from March 1 – end of February, the trip limit is 3,500 lbs. From Flagler/Volusia to Volusia/Brevard county lines from April 1 – October 31, the trip limit is 3,500 lbs. From the Volusia/Brevard to Miami-Dade/Monroe County lines from April 1 – October 31, the trip limit is 75 fish. In Monroe County (Florida Keys) from April 1 – October 31, the trip limit is 1,250 lbs. (For information on Gulf king mackerel allocations affecting the east coast of Florida, contact NOAA Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, Sustainable Fisheries Division at 727/824-5305).



NOTE: This table is for general informational purposes and has no legal force or effect. Fishery regulations are subject to change.

Seasonal King Mackerel Boundaries



Commercial Mackerel Information (CONTINUED)

Species	Permit Required	Size Limit	Gear Restrictions	Remarks	Fishing Year	Trip Limits
Spanish Mackerel	Yes	12" FL	Authorized gear: automatic reel, bandit gear, hand-line, rod & reel, cast net, run around gill net and stab net. Minimum size of 3.5" stretch mesh required for all run around gill nets.	Season opens 3/1 and closes end of February or when quota is filled. Must be landed with heads and fins intact. Atlantic Spanish mackerel catches divided into northern (GA through NY) and Southern (FL east coast to Dade-Monroe county line) zone. Northern zone restricted to 3,500 lbs. per vessel per day. Southern zone possession limits vary by month and percentage allocation harvested (compatible with FL waters). Fish must be landed with heads and fins intact. Quota = 3.87 million lbs.	The fishing year for Atlantic migratory Spanish mackerel is March 1 through the end of February.	For Northern area (GA-NY), the trip limit is 3,500 lbs. The Florida trip limit regime has been modified into stages. For the first part of the fishing year, March 1-November 30 (stage I) the daily trip limit is 3,500 lbs. Beginning December 1 (Stage II) unlimited daily harvest is allowed on Monday through Friday, with a 1,500 lb. trip limit on Saturday and Sunday. When 75% of the adjusted quota is taken (Stage III) all trip limits equal 1,500 lbs. Once the adjusted quota is met (Stage IV), trip limits are further reduced to 500 pounds for the remainder of the fishing year.



NOTE: This table is for general informational purposes and has no legal force or effect. Fishery regulations are subject to change.

Other Commercial Regulations

Shrimp

The Shrimp Fishery Management Plan allows North and South Carolina, Georgia, and east Florida to request a closure in federal waters adjacent to closed state waters for brown, pink or white shrimp following severe cold weather that results in an 80% or greater reduction in the population of white shrimp (whiting, royal red and rock shrimp fisheries are exempt from a federal closure for white shrimp).

During a federal closure, a buffer zone is established extending seaward from shore to 25 nautical miles, inside of which no trawling is allowed with a net having less than 4" stretch mesh. Vessels trawling inside this buffer zone cannot have a shrimp net aboard (i.e., a net with less than 4" stretch mesh) in the closed portion of the federal zone. Transit of the closed federal zone with less than 4" stretch mesh aboard while in possession of penaeid (white, brown and pink) shrimp will be allowed provided that the nets are in an unfishable condition, which is defined as stowed below deck.

The Council has established a control date of December 10, 2003, for the penaeid shrimp fishery in the South Atlantic EEZ. A control date means that in the future the Council may consider management measures that limit the participation or effort in the fishery and may use this control date as part of a management strategy.

Federal Shrimp Permits Required

As of April 11, 2006, an owner or operator of a trawler that harvests or possesses penaeid shrimp in or from the EEZ off the South Atlantic must have a commercial vessel permit on board and submit catch and effort reports and carry observers if selected. (For additional information contact NOAA Fisheries Service Permits Office at 727/824-5326.)

Bycatch Reduction Devices (BRDs)

On a penaeid shrimp trawler in the South Atlantic EEZ, each trawl net that is rigged for fishing and has a mesh size less than 2.5", as measured between the centers of opposite knots when pulled taut, and each try net that is rigged for fishing and has a headrope length longer than 16.0 ft. must have a certified BRD installed. The following BRDs are certified for use by penaeid shrimp trawlers in the South Atlantic EEZ: extended funnel, expanded mesh, fisheye, Gulf fisheye, Jones-Davis, and modified Jones-Davis BRD. Specifications of these devices and additional information on testing and certification of BRDs can be obtained through NOAA Fisheries Service Southeast Regional Office, Sustainable Fisheries Division by calling 727/824-5305.

Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs)

TEDs are required for both the penaeid and rock shrimp fisheries. These devices are regulated by NOAA Fisheries Service. Contact the Southeast Regional Office, Protected Resource Division at 727/824-5312 for information.

Rock Shrimp

Amendment 7, approved in October, 2009, makes changes to commercial regulations for South Atlantic rock shrimp, including issuance of new permits. The limited access endorsement has been renamed the Rock Shrimp Permit (South Atlantic EEZ) and the open access permit has been renamed the Rock Shrimp Permit (Carolinas Zone).

A commercial vessel permit and operator permit is required to fish for or possess rock shrimp in or from the South Atlantic EEZ. For a person aboard a vessel to fish for or possess rock shrimp in the South Atlantic EEZ off Georgia and Florida, a Rock Shrimp Permit (South Atlantic EEZ) must be issued to the vessel and must be on board. An owner or operator of a vessel that had been issued a limited access Rock Shrimp Permit (South Atlantic EEZ) must ensure that the vessel has a NMFS-approved type operating Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) on board when on a trip in the South Atlantic. **As of January 12, 2007, on a vessel that fishes for or possesses rock shrimp in the South Atlantic EEZ, each trawl net or try net that is rigged for fishing must have a certified BRD installed.** (For additional information regarding permits and VMS requirements, contact NOAA Fisheries Service at 727/824-5326.)

A dealer permit is required to receive rock shrimp from permitted vessels. No persons may fish for rock shrimp in the Oculina Bank Habitat Area of Particular Concern (HAPC) located off the east coast of Florida. See page 12 in this brochure for specific coordinates. No person may possess rock shrimp in or from this area on board a fishing vessel.

The minimum mesh size for the cod end of a rock shrimp trawl net in the South Atlantic EEZ off Georgia and Florida is 1-7/8 inches (4.8 cm), stretched mesh. This minimum mesh size is required in at least the last 40 meshes forward of the cod end drawstring (tie off strings), and smaller mesh bag liners are not allowed. A vessel that has a trawl net on board that does not meet these requirements may not possess a rock shrimp in or from the South Atlantic EEZ off Georgia and Florida.

Other Commercial Regulations

Species	Permit Required	Size Limit	Gear Restrictions	Remarks	Trip Limits
 <p>Spiny Lobster</p>	Yes	More than 3" carapace. Removal of tail allowed with tailing permit. If removed, tail must be at least 5.5".	Allowable gear: trap, pot, dip net, bully net or snare. There is a 5% bycatch limit by weight (of all fish lawfully aboard) for incidental harvest of spiny lobster by trawls in the EEZ. No poisons or explosives are allowed. No spear, hooks or piercing devices are allowed. A degradable panel is required on non-wooden traps. Traps may not be tended at night. Buoy and trap identification is required.	A trap certificate program has been adopted in the EEZ off Florida. Contact Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for information at 850/487-0554. Season closes April 1- August 5. No taking of berried spiny or berried slipper lobsters is allowed. Vessel ID is required. A maximum of 50 shorts or 1 per trap on board whichever is greater as attractants in a live well containing 3/4 gallon aerated, circulating sea water per lobster is allowed. These must be released alive and prior to one hour after sunset. Night divers are limited to a six-lobster bag limit. All divers must measure spiny lobsters while in the water and release shorts unharmed immediately without removal from the water. In federal waters off NC, SC and GA harvesting is allowed year-round with a daily bag or possession limit of 2 per person.	In the EEZ a spiny lobster trap may be no larger in dimension than 3 ft. by 2 ft. by 2 ft. or the volume equivalent. A trap constructed of material other than wood must have a panel constructed of wood, cotton or other material that will degrade at the same rate as a wooden trap. Such panel must be located in the upper half of the sides or on the top of the trap, so that, when removed, there will be an opening in the trap no smaller than the diameter found at the throat or entrance of the trap.
NOTE: This table is for general informational purposes and has no legal force or effect. Fishery regulations are subject to change.					

Species	Permit Required	Size Limit	Gear Restrictions	Remarks
 <p>Bluefish</p>	Yes	None	Contact the NMFS Northeast Regional Office. 978/281-9370	Permits are required for commercial vessels, dealers and party/charter boats. Permits are required for bluefish vessel operators. Commercial quotas are established on state by state allocations. For more details, contact the NMFS Northeast Regional Office at 978/281-9370.
 <p>Cobia</p>	No	33" FL	Authorized gear: automatic reel, bandit gear, hand-line, rod & reel and pelagic longline.	No person may possess more than two cobia per day regardless of the number of trips or duration of a trip. Must be landed with head and fins intact.
 <p>Golden Crab</p>	Yes - Permit limitation program in place. Contact the Council office for details.	None	Traps are the only allowable gear. Rope is the only allowable material for mainlines and buoy line. Max. trap size = 64 cubic feet in volume in the Northern zone and 48 cubic feet in volume in the Mid and Southern zones. Traps must have at least 2 escape gaps or rings and an escape panel. Traps must be identified with a permit number.	Golden crab must be landed whole. Escape gaps or rings must be located on each of 2 opposite vertical sides of the trap, with an inside measurement no smaller than 2 3/4" by 3 3/4" for escape gaps or 4.5 inside diameter for escape rings. Traps made of webbing must have an opening at least 1 foot long that may be closed only with untreated cotton string less than or equal to 3/16" diameter. Traps constructed of other material must have an escape panel of at least 11 7/8" X 11 7/8" located on at least one side, excluding top and bottom. The hinges or fasteners must be made of specified degradable material. The retention of females is limited to 0.5% of the catch by number of all golden crab on board and the sale of females is prohibited. For information on zones, please contact the Council office.
 <p>Dolphin</p>	Yes - For details regarding permit requirements, contact NMFS Southeast Regional Office at 727/824-5326.	20" off FL and Georgia	Allowable gear in Atlantic EEZ: Pelagic longline*, hook-and-line gear including manual, electric, or hydraulic rod and reels, bandit gear, hand-line and spearfishing gear (including powerheads). *Surface and pelagic longline gear for dolphin and wahoo is prohibited within any "time area closure" in the Atlantic EEZ which is closed to the use of pelagic gear for highly migratory pelagic species (HMS).	Vessel permits and operator permits are required for both the commercial and for-hire fisheries. A cap of 1.5 million lbs. or 13% of total landings, whichever is greater, has been established for the commercial fishery. Fishing year is January 1 to December 31. For a commercially permitted vessel fishing north 39° N. latitude, that does not have a federal commercial vessel permit for dolphin or wahoo, there is a trip limit of 200 lbs. of dolphin and wahoo, combined.
 <p>Wahoo</p>	Yes	None		Commercial trip limit of 500 lbs. (landed head and tail intact) with no transfer at sea. Vessel permits and operator permits are required for both the commercial and for-hire fisheries. Fishing year is January 1 to December 31.
NOTE: This table is for general informational purposes and has no legal force or effect. Fishery regulations are subject to change.				

New: Sea turtle and smalltooth sawfish release protocol

The owner or operator of a vessel for which a federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat South Atlantic Snapper Grouper permit has been issued must follow protocol as outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations (Part 622.10(c)) for sea turtle handling and release with minimal injury. In addition, smalltooth sawfish conservation measures must be followed as outlined in CFR Part 622.10(c): (1) keep the sawfish in the water at all times; (2) if it can be done safely, untangle the line that is wrapped around the saw; (3) cut the line as close to the hook as possible; and (4) do not handle the animal or attempt to remove any hooks on the saw, except with a long-handled dehooker. For additional information on sea turtles and smalltooth sawfish, visit the NMFS Protected Resources Division web site: <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pr.htm>.



Loggerhead Sea Turtle, *Caretta caretta*

Important Numbers & Information Sources

For More Information Regarding the Contents of this Publication Contact:

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201
N. Charleston, SC 29405
Phone: 843/571-4366
Toll Free: 866/SAFMC-10
Fax: 843/769-4520
www.safmc.net

For Other Information Contact:

National Marine Fisheries Service Offices:

Highly Migratory Species (Sharks, Swordfish, Billfish & Tunas):
HMS Automated toll free:
1-800/894-5528 or 301/713-2347

- Current recreational and commercial regulations
- New alerts
- How to apply for permits

Permits and Landings Reporting System

www.nmfspermits.com
Toll Free: 1-888/872-TUNA (8862)

- Renew Atlantic tuna vessel permits
- Check permit status
- Report recreationally landed bluefin tuna
- Regulations
- HMS tournament organizer registration information

NMFS Cooperative Tagging Program

1-800/437-3936

Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary
http://graysreef.noaa.gov
912/598-2345

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary
http://floridakeys.noaa.gov
305/809-4670

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)

Southeast Regional Office:

263 13th Ave. South
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov
Front Office: 727/824-5301
Permits: 727/824-5326
877/376-4877 (toll free)
Plans & Regulations:
727/824-5305

Fishery Management Councils:

Caribbean Fishery Management Council
www.caribbeanfmc.com
787/766-5926

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council
www.gulfcouncil.org
1-888/833-1844 (toll free) or
813/348-1630

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
www.mafmc.org
1-877/446-2362 (toll free) or
302/674-2331

New England Fishery Management Council
www.nefmc.org
978/465-0492

Law Enforcement:

NOAA Fisheries Enforcement
1-800/853-1964

State Agencies:

NC Division of Marine Fisheries
www.ncfisheries.net
Information: 252/726-7021
Report state fishing violations:
1-800/682-2632 (NC Only)

SC DNR Marine Resources Division
www.dnr.sc.gov
Information: 843/953-9300
Report state fishing violations:
1-800/922-5431

GA DNR Coastal Resources Division
www.dnr.state.ga.us
Information: 912/264-7218
Report state fishing violations:
1-800/241-4113

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
www.myfwc.com
Information: 850/487-0554
Wildlife Alert Reward Program:
1-888/404-FWCC (3922) or online
Cell Phone: *FWC or #FWC

Report Fishing Violations:

NOAA Fisheries Service Enforcement Hotline
1-800/853-1964
24 hours a day, 7 days a week
ANYWHERE IN THE U.S.A.

State Agencies:
NC DMF: 1-800/682-2632 (NC Only)
SC DNR: 1-800/922-5431
GA DNR: 1-800/241-4113
FWCC: 1-888/404-FWCC or
Cell: *FWC or #FWC
(not in service in all areas)



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South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Complex Recreational Regulations

(Updated October, 2011 - Updates in red)

List of Species in the South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Complex:

Snappers	Dog Snapper	Yellowedge Grouper	Jolthead	Blue Runner	Porkfish	Puttidgewife
Lane Snapper	Silk Snapper	Coney	Saucereye	Crevalle Jack	Margate	Sea Basses
Yellowtail Snapper	Groupers	Red Hind	Whitebone	Bar Jack	Tomtate	Black Sea Bass
Gray Snapper	Gag	Goliath Grouper	Knobbed	Almaco Jack	Smallmouth Grunt	Bank Sea Bass
Mutton Snapper	Scamp	Misty Grouper	Longspine	Lesser Amberjack	French Grunt	Rock Sea Bass
Vermilion Snapper	Red Grouper	Nassau Grouper	Scup	Banded Rudderfish	Spanish Grunt	
Red Snapper	Black Grouper	Yellowmouth Grouper	Triggerfish	Tilefishes	Cottonwick	
Black Snapper	Speckled Hind	Tiger Grouper	Gray	Golden Tilefish	Sailors Choice	
Queen Snapper	Snowy Grouper	Yellowfin Grouper	Queen	Blueline Tilefish	Bluestriped Grunt	
Schoolmaster	Warsaw Grouper	Porgys	Ocean	Sand Tilefish	Spadefishes	
Blackfin Snapper	Wreckfish	Red	Jacks	Grunts	Spadefish	
Cubera Snapper	Rock Hind	Sheepshead	Greater Amberjack	White Grunt	Wrasses	
Mahogany Snapper	Graysby	Grass	Yellow Jack	Black Margate	Hogfish	

Recreational and commercial fishermen are required to use **dehooking tools** when fishing for snapper grouper species.

Black sea bass fishery Closed, effective October 17, 2011.

The 2011-2012 recreational annual catch limit (ACL) of 341,747 lbs has been met. Fishery will reopen on June 1, 2012.

Golden tilefish fishery temporarily Closed, effective October 6, 2011.

Because the 2010 recreational ACL of 1,578 fish was exceeded by 2,805 fish, the recreational sector for golden tilefish is closed from October 6, 2011 through January 1, 2012.

Circle hooks are now required for the snapper grouper fishery, effective March 3, 2011.

The use of non-stainless steel circle hooks (offset or non-offset) is required on any commercial or recreational vessel using hook-and-line gear with *natural baits* to fish for snapper grouper species north of 28 degrees N. latitude.

The harvest and retention of some deepwater species is prohibited in waters greater than 240' in depth

In waters greater than 240 feet (73 m), there is a prohibition on the harvest and retention of snowy grouper, blueline tilefish, yellowedge grouper, misty grouper, queen snapper and silk snapper.

Red snapper harvest prohibited. Prohibition on all harvest and possession of red snapper in federal waters off the South Atlantic and state waters for vessels holding federal snapper grouper permits.

Aggregate Grouper Bag Limit: three (3) groupers per person/day includes:

* gag, * black, **+snowy, +misty, red, scamp, tiger, +yellowedge, yellowfin, yellowmouth, +blueline tilefish, sand tilefish, ***golden tilefish, coney, graysby, red hind & rock hind.

* Maximum of 1 gag or black grouper (*but not both*) per person/day

** **snowy grouper limited to 1 per vessel per trip, no harvest in depths > 240'**

*** Maximum of 1 golden tilefish per person/day / **Fishery CLOSED October 6, 2011-Jan 1, 2012**

+ may not be harvested in depths > 240'

Goliath grouper, Nassau grouper, speckled hind, and warsaw grouper - Closed to harvest or possession in federal waters.

Wreckfish - Only ITQ shareholders or their designees may harvest or possess wreckfish

Aggregate Snapper Bag Limit: Ten (10) snapper (excluding vermilion snapper) per person/day with the following exceptions:

The red snapper fishery is closed to both commercial and recreational harvest. Maximum of 2 cubera per person (not to exceed 2 per/vessel) for fish 30" Total Length (TL) or larger off Florida. These are not included in the 10 snapper bag limit. Cubera less than 30" TL are included in the 10 fish bag limit. **Harvest and possession of queen snapper and silk snapper is prohibited in waters deeper than 240'.**

In addition, fishermen may retain:

1 **amberjack** per person/day (in April, for-hire/charter vessels limited to 1 per person/day or 1 per person/trip)

5 **hogfish** per person/day, off the coast of East Florida

3 **red porgy** per person/day or 3 per/person/trip, whichever is more restrictive

5 **vermilion snapper** per person/day (*Recreational harvest prohibited annually November 1 to March 31*)

Other Snapper Grouper Complex Species: 20 Fish Aggregate Bag Limit

There is an aggregate bag limit of 20 fish per person inclusive of all fish in the snapper grouper complex currently *not under a bag limit*, excluding tomtate and blue runner. This means you may catch your bag limits and *additionally* retain up to 20 other fish

NOTE: This summary is for informational purposes only and has no legal force or effect. Fishery regulations are subject to change.

For updated information, visit www.safmc.net or call toll free 866/SAFMC-10

See Next Page for SUMMARY TABLE



Note: All species in the snapper grouper complex must be maintained with heads and fins intact. (Cobia, king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, dolphin, and wahoo must also be landed with heads and fins intact.) Goliath and Nassau grouper must be released by cutting the line and **not** removing the fish from the water.

The sale of bag-limit caught snapper grouper species is prohibited.

South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Complex Recreational Regulations

(updates in red)

Common Name	Local Names	Size Limit	Daily Bag Limits	Other Regulations
Black Grouper	Blackfin Grouper	24" TL	No more than one (1) Black or Gag Grouper (included in 3 grouper per person) - *Closed January 1 to April 30	
Black Sea Bass	Sea Bass, Blackfish	12" TL	Black Sea Bass CLOSED from October 17, 2011-June 1, 2012.	
Blackfin Snapper		12" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person limit	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Cubera Snapper	Cuban Snapper	12" TL	2 per person (not to exceed 2 per vessel) for fish 30" TL or larger off East Florida. See "Retention Limits".	
Dog Snapper		12" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person limit	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Gag	Charcoal Belly	24" TL	No more than one (1) Black or Gag Grouper (included in 3 grouper per person) - *Closed January 1 to April 30	
Gray Snapper	Mangrove Snapper	12" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person limit	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Gray Triggerfish	Triggerfish	12" TL off East Florida only	Included in 20 fish snapper grouper aggregate	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Greater Amberjack	Amberjack, A.J.	28" FL; no coring	1 per person/day (In April, for-hire/charter vessels limited to 1 per person/day or 1 per person/trip.)	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Hogfish	Hog Snapper	12" FL	5 off East Florida only	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Goliath Grouper	Jewfish, Giant Seabass		Closed to possession or harvest	
Lane Snapper	Redtail Snapper, Candy Snapper	8" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Mahogany Snapper		12" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Mutton Snapper	Muttonfish	16" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Nassau Grouper			Closed to possession or harvest	
Queen Snapper		12" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person; prohibited in depths beyond 240'	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Red Grouper	Grouper	20" TL	Included in 3 grouper per person	*Closed January 1 to April 30 See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Red Porgy	Pink Porgy, Silver Snapper Pink Snapper	14" TL	3 per person/day (or 3 per person/trip, whichever is more restrictive)	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Red Snapper	Mules, Sow Snapper, Spot Snapper, American Snapper		Closed to possession or harvest	
Scamp	Broomtail	20" TL	Included in 3 grouper per person	*Closed January 1 to April 30 See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Schoolmaster		12" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Silk Snapper	Yelloweye Snapper	12" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person; prohibited in depths beyond 240'	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Snowy Grouper	Snowflake	None	1 per vessel/trip; prohibited in depths beyond 240'	Included in 3 grouper bag limit
Speckled Hind	Strawberry Grouper, Kitty Mitchell, Calico Grouper		Closed to possession or harvest	
Golden, Blueline, Sand Tilefish	Golden - Rainbow Tilefish; Blueline - Gray Tilefish	None	Included in 3 grouper bag limit. Golden Tilefish CLOSED from October 6, 2011-January 1, 2012. Blueline Tilefish prohibited in depths beyond 240'.	
Vermilion Snapper	Beeliner, Night Snapper	12" TL	5 (in addition to the snapper bag limit)	Closed November 1 to March 31
Warsaw Grouper	Jewfish (Miscalled), Grouper		Closed to possession or harvest	
Wreckfish	No recreational harvest allowed. Individual Transfer Quota (ITQ) Program in place. <i>No one other than shareholders or their designees may possess Wreckfish.</i>			
Yellowfin Grouper		20" TL	Included in 3 grouper per person	*Closed January 1 to April 30 See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Yellowtail Snapper		12" TL	Included in 10 snapper per person	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Yellowmouth Grouper	Yellowtail	20" TL	Included in 3 grouper per person	*Closed January 1 to April 30 See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net

* Annual January 1 to April 30 Shallow Water Grouper Closure includes: gag, black grouper, red grouper, scamp, red hind, rock hind, coney, graysby, yellowfin grouper, yellowmouth grouper, and tiger grouper.



South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Complex Commercial Regulations

Updated October, 2011 - Recent Updates in Red

Snappers Lane Snapper Yellowtail Snapper Gray Snapper Mutton Snapper Vermilion Snapper Red Snapper Black Snapper Queen Snapper Schoolmaster Blackfin Snapper Cubera Snapper Mahogany Snapper	Dog Snapper Silk Snapper Groupers Gag Scamp Red Grouper Black Grouper Speckled Hind Snowy Grouper Warsaw Grouper Wreckfish Rock Hind Graysby	Yellowedge Grouper Coney Red Hind Goliath Grouper Misty Grouper Nassau Grouper Yellowmouth Grouper Tiger Grouper Yellowfin Grouper Porgys Red Sheepshead Grass	Jolthead Saucereye Whitebone Knobbed Longspine Scup Triggerfish Gray Queen Ocean Jacks Red Greater Amberjack Yellow Jack	Blue Runner Crevalle Jack Bar Jack Almaco Jack Lesser Amberjack Banded Rudderfish Tilefishes Golden Tilefish Blueline Tilefish Sand Tilefish Grunts White Grunt Black Margate	Porkfish Margate Tomate Smallmouth Grunt French Grunt Spanish Grunt Cottonwick Sailors Choice Bluestriped Grunt Spadefishes Spadefish Wrasses Hogfish	Puddingwife Sea Basses Black Sea Bass Bank Sea Bass Rock Sea Bass
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NOTE: This listing is published for informational purposes and has no legal force or effect.

NEW! Commercial Trip Limits effective July 15, 2011

Gag: 1,000 lbs, gutted weight (gw)

Vermilion Snapper: 1,500 lbs, gw

Greater Amberjack: 1,200 lbs, gw

Commercial harvest of vermilion snapper fishery to remain closed until January 1, 2012. The July through December portion of the split commercial Annual Catch Limit (ACL) of 302,523 lbs. was met on September 30, 2011. The fishery will re-open January 1, 2012 with a January - June portion of the ACL of 315,523 lbs.

Commercial harvest of black sea bass fishery to remain closed until June 1, 2012. The commercial ACL of 309,000 lbs. has been met for the June 1, 2011- May 31, 2012 fishing year, and the fishery was closed effective July 15, 2011.

Circle hooks are now required for the snapper grouper fishery, effective March 3, 2011.

The use of non-stainless steel circle hooks (offset or non-offset) is required on any commercial or recreational vessel using hook-and-line gear with *natural baits* to fish for snapper grouper species north of 28 degrees N. latitude.

The harvest and retention of some deepwater species is currently prohibited in waters greater than 240' deep.

The harvest and/or possession of snowy grouper, blueline tilefish, yellowedge grouper, misty grouper, queen snapper and silk snapper is currently prohibited in waters greater than 240 feet (73 m).

The following species are closed to harvest or possession in federal waters:

red snapper, goliath grouper, Nassau grouper, **speckled hind and warsaw grouper.**

Wreckfish - Only ITQ shareholders or their designees may harvest or possess wreckfish.

Annual Shallow-water Grouper Spawning Season Closure January 1 through April 30

Prohibition on recreational and commercial harvest or possession of: gag, black grouper, red grouper, scamp, red hind, rock hind, coney, graysby, yellowfin grouper, yellowmouth grouper, and tiger grouper. Captain and crew of for-hire and charter vessels have a bag-limit of zero (0).

Note: The combined ACL for gag, black grouper and red grouper is 662,403 lbs. gutted weight.

Recreational and commercial fishermen are required to use **dehooking tools** when fishing for snapper grouper species.

After a commercial quota has been met, all purchase and sale is prohibited, and harvest and/or possession is limited to the recreational bag limit. This prohibition does not apply to fish harvested, landed and sold prior to the quota being reached and held in cold storage by a dealer.



Note: All species in the snapper grouper complex must be maintained with heads and fins intact. (Cobia, king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, dolphin, and wahoo must also be landed with heads and fins intact.) Goliath and Nassau grouper must be released by cutting the line and **not** removing the fish from the water.



Note: Commercial snapper grouper vessels must have onboard NMFS approved sea turtle release gear and follow smalltooth sawfish release protocol. For more information visit: <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/HandlingandReleaseRequirements> or call 727/824-5312.

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For updated information, visit www.safmc.net or call toll free 866/SAFMC-10

See Next Page for SUMMARY TABLE

South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Complex Commercial Regulations

(Updates in red)

Common Name	Local Names	Size Limit	Trip Limits	Other Regulations
Black Grouper	Blackfin Grouper	24" TL	Shallow-water Grouper closed season January-April. See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net	
Black Sea Bass	Sea Bass, Blackfish	10" TL	Fishing year is June 1-May 31. ACL = 309,000 lbs gw. ACL met on July 15, 2011. Fishery to remain closed until June 1, 2012. Sea bass pot restrictions found at www.safmc.net	
Blackfin Snapper		12" TL	None	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Cubera Snapper	Cuban Snapper	12" TL	2 per person (not to exceed 2 per vessel) for fish 30" TL or larger off East Florida.	
Dog Snapper		12" TL	None	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Gag	Charcoal Belly	24" TL	Shallow-water Grouper closed season January-April. Trip limit is 1,000 lbs gw. ACL = 352,940 lbs gw.	
Gray Snapper	Mangrove Snapper	12" TL	None	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Gray Triggerfish	Triggerfish	12" TL off East Florida only	None	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Greater Amberjack	Amberjack, A.J.	36" FL; no coring	Trip limit is 1,200 lbs gw. ACL = 1,169,931 lbs gw.	
Hogfish	Hog Snapper	12" FL	None	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Goliath Grouper	Jewfish, Giant Seabass		Closed to possession or harvest	
Lane Snapper	Redtail Snapper, Candy Snapper	8" TL	None	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Mahogany Snapper		12" TL	None	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Mutton Snapper	Muttonfish	16" TL	During May and June, possession limited to 10/person per day <i>or</i> per trip, whichever is more restrictive.	
Nassau Grouper			Closed to possession or harvest	
Queen Snapper		12" TL	Harvest/possession prohibited in depths beyond 240'	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Red Grouper	Grouper	20" TL	Shallow water Grouper closed season January-April. See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net	
Red Porgy	Pink Porgy, Silver Snapper, Pink Snapper	14" TL	ACL = 190,050 lbs gw. / Jan-April: sale or purchase prohibited. Possession limited to 3/person per day <i>or</i> per trip, whichever is more restrictive. / May-Dec: commercial trip limit of 120 fish per trip.	
Red Snapper	Mules, Sow Snapper, Spot Snapper, American Snapper		Closed to possession or harvest	
Scamp	Broomtail	20" TL	Shallow-water Grouper closed season January-April. See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net	
Schoolmaster		12" TL	None	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Silk Snapper	Yelloweye Snapper	12" TL	Harvest/possession prohibited in depths beyond 240'	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Snowy Grouper	Snowflake	None	ACL = 82,900 lbs gw / 100 lb. trip limit until modified; Harvest/possession prohibited in depths beyond 240'	
Speckled Hind	Strawberry Grouper, Kitty Mitchell, Calico Grouper		Closed to possession or harvest	
Golden, Blueline, Sand Tilefish	Golden - Rainbow Tilefish; Blueline - Gray Tilefish	None	ACL for golden tilefish 282,819 lbs gw. ACL met on March 9, 2011. Golden tilefish fishery to remain closed until Jan 1, 2012. / Blueline prohibited in depths beyond 240'.	
Vermilion Snapper	Beeliner, Night Snapper	12" TL	July-Dec split ACL (302,523 lbs gw) met. Fishery to remain closed until Jan 1, 2012. / (Jan-June split ACL = 315,523 lbs gw.) / Trip limit is 1,500 lbs gw.	
Warsaw Grouper	Jewfish (Miscalled), Grouper		Closed to possession or harvest	
Wreckfish	Individual Transfer Quota (ITQ) Program in place. <i>No one other than shareholders or their designees may possess wreckfish.</i> Spawning season closure: January 15-April 15. Fishing Year begins April 16. ACL = 2 million lbs.			
Yellowfin Grouper		20" TL	Shallow-water Grouper closed season January-April. See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net	
Yellowtail Snapper		12" TL	None	See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net
Yellowmouth Grouper	Yellowtail	20" TL	Shallow-water Grouper closed season January-April. See "allowable gear" at www.safmc.net	

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