



MAGNUSON – STEVENS ACT/NEPA SCOPING DOCUMENT

Amendment 9 to the Shrimp Fishery Management Plan for the South Atlantic Region

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2012

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Comments accepted 1/13/2012 – 2/15/2012



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Scoping meetings are less formal than public hearings and occur prior to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) taking any position on a management issue. When the Council is considering the need for management, scoping meetings provide an opportunity for members of the public to make suggestions BEFORE the Council has made any decisions.

The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council is soliciting public input on possible actions under consideration.

For Shrimp Amendment 9, the Council is considering:

- (1) Modifying the protocol for states to request concurrent closure of the EEZ during severe winter weather to expedite the process:
 - A) use environmental criteria for closure requests
 - B) allow states to directly request a closure from NOAA Fisheries Service
- (2) Revising the minimum stock size threshold (MSST) proxy for pink shrimp

NEED FOR ACTION

The Council is considering modifying the current process for a state to request a concurrent closure of the penaeid shrimp fisheries in the adjacent EEZ during severe cold weather events. Additionally, the Council will examine options to revise the Minimum Stock Size Threshold (MSST) proxy for pink shrimp.



Credit: Kim Iverson

POSSIBLE ACTIONS

Action 1. Modify the process for a state to request a concurrent closure of the penaeid shrimp fisheries in the adjacent EEZ during severe winter weather

This action is being considered after South Carolina representatives expressed interest in developing an expedited process for a concurrent closure in which environmental criteria could be used and by which the state could directly request a closure from NOAA Fisheries Service. Currently, the process requires any state requesting a concurrent closure to provide data to demonstrate an 80% decrease in abundance to a review panel, and the panel's recommendations are reviewed at the next Council meeting (usually in March). After approval by the Council, a letter is drafted to the NOAA Fisheries Regional Administrator requesting that the EEZ adjacent to the state be closed to penaeid shrimp harvest. The Regional Administrator then publishes an official notice of closure in the Federal Register.

Although it only takes a week or so to implement the closure after the Council approves the state's request, it is likely that the severe weather event has occurred weeks or even months earlier. This action would modify the process by considering different criteria for concurrent closure and expediting the steps between a state's request to NOAA Fisheries Service and implementing the closure.

Option 1- use criteria based on environmental conditions instead of shrimp abundance such as:

- a minimum temperature
- how quickly temperature drops in a short period
- duration of a cold temperature event
- precipitation levels

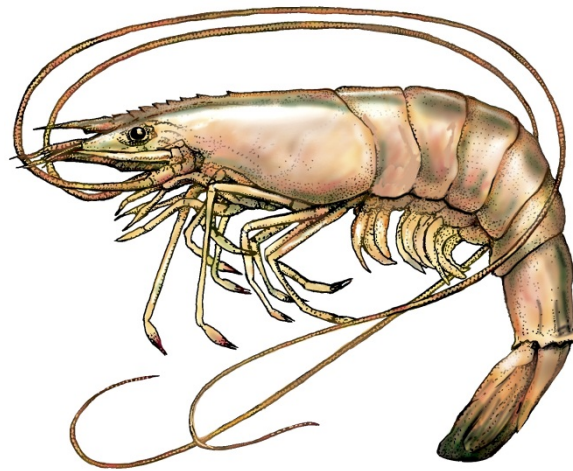
Option 2- allow states to request closure directly from NOAA Fisheries Service

- the state requesting a concurrent closure would submit data to demonstrate that criteria have been met directly to NOAA Fisheries Service

Action 2: Revise the minimum stock size threshold (MSST) proxy for pink shrimp

The Magnuson-Stevens Act requires that Councils define biological parameters in order to monitor whether a stock is overfished or that overfishing is occurring. One of these parameters is minimum stock size threshold (MSST), which comes from a stock assessment or is defined by a proxy. If the stock size drops below the MSST value or proxy, the stock is considered overfished. Amendment 6 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Shrimp Fishery of the South Atlantic Region established a proxy for MSST as a parent stock size capable of producing maximum sustainable yield (MSY) the following year.

The Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (SEAMAP) survey is the proxy for pink shrimp. According to SEAMAP sampling data, the stock of South Atlantic pink shrimp has been below the threshold (0.461 shrimp/hectare) in recent years, which translates into an overfished status for pink shrimp. However, the Shrimp Review Panel (a group made up of scientists from North Carolina DNR, South Carolina DNR, Georgia DNR, Florida FWC, and NOAA Fisheries Service) reviewed information about pink shrimp and felt that other factors likely affect the pink shrimp stock other than fishing mortality, and no further management measures were necessary. Further, the SEAMAP survey does not have adequate data south of Cape Canaveral and north of Cape Hatteras. The Shrimp Review Panel has recommended that other surveys be considered in monitoring the pink shrimp MSST in addition to or in replacement of SEAMAP.



Pink shrimp (*Penaeus duorarum*).

Image credit: Florida Dept of Agriculture (FL-Seafood.com)

SHRIMP AMENDMENT 9

PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING SITES AND DATES

Scoping meetings will be held from 4:00 P.M – 7:00 P.M. at the following locations. Written comments will be received January 13 – February 15th, 2012. The Council accepts comments sent by mail, fax, or e-mail. You can email your comments to: ShrimpAmend9ScopingComment@safmc.net

<u>January 24, 2012</u> Crowne Plaza 4831 Tanger Outlet Blvd. North Charleston, SC 29418 Phone: 843-744-4422	<u>January 31, 2012</u> Hilton Cocoa Beach 1550 North Atlantic Ave. Cocoa Beach, FL 32931 Phone: 321-799-0003
<u>January 26, 2012</u> BridgePointe Hotel & Marina 101 Howell Road New Bern, NC 28562 Phone: 252-636-3637	<u>February 1, 2012</u> Crowne Plaza Jacksonville Riverfront 1201 Riverplace Boulevard Jacksonville, FL 32207 Phone: 904-398-8800
<u>January 30, 2012</u> Hilton Key Largo Resort 97000 Overseas Highway Key Largo, FL 33037 Phone: 305-852-5553	<u>February 2, 2012</u> Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum 175 Bourne Avenue Pooler, GA 31322 Phone: 912-748-8888

Council staff and local Council representatives (see Appendix A for Council Members and responsible staff members) will be on hand to answer questions concerning Shrimp Amendment 9 and other topics covered during this series of scoping meetings. Members of the public will have the opportunity to provide comments on the record at any time during the hours posted above.

What Next?

Written comments must be received by 5 P.M. on February 15, 2012. All comments will be considered by the Council in drafting Shrimp Amendment 9. There will be a number of opportunities to provide public input if the Council moves forward to develop an amendment. A simplified schematic of the Council process is presented in Appendix C.

Appendix A. South Atlantic Fishery Management Council 2011-2012 Membership

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Appendix B. Species Managed By SAFMC.

SNAPPER GROUPER COMPLEX

Sea basses and Groupers (Serranidae) - 21 species

Gag	<i>Mycteroperca microlepis</i>
Red grouper	<i>Epinephelus morio</i>
Scamp	<i>Mycteroperca phenax</i>
Black grouper	<i>Mycteroperca bonaci</i>
Rock hind	<i>Epinephelus adscensionis</i>
Red hind	<i>Epinephelus guttatus</i>
Graysby	<i>Cephalopholis cruentata</i>
Yellowfin grouper	<i>Mycteroperca venenosa</i>
Coney	<i>Cephalopholis fulva</i>
Yellowmouth grouper	<i>Mycteroperca interstitialis</i>
*Tiger grouper	<i>Mycteroperca tigris</i>
Goliath grouper	<i>Epinephelus itajara</i>
Nassau grouper	<i>Epinephelus striatus</i>
Snowy grouper	<i>Epinephelus niveatus</i>
Yellowedge grouper	<i>Epinephelus flavolimbatus</i>
Warsaw grouper	<i>Epinephelus nigritus</i>
Speckled hind	<i>Epinephelus drummondhayi</i>
Misty grouper	<i>Epinephelus mystacinus</i>
Black sea bass	<i>Centropristis striata</i>
Bank sea bass	<i>Centropristis ocyurus</i>
Rock sea bass	<i>Centropristis philadelphica</i>

Wreckfish (Polyprionidae) - 1 species

Wreckfish	<i>Polyprion americanus</i>
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Snappers (Lutjanidae) - 14 species

Queen snapper	<i>Etelis oculatus</i>
Yellowtail snapper	<i>Ocyurus chrysurus</i>
Gray snapper	<i>Lutjanus griseus</i>
Mutton snapper	<i>Lutjanus analis</i>
Lane snapper	<i>Lutjanus synagris</i>
Cubera snapper	<i>Lutjanus cyanopterus</i>
Dog snapper	<i>Lutjanus jocu</i>
Schoolmaster	<i>Lutjanus apodus</i>
Mahogany snapper	<i>Lutjanus mahogoni</i>
Vermilion snapper	<i>Rhomboplites aurorubens</i>

Red snapper	<i>Lutjanus campechanus</i>
Silk snapper	<i>Lutjanus vivanus</i>
Blackfin snapper	<i>Lutjanus buccanella</i>
Black snapper	<i>Apsilus dentatus</i>

Porgies (Sparidae) - 9 species

Red porgy	<i>Pagrus pagrus</i>
*Sheepshead	<i>Archosargus probatocephalus</i>
Knobbed porgy	<i>Calamus nodosus</i>
Jolthead porgy	<i>Calamus bajonado</i>
Scup	<i>Stenotomus chrysops</i>
Whitebone porgy	<i>Calamus leucosteus</i>
Saucereye porgy	<i>Calamus calamus</i>
*Grass porgy	<i>Calamus arctifrons</i>
Longspine porgy	<i>Stenotomus caprinus</i>

Grunts (Haemulidae) - 11 species

White grunt	<i>Haemulon plumieri</i>
*Black margate	<i>Anistotremus surinamensis</i>
Margate	<i>Haemulon album</i>
Tomtate	<i>Haemulon aurolineatum</i>
Sailor's choice	<i>Haemulon parra</i>
*Porkfish	<i>Anistotremus virginicus</i>
*Bluestriped grunt	<i>Haemulon sciurus</i>
*French grunt	<i>Haemulon flavolineatum</i>
Cottonwick	<i>Haemulon melanurum</i>
*Spanish grunt	<i>Haemulon macrostomum</i>
*Smallmouth grunt	<i>Haemulon chrysargeryum</i>

Jacks (Carangidae) - 8 species

Greater amberjack	<i>Seriola dumerili</i>
*Crevalle jack	<i>Caranx hippos</i>
Blue runner	<i>Caranx crysos</i>
Almaco jack	<i>Seriola rivoliana</i>
Banded rudderfish	<i>Seriola zonanta</i>
Bar jack	<i>Caranx ruber</i>
Lesser amberjack	<i>Seriola fasciata</i>
*Yellow jack	<i>Caranx bartholomaei</i>

Tilefishes (Malacanthidae) - 3 species

Tilefish	<i>Lopholatilus chamaeleonticeps</i>
Blueline tilefish	<i>Caulolatilus microps</i>
Sand tilefish	<i>Malacanthus plumier</i>

Triggerfishes (Balistidae) - 3 species

Gray triggerfish	<i>Balistes capriscus</i>
Ocean triggerfish	<i>Canthidermis sufflamen</i>
*Queen triggerfish	<i>Balistes vetula</i>

Wrasses (Labridae) - 2 species

Hogfish	<i>Lachnolaimus maximus</i>
*Puddingwife	<i>Halichoeres radiates</i>

Spadefishes (Eppiphidae) - 1 species

Atlantic spadefish	<i>Chaetodipterus faber</i>
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COASTAL MIGRATORY PELAGICS

Cero	<i>Scomberomorus regalis</i>
Cobia	<i>Rachycentron canadum</i>
King mackerel	<i>Scomberomorus cavalla</i>
Little tunny	<i>Euthynnus alletteratus</i>
Spanish mackerel	<i>Scomberomorus maculatus</i>

DOLPHIN WAHOO

Dolphinfish	<i>Coryphaena hippurus</i>
Wahoo	<i>Acanthocybium solandri</i>

GOLDEN CRAB

Golden crab	<i>Chaceon fenneri</i>
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SHRIMP

White shrimp	<i>Litopenaeus setiferus</i>
Pink shrimp	<i>Farfantepenaeus duorarum</i>
Brown shrimp	<i>Farfantepenaeus aztecus</i>
Rock shrimp	<i>Sicyonia brevirostris</i>
Royal red shrimp	<i>Pleoticus robustus</i>

SPINY LOBSTER

Spiny lobster	<i>Panulirus argus</i>
Slipper lobster	<i>Scyllarides spp.</i>

SARGASSUM

<i>Sargassum fluitans</i>
<i>Sargassum natans</i>

CORAL, CORAL REEFS AND LIVE/HARD BOTTOM HABITAT

Coral belonging to the Class Hydrozoa (fire corals and hydrocorals). Coral belonging to the Class Anthozoa, Subclass Hexacorallia, Orders Scleractinia (stony corals) and Antipatharia (black corals). Seafans, Gorgonia flabellum or G. ventalina. Coral in a coral reef, except for allowable octocoral. Coral in an HAPC, including allowable octocoral. Live rock - living marine organisms, or an assemblage thereof, attached to a hard substrate, including dead coral or rock (excluding individual mollusk shells).

*** Denotes species that are subject to removal from the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit pending final approval of Comprehensive Annual Catch Limit Amendment (under Secretarial review).**

Appendix C. A Simplified Schematic of the Council Process.

