



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Trish Murphey, Chair | Jessica McCawley, Vice Chair
John Carmichael, Executive Director

AGENDA

Snapper Grouper Committee

Radisson Resort at the Port
8701 Astronaut Blvd.
Cape Canaveral, FL

Tuesday, June 10, 2025, 3:15 PM – 5:00 PM

- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of Minutes (March 2025)
- NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office (NOAA SERO) Updates (Exempted Fishing Permit applications, update on Secretarial Amendment and 2025 recreational red snapper season, amendments recently submitted)

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

1. Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) Proxies
 - a. Presentation (**Attachment 1a**) – Luiz Barbieri, Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission's (FWC) Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI)
 - b. Update – John Walter, Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC)
 - c. **Council Staff Summary** (**Attachment 1b**) – Judd Curtis
 - d. **Committee Action:** None.

Wednesday, June 11, 2025, 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM

8:30 am – 11:30 am

2. Black Sea Bass (Amendment 56)
 - a. Stock Risk Rating (**Attachment 2a**) – Judd Curtis
 - b. [SEDAR 76 Update](#) Assessment Presentation (**Attachment 2b**) – TBD, SEFSC
 - c. Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Recommendations (**SSC Report**) – Marcel Reichert, SSC Chair
 - d. Overview (**Attachment 2c**) – Mike Schmidtke

--- Break (10:00 am – 10:15 am) ---

- e. Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel (AP) Recommendations (**AP Report**)
- f. Overview (**Attachment 2c**) – Michael Schmidtke

- g. **Committee Actions:** Set the stock risk rating for use in applying the acceptable biological catch (ABC) control rule, review assessment information and SSC recommendations for catch levels, review AP recommendations for Amendment 56, and provide direction to staff on further development of Amendment 56.

11:30 am – 11:45 am

- 3. Commercial Sub-Committee Report and Amendment 60
 - a. Summary Report (**Attachment 3**) – Jessica McCawley, Sub-Committee Chair
 - b. **Committee Action:** Consider approval of Amendment 60 for scoping.

11:45 am – 12:00 pm

- 4. Golden Tilefish Assessment Update – Chip Collier
 - a. **Committee Action:** None.

NOTE: there is no attachment for this agenda item.

--- Lunch ---

Wednesday, June 11, 2025, 1:30 PM – 3:45 PM

- 5. Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit Revision
 - a. Overview (**Attachment 5**) – Michael Schmidtke
 - b. **Committee Action:** Provide direction to staff on any snapper grouper species that require further evaluation of whether they are in need of conservation and management and timeline of amendment development.

Thursday, June 12, 2025, 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM

8:30 am – 10:00 am

- 6. Yellowtail Snapper & Mutton Snapper (Amendment 44)
 - a. [SEDAR 96](#) and [SEDAR 79](#) Assessment Presentations (**Attachments 6a and 6b**) – Shanae Allen and Chris Swanson, FWC
 - b. SSC Recommendations (**SSC Report**) – Marcel Reichert, SSC Chair
 - c. **Committee Action:** Review assessment results and SSC recommendations, direct staff to resume work on joint amendment.

--- Break (10:00 am – 10:15 am) ---

10:15 am – 12:00 pm

- 7. Private Recreational Permit & Education Requirement (Amendment 46) (10:15 am – 12:00 pm)
 - a. Presentation (**Attachment 7a**) – SEFSC and NOAA Fisheries Office of Science and Technology (OST)
 - b. Overview (**Attachments 7b and 7c**) – John Hadley
 - c. **Committee Action:** Consider approval for public hearings.

--- Lunch ---

Thursday, June 12, 2025, 1:30 PM – 3:00 PM

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

8. Atlantic Blueline Tilefish
 - a. [SEDAR 92](#) Assessment Presentation (**Attachment 8**) – SEFSC
 - b. SSC Recommendations (**SSC Report**) – Marcel Reichert, SSC Chair
 - c. Fishery Overview
 - d. **Committee Action:** Review assessment results and consider initiation of an amendment responding to the results and SSC recommendations.

2:30 pm – 2:40 pm

9. AP Report for topics not covered on the agenda (**AP Report**) – Chris Kimrey, Acting AP Chair

2:40 pm – 2:50 pm

10. Management Strategy Evaluation Update – Chip Collier

2:50 pm – 3:00 pm

11. Other Business

Adjourn

Committee Members:

Jessica McCawley, Chair
Kerry Marhefka, Vice Chair
Robert Beal
Carolyn Belcher
Gary Borland
Amy Dukes
Tim Griner
Judy Helmey
Jimmy Hull
Trish Murphey
Lt. Tom Pease
Charlie Phillips
Tom Roller
Robert Spottswood, Jr.
Andy Strelcheck

Attachments:

SSC Reports: SSC Meetings April 2025 and May 2025 (*available by June 4*)

AP Report: Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel Meeting April 2025

Attachment 1a: FWRI MSY Proxy Presentation

Attachment 1b: Summary of MSY Proxy Applications to South Atlantic Species (*available by June 4*)

Attachment 2a: Black Sea Bass Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) Control Rule Stock Risk Rating Decision Document

Attachment 2b: SEDAR 76 (Black Sea Bass) Update Presentation (*available by June 4*)

Attachment 2c: Amendment 56 (Black Sea Bass) Decision Document

Attachment 3: Commercial Sub-Committee Report (*available at the meeting*)

Attachment 5: Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit Decision Document

Attachment 6a: SEDAR 96 (Yellowtail Snapper) Presentation (*available by June 4*)

Attachment 6b: SEDAR 79 (Mutton Snapper) Presentation

Attachment 7a: NOAA Fisheries SEFSC and OST Presentation (*available by June 4*)

Attachment 7b: Amendment 46 (Private Recreational Permitting and Education Requirement) Decision Document

Attachment 7c: Amendment 46 (Private Recreational Permitting and Education Requirement) Draft Amendment

Attachment 8: SEDAR 92 (Blueline Tilefish) Presentation (*available by June 4*)

Staff Lead: Michael Schmidtke (mike.schmidtke@safmc.net)

OVERVIEW

Snapper Grouper Committee

The Committee will approve the minutes from the March 2025 meeting and the agenda for the June 2025 Committee meeting.

1. Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) Proxies (*Attachments 1a and 1b*)

Description: Technical guidance for recent stock assessments of South Atlantic snapper grouper species (e.g. scamp/yellowmouth grouper and black sea bass) has recommended changes to the spawning potential ratio (SPR) proxies for maximum sustainable yield (MSY) based on the most recent scientific information. MSY proxies are used for setting status determination criteria and are set by the Council through amendments to the fishery management plan (FMP). The Council has requested presentations explaining the scientific advice that indicates these changes are necessary and which species' MSY proxies should be changed following this advice. Florida FWC will present their perspective on SPR-based proxies for state and federally-managed species. NOAA SEFSC will update the Council on MSY proxies and their use in management. Council staff will provide a summary of MSY and SPR-based benchmarks from the stock assessments for Council-managed species.

Committee Action: None.

2. Black Sea Bass (Amendment 56) (*Attachments 2a-2c*)

Description: SEDAR 76 included data through 2021 and indicated that the black sea bass stock in the South Atlantic is at very low levels in recent years. In June 2023, the Council reviewed the [Fishery Overview](#) and initiated Amendment 56 to respond to the SEDAR 76 assessment results. Scoping was conducted from January 22 – February 6, 2025.

The SEFSC recently completed an update to the SEDAR 76 stock assessment, which included more recent years and additional modeling adjustments. To develop future catch levels using the ABC Control Rule, the Council will determine the stock risk rating for black sea bass, considering input from the SSC and AP. The [SEDAR 76 update](#) was reviewed by the SSC at their April and May 2025 meetings. SEFSC staff will present the stock assessment update results and the SSC will provide recommendations on how assessment information should be used in management.

The AP discussed management measures considered in Amendment 56 during their April 2025 meeting. Staff will present the AP's comments, as well as an overview of the amendment development progress and timeline.

Committee Action: Review the assessment update and AP comments. Provide direction to staff on actions and alternatives that should be included in the draft amendment and review the timeline for amendment development.

3. Commercial Sub-Committee Report and Amendment 60 (*Attachment 3*)

Description: In June 2024, the Council formed the Snapper Grouper Commercial Sub-Committee (Sub-Committee) and tasked it with reviewing the Snapper Grouper Vision Blueprint and developing a list of commercial management topics that require further consideration. In March 2024, the Council initiated Amendment 60 to consider changes to

commercial permit policies and management measures that would improve commercial trip efficiency. The Sub-Committee will meet on June 9, ahead of the Snapper Grouper Committee meeting. A summary report will be developed following the meeting, and the Sub-Committee Chair will present this report and recommendations.

Committee Action: Review the Sub-Committee meeting report and consider approval of Amendment 60 for scoping.

4. Golden Tilefish Assessment Update (*No attachment*)

Description: In March 2025, the Council directed staff to develop an abbreviated framework amendment that would consider revising catch levels for South Atlantic golden tilefish in response to the results of the [SEDAR 89](#) stock assessment, which indicated that the stock is not overfished and not experiencing overfishing. During preparation of the amendment for analysis and further discussion, Council staff identified some discrepancies between data sources. Work on the framework amendment paused upon identification of this issue, and Council staff are working with SERO, SEFSC, and data providers to identify the source and resolve the issue. Council staff will update the Council on these discussions.

Committee Action: None.

5. Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit Revision (*Attachment 5*)

Description: In March 2025, the Council directed staff to compile information on several species in the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit (FMU) to evaluate whether they continue to require conservation and federal management. Staff will use an online survey that includes federal guidelines to facilitate a discussion of whether an amendment should be developed to change the conservation and management status of these species in the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan. Council members will be emailed ahead of the meeting with a link and instructions on how to complete the survey.

Committee Action: Evaluate whether the presented species are in need of conservation and management. Direct staff on whether to begin development of an amendment to change the management status of any of these species.

6. Yellowtail Snapper & Mutton Snapper (Amendment 44) (*Attachments 6a and 6b*)

Description: The Council reviewed the results of the SEDAR 68 Interim Analysis for yellowtail snapper in September 2022. The resulting amendment aimed to modify catch levels, the Gulf and South Atlantic jurisdictional allocation, and any South Atlantic management measure modifications for yellowtail snapper. During the September 2023 meeting the South Atlantic Council directed staff to ask the South Atlantic SSC to consider withdrawing the yellowtail snapper stock ABC and prioritize a new assessment for the stock in light of the MRIP-FES pilot study and Florida Reef Fish Survey. Because this is a joint amendment, the South Atlantic Council communicated with the Gulf Council and work was paused on both Snapper Grouper Amendment 44 and Reef Fish Amendment 55 until the new stock assessment was completed. At their December 2024 meeting the South Atlantic Council discussed the logistics of starting work on this amendment again and approved a approach to complete a joint SAFMC/Gulf Council amendment to establish the OFL and ABC for the single stock of mutton snapper and single stock of yellowtail snapper, and review jurisdictional allocations for both species and modify, if necessary. The Gulf Council would be the administrative lead for this amendment. The South Atlantic would then complete a follow-up amendment to the South Atlantic Snapper Grouper FMP to establish

the South Atlantic total ACLs for mutton and yellowtail snapper, establish the South Atlantic sector allocations and sector ACLs for each stock, and introduce any management and accountability measures to manage the fisheries. At this meeting the South Atlantic Council will review the results of SEDAR 96 (yellowtail snapper) and SEDAR 79 (mutton snapper), and the SSC's catch level recommendations and will have the ability to direct staff to resume work on the amendment with the changes noted.

Committee Action: Review assessment results and SSC recommendations, direct staff to resume work on the joint amendment.

7. Private Recreational Permit & Education Requirement (Amendment 46) (*Attachments 7a-7c*)

Description: Amendment 46 considers establishing a private recreational permit and education requirement for the South Atlantic snapper grouper fishery. Over multiple meetings, the Council has received input and technical guidance from the Private Recreational Reporting Working Group, Joint Council Workgroup on Section 102 of the Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Management Act, and several advisory panels (APs).

At the March 2024 meeting, the Committee further developed Amendment 46, directing staff to prepare the amendment for approval for public hearings. At the June 2024 meeting, the Committee will be provided with summary effects, AP and IPT comments, and asked to confirm or choose preferred alternatives for all actions.

Committee Action: Consider confirming or choosing preferred alternatives and approving the amendment for public hearings.

8. Atlantic Blueline Tilefish (*Attachment 8*)

Description: [SEDAR 92](#) included data through 2023 and indicated that the Atlantic blueline tilefish stock is not overfished or experiencing overfishing south of Cape Hatteras, NC. North of Cape Hatteras, data to estimate status were unavailable, but data-limited methods were applied to estimate sustainable catch levels. SEFSC staff will deliver a presentation on the assessment results to the Committee. In April 2025, the SSC began its review of the stock assessment. The SSC is expected to complete their review and develop acceptable biological catch recommendations in their May 2025 meeting. The SSC Chair will deliver the SSC's recommendations. In addition, Council staff will provide a [Fishery Overview](#) of available blueline tilefish landings and other pertinent data.

Committee Action: Review assessment results and consider initiation of an amendment responding to the results and SSC recommendations.

9. AP Report for topics not covered on the agenda (*AP Report*)

Description: The Snapper Grouper AP met on April 2-3, 2025, and discussed additional topics pertaining to the snapper grouper fishery. The AP Chair will deliver the Snapper Grouper AP's recommendations to the Committee on items not covered on the Committee's agenda.

Committee Action: None.

10. Management Strategy Evaluation Update (*No attachment*)

Description: The Council has funding to continue working on the Council's management strategy evaluation for the snapper grouper fishery. A request for proposals seeking a contractor to further develop the SAFMC-MSE package closed on April 30, 2025. Council

staff will update the Committee on the continuation of the recreational snapper grouper management strategy evaluation.

Committee Action: None.

11. Other Business