

Catch Share Programs Under
Consideration by the South Atlantic
Fishery Management Council

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Snapper Grouper Catch Share Program

- March 2007 – Council forms SG LAP Exploratory Workgroup – 12 voting members (11 from fishing industry), 5 non-voting members (Sea Grant and NMFS staff)
- April 2007 – Workgroup meets for the first of eight meetings
- March 2008
 - Workgroup delivers a report to the Council outlining goals, objectives, and the design for a catch share program
 - The report includes survey results indicating that 55% (6 people) agreed with the statement that they saw “a strong potential in adopting a LAP program for the snapper grouper fishery, provided it is enforced, there is money to pay for it, and that there are tangible economic and conservation benefits resulting from it”. Two people (18%) disagreed with this statement and 3 people (27%) were undecided.
 - The Council decides to not pursue a LAP amendment at that time due to lack of sufficient support

Snapper Grouper Catch Share Program

- Sept 2009
 - Two commercial fishermen present a sign on letter and survey requesting a catch share for snapper grouper
 - One commercial fishermen presents a sign-on letter in favor of trip limits
 - The Council motions that a catch share amendment be created for snapper grouper that compares catch shares and trip limits. Staff to work on the amendment as time allows with wreckfish being a higher priority.
- Outreach
 - 1) DVD with presentations on LAPs and upcoming amendments implementing ACLs distributed to all permit owners; 2) Information on LAPs distributed on SAFMC website and by the SG LAP Workgroup Outreach Team via Sea Grant; 3) Initial allocation models presented by Council staff and NMFS staff.

Golden Tilefish Catch Share Program

- March 2008 – The Council directs staff to find people interested in serving on a Golden Tilefish LAP Exploratory Workgroup and assess interest in a golden tilefish LAP.
- June 2008
 - Staff reports that an informal survey indicates that 62% of golden tilefish fishermen landing over 500 pounds annually are in favor of a catch share, 21% against, and 15% want a LAP only with a new stock assessment. Those in favor want an end to race to fish.
 - Workgroup members (all commercial industry) are chosen

Golden Tilefish Catch Share Program

- Oct 2008 - GT LAP Workgroup meets and produces a report outlining an endorsement and a LAP program. They prefer an endorsement now and a LAP when a new stock assessment is complete. They are not sure that a LAP can work economically without a TAC equal to 331,000 (current level) or a little higher.
- Dec 2008 – The Council receives the tilefish report and begins analysis of a golden tilefish catch share program in Amendment 18 which is still under development.
- Nov 2009 – Public hearings for Amd 18 are held.

Golden Crab Catch Share Program

- Jan 2009 – Council staff meets with golden crabbers at their request, all permit holders invited
- March 2009 – Golden Crab fishermen present the Council with a letter stating their interest in a golden crab catch share program. They fear new entrants (buying of latent permits) that will endanger coral habitat and put fishery at risk. They want increased stewardship of the resource.
- June 2009 – The Council tasks the Golden Crab AP with designing a draft catch share program. Staff is tasked with drafting Amd 5 which has a golden crab ACL action and a catch share program action.
- August 2009 – AP meets to complete a draft report outlining a catch share program.
- Sept 2009 – Report is delivered to the Council.

Revision of the Wreckfish IFQ

- March 2009 – Staff begins drafting Amendment 20 to consider changes to the wreckfish ITQ. Amd 20 given priority over other catch share program amendments.
- Sept 2009 – Informal survey of wreckfish shareholders completed.
- Dec 2009 – Review of wreckfish program completed and presented to the Council.
- March 2010
 - Options paper to be presented to the Council for review on Thursday.
 - Shareholder meeting scheduled to review Amd 20 at the end of March.

Purpose of this Meeting

Provide a forum where Council members can focus on a discussion of the direction the Council is taking toward catch shares

- 1) Address some pressing questions the Council has received from the fishermen
- 2) Provide an opportunity to identify a timeline for the Snapper Grouper and other catch share amendments as staff get closer to being able to complete drafts of these amendments
- 3) Suggest any specific details of catch share programs they would like to see analyzed