



## SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Jessica McCawley, Chair | Mel Bell, Vice Chair  
Gregg T. Waugh, Executive Director

July 16, 2019  
LN# 201945

Mr. Chris Oliver  
Assistant Administrator NOAA Fisheries  
1315 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Mr. Oliver:

The Fisheries Allocation Review Policy (NMFS Policy Directive 01-119) and the associated Procedural Directive on allocation review triggers (NMFS Procedural Directive 01-119-01) established the responsibility for the Regional Fishery Management Councils to set allocation review triggers and consider three types of trigger criteria: indicator, public interest, and time. Councils were directed to establish triggers for consideration of allocation reviews by August 2019.

The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) has reviewed species allocations on numerous occasions in the past. However, these reviews may not have been formally documented in a fishery management plan amendment if a decision was made not to modify sector allocations. This new policy will ensure all species currently having sector allocations will be reviewed on a regular basis and will formalize the allocation review process so the Council's consideration of allocations will be documented.

The Council reviewed their current sector allocations, and began discussions on the Policy and Procedural Directives and criteria for considering fishery allocation reviews at their December 2018 meeting. At their June 2019 meeting, the Council adopted two types of criteria for triggering consideration of an allocation review: indicator and time.

The Council chose several indicator-based criteria as triggers:

- Either sector exceeds its ACL or closes prior to the end of its fishing year three out of five consecutive years,
- Either sector under harvests its ACL or OY by at least 50% three out of five consecutive years,
- After a stock assessment is approved by the SSC and presented to the Council, and
- After the Council reviews a species Fishery Performance Report.

The Council chose a time-based trigger to ensure allocation reviews are regularly considered. Each species will have its sector allocations reviewed not less than every seven years. **Table 1** shows by species when the next sector allocation review will be considered by the Council

should an indicator-based criterion not be triggered. Regardless of whether consideration of an allocation review is triggered by an indicator or time criterion, once it occurs the next one will automatically be scheduled for consideration seven years later. For species which are jointly managed with the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, the timing for consideration of allocation reviews was coordinated with that council.

A public interest-based criterion was not selected because the Council currently receives substantial and regular comment from the public through scoping and public hearing sessions, general public comment periods held at every Council meeting, the public comment form on the Council's website, and through other more informal channels. Thus, the Council decided the existing Council process provides sufficient opportunity for public input on allocation.

The Council will publish the criteria for triggering consideration of an allocation review on its website and looks forward to working with the Southeast Regional Office and Science Center staff on future allocation reviews.

Sincerely,



Jessica McCawley  
Chair

cc: Council Members and Staff  
Executive Directors  
Sam Rauch and Alan Risenhoover, NMFS HQ  
Monica Smit-Brunello, NOAA GC  
John McGovern and Rick DeVictor, NMFS SERO  
Clay Porch, Theo Brainerd, and Erik Williams, NMFS SEFSC

**Table 1.** Time-based indicator of next year for allocation reviews by species.

<b>Assessed Species</b>	<b>Review Year</b>
Black grouper	2026
Black sea bass	2023
Blueline Tilefish	2020
Gag	2022
Golden tilefish	2021
Gray Triggerfish	2023
Greater amberjack	2021
GA-NC Hogfish	2023
FLK/EFL Hogfish	2023
Mutton Snapper	2023
Red grouper	2023
Red porgy	2021
Red snapper	2024
Snowy grouper	2021
Vermilion snapper	2021
Wreckfish	2019
Yellowtail Snapper	2021
Atlantic Group King Mackerel	2021
Atlantic Group Spanish Mackerel	2022
Gulf Group Cobia-FL East Coast Zone	2021
<b>Unassessed Species</b>	
Atlantic Spadefish	2022
Bar Jack	2022
Scamp	2022
Speckled hind*	*
Warsaw grouper*	*
<b>Deepwater Complex</b>	
Yellowedge Grouper	2024
Silk Snapper	2024
Misty Grouper	2024
Sand Tilefish	2024
Queen Snapper	2024

	Review Year
Blackfin Snapper	2024
<b>Jacks Complex</b>	
Almaco Jack	2025
Banded Rudderfish	2025
Lesser Amberjack	2025
<b>Snappers Complex</b>	
Gray Snapper	2025
Lane Snapper	2025
Cubera Snapper	2025
<b>Grunts Complex</b>	
White Grunt	2024
Sailor's Choice	2024
Tomtate	2024
Margate	2024
<b>Shallow-Water Groupers Complex</b>	
Red Hind	2026
Rock Hind	2026
Yellowmouth Grouper	2026
Yellowfin Grouper	2026
Coney	2026
Graysby	2026
<b>Porgy Complex</b>	
Jolthead Porgy	2027
Knobbed Porgy	2027
Saucereye Porgy	2027
Scup	2027
Whitebone Porgy	2027
<b>Dolphin/Wahoo</b>	
Dolphin	2019
Wahoo	2019

\*ACL=0 for this species. If ACL>0 in the future, allocations will be reviewed when the ACL is increased.