

**SUMMARY REPORT  
DOLPHIN WAHOO COMMITTEE  
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL  
Webinar  
June 16-17, 2021**

The Committee approved amended minutes from the March 2021 meeting and the agenda.

**Status of Amendments under Formal Review**

The Committee was updated on the status of Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 12 that adds bullet mackerel and frigate mackerel to the Dolphin Wahoo Fishery Management Plan and designates them as Ecosystem Component species. The final rule for this amendment was published on May 10, 2021 and went into effect June 9, 2021.

**Revise Dolphin and Wahoo Management Measures: Amendment 10**

Amendment 10 includes actions that accommodate updated catch level recommendations and recreational data from the Marine Recreational Information Program and revise the annual catch limits and sector allocations for dolphin and wahoo accordingly. The amendment also contains actions that implement various other management changes in the fishery including revising recreational accountability measures, accommodating possession of dolphin and wahoo on vessels with trap, pot, or buoy gear onboard, removing the operator card requirement, reducing the recreational vessel limit for dolphin, and reducing the recreational bag limit or implementing a recreational vessel limit for wahoo.

The Committee discussed the amendment, reviewed the effects analyses, and made the following motions:

**MOTION #1: DESELECT ALTERNATIVE 4 AND SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS PREFERRED IN ACTION 4.**

**Action 4. Revise sector allocations and sector annual catch limits for wahoo**

**Preferred Alternative 3.** Allocate 97.55% of the revised total annual catch limit for wahoo to the recreational sector. Allocate 2.45% of the revised total annual catch limit for wahoo to the commercial sector. This is based on approximately maintaining the current commercial annual catch limit and allocating the remaining revised total annual catch limit to the recreational sector.

**Preferred Alternative 4.** Allocate 97.00% of the revised total annual catch limit for wahoo to the recreational sector. Allocate 3.00% of the revised total annual catch limit for wahoo to the commercial sector. This is based on the Council's intent to explore alternatives for sector allocations that would not result in a decrease in the current pounds of wahoo available to either sector.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION #2: DESELECT SUB-ALTERNATIVE 2D AND SELECT SUB-ALTERNATIVE 2E AS PREFERRED IN ACTION 11.**

**Action 11. Reduce the recreational vessel limit for dolphin**

Note: **Alternative 1 (No Action)**, **Alternative 2** and **Alternative 3** (including their respective sub-alternatives) do not apply to headboats. The current limit of 10 dolphin per paying passenger onboard a headboat will not change under this action and its alternatives.

**Preferred Alternative 2.** The recreational daily bag limit is 10 dolphin per person, not to exceed:

~~Preferred~~ **Sub-alternative 2d.** 48 dolphin per vessel, whichever is less.

~~Preferred~~ **Sub-alternative 2e.** 54 dolphin per vessel, whichever is less.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION #3:** DESELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AND SELECT ALTERNATIVE 1 AS PREFERRED IN ACTION 12.

**Action 12. Reduce the recreational bag limit and establish a recreational vessel limit for wahoo**

**Preferred Alternative 1 (No Action).** The recreational daily bag limit is 2 wahoo per person. There is no recreational vessel limit for wahoo.

~~Preferred~~ **Alternative 2.** The recreational daily bag limit is 1 wahoo per person.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION #4:** MOVE ACTION 12 TO THE CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED SECTION.

~~**Action 12. Reduce the recreational bag limit and establish a recreational vessel limit for wahoo**~~

~~**Alternative 1 (No Action).** The recreational daily bag limit is 2 wahoo per person. There is no recreational vessel limit for wahoo.~~

~~**Preferred Alternative 2.** The recreational daily bag limit is 1 wahoo per person.~~

~~**Alternative 3.** The recreational vessel limit is:~~

~~**Sub-alternative 3a.** 2 wahoo per vessel.~~

~~**Sub-alternative 3b.** 3 wahoo per vessel.~~

~~**Sub-alternative 3c.** 4 wahoo per vessel.~~

~~**Sub-alternative 3d.** 5 wahoo per vessel.~~

~~**Sub-alternative 3e.** 6 wahoo per vessel.~~

~~**Sub-alternative 3f.** 7 wahoo per vessel.~~

~~**Sub-alternative 3g.** 8 wahoo per vessel.~~

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION #5:** APPROVE THE IPT'S SUGGESTED EDITS TO THE PURPOSE STATEMENT IN AMENDMENT 10.

The *purpose* of Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10 is to revise the catch levels [acceptable biological catch (ABC) and annual catch limits (ACL)], sector allocations, accountability measures, and management measures for dolphin and wahoo. Management measures address authorized gear, and the operator card requirement in the dolphin and wahoo fisheries, as well as and the recreational bag-vessel limits in the dolphin fishery and wahoo fisheries, as well as allowing fillets at sea onboard for hire vessels in the dolphin fishery.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**MOTION #6:** APPROVE AMENDMENT 10 TO THE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE DOLPHIN AND WAHOO FISHERY OF THE ATLANTIC FOR FORMAL SECRETARIAL REVIEW AND DEEM THE CODIFIED TEXT AS NECESSARY AND APPROPRIATE. GIVE STAFF EDITORIAL LICENSE TO MAKE ANY NECESSARY EDITORIAL CHANGES TO THE DOCUMENT/CODIFIED TEXT AND GIVE THE COUNCIL CHAIR AUTHORITY TO APPROVE THE REVISIONS AND RE-DEEM THE CODIFIED TEXT.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

**Project plan for future Dolphin Wahoo Fishery Management Plan amendments**

During the discussion of Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10 at the March 2021, the Committee requested information on the potential development of “a framework action or other appropriate action to consider making the minimum size requirements currently in place for FL, GA, and SC apply throughout the management zone for dolphin” and “a framework or other appropriate action to consider exempting the charter fleet from the dolphin and wahoo vessel limits.” Additionally, in the timing and tasks motion for the Dolphin Wahoo Committee, the Council directed staff to also prepare information “regarding the use of pelagic longline gear in the Dolphin Wahoo fishery.” This topic was previously removed from Amendment 10 at the Council’s request during the June 2020 meeting, with the direction to address it at a later date through a separate amendment.

The Committee discussed the timing of potential upcoming amendments to the Dolphin Wahoo FMP and provided the following direction to staff. The timing of the amendments was specified by the Executive Committee.

*DIRECTION TO STAFF:*

- 1) IN THE NEAR-TERM, DEVELOP AN AMENDMENT THAT WOULD CONSIDER RETENTION AND SIZE LIMIT TOPICS:
  - INCLUDE A DIFFERENT RETENTION LIMIT BETWEEN CHARTER AND PRIVATE VESSELS FOR BOTH DOLPHIN AND WAHOO.
  - CONSIDER REMOVING OR REDUCING CAPTAIN AND CREW BAG LIMITS.
  - EXPLORE EXTENDING THE RANGE OF THE MINIMUM SIZE LIMIT FOR DOLPHIN.
  
- 2) EXAMINE CHANGES TO THE PELAGIC LONGLINE FISHERY AFTER THE UPDATED BIOLOGICAL OPINION FOR THE DOLPHIN WAHOO FISHERY IS AVAILABLE.
  
- 3) OTHER POTENTIAL FUTURE AMENDMENT TOPICS FOR CONSIDERATION:
  - REGIONAL MANAGEMENT ACTIONS
    - EXAMPLE: ESTABLISH REGIONAL ACLS.

- REMOVE THE OPEN ACCESS NATURE OF THE COMMERCIAL DOLPHIN WAHOO PERMIT.
- DISCUSS RE-ESTABLISHING FOR-HIRE BAG LIMIT SALES.

**Other Business**

There were no items discussed under other business.

**Timing and Tasks**

**MOTION #7:** APPROVE THE FOLLOWING TIMING AND TASKS:

- 1) PREPARE AMENDMENT 10 FOR SUBMISSION.
- 2) PREPARE INFORMATION ON AN AMENDMENT THAT WOULD ADDRESS THE IDENTIFIED RETENTION AND SIZE LIMIT TOPICS FOR REVIEW AT THE SEPTEMBER 2021 MEETING.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL