



CE-BA 3
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
December 2011

Draft List of
Measures for Consideration

General Timing for this Amendment:

1. Approval for public scoping – December 2011
2. Public scoping – January/February 2012
3. Assemble IPT, review scoping comments, provide guidance to staff – March 2012
4. Individual Council species Committees develop actions and alternatives – March/June 2012
5. Council reviews actions, selects preferred alternatives, approves for public hearings – June 2012
6. Public Hearings – July/August 2012
7. Council reviews public hearing comments and approves for formal review – September/December 2012

Measures for Consideration:

1. Expansion of Coral HAPCs
 - Oculina Bank
 - Stetson-Miami Terrace
 - Cape Lookout
2. Powerhead Prohibition off NC
3. Commercial Wreckfish Fishery Impacts on Bottom Habitat; and Recreational Deep-Drop Fisheries' Impacts on Bottom Habitat
4. Speckled Hind and Warsaw Grouper Protections
5. Designation of Snapper Ledge (within FL Keys National Marine Sanctuary) as a Sanctuary Preservation Area
6. Others???

Measure 1

Expansion of Coral Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPCs) designated in CE-BA 1 and earlier

CHAPC expansion recommendations are based upon research conducted under NOAA's Deep Sea Coral Research and Technology Program's focused efforts in South Atlantic 2009-2011. CHAPC expansion measures are a recommendation of the Coral Advisory Panel.

- **Expansion of Oculina Bank**

Coral AP Recommendation:

Recommend that the northern boundaries of the present Oculina HAPC in areas off Oculina-Daytona, FL be modified based on information and research that has identified new areas of

deep-water coral resources. John Reed to provide a proposed boundary revision map prior to the December Council meeting that will be a recommendation based on NOAA Bathymetric charts indicating probable extent of mounds which were ground-truthed and mapped in part during the 2011 Pisces cruise (<http://cioert.org/xcorals2011>).

- **Stetson-Miami Terrace, *Lophelia* site off Jacksonville**

Coral AP Recommendation:

Recommend that the boundaries of the present Stetson-Miami Terrace CHAPC in areas off Jacksonville, FL, be modified based on information and research that has identified new areas of deep-water coral resources. Specific areas of CHAPC boundary modification recommended include following *Lophelia* areas off Jacksonville, FL:

Area west of the existing Stetson-Miami CHAPC bounded approximating by the 200 m depth contour between lat 30°45.0' to the north and Lat. 29°52.0' to the south.

- **Cape Lookout**

Coral AP Recommendation:

Recommend that the boundaries of the present Cape Lookout CHAPCs be modified based on information and research that has identified new areas of deep-water coral resources. Specific areas recommended include extension of the northern Cape Lookout CHAPC boundary to encompass area identified by the following coordinates:

<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
34°24.6166'	75°45.1833'
34°23.4833'	75°43.9667'
34°27.9'	75°42.75'
34°27.0'	75°41.5'

Measure 2

Powerhead prohibition off NC

The NC Commission has requested the Council (via March 2011 letter) consider taking action to prohibit the use of bangsticks in the EEZ off NC in response to concerns of localized depletion of larger SG species. NC DMF has developed an Issues Paper about the situation that was distributed to the Council in January 2011.

SG AP Input:

During their October meeting, the SG AP engaged in discussion over powerheads and whether this gear type should continue to be allowed in the snapper grouper fishery. Several AP members stated that the use of powerheads is not highly regarded by the public. The AP discussed possibly using a different size limit or a slot limit especially for fish harvested with powerhead gear since this type of gear is more selective. The AP also discussed the difference in the quality of the product when using a powerhead versus hook and line gear: powerheads deliver a higher quality product and there is currently a market for fish harvested with powerheads specifically. AP members also suggested that the Council consider some type of spearfishing endorsement that would include a test of sorts (e.g., species identification, rules). This would not be a powerhead endorsement, but a general spearfishing endorsement. The rationale is that release of undersized fish or protected species is not an option as it is with hook

and line, so a diver needs to be sure of his target and know the rules (size limits, closed seasons, etc.) before he attempts to take any fish.

Measure 3

Commercial wreckfish fishery impacts on bottom habitat

Issue surfaced in Comprehensive Ecosystem Amendment 1 regarding whether gear impacts from the commercial wreckfish fishery jeopardize integrity of deepwater coral habitat. Council chose to address this issue in future plan amendment because it was unknown at the time if harvest techniques have impacts on bottom habitat in South Atlantic region. Currently, this is a gear type allowed within the CHAPCs.

Recreational deep-drop fishery impacts on bottom habitat

Hook and line fishing commonly referred to as deep drop fishing is conducted by recreational anglers targeting species such as snowy grouper, yellowedge grouper, warsaw grouper, queen snapper, blueline tilefish, golden tilefish, blackbelly rosefish, and other species in depths of 500 to 1,200 feet. Deep drop fishing is done primarily with an electric fishing reel. Weights used range from 3 pounds to 6 pounds or more depending on the current and depth. In contrast to the wreckfish fishery, where fishermen attempt to maintain a constant position of the bottom, fishermen in the deep drop fishery typically drift to catch snapper grouper species. Currently, most fishing likely occurs inshore of the CHAPCs. Council has discussed addressing in a future plan amendment whether recreational deep-drop fisheries incur bottom habitat damage through gear impacts.

Measure 4

Protections for mid-shelf fishery species undergoing overfishing, Speckled Hind and Warsaw Grouper

Through the analysis of Regulatory Amendment 11 and finding that the 240' closure established in SG Amendment 17B is no longer necessary, a potential measure for CE-BA 3 includes development of additional protections for two mid-shelf species undergoing overfishing – speckled hind and Warsaw grouper.

Measure 5

Designation of Snapper Ledge (federal waters) within Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary as a Sanctuary Preservation Area

The Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council passed a resolution at their August 2011 meeting supporting designation of Snapper Ledge as a Sanctuary Preservation Area. The area under consideration is a rectangle approximately 0.6 nautical miles long by 0.4 nautical miles wide and will include the unique concentrated fish populated ledge and gully area and the hard bottom section currently being used as a coral transplantation research and re-population study site.

The area is identified by the following bounding coordinates:

<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
24.982537	-80.422863
24.974871	-80.433154
24.972865	-80.430384
24.979988	-80.420789

Other Measures?