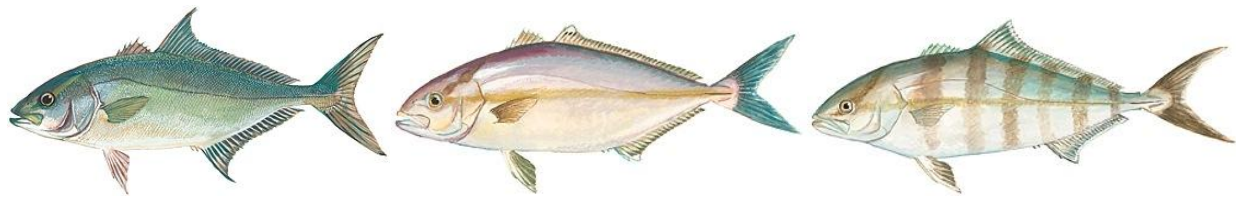


## **Allocation Review Report for the Jacks Complex (Almaco Jack, Lesser Amberjack, and Banded Rudderfish)**



### **South Atlantic Fishery Management Council December 2024**

#### **Introduction**

At the December 2023 meeting, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) approved their [Allocation Review Guidelines](#) (guidelines) and updated their [Allocation Review Trigger Policy](#) (policy). The guidelines specify how the Council's sector allocations will be reviewed and documented while the policy specifies when allocations reviews will occur. One of the criteria that the Council chose to trigger an allocation review is time-based, noting that each species will have its sector allocations reviewed at least once every seven years.

Sector allocations for the Jacks Complex met the Council's time-based trigger policy and were discussed at the September 2024 meeting. These allocations were last reviewed by the Council through Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 13, which became effective July 17, 2013. In accordance with the Council's guidelines, the Council was presented with the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan (FMP) Goals and Objectives, the current sector allocations and rationale for those allocations, and the landings and annual catch limit (ACL) usage by sector for the most recent 5-years of available data. There is no Fishery Performance Report available for these species but additional information on the total ACL, retention regulations, accountability measures, and recent harvest closures for the Jacks Complex were also provided as background information for the Council. The information provided to the Council is included for reference in the appendix.

#### **Council's comments and decision on current sector allocations for the Jacks Complex**

Generally, the Council noted that the existing sector allocations for the Jacks Complex are sufficient in relation to the current fishery. The Council observed that harvest is variable and both sectors have harvested their respective sector ACL in some years; however, neither sector has been constrained by its sector allocation in recent years. Almaco Jack were noted as particularly important for both sectors and the Council expressed that it would continue monitoring landings before re-examining allocations. The Council felt that it was not the appropriate time for reallocation of the total ACL with upcoming expected updates to catch level recommendations and that there was no immediate need to reallocate. Thus, Goal 2 (Management) of the Snapper Grouper FMP is adequately addressed under the existing allocations.

The Council did note that sector allocations should be re-examined when annual catch limits are revised and catch estimates from the Marine Recreational Information Program Fishing Effort

Survey are integrated into the catch level recommendations. The Council also noted that accountability measures should be examined at this time. In the meantime, the Council would like the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel to complete a Fishery Performance Report for the Jacks Complex before revised catch level recommendations are developed.

## Appendix. Information provided to the Council for reviewing sector allocations of the Jacks Complex

**Table 1.** Goals and objectives of the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region.

<b>Goal 1 (Science):</b> Management decisions for the snapper grouper fishery are based upon robust, defensible science that considers qualitative and quantitative data analyzed in a timely, clear, and transparent manner that builds stakeholder confidence.	
<i>Objective 1</i>	Promote collection of quality data to support management plans and programs considered by the Council.
<i>Objective 2</i>	Encourage development of mechanisms to effectively engage and collaborate with stakeholders on cooperative research, data collection and analysis.
<i>Objective 3</i>	Improve knowledge about the social and economic elements of the snapper grouper fishery in the South Atlantic.
<i>Objective 4</i>	Support improved and expanded monitoring and reporting programs for the snapper grouper fishery.
<i>Objective 5</i>	Promote data collection and analysis to support ecosystem and habitat considerations for the snapper grouper fishery.
<b>Goal 2 (Management):</b> Adopt management strategies for the snapper grouper fishery that rebuild and maintain fishery resources, adapt to regional differences in the fishery, and consider the social and economic needs of fishing communities.	
<i>Objective 1</i>	Develop management measures that consider sub-regional differences and issues within the fishery.
<i>Objective 2</i>	Develop innovative management measures that allow consistent access to the fishery for all sectors.
<i>Objective 3</i>	Ensure that management decisions help maximize social and economic opportunity for all sectors.
<i>Objective 4</i>	Develop management measures that reduce and mitigate discards.
<i>Objective 5</i>	Support management measures that incorporate ecosystem and habitat considerations for the snapper grouper fishery.
<i>Objective 6</i>	Develop management measures that support optimal sector allocations for the snapper grouper fishery.
<b>Goal 3 (Communication):</b> Employ interactive outreach strategies that encourage continuous participation and support two-way engagement between managers and snapper grouper fishery stakeholders while building a greater understanding of science and management.	
<i>Objective 1</i>	Develop communication approaches that provide streamlined and timely information to increase awareness and engage stakeholders.
<i>Objective 2</i>	Ensure that Council communication encourages and supports engagement with a diverse audience of stakeholders.
<i>Objective 3</i>	Improve awareness and understanding of fishery science and research and how these inform management.
<i>Objective 4</i>	Improve awareness and understanding of how social and economic issues are linked to fisheries management measures.

<b>Goal 4 (Governance):</b> Commit to a transparent, balanced, and timely decision-making process that allows flexible yet well-defined protocols and strategies for managing the snapper grouper fishery.	
<i>Objective 1</i>	Create an accountable and flexible decision-making process for development and evaluation of management measures.
<i>Objective 2</i>	Build capacity to streamline management efforts and better coordinate with management partners.
<i>Objective 3</i>	Improve communication with stakeholders to ensure the needs of the fishery are understood and considered throughout the Council process.

**Table 2.** Current ACLs, sector allocations, rationale for allocations, regulations, and accountability measures for the Jacks Complex in the South Atlantic Region.

<b>Total ACL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>457,221 lbs ww. Current ACLs in place via SG Regulatory Amendment 13 (effective July 17, 2013).</li> <li>The ACL and landings are tracked as a complex and not by single species.</li> </ul>
<b>Recreational Sector Allocation and ACL</b>	58.57% of the Total ACL (267,799 lbs ww)
<b>Commercial Sector Allocation and ACL</b>	41.43% of the Total ACL (189,422 lbs ww)
<b>Rationale for Allocation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defacto allocation based on the resulting summed sector ACLs for the three jack species. The Comprehensive ACL Amendment equation was applied to all 3 jack species.</li> </ul>
<b>Recreational Retention Regulations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 fish per person bag limit.</li> <li>Part of the 20 fish per person aggregate bag limit.</li> <li>No size limit or season.</li> </ul>
<b>Commercial Retention Regulations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>500 lbs gw aggregate Jacks Complex trip limit.</li> <li>20 inch FL minimum size limit for Almaco Jack.</li> <li>No size limit for Lesser Amberjack or Banded Rudderfish.</li> <li>No season.</li> </ul>
<b>Accountability Measures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In-season closure for both sectors once the sector ACL is met.</li> <li>Payback provision for an overage only if the total ACL is exceeded.</li> </ul>

**Table 3.** Sector specific landings and ACL utilization for the Jacks Complex in the South Atlantic Region, 2019-2023.

Year	Recreational Landings (lbs ww)	% of Recreational ACL Landed	Recreational Closure?	Commercial Landings (lbs ww)	% of Commercial ACL Landed	Commercial Closure?
2019	403,222	150.6%	Yes 9/25/2019	186,940	98.7%	Yes 7/16/2019
2020	192,919	72.0%	No	146,022	77.1%	No
2021	297,986	111.3%	No	135,114	71.3%	No

2022	185,707	69.3%	No	145,050	76.6%	No
2023	200,268	74.8%	No	155,025	81.8%	No
<i>Average</i>	<i>256,021</i>	<i>95.6%</i>	-	<i>153,630</i>	<i>81.1%</i>	-

**Table 4.** Total landings and ACL utilization for the Jacks Complex in the South Atlantic Region, 2019-2023.\*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Landings (lbs ww)</b>	<b>% of Total ACL Landed</b>
2019	590,162	129.1%
2020	338,941	74.1%
2021	433,100	94.7%
2022	330,757	72.3%
2023	355,293	77.7%
<i>Average</i>	<i>409,651</i>	<i>89.6%</i>

\*\*Recreational landings estimates for each species are based on the Marine Recreational Information Program's (MRIP) Coastal Household Telephone Survey (CHTS) methodology rather than the more recent Fishing Effort Survey (FES). Reallocation based on landings that include CHTS estimates may prove difficult since it is no longer considered best scientific information available, but potential solutions can be provided should the Council deem reallocation is warranted at this time. The recreational landings presented are sourced from an ACL monitoring dataset provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Regional Office. The presented commercial landings are from the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program [public data warehouse](#), which is used to avoid showing confidential landings.

**Table 5.** Current ACLs, sector allocations, rationale for allocations, regulations, and accountability measures for the Almaco Jack in the South Atlantic Region.

<b>Total ACL</b>	302,517 lbs ww. Current ACLs in place via SG Regulatory Amendment 13 (effective July 17, 2013).
<b>Recreational Sector Allocation and ACL</b>	51.30% of the Total ACL (155,195 lbs ww)
<b>Commercial Sector Allocation and ACL</b>	48.70% of the Total ACL (147,322 lbs ww)
<b>Rationale for Allocation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used the Comprehensive ACL Amendment equation of 50% weighting towards the sector-based breakdown of landings from 1986-2008 and 50% from 2006-2008.</li> </ul>
<b>Recreational Retention Regulations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 fish per person bag limit.</li> <li>Part of the 20 fish per person aggregate bag limit.</li> <li>No size limit or season.</li> </ul>
<b>Commercial Retention Regulations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part of the 500 lbs gw aggregate Jacks Complex trip limit.</li> <li>20 inch FL minimum size limit.</li> <li>No season.</li> </ul>
<b>Accountability Measures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In-season closure for both sectors once the Jacks Complex sector ACL is met.</li> <li>Payback provision for an overage only if the total Jacks Complex ACL is exceeded.</li> </ul>

**Table 6.** Sector specific landings and ACL utilization for Almaco Jack in the South Atlantic Region, 2019-2023<sup>1</sup>.

Year	Recreational Landings (lbs ww)	% of Recreational ACL Landed	Recreational Closure?	Commercial Landings (lbs ww)	% of Commercial ACL Landed	Commercial Closure?
2019	318,622	205.3%	Yes 9/25/2019	151,921	103.1%	Yes 7/16/2019
2020	166,249	107.1%	No	124,667	84.6%	No
2021	271,955	175.2%	No	119,958	81.4%	No
2022	157,365	101.4%	No	124,140	84.3%	No
2023	167,132	107.7%	No	138,690	94.1%	No
<i>Average</i>	<i>216,265</i>	<i>139.4%</i>	-	<i>131,875</i>	<i>89.5%</i>	-

**Table 7.** Total landings and ACL utilization for Almaco Jack in the South Atlantic Region, 2019-2023.

Year	Total Landings (lbs ww)	% of Total ACL Landed
2019	470,543	155.5%
2020	290,916	96.2%
2021	391,913	129.6%
2022	281,505	93.1%
2023	305,822	101.1%
<i>Average</i>	<i>348,140</i>	<i>115.1%</i>

**Table 8.** Current ACLs, sector allocations, rationale for allocations, and accountability measures for the Lesser Amberjack in the South Atlantic Region.

<b>Total ACL</b>	9,270 lbs ww. Current ACLs in place via SG Regulatory Amendment 13 (effective July 17, 2013).
<b>Recreational Sector Allocation and ACL</b>	53.93% of the Total ACL (5,000 lbs ww)
<b>Commercial Sector Allocation and ACL</b>	46.07% of the Total ACL (4,270 lbs ww)
<b>Rationale for Allocation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Used the Comprehensive ACL Amendment equation of 50% weighting towards the sector-based breakdown of landings from 1986-2008 and 50% from 2006-2008.</li> </ul>
<b>Recreational Retention Regulations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 fish per person bag limit.</li> <li>Part of the 20 fish per person aggregate bag limit.</li> <li>No size limit or season.</li> </ul>
<b>Commercial Retention Regulations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>500 lbs gw aggregate Jacks Complex trip limit.</li> <li>No size limit or season.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Landings and the ACL are tracked cumulatively for the Jacks complex and not by single species. The triggering of accountability measures is also based on complex rather than single species landings. Species-specific recreational landings of Almaco Jack are available from MRIP and commercial landings of Almaco Jack are based upon landings reported by seafood dealers.

<b>Accountability Measures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-season closure for both sectors once the Jacks Complex sector ACL is met.</li> <li>• Payback provision for an overage only if the total Jacks Complex ACL is exceeded.</li> </ul>
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**Table 9.** Sector specific landings and ACL utilization for the Lesser Amberjack in the South Atlantic Region, 2019-2023.

Year	Recreational Landings (lbs ww)	% of Recreational ACL Landed	Recreational Closure?	Commercial Landings (lbs ww)	% of Commercial ACL Landed	Commercial Closure?
2019	1,404	28.1%	Yes 9/25/2019	2,741	64.2%	Yes 9/25/2019
2020	651	13.0%	No	4,790	112.2%	No
2021	1,021	20.4%	No	10,842	253.9%	No
2022	370	7.4%	No	12,222	286.2%	No
2023	5,006	100.1%	No	8,734	204.5%	No
<i>Average</i>	<i>1,690</i>	<i>33.8%</i>	-	<i>7,866</i>	<i>184.2%</i>	-

**Table 10.** Total landings and ACL utilization for the Lesser Amberjack in the South Atlantic Region, 2019-2023.

Year	Total Landings (lbs ww)	% of Total ACL Landed
2019	4,145	44.7%
2020	5,441	58.7%
2021	11,863	128.0%
2022	12,592	135.8%
2023	13,740	148.2%
<i>Average</i>	<i>9,556</i>	<i>103.1%</i>

**Table 11.** Current ACLs, sector allocations, rationale for allocations, and accountability measures for the Banded Rudderfish in the South Atlantic Region.

<b>Total ACL</b>	145.434 lbs ww. Current ACLs in place via SG Regulatory Amendment 13 (effective July 17, 2013).
<b>Recreational Sector Allocation and ACL</b>	73.99% of the Total ACL (107,605 lbs ww)
<b>Commercial Sector Allocation and ACL</b>	26.01% of the Total ACL (37,829 lbs ww)
<b>Rationale for Allocation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Used the Comprehensive ACL Amendment equation of 50% weighting towards the sector-based breakdown of landings from 1986-2008 and 50% from 2006-2008.</li> </ul>
<b>Recreational Retention Regulations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 fish per person bag limit.</li> <li>• Part of the 20 fish per person aggregate bag limit.</li> <li>• No size limit or season.</li> </ul>
<b>Commercial Retention Regulations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 500 lbs gw aggregate Jacks Complex trip limit.</li> <li>• No size limit or season</li> </ul>

<b>Accountability Measures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-season closure for both sectors once the Jacks Complex sector ACL is met.</li> <li>• Payback provision for an overage only if the total Jacks Complex ACL is exceeded.</li> </ul>
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**Table 12.** Sector specific landings and ACL utilization for the Banded Rudderfish in the South Atlantic Region, 2019-2023.

Year	Recreational Landings (lbs ww)	% of Recreational ACL Landed	Recreational Closure?	Commercial Landings (lbs ww)	% of Commercial ACL Landed	Commercial Closure?
2019	83,196	77.3%	Yes 9/25/2019	32,278	85.3%	Yes 7/16/2019
2020	26,019	24.2%	No	16,565	43.8%	No
2021	25,011	23.2%	No	4,314	11.4%	No
2022	27,972	26.0%	No	8,688	23.0%	No
2023	28,130	26.1%	No	7,601	20.1%	No
<i>Average</i>	<i>38,066</i>	<i>35.4%</i>	-	<i>13,889</i>	<i>36.7%</i>	-

**Table 13.** Total landings and ACL utilization for the Banded Rudderfish in the South Atlantic Region, 2019-2023.

Year	Total Landings (lbs ww)	% of Total ACL Landed
2019	115,474	79.4%
2020	42,584	29.3%
2021	29,325	20.2%
2022	36,660	25.2%
2023	35,731	24.6%
<i>Average</i>	<i>51,955</i>	<i>35.7%</i>