



Spawning Special Management Zones (SSMZ)

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Developing HEAP Recommendations for the Evaluation

SSMZs in Amendment 36

Purpose and Need

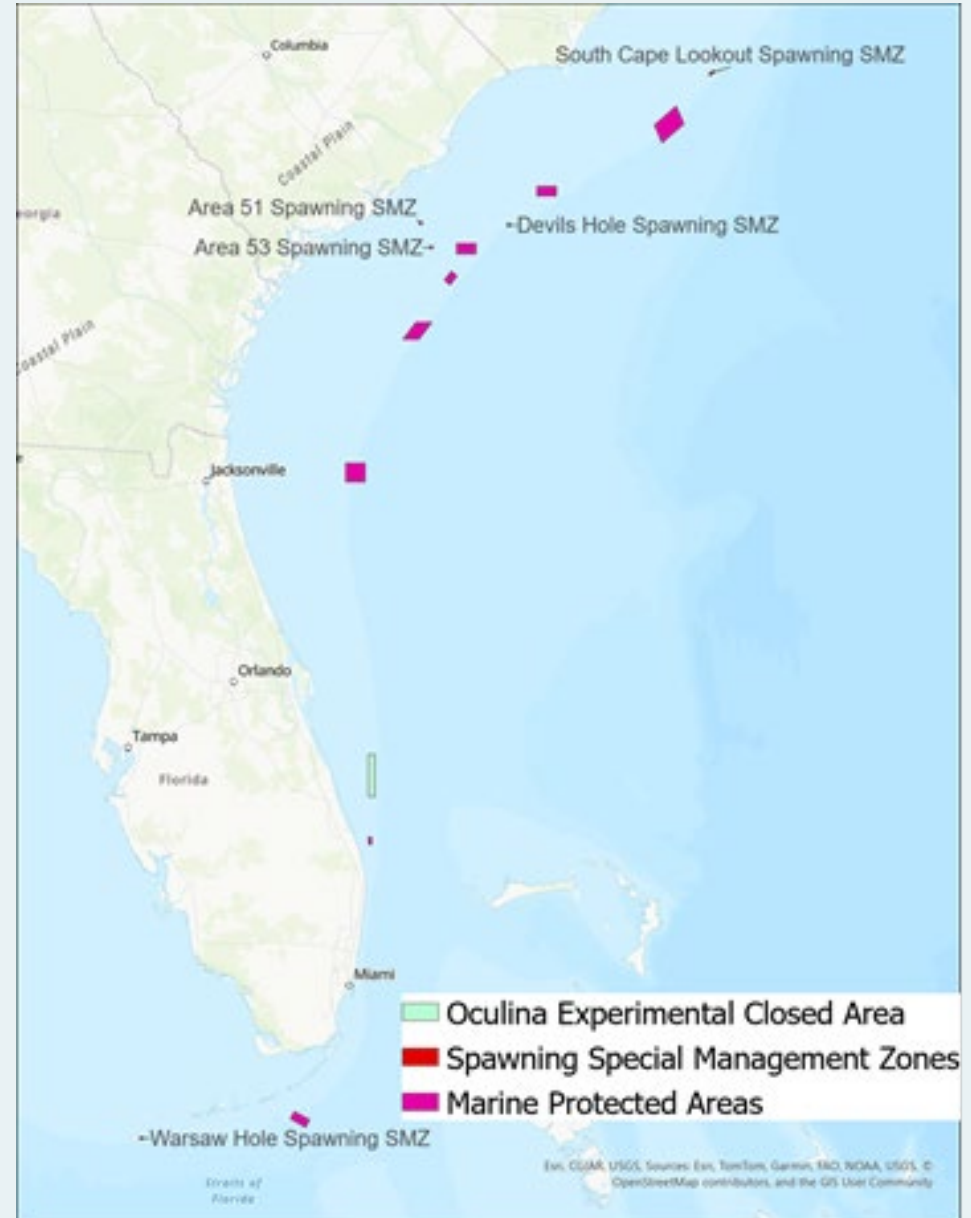
- Protect important spawning habitatto enhance spawning.
- Reduce bycatch and bycatch mortality ... including speckled hind and warsaw grouper.
- Prevent overfishing and achieve optimum yield (National Standard 1).
- Achieve conservation goals while minimizing to the extent practicable negative social and economic effects.



Credit: FWC

SSMZ and Locations

- Relatively small protected areas ~5 sq miles or less
- Natural Reefs
 - South Cape Lookout
 - Devils Hole/Georgetown Hole
 - Warsaw Hole
- Artificial Reefs
 - Area 51
 - Area 53



SSMZ Regulations

- Prohibits fishing for, harvest of, and/or possession of Snapper Grouper Species
- Transit provisions:
 - Allows possession if gear stowed properly
 - No anchoring by fishing vessels
- Sunset clause for natural reefs



Focal Species

- Groupers (14)
- Snappers (6)
- Tilefish (2)
- Greater Amberjack (1)

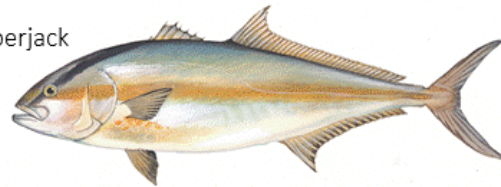
Groupers

Coney
 Graysby
 Goliath
 Nassau
 Red Grouper
 Red Hind
 Rock Hind
 Speckled Hind
 Snowy Grouper
 Warsaw Grouper
 Yellowedge Grouper
 Black Grouper
 Gag
 Scamp



Amberjack

Greater Amberjack



Snappers

Blackfin Snapper
 Cubera Snapper
 Mutton Snapper
 Red Snapper
 Silk Snapper
 Yellowtail Snapper



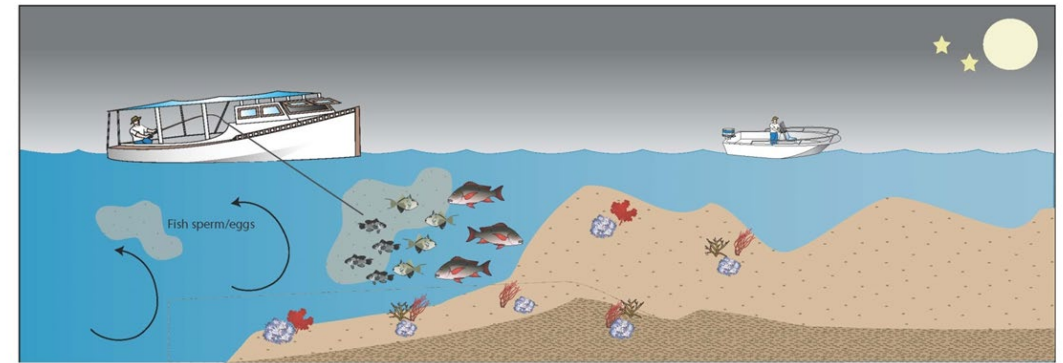
Tilefish

Golden Tilefish
 Blueline Tilefish



Habitat Information

- Natural Sites
 - Multi-species spawning areas
 - Target promontory locations
- Artificial Reefs
 - Designed as protected areas in application
 - Created before in SSMZs were regulated
 - Sandy areas prior to reef placement
- All areas have been mapped

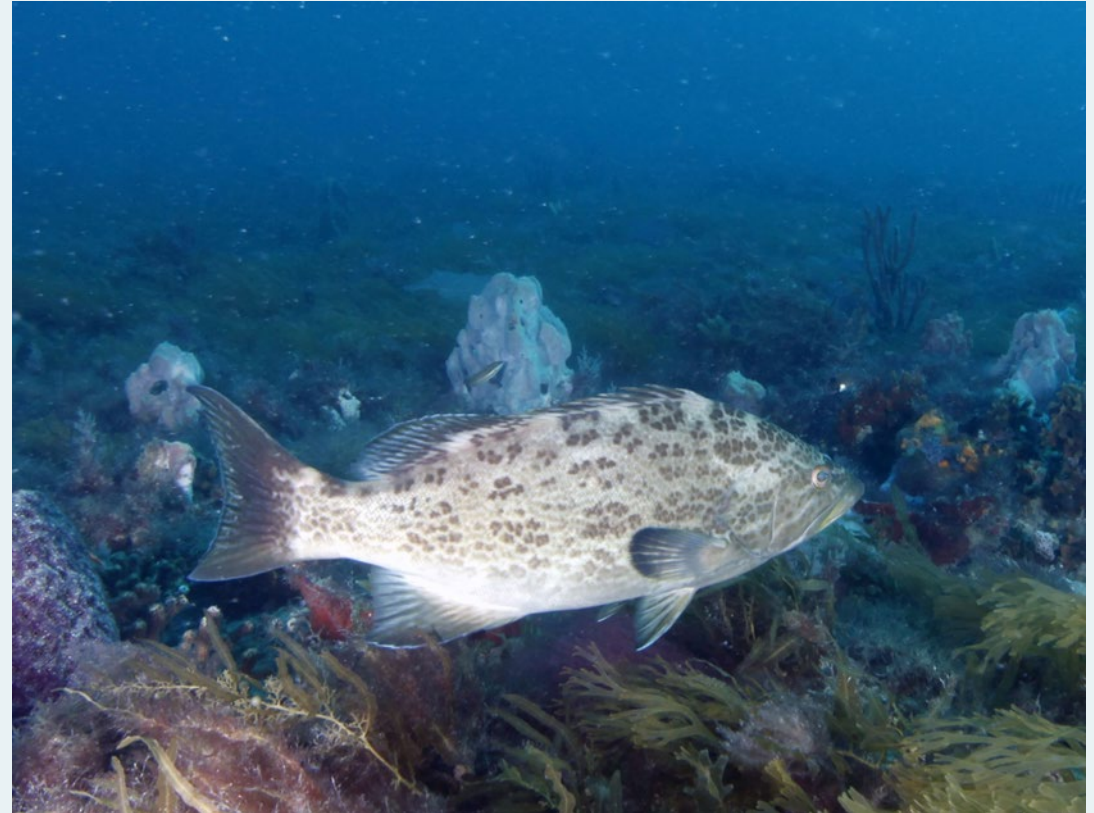


Spawning Aggregations & Larval Transport around Specific Lunar Cycles



Recent Research and Monitoring

- Connectivity through larval dispersal models – Brothers et al
- Biological samples during spawning – TNC/LGL
- Artificial reef monitoring – SC Aquarium
- Southeast Reef Fish Survey – SEFSC/SC DNR



Evaluation of the SSMZ

- Conducted by System Management Plan Workgroup
 - Designed to gather input from a diverse group
- Gather input from Advisory Panels
- Evaluate if management should
 - Keep areas as is
 - Modify areas
 - Move
 - Change size
 - Change regulations



HEAP SSMZ Evaluation

- Staff developed an [evaluation tool](#) to gather input from the HEAP
- You do not need to complete all sections if you are not familiar with them.
- Provide feedback. It will be incorporated into an evaluation report to the Council on the SSMZs.
- We will review aggregated comments at the meeting to get the group's recommendation.



Credit: SC Sea Grant Consortium

Review HEAP Recommendations

- Planning
- South Cape Lookout
- Area 51
- Area 53
- Devil's Hole
- Warsaw Hole
- Cross Area Comparisons
 - Successes
 - Improvements





Additional Resources

- [Amendment 36](#)
- [System Management Plan for Amendment 36](#)
- [Connectivity - Brothers et al](#)
- Biological Sampling –
 - [Natural Reefs - TNC/LGL](#)
 - [Artificial Reefs - SC Aquarium](#)
 - [SERFS](#)