Content and Status Summary of Amendments and Projects

September 2026

Note: A summary table of progress towards rulemaking and implementation is in Appendix A.

Recently Submitted or Implemented:

Joint Commercial Logbook Amendment
Staff lead: Myra Brouwer
Purpose of Amendment: To allow submittal of electronic commercial logbooks.
Action Summary: This amendment is being developed jointly with the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. The amendment modifies the FMPs for South Atlantic Snapper Grouper, Atlantic Dolphin Wahoo, Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Coastal Migratory Pelagics, and Gulf Reef Fish to require commercial logbooks be submitted via electronic reporting forms instead of the currently used paper-based forms.
Most recent document: Final Amendment in Administrative Record.
Development level: Under review. Amendment submitted on February 27, 2024.
Key Events: Refer to December 2023 Active Amendments Document.

Coral Amendment 11/Shrimp Amendment 12 (CHAPC Modifications and Shrimp Fishery Access Area)
Staff Lead: Kathleen Howington & Allie Iberle
Purpose of the Amendment: To establish a Shrimp Fishery Access Area (SFAA) along the western boundary of the northern extension of the Oculina Bank Habitat Area of Particular Concern (OHAPC) where fishing for rock shrimp would be allowed. The area under consideration was once utilized by the fishery but access to it was restricted with implementation of Coral Amendment 8 in 2014.
Action Summary: to establish an area within the existing OHAPC where rock shrimp fishing would be allowed to restore access to historic grounds to the fishery while maintaining protection for Oculina coral.
Most recent document: December 2025 Decision Document & Draft Amendment
Development level: Under review. Amendment submitted on April 16, 2026.
Key Events: Refer to March 2026 Active Amendment Document

Snapper Grouper

Recently Submitted or Implemented:

Amendment 48 (Wreckfish ITQ Program Modernization)
Staff Lead: Christina Wiegand
Purpose of Amendment: The Council finished its second review of the Wreckfish ITQ program in September of 2019. As part of the review there were several recommendations made to modernize the program, which will be addressed in this amendment.
Action Summary: moving away from a paper coupon-based program to an electronic program; fishing season; cost recovery; wreckfish permit requirement; allocation issues; offloading sites and times; and monitoring requirements.
Most recent document: Final Amendment in Administrative Record
Development Level: Under review. Amendment submitted on December 19, 2024.
Key Events: Refer to December 2024 Active Amendments Document.

Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 36 (Gag and Black Grouper; On-Demand Gear)
Staff Lead: Mike Schmidtke
Purpose of Amendment: Revise recreational vessel limits for gag and black grouper and specify requirements for on-demand black sea bass pots while transiting through closed areas
Action Summary: Revise the recreational vessel limits for gag and black grouper to be an aggregate bag limit including both species. Revise transit requirements for on-demand black sea bass pots.
Most recent document: Final amendment in Administrative Record.
Development Level: Final Rule. Changes effective on October 28, 2026
Key Events: Refer to December 2024 Active Amendments Document.

Abbreviated Framework 5 (Blueline Tilefish)
Staff Leads: Christina Wiegand
Purpose of the Amendment: adjust catch levels of blueline tilefish int he South Atlantic based on the most recent stock assessment (SEDAR 92)
Action Summary: Revise ABC, total ACL, and sector ACLs (retaining the current sector allocation)
Most recent document: Final Amendment in Administrative Record
Development level: Under review. Amendment submitted on February 13, 2026.
Key Events: Refer to March 2026 Active Amendments Document

Regulatory Amendment 37 (Black Sea Bass Management Measures)
Staff Leads: Mike Schmidtke
Purpose of the Amendment: Address depleted status of black sea bass in the South Atlantic immediately with management measures aimed at reducing regulatory discards and protecting the spawning stock.
Action Summary: establish recreational and commercial annual catch targets and revise accountability measures, reduce the recreational bag limit, and implementing an annual spawning season closure in February and March for both commercial and recreational sectors.
Most recent document: December 2025 Decision Document & Draft amendment
Development level: Under review. Amendment submitted April 17, 2026.
Key Events: Refer to March 2026 Active Amendments Document

Under Development:

Snapper Grouper Amendment 44/ Reef Fish Amendment 55(Yellowtail & Mutton Snapper)
Staff Lead: Allie Iberle
Purpose of Amendment: Respond to the latest stock assessments for yellowtail snapper and mutton snapper (SEDAR 96 and SEDAR 79, respectively). Neither species is overfished nor undergoing overfishing.
Action Summary: Adopt recommended stock OFL and ABCs, adjust the jurisdictional apportionment between the South Atlantic and Gulf Councils, update regional ACLs, and update South Atlantic sector allocations.
Most recent document: September 2026 Decision Document
Development Level: public hearings
Key Events:

Note: Refer to previous Active Amendments Document for key events prior to 2025

- February 2025: Sub-groups of South Atlantic and Gulf SSCs reviewed the amendments and recommended ABC for each species.
- March 2025: Council re-starts work on the amendment to be developed jointly with the Gulf Council (lead). The amendment will address SDCs, stock ABCs, and jurisdictional allocations for yellowtail snapper and mutton snapper.
- September 2025: Council opts to develop one amendment including actions to adjust catch levels, revise jurisdictional apportionment between the SA and Gulf, and set SA sector allocations for each species. The Gulf is administrative lead.
- December 2025: Council reviewed actions and alternatives for the jurisdictional apportionment and developed alternatives for South Atlantic sector allocation actions.
- March 2026: Council received update on actions and alternatives, but no corresponding catch levels were available to review.
- June 2026: Council reviewed actions and alternatives included catch levels and a preliminary analysis as well as Gulf feedback and motions from their June 2026. Preferred alternatives were selected.
- September 2026: Council approved for public hearings.

Amendment 61 (Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit Revision)

Staff Leads: John Hadley

Purpose of the Amendment: Evaluate whether 14 species currently in the FMU should remain, be removed, or be designated as ecosystem component species. Note: this amendment supersedes an earlier proposed amendment to specify ABCs for unassessed snapper grouper species.

Action Summary: To determine the need for conservation and management of 14 snapper grouper species.

Most recent document: September 2026 Decision Document

Development level: Post-scoping

Key Events:

- March 2025: Council initiated work on the amendment.
- June 2025: Council reviewed amendment.
- September 2025: Council approved amendment for scoping.
- December 2025: Council reviewed scoping and AP comments, draft ecosystem management objectives for EC species, and requested additional information before further developing the amendment.
- March 2026: Council reviewed draft purpose and need statements. Narrowed down the scope of species considered in the amendment to 14.
- June 2026: Council approved the draft purpose and need statements and actions for inclusion in the amendment. The Council also gave direction to staff to prepare the amendment for consideration of approval for public hearings at the December 2026 meeting.
- September 2026: Reviewed amendment and postponed approval for public hearing to March 2027.

Amendment 60 (Commercial management measures)

Staff Leads: Mike Schmidtke

Purpose of the Amendment: The amendment has two main objectives: 1) address issues related to the commercial Snapper Grouper Unlimited (SG 1) permit, and 2) increase commercial trip efficiency.

Action Summary: Revise the 2-for-1 snapper grouper commercial unlimited permit policy; modify trip limits; and revise existing stowage requirements for gear on board.

Most recent document: September 2026 Decision Document & PH draft

Development level: Post-public hearings development

Key Events:

- March 2025: Council initiates work on the amendment
- July 25 to August 8: scoping period. Comments solicited online.
- September 2025: Review scoping comments and refine actions. AP to receive update in fall 2025 and provide recommendations on proposed actions in Spring 2026.
- December 2025: Further defined actions and alternatives; revised the timeline to have a draft amendment for consideration of public hearing approval in June 2026.
- March 2026: Further developed actions and alternatives.
- June 2026: Added an action and approved the amendment for public hearings.
- September 2026: reviewed public hearing comments, selected preferred alternatives, and approved all actions.

Amendment 62 (Joint State-Federal Management of Recreational Red Snapper)

Staff Leads: TBD
Purpose of the Amendment: To establish a mechanism for joint federal-state management of the recreational red snapper fishery in the South Atlantic.
Action Summary: TBD
Most recent document: None
Development level: Pre-scoping
Key Events:

- September 2025: Council initiates work on the amendment.
- December 2025: Council expects to begin development once the states' EFPs have been approved and are underway.

Regulatory Amendment 38 (Vessel Limits for Headboats)

Staff Lead: Allie Iberle
Purpose of the Amendment: Modify vessel limits for South Atlantic headboats
Action Summary: establish vessel limits for select snapper grouper species for headboats and adjust catch levels of golden tilefish
Most recent document: September 2026 Decision Document
Development level: Public Hearings
Key Events:

- March 2026: Amendment initiated.
- June 2026: The Council discussed how to properly define a headboat vessel as it pertains to this action, refined the set of actions and alternatives and edited the purpose and need statements.
- September 2026: approved for public hearings and added an action to adjust catch levels for golden tilefish

Regulatory Amendment 39 (Modify Sunsetting of Spawning Special Management Zones)

Staff Lead: Allie Iberle
Purpose of the Amendment: Evaluate sunsetting of Spawning Special Management Zones
Action Summary: Extend sunsetting provision for 3 SSMZs
Most recent document: September 2026 Decision Document
Development level: Public Hearings
Key Events:

- March 2026: Amendment initiated.
- June 2026: The Council reviewed the initial draft actions and alternatives and added an additional alternative to consider a 7-year sunset provision extension for all SSMZs. The Council also edited the purpose and need statements.
- September 2026: approved for public hearings

Regulatory Amendment 40 (Re-Opening of Seasonal Nearshore Closed Areas to Black Sea Bass Pots Equipped with On-Demand Gear Retrieval Systems)
Staff Lead: Myra Brouwer
Purpose of the Amendment: Evaluate re-opening of seasonal nearshore closed areas to on-demand black sea bass pots
Action Summary: allow pots with on-demand gear to fish in the nearshore seasonal closed areas
Most recent document: June 2026 Decision Document
Development level: Pre-public hearings development
Key Events:

- March 2026: Amendment initiated.
- June 2026: Removed consideration of trip limit reduction and adjusted timeline to approve for public hearings in December 2026 and consider for final approval in March 2027.

Planned or postponed:

Amendment 46 (Private Recreational Permit and Education Requirement)
Staff Lead: John Hadley
Purpose of the Amendment: Address deficiencies in recreational data through the creation of a permit requirement for private recreational vessels or anglers. Additionally, it considers establishing a required education component to encourage best fishing practices that help reduce discard mortality in the snapper grouper fishery.
Action Summary: This amendment considers establishing a permit and education requirement for anglers or vessels to participate in the private recreational component of the snapper grouper fishery.
Most recent document: March 2025 decision document.
Development Level: Scoping. Approval for public hearings was expected in March 2025.
Key Events: Refer to March 2025 Active Amendments Document. Council paused work on this amendment in June 2025 to focus on de-regulatory actions.

Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 56 (Black Sea Bass)
Staff Lead: Mike Schmidtke
Purpose of Amendment: Respond to most recent stock assessment (SEDAR 76).
Action Summary: Revise catch levels and status determination criteria, consider revision of sector allocations, other black sea bass management measures.
Most recent document: March 2025 Decision Document
Development Level: Scoping
Key Events: Refer to March 2025 Active Amendments Document. The Council paused work on adjusting catch levels for black sea bass in June 2025 pending further review of the stock assessment and SSC recommendations. The Council initiated work through Regulatory Amendment 37 to modify management measures.

- March 2026: The Council received an update on the amendment and timeline

Evaluation for the Need of Continued Management for 9 Snapper Grouper Species

Staff Leads: Myra Brouwer & Mike Schmidtke

Purpose of the Amendment: In October 2019, the SSC recommended designation of Cubera Snapper, Margate, Silk Snapper, Coney, Saucereye Porgy, Yellowfin Grouper, Misty Grouper, Blackfin Snapper, and Yellowedge Grouper as ecosystem component (EC species).

Action Summary: To determine the need for conservation and management of 9 snapper grouper species.

Most recent document: None

Key Events:

- November 2020: The Snapper Grouper AP discussed and provided recommendations.
- December 2020: Direction to include an action in a future amendment to the Snapper Grouper FMP (possibly the amendment addressing unassessed species' ABCs) to address this topic but exclude Margate, Yellowedge Grouper, Yellowfin Grouper, Silk Snapper, and Cubera Snapper. Directed staff to work with the SEFSC on a possible approach for data-poor species to set a single ACL with an assessed indicator species.
- December 2024: The Council directed staff to begin an evaluation to determine the continued need for conservation and federal management for species in the Snapper Grouper FMU.
- June 2025: Council initiated work on an amendment to revise the composition of the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit, including the 9 species above. See Amendments Under Development. This amendment will not be developed and will be removed from future AA documents).

Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation

Staff Lead: Chip Collier, Judd Curtis

Purpose of the Amendment: Dead releases are a major issue in the snapper grouper fishery as a whole and affect many species within the complex. The Council has directed a management strategy evaluation (MSE) project that would consider multispecies effects of potential management changes and be used to develop a more holistic approach to management of the snapper grouper fishery. The amendment will follow the MSE project and consider implementation of management changes evaluated through the MSE.

Action Summary: This amendment will provide actions intended to incorporate recommendations from the MSE project.

Most recent document: None

Key Events:

Note: Refer to previous Active Amendments Document for key events prior to 2025

- January 2025: Staff will develop a request for proposals to continue MSE work for the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit.
- June 2025: Contract awarded to Blue Matter Science. The Council will continue to narrow the range of management measures to actionable measures in September 2025.
- September 2025: Council provides feedback on scenarios to develop, including aggregate recreational bag limits.
- March 2026: Council received update on social science component (recreational angler attitudes survey)
- September 2026: Council received update.

Unassessed Snapper Grouper Species ABCs/ACLs/Allocations
Staff Lead: TBD
Purpose of the Amendment: Update the ABCs, ACLs, and sector allocations for unassessed snapper grouper species based on catch level recommendations from the SSC.
Action Summary: adjust ABCs, ACLs, and sector allocations for unassessed snapper grouper species to incorporate revised recreational landings based on updated MRIP-FES methodology.
Most recent document: None
Key Events:

- October 2019: The SSC provided updated catch level recommendations.
- December 2021: Council decided to update catch level recommendations for the unassessed snapper grouper species once the ABC Control Rule Amendment is implemented.
- December 2024: The Council directed staff to begin an evaluation to determine the continued need for conservation and federal management for species in the Snapper Grouper FMP. This evaluation may affect development of this amendment.
- June 2025: The Council initiated work on Amendment 61 to revise the composition of the Snapper Grouper FMU (refer to Amendments Under Development).

Dolphin Wahoo

Under development: None

Planned or Postponed:

Regulatory Amendment 3 (Minimum Size Limit and Recreational Retention Limits for Dolphin)
Staff Lead: John Hadley
Purpose of the Amendment: This amendment will seek to extend the applicable range of the minimum size limit for dolphin and modify recreational retention limits for dolphin.
Action Summary: This amendment includes actions that would extend the applicable geographic range of the minimum size limit, modify recreational bag and vessel limits, and remove captain and crew bag limits for dolphin.
Most recent document: June 2026 decision document.
Development Level: Scoping has been conducted and work on the amendment has been stopped.
Key Events:
Note: Refer to previous Active Amendments Document for key events prior to 2024

- December 2024: Reviewed progress of the MSE for Dolphin and directed staff to re-commence work on the amendment with the intent of using modeling results from the MSE to help inform the Council's decisions in the amendment. The preliminary MSE results will be reviewed by the SSC in April 2024 and by the Council in June 2024.
- September 2025: Reviewed progress on the MSE.
- March 2026: The SEFSC presented an update on the MSE to the Council.
- June 2026: The Council reviewed preliminary results of the MSE for dolphin and passed a motion to not continue working on Regulatory Amendment 3.

Golden Crab

Recently Submitted or Implemented: None

Under Development: None

Planned or Postponed: None

Coral

Recently Submitted or Implemented: Coral Amendment 11 (refer to beginning of document)

Under Development: None

Planned or Postponed: None

Shrimp

Recently Submitted or Implemented: Shrimp Amendment 12 Refer to beginning of document)

Under Development: None
Planned or Postponed: None

Mackerel Cobia

Recently Submitted or Implemented: None

Under Development:

Coastal Migratory Pelagics Amendment 38
Staff lead: Christina Curtis
Purpose of Amendment: modify the commercial fishing year for Atlantic Spanish mackerel to facilitate transfer of commercial quota between the Northern and Southern Zones, consider changes to sale of tournament caught Atlantic king mackerel and Atlantic Spanish mackerel, modify the CMP FMP framework procedure.
Action Summary: TBD
Most recent document: None
Key Events:

- June 2026: Amendment development initiated.
- November 2026: Review by the Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel.

Planned or Postponed: None

Spiny Lobster

Recently Submitted or Implemented: None

Planned or Postponed:

Spiny Lobster Regulatory Amendment 5 (commercial trip limit for vessels with an SG1 and LT permit off NC, SC, and GA)

Staff lead: Christina Curtis

Purpose of Amendment: to allow vessels with a snapper grouper unlimited permit (SG1) and a spiny lobster tailing permit (LT) to retain commercial quantities of spiny lobster, allowing them to supplement their snapper grouper trips with additional income from lobster.

Action Summary: allow vessels with an SG1 and LT permit to retain 20/30/40 lobster per trip harvested via diving, off NC, SC, and GA.

Most recent document: None

Key Events:

- March 2019: Amendment development initiated.
- June 2019: Options paper reviewed during meeting.

Generic Amendments

Planned or Postponed:

Comprehensive Recreational For-Hire Limited Entry Amendment

Staff Leads: John Hadley & Myra Brouwer

Purpose of Amendment: To establish limited entry for the for-hire components of the snapper grouper, coastal migratory pelagics, and dolphin wahoo fisheries.

Action Summary: TBD

Most recent document: June 2024 Meeting Document.

Development Level: Pre-scoping.

Key Events: Refer to March 2025 Active Amendments Document. Council paused work on this amendment in March 2025 to focus on de-regulatory actions.

Comprehensive For-Hire Reporting Improvement Amendment

Staff Leads: John Hadley & Myra Brouwer

Purpose of Amendment: To improve compliance with for-hire reporting requirements

Action Summary: TBD

Most recent document: June 2025 Discussion Document

Development Level: Scoping completed.

Key Events: Refer to March 2025 Active Amendments Document. Council paused work on this amendment in June 2025 to focus on de-regulatory actions.

Other Work Items

South Atlantic Ecopath with Ecosim Model Application

Staff Lead: Chip Collier

The SSC reviewed the SAFMC EwE model development in October 2020 and recommended that the model was ready for applying to specific questions of interest to the Council. In December 2020, the Council identified 4 potential questions to address with the model. Staff is working with FL FWC staff to provide a contract to support FWC leading the effort to apply the model to 2 of the Councils questions. The impact of high Red Snapper recruitment was reviewed by the SSC in October 2021 and presented to the Council in December 2021. The second product will be the development of a model of intermediate complexity for ecosystem analysis (MICE). The MICE model was completed in June 2022 and a preliminary model was developed. A new contract was developed in 2023 to add Ecospace module into the Ecopath model to describe potential shifts in species distribution. The pilot species is Black Sea Bass. The project was presented to the SSC in April 2025.

Wreckfish ITQ review

Staff Lead: Christina Curtis, John Hadley, Myra Brouwer, Chip Collier

Staff proposed a workplan to accomplish the review, which is due to be completed by late 2026:

- March 2026: Contractor is selected to collaborate with Council staff
- March 2026: Data request sent to NMFS with a deadline of June 2026.
- June 2026: Council reviews outline for the review
- Summer 2026: Councils staff and contractors complete the draft review
- September 2026: guidance to present review to AP in November and Council approval in December 2026.

Appendix A. Rulemaking progress for SAFMC amendments (updated 9/28/26)

Amendment	Council voted final action	Council submitted to NMFS	NOA published (comments due)	Proposed rule published (comments due)	Final rule published	Amendment Approval date	Implementation date
SG Reg 36 (transit and bag limits)	9/20/24	3/31/25	n/a	4/23/26 (5/26/26)	9/28/26	n/a	10/28/26
SG 48 (wreckfish)	6/14/24	12/19/24					
Joint Commercial Electronic Logbook	Sept 2023 SA) Oct 2023 (Gulf)	2/27/2024	11/20/25 (1/20/26)	5/26/26 (6/25/26)		1/22/26	
SG AF 5 (blueline tilefish)	12/12/25	2/13/26	n/a	7/13/26 (8/12/26)		n/a	
SG Reg 37 (black sea bass)	12/12/25	4/17/26	n/a	9/22/26 (10/22/26)		n/a	
Coral Am 11/Shrimp Am 12	1/23/26	4/16/26	9/18/26 (11/17/26)				

Note: Blank cells indicate that the action has not occurred.

Framework Amendments

- The approximate time frame from when Council submits a framework amendment to NMFS and the implementation date is 6-9 months.
- NMFS does not publish an NOA for a framework amendment.
- The public comment period for proposed rules is usually 30 days.

Plan Amendments

- The approximate time frame from when Council submits a plan amendment to NMFS and the implementation date is 9-11 months.
- NMFS publishes an NOA for a plan amendment, followed by the proposed rule.
- The public comment period for proposed rules and amendments (NOA) are usually 30 and 60 days, respectively.