

Overview

SNAPPER GROUPEL ADVISORY PANEL

Crowne Plaza
4381 Tanger Outlet Boulevard
North Charleston, SC 29418
October 21-22, 2014

1. Status of Amendments under Development and Recently Implemented (Attachments 1a & 1b)

The AP will receive a brief overview of the status and content of amendments to the Snapper Grouper FMP that are under review or have been recently implemented. While this overview is intended to update the AP on the status of amendments, their recommendation is being requested on one action included in Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 7/Snapper Grouper Amendment 33. This amendment addresses transport of fillets from The Bahamas. The SG AP reviewed SG Amendment 33 at their April 2014 meeting. Since then, however, the Council added an action to the amendment and public hearings were held in August 2014. The AP will be asked to comment on an action proposing that for snapper grouper fillets brought from The Bahamas, 2 fillets, regardless of the size of the fillet, count as one fish towards the 20 fish aggregate bag limit allowed in The Bahamas.

2. Regulatory Amendment 16 (Removal of Black Sea Bass Pot Closure; Attachment 2)

Myra Brouwer, Council staff, will present the current alternatives in the amendment as revised per the Council's guidance during the June 2014 meeting. Analyses for the amendment have been underway at the Regional Office but will not be available for the AP to review. The analyses will be presented to the SSC at their October 28-29, 2014 meeting for their review and the Council will review them at their December 2014 meeting. At that time, the Council is scheduled to approve the amendment for public hearings to be held in January 2015. The AP will have the opportunity to review the completed analyses at their Spring 2015 meeting, prior to the Council taking final action on this amendment in June 2015.

3. Regulatory Amendment 22 (Gag & Wreckfish; Attachment 3)

Myra Brouwer, Council staff, will present an overview of items included in Regulatory Amendment 22. The amendment would adjust the ABCs and ACLs for gag and wreckfish in response to the latest stock assessments for those two species. Also included is an action to adjust the bag limit for gag. The SSC is scheduled to discuss the bag limit analysis at their October 28-30 meeting. The Council approved this amendment for public hearings, which will be held this fall via webinar.

4. Joint SA/GM Amendment on South Florida Issues (*Attachment 4*)

The Joint Council Committee on South Florida Management Issues (Joint South Florida Committee) met in Key Largo, FL, on July 22-14, 2014. Gregg Waugh, Council staff, will present an overview of the items that were discussed during the meeting and update the AP on status of the amendment and next steps.

5. Amendment 36 (spawning SMZs; *Attachment 5*)

Gregg Waugh, Council staff, will provide an overview of the amendment and update the AP on changes that the Council requested at the September 2014 meeting. The amendment will continue to be developed and presented to the Council in December 2014. Public hearings will likely be held the first half of 2015.

6. Amendment 35 (removal of species and golden tilefish endorsements; *Attachments 6a & 6b*)

Amendment 35 proposes the removal of four snapper grouper species (black snapper, dog snapper, mahogany snapper, and schoolmaster) from the management unit. Scoping on this amendment took place in August 2014. At their September 2014 meeting, the Council reviewed scoping comments and received an overview of the decision document (**Attachment 6a**). The Council opted to add an action to the amendment to address golden tilefish longline endorsements. Some fishermen believe they can transfer their golden tilefish longline endorsement to another vessel and then fish for golden tilefish using hook-and-line gear, or that they can renew their Federal commercial snapper grouper vessel permit at one time but wait to renew their golden tilefish longline endorsement and then fish for golden tilefish using hook-and-line gear while their endorsement is not valid. Based on comments during the June 2012 Council meeting, neither scenario was the intent of the Council. An Options Paper (**Attachment 6b**) was presented to the Council at the September 2014 meeting with a number of alternatives to address the issue. The action will be incorporated into Amendment 35, and the Council will review the amendment and approve it for public hearings at their December 2014 meeting.

7. Update on Amendment 22 (recreational harvest tag program; *Attachment 7*)

Staff of the SE Regional Office (SERO) gave a presentation to the Snapper Grouper Committee during the September 2014 Council meeting on the status of Amendment 22. Council members representing the for-hire industry voiced concerns over the proposed program. Monica Smit-Brunello (NOAA General Counsel) indicated the proposed program *may* be considered a Limited Access Privilege Program (LAPP) depending on how the Council chooses to design it. The proposed lottery system by itself does not create a limited access program but specification of eligibility criteria may. The Committee had extensive discussion on the purpose of the proposed program and possible challenges in its design and administration. The Committee decided to postpone further discussion of Amendment 22 and request that staff from the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries give the Committee a presentation at the December 2014 Council on the NC catch card program for highly migratory species.

8. Stock Assessment Updates

Council staff will update the AP on the SEDAR 41 (red snapper and gray triggerfish) assessment and those for hogfish and mutton snapper. The Florida FWC is the lead analytical team for both the hogfish and mutton snapper assessments but they both underwent SEDAR review. The assessment for hogfish was a benchmark and that for mutton was an update. Both are set to go to the SSC for review in October.

9. Update on Electronic Reporting (*Attachment 8a*)

Gregg Waugh, Council staff, will update the AP on discussions that took place during the Data Collection Committee meeting (September 2014) regarding the use of electronic reporting in the South Atlantic.

10. Update on Joint SA/GM Joint Charterboat Electronic Reporting Amendment (*Attachment 8b*)

The SA and Gulf Councils appointed a technical subcommittee to develop recommendations to implement an improved data collection program to support the needs of science, fisheries management, and address stakeholder concerns about data quality. Specifically, the technical subcommittee was charged with developing recommendations to implement electronic reporting for charter vessels in the Gulf of Mexico and US South Atlantic. Mike Errigo, Council staff, reviewed the draft report (**Attachment 8b**) during the Data Collection Committee meeting. The final report will be available by the Council's December 2014 meeting.

11. Update on Vision Blueprint for the Snapper Grouper Fishery (*Attachment 9*)

The AP will receive a summary of issues/themes by sector from the 2014 port meetings. Amber Vonharten will also provide an update on the October 14-16 Council Visioning workshop and next steps.

12. Other Business

The AP will discuss items under Other Business as appropriate.