Revisions to the wording for SG Reg Amendment 16, Action 2

**Action 2. Enhance the existing Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP) buoy line/weak link gear requirements and buoy line rope marking for black sea bass pots**

### 2.2 Action 2 Alternatives

**Alternative 1 (No Action). Commercial black sea bass fishermen are required to abide by the pot configuration restrictions, pot escape mechanism requirements, and pot construction and escape mechanism requirements contained in 50 CFR § 622.189 (see discussion below). Additionally, c**ommercial fishermen will continue to fish in compliance with existing buoy line and weak link gear requirements for black sea bass pots as required by the ALWTRP (50 CFR **§** 229.32).

**Alternative 2.** In addition to the requirements in **50 CFR § 622.189,** enhance the current ALWTRP buoy line requirements from November 1 through April 30 in federal waters in the South Atlantic EEZ.

**Sub-alternative 2a:** The breaking strength must not exceed 2,200 lbs .

**Sub-alternative 2b**: The breaking line strength must not exceed 1,200 lbs.

Note: Fishermen could decide whether they would want to use the same buoy line from May 1 through October 31.

**Alternative 3.** In addition to the requirements in **50 CFR § 622.189,** enhance the current ALWTRP weak link requirements. From November 1 to April 30, the breaking strength of the weak links must not exceed 400 pounds for black sea bass pots in the South Atlantic EEZ.

Note: Fishermen could decide whether they would want to use the same weak link strength from May 1 through October 31.

**Preferred Alternative 4.** In addition to the requirements in **50 CFR § 622.189,** enhance the current ALWTRP gear marking requirements. In addition to the ALWTRP’s rope marking requirements, include a feature to specifically distinguishing the commercial South Atlantic black sea bass pot component of the snapper grouper fishery. Currently the ALWTRP requires three 12-inch color marks at the top, midway, and bottom sections of the buoy line specified for the individual management area in which the gear are deployed. This alternative will require an additional 12-inch wide purple band be added at the end of each required 12-inch colored mark. Each of the three marks would be a total of 24 inches in length. The additional gear marking requirements of this action are required in federal waters from November 15 through April 15 (Southeast Restricted Area North), September 1 through May 31 (Offshore Trap/Pot Area), and September 1 through May 31 (Southern Nearshore Trap/Pot Waters Area).

Note: