



# South Florida Public Workshops

July 29 – August 5, 2013

**Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission**  
Division of Marine Fisheries Management

# Workshop Ground Rules

- All points of view are valid
- Behave with courtesy and respect
- Discuss the topic and not the person
- Phones off (or on vibrate) and side conversations outside
- Please direct questions and comments to FWC staff



# Introductions



# Workshop Format

1. Overview
2. Questions
3. Public comment



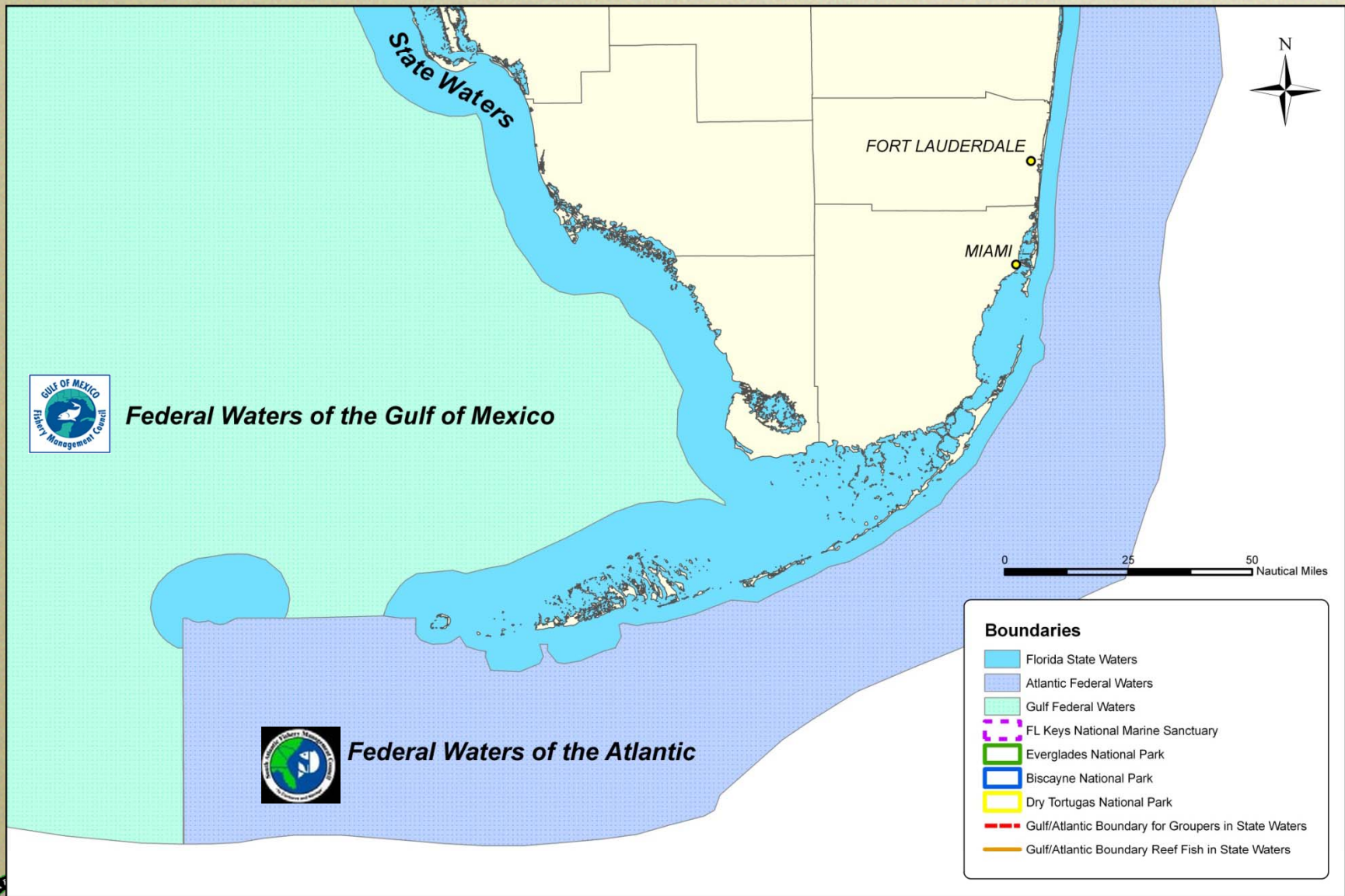
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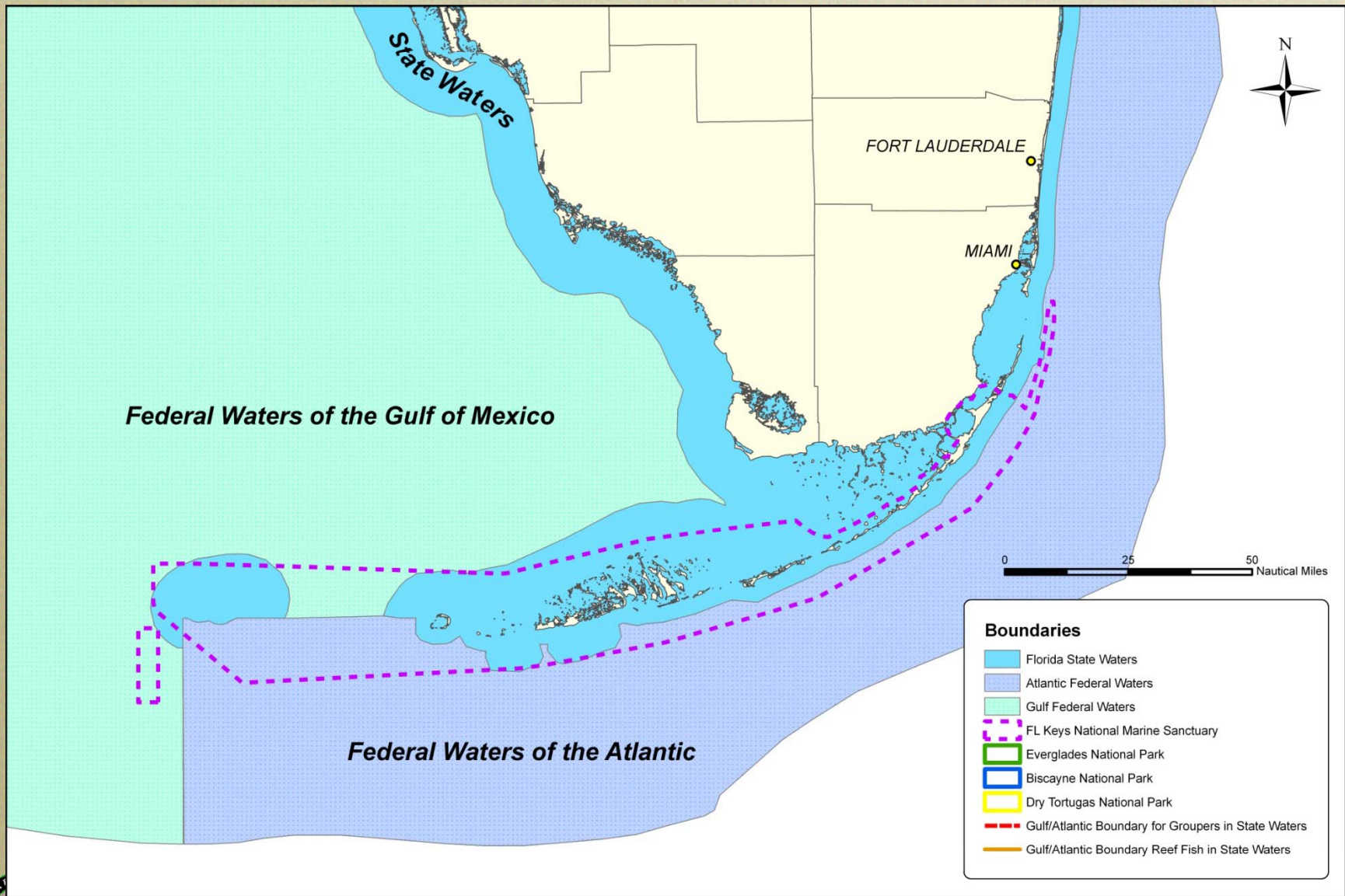


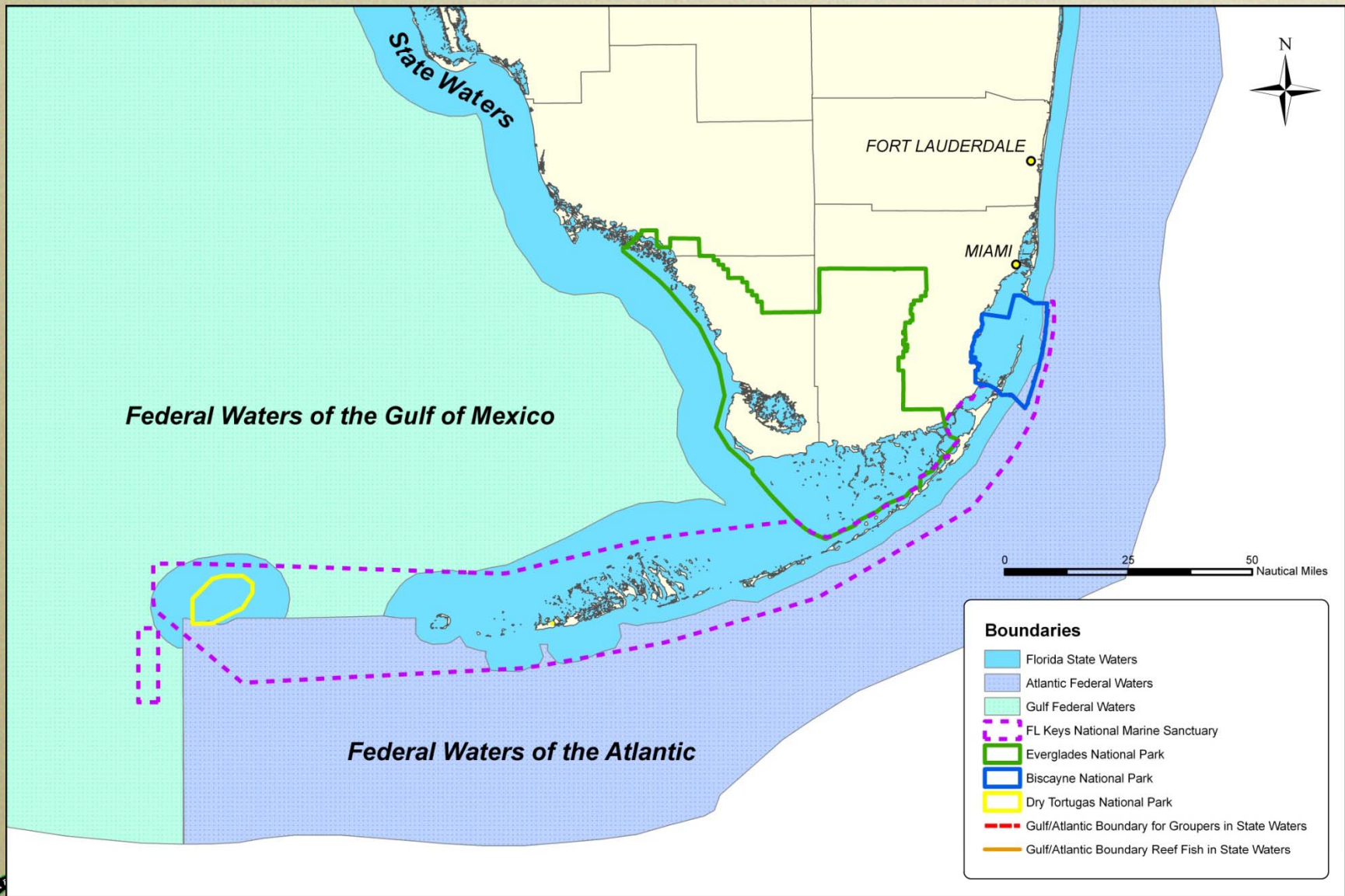
# Why Are We Here?

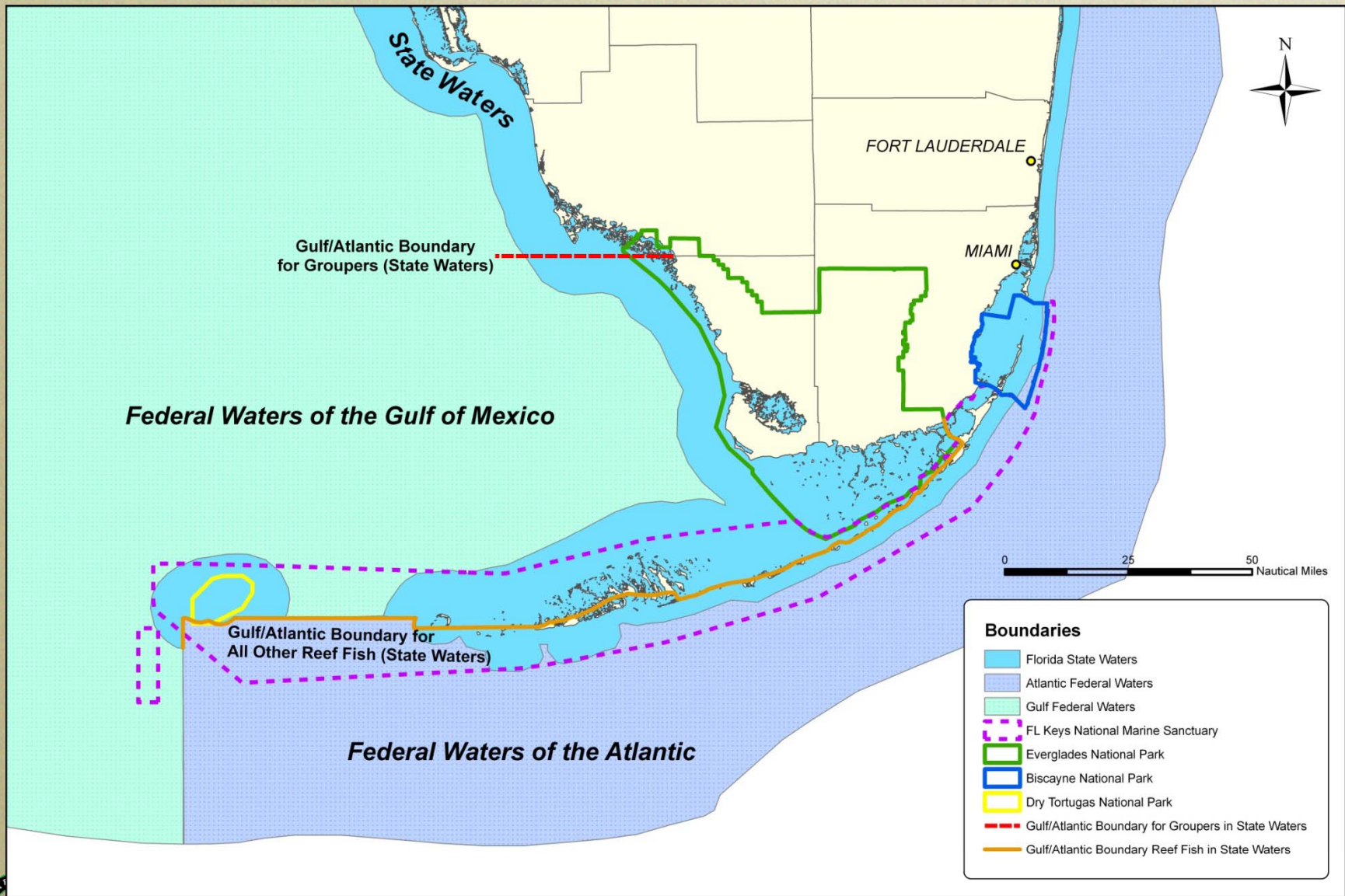
- South Florida fisheries, marine ecosystems, and fishing communities are unique
- Joint-Council South Florida Committee formed
- Workshop Goals:
  - Identify South Florida-specific marine fisheries management issues
  - Better coordinate state and federal management
- Workshop input will go to FWC, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC), and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (GMFMC)











# Is There a Better Way to Manage South Florida Fisheries in General?

- Example: regional approach to management
  - Mirror federal regulations after Florida regulations for Florida-centric species
  - Joint-Council management plans in coordination with FWC management
- Example: consider delegating federal waters management for certain species
  - Stone crab and octocorals now managed by FWC in state and federal waters off Florida
  - Nassau grouper management in federal waters managed by SAFMC



# Yellowtail Snapper

## Stakeholder Ideas

- Manage as a single unit with one quota
  - Quota currently split 75% Atlantic, 25% Gulf
- Change fishing year to minimize disruptions to the fishery when quotas are met
- Spawning season closure during summer
- Exempt from Gulf reef fish circle hook requirements in South Florida



# Mutton Snapper

## Stakeholder Ideas

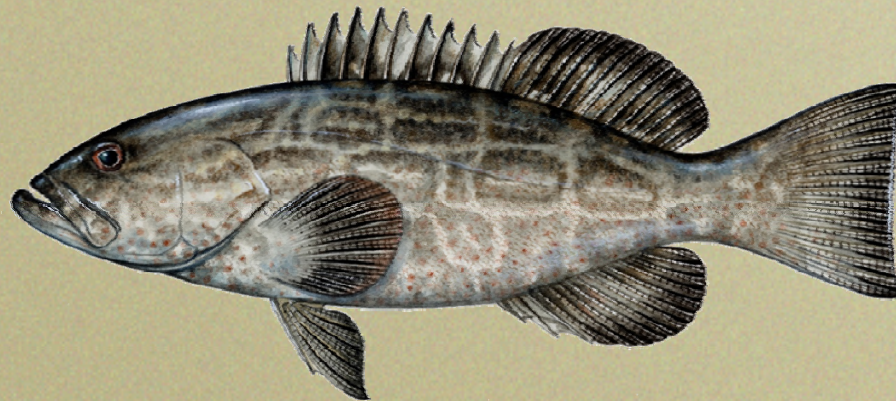
- Protect spawning fish
  - Lower bag limits, spawning season closure, area closures
- Stock assessment update underway



# Groupers

## Stakeholder Ideas

- Gulf/Atlantic state waters boundary for groupers is confusing
- Consistent regulations between Atlantic and Gulf state and federal waters needed
  - Would eliminate transit issues
- Reconsider Jan. – April Atlantic grouper closure (in place to protect gag) for South Florida



# Hogfish

## Stakeholder Ideas

- Stakeholder concerns about stock status
  - Requests for increased minimum size limit and decreased bag limit
- Stock assessment due summer 2014



# Goliath Grouper

- Joint-Council workgroup formed to move past last rejected assessment
  - Science workgroup
  - Stakeholder workgroup
  - Stakeholder survey completed
- Where do we go from here?



# Stone Crab

## Stakeholder Ideas

- Modify trap marking requirements
- Reduce or eliminate traps



# Lobster

## Stakeholder Ideas

- Mini-season: eliminate it, regulate it more, or keep it as is
- Traps: modify marking requirements, reduce or eliminate traps, allow recreational traps
- End moratorium on commercial dive permits
- Increase the minimum size limit



# Corals

## Stakeholder Ideas

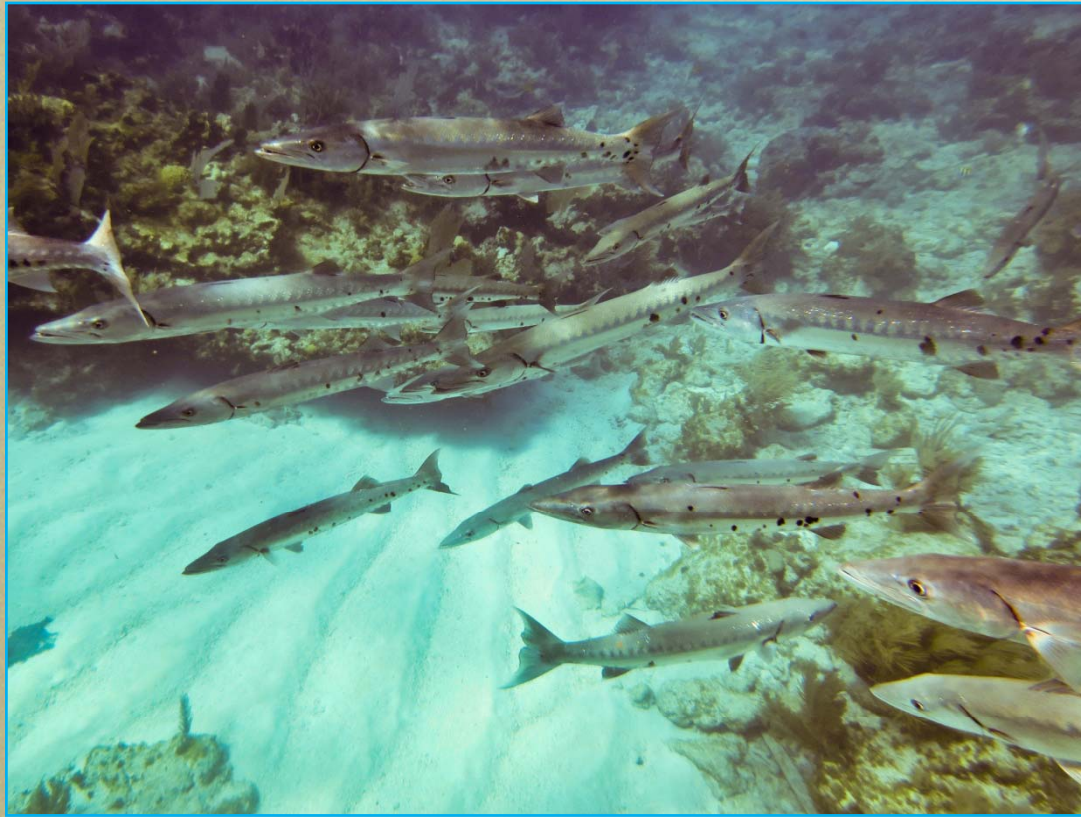
- Protect threatened elkhorn and staghorn colonies from incidental damage
  - Consider trap area closures in state waters
  - Already protected in federal waters and Keys
- Several species pending federal listing as endangered or threatened
  - Additional protections in state and federal waters could be necessary



# Barracuda

## Stakeholder Ideas

- Concerns about loss of these top predators
  - Eliminate spearing
  - Eliminate commercial harvest



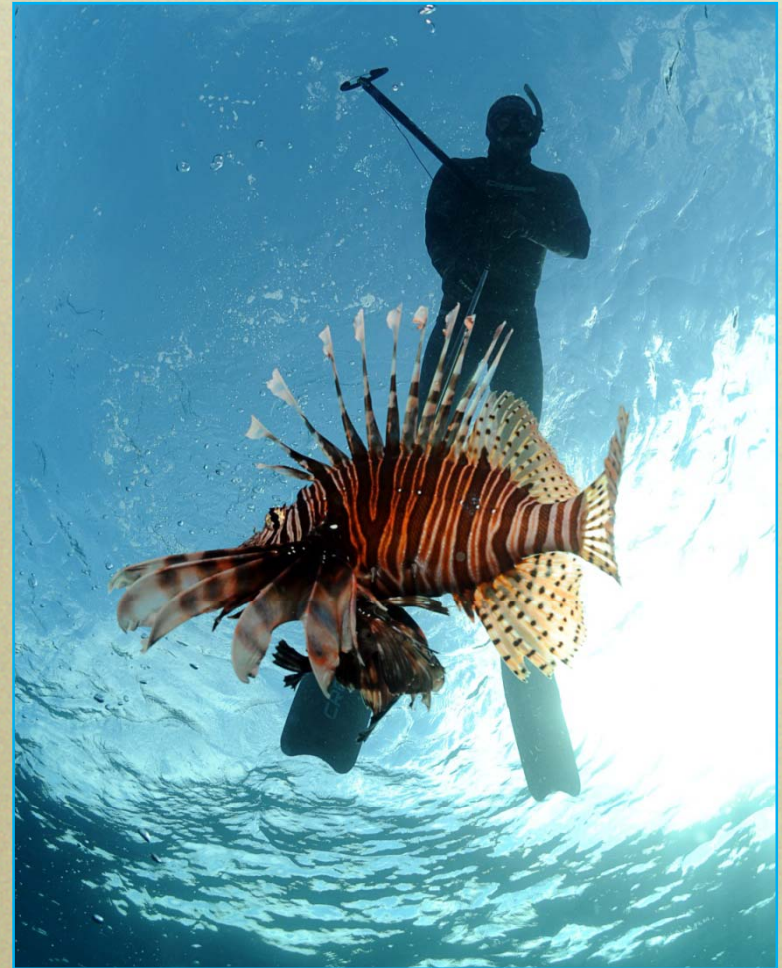
# Marine Life (Aquarium Species)

- FWC manages state and federal waters
- Giant anemone (*Condylactis*) monitoring ongoing; harvest prohibited through 2015
- Sea cucumbers
  - Export market developing for sea cucumbers as food
  - FWC may consider additional management measures



# Lionfish

- FWC encourages harvest
- Recreational license no longer required to harvest lionfish with spears or hand-held nets
- No bag limits
- State symposium to coordinate path forward
  - Oct. 22-24 in Cocoa Beach



## Next Steps

- FWC will review issues and determine which are issues for FWC, Councils, or both
- FWC will present workshop feedback to the Councils
- Joint-Council South Florida Committee meeting later in 2013 to discuss ideas and how to move forward with Council items and state-federal coordination
- FWC will consider timelines for state issues



# Other Issues, Questions, and Comments?

Input on other fisheries issues or unique management ideas is welcome

