



## Content and Status Summary of Amendments and Projects

March 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

#### **Key Events:**

- September 2024: Council directed staff to begin preparing Coral Amendment 11/Shrimp Amendment 12 to establish a SFAA.
- June 2025: Council approved the Purpose & Need, selected a preferred alternative, and approved the amendment for public hearings.
- July 22 to August 12: public comment period. Webinar hearing held on August 5, 2025, and in-person hearing held on August 7, 2025, in St. Augustine, FL.

- September 2025: Reviewed public hearings comments and approved to prepare for consideration for final approval in December 2025.
- December 2025: Council sets special webinar to be held on January 23, 2026, to consider approval.
- January 2026: amendment approved for submittal.

## Snapper Grouper

### Recently Submitted or Implemented:

#### *Amendment 55 (Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper)*

**Staff Lead:** Allie Iberle

**Purpose of Amendment:** Respond to the latest stock assessment (SEDAR 68).

**Action Summary:** Establish a scamp/yellowmouth grouper complex, remove yellowmouth grouper from the shallow water grouper (SWG) complex, establish catch levels and sector allocations for the new complex, adjust catch levels and sector allocations for the SWG complex.

**Most recent document:** Final Amendment in Administrative Record.

**Development Level:** Under review. Amendment submitted on December 9, 2024.

**Key Events:** Refer to December 2024 Active Amendments Document.

#### *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 to NMFS 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:** Under Review. Amendment submitted to NMFS on March 31, 2025.

**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 in the 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. Submitted to NMFS on February 13, 2026.

**Key Events:**

- September 2025: Council initiates development with the intent to hold a public hearing and approve for submission in December 2025.
- December 2025: The Council voted to submit the amendment to NMFS

*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:** Approved for submission

**Key Events:**

- March 2025: Council initiates work on the amendment
- September 2025: Council approves for public hearings
- December 2025: Reviewed public comment and approved for submission

**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:** March 2026 Decision Document

**Development Level:** Pre-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.

### *Amendment 61 (Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit Revision)*

**Staff Leads:** John Hadley & Allie Iberle

**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:** March 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.

### *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; establish dynamic (step-down) trip limits; and revise existing stowage requirements for gear on board.

**Most recent document:** March 2026 Decision Document

**Development level:** Post-scoping 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.

*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.

**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 27 to modify management measures.

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

*Abbreviated Framework 4 (Golden Tilefish)*

**Staff Lead:** Mike Schmidtke

**Purpose of Amendment:** Respond to the latest stock assessment (SEDAR 89) by updating catch levels.

**Action Summary:** Revise ABC and ACLs.

**Most recent document:** None

**Development Level:** Pre-scoping

**Key Events:**

- December 2024: Amendment development initiated.
- March 2025: amendment development paused pending resolution of commercial landings discrepancy between the assessment and ACL monitoring.
- September 2025: Council notified that an update to the assessment with corrected landings is underway and will be presented to the SSC in October 2025 and to the Council in December 2025.
- December 2025: Council received presentation on revised amendment and decided to include an action to adjust catch levels in another SG amendment sometime in 2026. **This amendment will not be developed and will be removed from future AA documents.**

*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)

*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:**

*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:** December 2024 decision document.

**Development Level:** Scoping has been conducted and work on the amendment is underway.

## 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 to the Council.

## Planned or Postponed:

### *Pelagic Longlines in the Dolphin Wahoo Fishery*

**Staff Lead:** John Hadley

**Purpose of the Amendment:** This amendment would consider implementing changes to the commercial longline fishery for dolphin and wahoo to better align with HMS requirements and potentially respond to recommendations from the forthcoming updated Biological Opinion for the dolphin wahoo fishery.

**Action Summary:** TBD

**Most recent document:** None

## Key Events:

- September 2020: The Council moved, from Amendment 10, actions that would modify gear, bait, and training requirements in the commercial longline fishery for dolphin and wahoo to better align with HMS requirements to a new amendment. The Council also added an alternative that would prohibit the use of pelagic longline gear in the dolphin wahoo fishery unless a vessel has the limited entry HMS permits that allows the use of this gear.
- June 2021: Guidance to examine this potential amendment once the updated biological opinion for the Dolphin Wahoo fishery is available.

December 2022: paused consideration to allow for completion of the Dolphin MSE (led by the SEFSC). The MSE is expected to be completed by the middle part of 2026.

## Golden Crab

**Recently Submitted or Implemented:** None

**Under Development:** None

**Planned or Postponed:** None

## Coral

**Recently Submitted or Implemented:** None

**Under Development:** None

**Planned or Postponed:** None

## Shrimp

**Recently Submitted or Implemented:** None

**Under Development:** Shrimp Amendment 12/Coral Amendment 11. See details under Coral FMP above.

**Planned or Postponed:** None

## Mackerel Cobia

**Recently Submitted or Implemented:** None

**Under Development:** None

**Planned or Postponed:**

*Framework Amendment 13 (Atlantic Spanish mackerel catch levels)*

**Staff Lead:** Christina Wiegand

**Purpose of Amendment:** Originally intended to respond to the latest stock assessment (SEDAR 78). The Council is awaiting an updated assessment to take action on catch levels so **this amendment will not be developed and will be removed from future AA documents.**

*Amendment 33 (Gulf King Mackerel Assessment and Allocations)*

**Staff Lead:** Christina Wiegand

**Purpose of Amendment:** Originally intended to respond to the latest stock assessment (SEDAR 38 Update). The Gulf Council is moving forward to address catch levels without involving the South Atlantic Council so **this amendment will not be developed and will be removed from future AA documents.**

## 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 Wiegand

**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.

**Appendix A. Rulemaking progress for SAFMC amendments (updated 8/19/25)**

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			n/a	
SG 48 (wreckfish)	6/14/24	12/19/24					
SG 55 (scamp and yellowmouth)	9/20/24	12/9/24	3/17/25 (5/16/25)	8/25/25 (9/24/25)			
Joint Commercial Electronic Logbook	Sept 2023 SA) Oct 2023 (Gulf)	2/27/2024				1/22/26	
SG AF 5 (blueline tilefish)	12/12/25	2/13/26					
SG Reg 37 (black sea bass)	12/12/25						
Coral Am 11/Shrimp Am 12	1/23/26						

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.