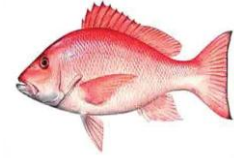
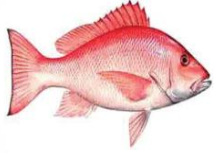


SOUTHEASTERN FISHERIES ASSOCIATION (SFA)



EAST COAST FISHERIES SECTION (ECFS)

Southeastern Fisheries Association- East Coast Fisheries Section (SFA-ECFS) requests that the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) initiates and supports planning for an expedient Golden Tilefish (GT) stock assessment update from SEDAR 25.

We believe this action is justified for the follow reasons: 1) GT is an economically important commercial fisheries species that should be harvested at Optimum Yield, per MSA mandate; 2) the SEDAR 25 GT stock assessment was performed along with Black Sea Bass, a species that was updated in 2013, whereby stock status was updated, and ABC was doubled; 3) the GT fishery is largely commercially-based, making data to construct updated indices of abundance for an update assessment easily obtainable and reliable.

SFA-ECFS requests that the SAFMC and NMFS make commercially and recreationally important species, such as GT, a priority in the scheduling of all future South Atlantic stock assessments.

Jimmy Hull, Chairman
SFA ECFS