



THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Snapper Grouper Amendment 56 Black Sea Bass

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HOW'D WE GET HERE?

SEDAR 76	Indicated strong declines in black sea bass over the last ~15 years Much uncertainty about fishing mortality rate and whether/how the stock could be rebuilt to past levels
Oct 2023– June 2025	Several iterations of SSC discussions, projection runs, and Council direction on draft actions and alternatives
June 2024	Approved for scoping
January 22- February 6, 2025	Scoping



HOW'D WE GET HERE?

<p>June 2025</p>	<p>SSC provided ABC recommendations, starting in 2027</p> <p>Council directed staff to develop Regulatory Amendment 37 and pause work on Amendment 56 until the SEDAR 76 Update stock assessment is updated, including incorporation of revised MRIP FES catch estimates</p>
<p>December 2025</p>	<p>Council approved Regulatory Amendment 37 to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• establish and manage catches to annual catch targets that are approximately 50% of recent catch levels,• establish a spawning season closure for both sectors during February and March,• and reduce the recreational bag limit from 7 fish to 3 fish per person per day

WHAT WAS IN AMENDMENT

56?



June 2025 [Amendment 56 Decision Document](#) & [Committee Report](#)

Actions

1. Revise status determination criteria for BSB
 - Assessment analysts recommended an increase in the Spawning Potential Ratio used as a proxy for maximum sustainable yield (MSY)
 - Most recent SEDAR 76 Update estimate MSY directly rather than using a proxy
2. Revise ABC, ACL, and OY for BSB
3. Change the fishing year start date for BSB
 - Commercial begins on Jan 1; Recreational begins on April 1
 - Considered aligning the start date for both sectors
4. Re-open nearshore areas to on-demand BSB pots

WHAT WAS IN AMENDMENT

56?



June 2025 [Amendment 56 Decision Document](#) & [Committee Report](#)

Actions (continued)

5. Revise recreational bag limit for BSB
6. Reduce recreational minimum size limit for BSB
 - Considered through Reg Am 37 but rejected due to a projected significant shortening of the recreational season
7. Recreational annual fixed closed season for BSB
 - Became a spawning season closure of both sectors during February and March
8. Prohibit multi-hook rigs in the recreational sector of the snapper grouper fishery

Considered/revised through Regulatory Amendment 37



WHAT'S NEXT?

1. Updated recreational catch estimates from MRIP
2. Revised stock assessment, including updated recreational catch estimates
3. SSC reviews assessment and recommends catch levels
4. Amendment development (including public hearings), approval, and implementation

Meeting 1	SSC recommendation of catch levels
Meeting 2	Draft actions and alternatives
Meeting 3	Consider approval for public hearings
Meeting 4	Review public comments and approve all actions
Meeting 5	Consider final Council approval



QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION