



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Carolyn N. Belcher, Ph.D., Chair | Trish Murphey, Vice Chair
John Carmichael, Executive Director

AGENDA

Snapper Grouper Committee

The Beaufort Hotel
2440 Lennoxville Road
Beaufort, NC

Tuesday, December 5, 2023, 11:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Wednesday, December 6, 2023, 8:30 AM – 3:45 PM

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes (September 2023)

Update on Red Snapper Notice of Funding Opportunity/EFPs – NMFS SERO

Update on Amendments Undergoing Rulemaking – NMFS SERO

System Management Plan Workgroup Update – Chip Collier

1. Wreckfish (SG Amendment 48) (*Attachments 1a and 1b*)
 - a. Wreckfish Advisory Group and Sub-Committee reports – Christina Wiegand
 - b. **Committee Action:** Review revised amendment development timeline and cost recovery actions and provide guidance for staff.
2. Private Recreational Permitting (SG Amendment 46) (*AP Report; Attachments 2a and 2b*)
 - a. AP Recommendations – Bob Lorenz, AP Chair
 - b. Overview – John Hadley
 - c. **Committee Action:** Review and approve for public hearings.
3. Gag and Black Grouper Vessel Limit and On-Demand Gear for Black Sea Bass (Regulatory Amendment 36) (*Attachment 3*)
 - a. Overview – Michael Schmidtke
 - b. **Committee Action:** Review and consider approval for scoping.
4. Scamp/Yellowmouth Grouper (Amendment 55) (*AP Report; Attachments 4a and 4b*)
 - a. AP Recommendations – Bob Lorenz, AP Chair
 - b. Overview – Allie Iberle

- c. **Committee Action:** Review the decision document and consider selecting preferred alternatives for Actions 1-3.
5. Yellowtail Snapper Update (SG Amendment 44/RF Amendment 55)
 - a. Overview – Allie Iberle
 - b. **Committee Action:** Provide guidance on amendment timeline.
6. Red Snapper (Regulatory Amendment 35) (*Attachments 6a-6c*)
 - a. Overview – Council Staff
 - b. Discussion of Potential Actions
 - c. **Committee Action:** Reconsider submittal of the amendment.
7. Best Fishing Practices Outreach (*Attachment 7*)
 - a. Update – Ashley Oliver, David Hugo
8. AP recommendations on topics not on agenda – Bob Lorenz, Chair (*AP Report*)
9. Other Business

Adjourn

Committee Members:

Jessica McCawley, Chair
Kerry Marhefka, Vice-chair
Robert Beal
Dr. Carolyn Belcher
Mel Bel
Gary Borland
LT Cameron Box
Tim Griner
Judy Helmey
Trish Murphey
Tom Roller
Robert Spottswood, Jr.
Andy Strelcheck
Laurilee Thompson
Spud Woodward
Mid-Atlantic Member: Sonny Gwin

Attachments:

AP Report: Snapper Grouper AP October 2023 Report

AP Presentation: Snapper Grouper AP October 2023 Report Presentation (*will be posted with Recent Documents by 11/28/2023*)

Attachment 1a: Wreckfish Advisory Group Report

- Attachment 1b:** Wreckfish Sub-Committee Report
- Attachment 2a:** Amendment 46 (Private Recreational Permitting) Decision Document
- Attachment 2b:** Amendment 46 (Private Recreational Permitting) Draft Amendment
- Attachment 3:** Regulatory Amendment 36 Decision Document (Gag, Black Grouper, and Black Sea Bass Pots)
- Attachment 4a:** Amendment 55 (Scamp/Yellowmouth Grouper) Draft Amendment
- Attachment 4b:** Amendment 55 (Scamp/Yellowmouth Grouper) Decision Document
- Attachment 6a:** Regulatory Amendment 35 (Red Snapper and Release Mortality) Draft Amendment
- Attachment 6b:** Presentation on Approach for Snapper Grouper Management and Ending Overfishing of Red Snapper
- Attachment 6c:** Approach for Snapper Grouper Management and Ending Overfishing of Red Snapper – Detailed Timeline
- Attachment 7:** Best Fishing Practices Presentation
- Staff Lead:** Michael Schmidtke (mike.schmidtke@safmc.net)

OVERVIEW

Snapper Grouper Committee

The Committee will approve the minutes from the September 2023 meeting and the agenda for the December 2023 Committee meeting.

1. **Wreckfish (SG Amendment 48) (*Attachments 1a and 1b*)**

Description: A review of the Wreckfish ITQ Program was completed in 2019 and included recommendations for improvement, including stakeholder concerns with offloading site and time requirements. At their June 2023 meeting the Council established an ad-hoc advisory group consisting of the current shareholders (Wreckfish Advisory Group) and Council Wreckfish Sub-Committee to discuss continued development of Amendment 48. Those two groups met to discuss Amendment 48 on September 19th and 20th. Staff will present an update on the discussions and decisions made at those meetings.

Required Committee Action: Consider recommendations of Wreckfish Advisory Group Report and Wreckfish Sub-Committee Report.

2. **Private Recreational Permitting (SG Amendment 46) (*AP Report; Attachments 2a and 2b*)**

Description: Amendment 46 considers establishing a private recreational permit and education requirement for the South Atlantic snapper grouper fishery. Over multiple meetings, the Council has received input and technical guidance from the Private Recreational Reporting Working Group, Joint Council Workgroup on Section 102 of the Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Management Act, and several advisory panels (APs). After reviewing this input, the Council began work on the amendment and approved it for scoping at the December 2022 meeting. Of note at this meeting was also the removal of a reporting component from further consideration in the amendment.

The Council has since further developed Amendment 46, with the amendment being most recently reviewed by the Snapper Grouper AP and Outreach and Communications AP at their October 2023 meetings. The Committee will be provided summary AP feedback and then Council staff will review a decision document for Amendment 46.

Required Committee Action: Review AP comments and the decision document. Consider choosing preferred alternatives for each action and approving the amendment for public hearings.

3. **Gag and Black Grouper Recreational Vessel Limits and On-Demand Gear for Black Sea Bass (Regulatory Amendment 36) (*Attachment 3*)**

Description: Regulatory Amendment 36 considers revising the gag and black grouper recreational vessel limits and revising commercial black sea bass pot requirements to allow the use of on-demand black sea bass pots. The Council initiated this amendment in September 2023, after clarifying their intent to recommend aggregate recreational vessel limits for gag and black grouper in Snapper Grouper Amendment 53. The Council also added consideration of on-demand pots following a workshop that reviewed results of this gear being used under an ongoing exempted fishing permit and fishermen perspective

supporting the long-term allowability for this gear's use in the commercial black sea bass fishery.

Required Committee Action: Provide initial guidance to staff on the range of alternatives to consider in the framework amendment and approve for scoping.

4. Scamp/Yellowmouth Grouper (SG Amendment 55) (*AP Report; Attachments 4a and 4b*)

Description: The results of SEDAR 68 were reviewed by the Council in March 2023 and staff were directed to start a plan amendment to reorganize the Other Shallow Water Grouper Complex, establish the new Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper Complex and then establish a rebuilding plan, catch levels, allocations and AMs for this new complex. In June 2023 the Council approved the amendment for scoping. Scoping hearings were held July 31, August 1 and 2. In October 2023 the SG AP reviewed the amendment and provided feedback. Staff will review the SG AP and a decision document, which will outline the actions needed for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper Complex as well as options for the remaining Other South Atlantic Shallow Water Grouper Complex.

Required Committee Action: Review SG AP feedback, review decision document and provide any guidance to staff on the range of actions and alternatives. Consider selecting preferred alternatives for Actions 1-3.

5. Yellowtail Snapper (SG Amendment 44/RF Amendment 55)

Description: The Council reviewed the results of the SEDAR 68 Interim Analysis and instructed staff to resume work on this joint plan amendment in September 2022. This amendment will modify catch levels for South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico yellowtail snapper as well updating the jurisdictional allocation of the stock acceptable biological catch, total South Atlantic annual catch limit, Gulf of Mexico annual catch limit, and South Atlantic sector allocations. During the September South Atlantic Council meeting, in light of the MRIP-FES pilot study results, the Council requested that the SSC re-consider their ABC recommendation and stated their intent to prioritize an updated assessment for yellowtail snapper that includes SRFS recreational estimates. A clarification letter was sent to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (GMFMC) in October 2023 explaining the South Atlantic Council's intent. The GMFMC subsequently approved a motion to deprioritize work on the amendment until completion of the updated assessment.

Required Committee Action: Provide guidance on amendment timeline.

6. Red Snapper (Regulatory Amendment 35) (*Attachments 6a and 6b*)

Description: In September 2023, the Council directed staff to not submit Regulatory Amendment 35 for secretarial review pending additional discussion. To assist in this discussion, Council staff will review work completed to date for Regulatory Amendment 35 and other projects addressing long-term management of red snapper and the whole snapper grouper fishery.

Required Committee Action: Reconsider submittal of the amendment.

7. Best Fishing Practices Outreach (*Attachment 7*)

Description: The Council will receive updates from staff on the Best Fishing Practices Campaign, including the video project, “What It Means to Me”, the Best Fishing Practices Master Volunteer Program, and the Sea Grant Reef Fish Fellowship.

Required Committee Action: None.

8. AP recommendations on topics not on agenda (*AP Report*)

The Snapper Grouper AP met on October 10-12, 2023, and discussed additional topics pertaining to the snapper grouper fishery. The AP Chair will deliver the Snapper Grouper AP’s recommendations to the Committee on items not covered on the Committee’s agenda.

9. Other Business