



THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Snapper Grouper Amendment 55

Re-organization of complexes, Rebuilding Schedule, Catch Level and Allocation
Establishment for South Atlantic Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper, and Catch
Level Modification for the Other South Atlantic Shallow Water Grouper complex

Public Hearing Session Date and Time

Tuesday August 13th at 6:00pm
and
Wednesday August 14th at 6:00pm

Registration Link and More Details

<https://safmc.net/events/august-2024-public-hearings-snapper-grouper-amendment-5>

Visit Our Website

<https://safmc.net/>

Check Out Our Socials





Why is the South Atlantic Council taking action?

Amendment 55 to the Snapper Grouper (SG) Fishery Management Plan (FMP) would remove yellowmouth grouper from the Other South Atlantic Shallow Water Grouper complex (OSASWG) and establish a new Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex. In addition, for the new complex, this amendment would establish stock determination criteria, a rebuilding timeframe, catch levels, sector allocations, management measures, and accountability measures. For the OSASWG complex, the annual catch limit (ACL) will be modified to subtract the portion allotted for yellowmouth grouper, which will be accounted for in the ACL for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex. For more information about the OSASWG reorganization, see the [Cheat Sheet](#).

The **PURPOSE** of this amendment is to modify the Other South Atlantic Shallow Water Grouper complex by removing yellowmouth grouper from the complex and establishing a new Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex. For the new complex, establish conservation and management measures, stock status determination criteria, a rebuilding plan, catch levels, sector allocations, and accountability measures based on the results of the SEDAR 68 operational assessment (2022) stock assessment. For the South Atlantic Other Shallow Water Grouper complex, modify catch levels

The **NEED** for this amendment is to rebuild the scamp and yellowmouth grouper stock, and achieve optimum yield while minimizing, to the extent practicable, adverse social and economic effect

A Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR) stock assessment for scamp and yellowmouth grouper was completed in 2022 (SEDAR 68 Operational Assessment [OA]). This assessment was completed for both scamp and yellowmouth grouper combined due to similarities between the species. The SEDAR 68 OA indicated that the stock of scamp and yellowmouth grouper is overfished but not experiencing overfishing.



Tentative Amendment Timing

June 2023	Review decision document and approve for scoping
Summer 2023	Conduct scoping
September 2023	Review scoping comments
October 2023	SG AP review
December 2023	Review draft document and preliminary analysis
March 2024	Review updated analysis
June 2024	Review updated analysis, selected preferred alternatives, approve for public hearings
July/August	Conduct public hearings
September 2024	Review public hearing comments and consider final approval

Keep Up with Amendment 55

Visit the Amendment 55 [WEBPAGE](#) on safmc.net to keep up with the amendments progress, find the most up to date documents, and submit public comments



[Home](#)
[Regulations](#)
[Meetings](#)
[Fishery Management](#)
[News & Updates](#)
[About the Council](#)
[Habitat and Ecosystem](#)
[Best Fishing Practices](#)
[Citizen Science Program](#)
[Science & SEDAR](#)

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

GET INVOLVED

[f](#) [t](#) [i](#) [v](#)

[Home](#) / [Snapper Grouper Amendment 55](#)

Snapper Grouper Amendment 55

Amendment Summary

Purpose of Amendment: Respond to the latest stock assessment (SEDAR 68) for scamp and yellowmouth grouper.

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, and adjust catch levels and sector allocations for the SWG complex.

Key Events:

- March 2023: an overview of the assessment and direction to staff to begin work on a plan amendment.
- June 2023: Council reviewed an initial decision document and gave direction to staff. Additional guidance was needed for the parameters of the rebuilding plan and OFL levels, which is anticipated to be provided at the September 2023 meeting.
- July-August 2023: scoping webinars held July 31- Aug 2, 2023.
- September 2023: Council modified the suite of alternatives for some actions and



IMPLEMENTATION
RULE MAKING
SECRETARIAL REVIEW
FINAL APPROVAL
PUBLIC HEARING
SCOPING
PRE-SCOPING

[SUBMIT PUBLIC COMMENT](#)

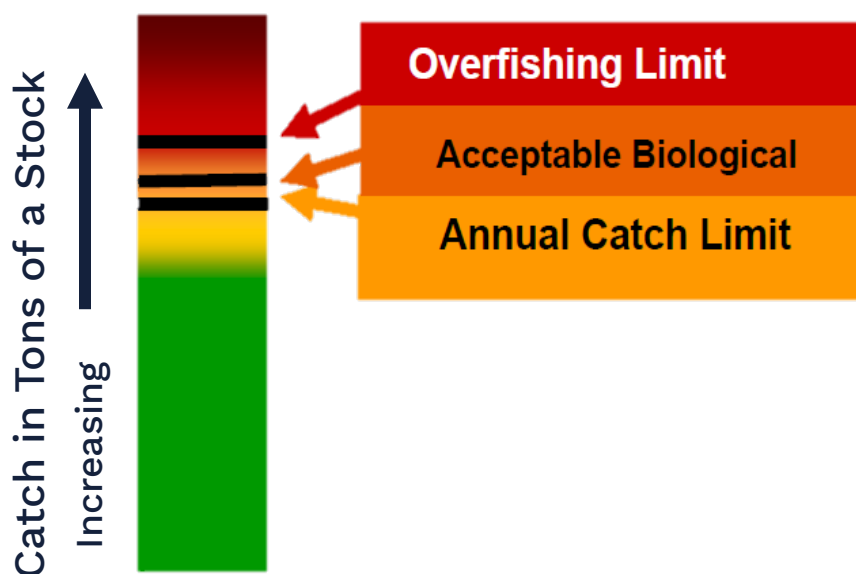




Catch Levels Definitions

Overfishing Limit (OFL): The number or amount (usually in pounds) of fish above which fishing activities would be removing fish from the population faster than they could be replaced (i.e., overfishing would be occurring). The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) determines this limit based on information from the most recent stock assessment.

Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC): The highest number or amount of fish, harvest and discards (released fish that do not survive), that can be removed from the population. The SSC recommends this level by estimating a buffer between OFL and ABC that accounts for scientific uncertainty. More uncertainty means a larger OFL-ABC buffer and a lower ABC.



Annual Catch Limit (ACL):

The limit for how many fish (or pounds of fish) can be landed in a year. The ACL is set by the South Atlantic Council and must be less than or equal to the ABC. The South Atlantic Council can set the ACL

lower than the ABC to further decrease the risk of overfishing and address other fishery objectives.

Optimum Yield (OY): This is the long-term average yield desired from a stock or fishery.



Catch Level Recommendations

The SSC reviewed SEDAR 68 OA and determined that it was sufficient for providing stock status and for providing catch level recommendations (Table 1). The South Atlantic Council received these catch level recommendations in June 2023 and began work on an amendment that would update catch levels to be consistent with the recommended catch levels and best scientific information available.

Table 1. OFL and ABC recommendations from the SSC (April 2023) in response to SEDAR 68 (2022).

Report to SEDAR 66 (2022)

OFL RECOMMENDATIONS		
Year	Total Removals (lbs ww)	
2025	97,000	
2026	119,000	
2027	171,000	
2028	227,000	
2029	270,000	
ABC RECOMMENDATIONS		
Year	Total Removals (lbs ww)	Total Removals (numbers)
2025	71,000	12,000
2026	76,000	12,000
2027	79,000	13,000
2028	82,000	13,000
2029	84,000	14,000
Year	Landings (lbs ww)	Dead Discards (lbs ww)
2025	67,450	3,550
2026	72,200	3,800
2027	75,050	3,950
2028	77,900	4,100
2029	79,800	4,200



Actions and Alternatives

The actions in this amendment achieve four main goals:

1. Create the new Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex. (Actions 1 - 3).
2. Establish catch levels for this complex (Actions 4 and 5).
3. Modify management measures and accountability measures for scamp and yellowmouth grouper (Actions 6 – 10)
4. Modify the existing Other South Atlantic Shallow Water Grouper complex and its ACL to remove yellowmouth grouper (Action 11).

Goal 1: Create the new Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex Actions 1 -3

Action 1. Reorganize the Other South Atlantic Shallow Water Grouper complex and establish a new Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex

Purpose of Action: Scamp and yellowmouth grouper were assessed together due to misidentification issues between the species. The SSC recommended catch levels, based on the assessment, for scamp and yellowmouth grouper combined; therefore, yellowmouth grouper must be removed from the Other South Atlantic Shallow Water Grouper complex (OSASWG) to establish a new Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex.

	Complex/Stock Name	Species
Alternative 1 (No Action)	scamp	scamp ONLY
	Other SA Shallow Water Grouper complex	graysby, coney, red hind, rock hind, yellowfin grouper, yellowmouth grouper
Preferred Alternative 2	Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex (ACL established in Action 4)	scamp and yellowmouth grouper
	Other SA Shallow Water Grouper complex (OSASWG ACL modified, ABC and sector allocation percentages retained in Action 11)	graysby, coney, red hind, rock hind, yellowfin grouper



Action 2. Establish the maximum sustainable yield, maximum fishing mortality threshold, minimum stock size threshold, and optimum yield for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex

Purpose of Action: Because the scamp and yellowmouth grouper complex is a new complex stock determination criteria need to be defined. The criteria set the goal posts for the stock. These criteria are:

(Sub-Action 2a) Maximum sustainable yield (MSY): MSY is the greatest long-term average catch that can be taken from a stock under current conditions. MSY is a static value in pounds.

(Sub-Action 2b) Maximum Fishing Mortality Threshold (MFMT): MFMT is the level of fishing mortality above which overfishing is occurring. MFMT is a rate of fishing mortality.

(Sub-Action 2c) Minimum Stock Size Threshold (MSST): MSST is the spawning stock biomass level below which a stock is declared overfished.

(Sub-Action 2d) Optimum Yield: OY is the long-term average yield desired from a stock or fishery. OY is reduced from MSY for the fishery based on relevant economic, social, and ecological factors.



The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

	Alternative	MSY (1,000 lbs)	MFMT	MSST (metric tons)	OY (1,000 lbs)
2a	Alternative 1 (No Action)	none	-	-	-
	Alternative 2 (MSY = MSY proxy at $F_{30\%SPR}$)	416.20	-	-	-
	Preferred Alternative 3 (MSY = MSY proxy at $F_{40\%SPR}$)	372.28	-	-	-
2b	Alternative 1 (No Action)	-	none	-	-
	Alternative 2 (MFMT = MSY proxy at $F_{30\%SPR}$)	-	0.52	-	-
	Preferred Alternative 3 (MFMT = MSY proxy at $F_{40\%SPR}$)	-	0.28	-	-
2c	Alternative 1 (No Action)	-	-	none	-
	Alternative 2 ($SSB_{MSY} (1-M)$ or 0.5)	-	-	601.12	-
	Preferred Alternative 3 (75% of $SSB_{F40\%}$)	-	-	801.60	-
2d*	Alternative 1 (No Action)	-	-	-	none
	Alternative 2 (OY = 75% of MSY)	-	-	-	279.21
	Alternative 3 (OY = 90% of MSY)	-	-	-	335.05
	Preferred Alternative 4 (OY = 95% of MSY)	-	-	-	353.67

Action 2(a-d) Discussion

MSY: Currently scamp (individually) and yellowmouth grouper (as part of the OSASWG complex) have MSY proxies of fishing mortality (F) at 30% of the stock's spawning potential ratio (SPR, $F_{30\%SPR}$); however, SEDAR 68 OA (2022) recommended an MSY proxy for scamp and yellowmouth grouper combined of $F_{40\%SPR}$. The Council decided to follow the advice of the stock assessment which is considered best available science.

MFMT: Currently scamp (individually) and yellowmouth grouper (as part of the OSASWG complex) have a MFMT equal to the MSY proxy of $F_{30\%SPR}$. However, SEDAR 68 OA (2022) recommended a MFMT equal to the MSY proxy for scamp and yellowmouth grouper combined of the yield at $F_{40\%SPR}$. The Council decided to continue to set MFMT equal to the MSY proxy, thus set this value equal to the updated MSY proxy from Sub-Action 2a.

MSST: Currently scamp (individually) and yellowmouth grouper (as part of the OSASWG complex) have a MSST equal to the spawning stock biomass (SSB) at MSY (SSB_{MSY}) times either 1-natural mortality (M) or 0.5, whichever is greater.



The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

SEDAR 68 OA (2022) defined MSST as the yield at 75% of $SSB_{F40\%}$. The Council decided to establish the updated definition of MSST recommended by the assessment.

Action 3. Establish a rebuilding timeframe for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex

Purpose of Action: The Council is required to establish a rebuilding timeframe for the stock of scamp and yellowmouth grouper because the stock is overfished.

Alternative	Rebuilding Timeframe	End of rebuilding timeframe
Alternative 1 (No Action)	No timeframe for rebuilding	n/a
Alternative 2	Tmin - 5 years	2030
Preferred Alternative 3	Tmax - 10 years	2035

Action 3 Discussion

Year one for Alternatives 2 and 3 is 2025. The Council was notified that the stock could rebuild in under 10 years; therefore, in accordance with the Magnuson Stevens Act, the maximum time the Council can set for the rebuilding plan is 10 years. The Council decided to select 10 years as the preferred rebuilding timeframe because it would incur less reduction in catch levels while still providing a greater than 50% chance of rebuilding the stock, which is required by the Magnuson Stevens Act.



Goal 2: Establish catch levels for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex Actions 4 and 5

Action 4. Establish the acceptable biological catch and total annual catch limit for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex

Purpose of Action: Now that the complex has been established and the benchmarks for the stock set, the complex needs catch levels. Action 4 sets the acceptable biological catch (ABC) and total annual catch limit (ACL). Both the ABC and ACL are inclusive of Marine Recreational Information Program's (MRIP) Fishing Effort Survey (FES) recreational estimates.

Alternative	ACL (pounds whole weight)				
	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Alternative 1 (No Action, no ABC)	n/a				
Preferred Alternative 2 (ACL = ABC)	67,450	72,200	75,050	77,900	79,800
Alternative 3 (95% of ABC)	64,078	68,590	71,298	74,005	75,810
Alternative 4 (90% of ABC)	60,705	64,980	67,545	70,110	71,820

Action 4 Discussion

The Council adopted the ABC recommended by the SSC based on the information from SEDAR 68 OA, 2022. The Council decided to set the total ACL equal to the ABC and forgo a buffer between these two catch levels, instead relying on commercial and recreational management measures and accountability measures to ensure the stock rebuilds within the timeframe.

Action 5. Establish sector allocations and sector annual catch limits for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex

Purpose of Action: The Council has established allocations for all snapper grouper stocks within the South Atlantic. Now that a total ACL was selected, it will be split between the recreational and commercial sectors.



The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

COMMERCIAL ALLOCATIONS

	Alternative 1 (No Action)	Preferred Alternative 2 Split Reduction (2018-2022)	Alternative 3 Split Reduction (2013-2022)
Total ACL (Year) (ACL=ABC)	Commercial % (lbs ww)	Commercial %, (lbs ww)	Commercial %, (lbs ww)
67,450 (2025)	NO ALLOCATIONS	64.90 (43,772)	63.40 (42,763)
72,200 (2026)	NO ALLOCATIONS	63.92 (46,147)	62.51 (45,132)
75,050 (2027)	NO ALLOCATIONS	63.39 (47,572)	62.04 (46,561)
77,900 (2028)	NO ALLOCATIONS	62.90 (48,997)	61.60 (47,986)
79,800 (2029)	NO ALLOCATIONS	62.59 (49,947)	61.32 (48,933)



RECREATIONAL ALLOCATIONS

	Alternative 1 (No Action)	Preferred Alternative 2 Split Reduction (2018-2022)	Alternative 3 Split Reduction (2013-2022)
Total ACL (Year) (ACL=ABC)	Recreational % (lbs ww)	Recreational %, (lbs ww)	Recreational %, (lbs ww)
67,450 (2025)	NO ALLOCATIONS	35.10 (23,678)	36.60 (24,687)
72,200 (2026)	NO ALLOCATIONS	36.08 (26,053)	37.49 (27,068)
75,050 (2027)	NO ALLOCATIONS	36.61 (27,478)	37.96 (28,489)
77,900 (2028)	NO ALLOCATIONS	37.10 (28,903)	38.40 (29,914)
79,800 (2029)	NO ALLOCATIONS	37.41 (29,853)	38.68 (30,867)

Action 5 Discussion

The Council, during the development of Amendment 53 (gag and black grouper), developed a method of allocating between the sectors that is based on how each fishery operates based during a given time period – the Split Reduction Method. For more information and a simple example of this technique see the [Split Reduction Cheat Sheet](#). This method would split the initial reduction of the ACL (as compared to the current scamp ACL) between the sectors based on the landings from the time period selected, and then split the increase in poundage evenly each year thereafter until 2029, when each sector's allocation percentage and ACL in pounds would remain until modified.

The Council discussed the merits of the 3- and 5-year basis for allocations and ultimately thought that the 3-year timeframe was more reflective of how the fishery is operating and, therefore, the best to be the basis for



The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

determining allocation. The two alternatives have very similar allocation percentages/sector ACLs and these percentages are also similar to the current scamp allocation percentages of 65.34% commercial and 34.66% recreational.

Goal 3: Modify management measures and accountability measures for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper

Actions 6 - 10

Management Measures

Action 6. Reduce the recreational fishing season for scamp and yellowmouth grouper

Purpose of Action: Because the scamp and yellowmouth grouper complex is overfished and catch levels need to be reduced, the Council considered shortening the fishing season to achieve the needed reduction in harvest.. However, this action would not modify the annual spawning season closure from January 1 through April 30.

Alternatives	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Preferred Alternative 1												
Alternative 2												
Alternative 3												

Action 6 Discussion

The recreational landings of scamp and yellowmouth grouper tend to spike in May when the season opens, and again in the end of July/beginning of August but then taper off by the end of August (Figure 1).

In June 2024, the Council selected Alternative 1 (No Action) as the preferred noting:

- Recreational fishermen from the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel (AP) recommended retaining year-round access to the fishery outside of the



The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

- annual spawning season closure. They noted that they would prefer a bag or vessel limit to the season being modified.
- Since recreational landings tend to wane in August, shortening the season may not achieve the necessary reduction in harvest. Moreover, fishermen stated that scamp/yellowmouth grouper can be a “day saver” later in the season.
- The Council noted that other management measures and accountability measures can better constrain landings with less negative effects on the recreational industry.

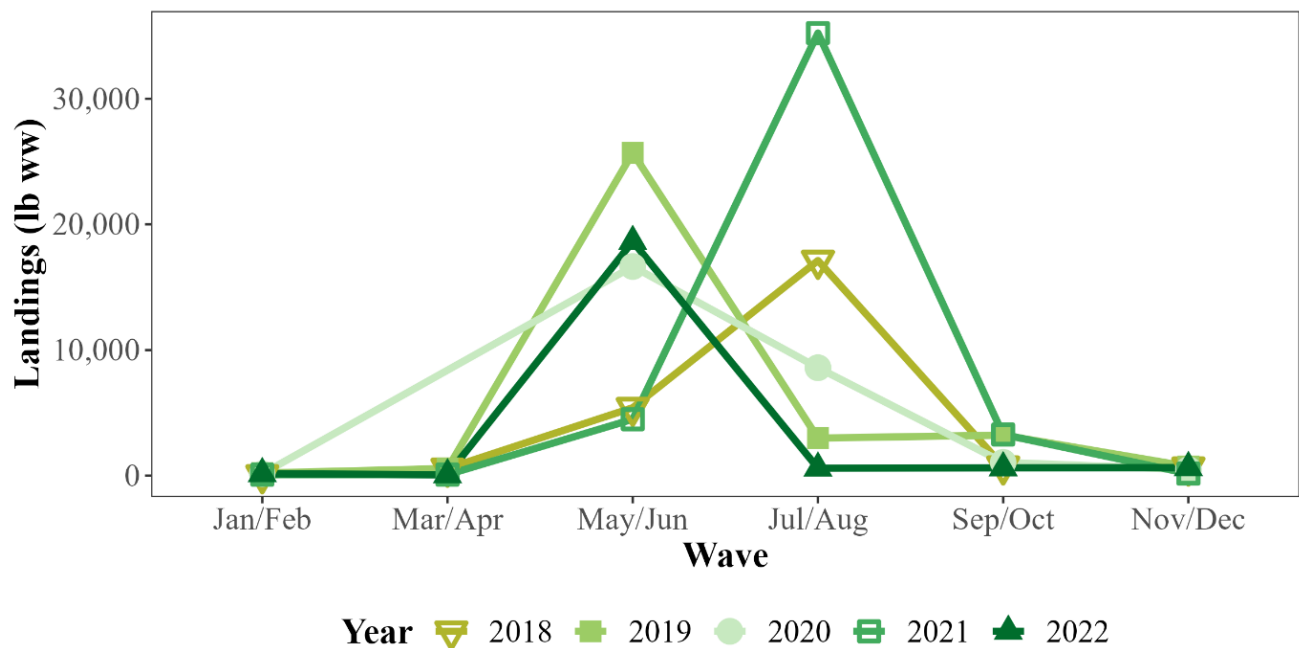


Figure 1. Observed recreational landings by wave, including MRIP-FES recreational landings from shore and private boat fishing modes, FHS landings for charter vessels, and SRHS landings for headboat vessels (Source: MRIP-FES Recreational data – August 2023).

Questions For You

- Do you agree with the Council’s preferred alternative to keep the season for scamp and yellowmouth grouper the same and rely on other management measure such as a bag limit to constrain recreational harvest?
- Is there anything else regarding the recreational scamp and yellowmouth grouper season the Council should know?



The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Action 7. Modify the recreational retention limit for scamp and yellowmouth grouper

Purpose of Action: Both Sub-Action 7a and b aim to constrain recreational harvest to the reduced recreational ACLs.

Sub-Action 7a. Modify the recreational bag limit

Alternative	Bag limit	Recreational Component	Vessel limit
Alternative 1 (No Action)	3 scamp or 3 YM within the grouper aggregate	private, for-hire	none
Alternative 2	2 fish (either scamp or YM grouper) within the grouper aggregate	private, for-hire	none
Preferred Alternative 3	1 fish (either scamp or YM grouper) within the grouper aggregate	private, for-hire	none

Sub-Action 7b. Establish a recreational vessel limit

Alternative	Bag limit	Recreational Component	Vessel limit
Preferred Alternative 1 (No Action)	3 fish within the grouper aggregate	private, for-hire	none
Alternative 2a	<i>Dependent on Sub-Action 7a</i>	private	2 fish (either scamp or YM grouper) PER DAY
Alternative 2b	<i>Dependent on Sub-Action 7a</i>	private	4 fish (either scamp or YM grouper) PER DAY
Alternative 3a	<i>Dependent on Sub-Action 7a</i>	for-hire	2 fish (either scamp or YM grouper) PER TRIP
Alternative 3b	<i>Dependent on Sub-Action 7a</i>	for-hire	4 fish (either scamp or YM grouper) PER TRIP

Action 7a-b Discussion

The proposed 1-fish bag limit of either scamp or yellowmouth grouper would remove the need to identify between the two. The Council selected



The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Alternative 3 as the preferred alternative because it struck a balance between constraining recreational harvest while reducing negative effects on the sector.

The vessel limit proposed under sub-Action 7b would further limit recreational harvest. The Council decided that modifying the recreational bag limit would appropriately constrain recreational harvest and a recreational vessel limit would incur unnecessary negative effects on the recreational sector.

The following are season closure projections for the recreational sector under the preferred total annual catch limit, allocations, , bag limit, and vessel limit:

Year	Recreational ACL	ACL % Overage/Underage	Projected Closure?
2025	23,678	-6%	No
2026	26,053	-14%	No
2027	27,478	-19%	No
2028	28,903	-23%	No
2029	29,853	-25%	No

Questions For You

- Do you agree with the Council's decision to implement a 1 fish aggregate bag limit and not establish a vessel limit?
- With regards to the aggregate bag limit, would no longer having to identify between the species be beneficial for recreational anglers?
- Is there anything else the Council should know about the scamp and yellowmouth grouper recreational bag limit?

Action 8. Establish an aggregate commercial trip limit for scamp and yellowmouth grouper

Purpose of Action: The Council is considering establishing a commercial trip limit to achieve the reduction in harvest needed to constrain catch to the updated commercial ACL, while maintaining an extended commercial season.



Alternative	Trip Limit (lbs gw)
Alternative 1 (No Action)	none
Alternative 2	200 lbs gw
Preferred Alternative 3	300 lbs gw
Alternative 4	400 lbs gw
Alternative 5	500 lbs gw

Action 8 Discussion

The majority of trips catching scamp/yellowmouth grouper from 2020 to 2022 caught 250 lbs or less (Figure 2). The Council felt that a 300-pound commercial trip limit would strike a balance between constraining harvest and possibly extending the commercial season (Table 2). The commercial trip limit also matches for that for gag, a species targeted alongside scamp/yellowmouth.

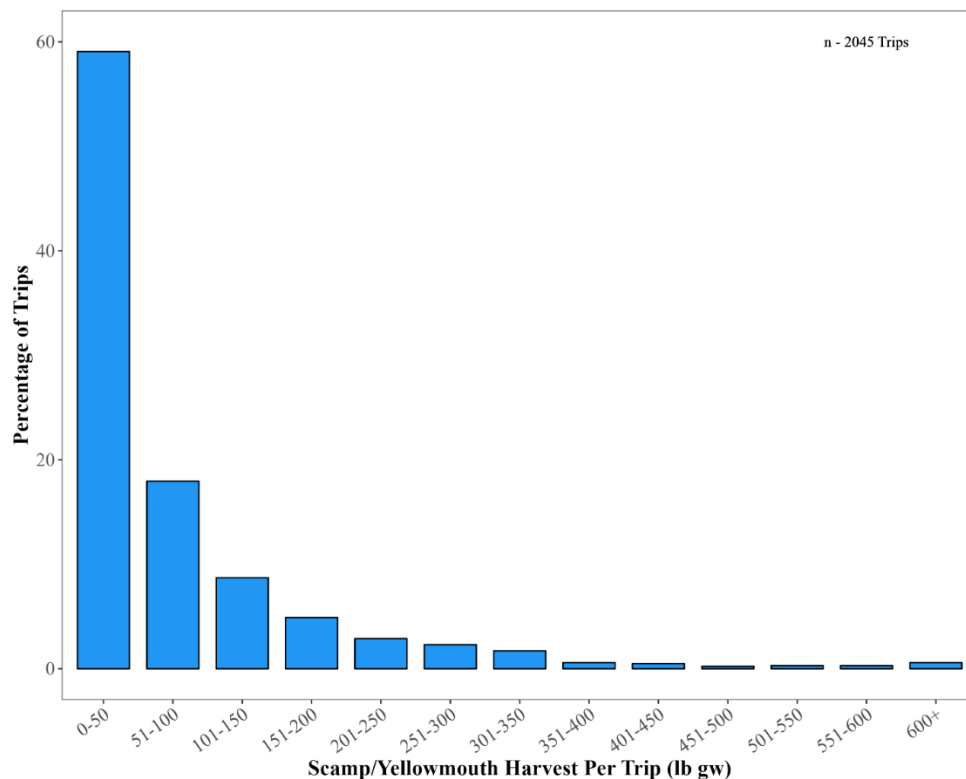


Figure 2. Distribution of scamp and yellowmouth grouper commercial trip harvest between 2020 and 2022, all years combined, in 50 lbs ww bins.



The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Table 2. Percent reduction in harvest associated with each commercial trip limit alternative.

Alternative	% Reduction
Alternative 1: (No Action)	0.00%
Alternative 2: 200 lbs gw (236 lbs ww) trip limit	-16.52%
Preferred Alternative 3: 300 lbs gw (354 lbs ww) trip limit	-7.96%
Alternative 4: 400 lbs gw (472 lbs ww) trip limit	-4.35%
Alternative 5: 500 lbs gw (590 lbs ww) trip limit	-2.46%

Under the preferred alternatives for the total catch limit, and trip limit result in the following season length projections for the commercial sector:

Year	Commercial ACL lbs ww	Commercial ACL lbs gw	Alternative 1 (No Action): No Commercial Trip Limit	Alternative 2: 200 lbs gw	Preferred Alternative 3: 300 lbs gw	Alternative 4: 400 lbs gw	Alternative 5: 500 lbs gw
2025	43,775	37,095	21-Aug	28-Sep	3-Sep	27-Aug	25-Aug
2026	46,150	39,108	29-Aug	20-Oct	16-Sep	6-Sep	2-Sep
2027	47,574	40,315	3-Sep	8-Nov	24-Sep	14-Sep	9-Sep
2028	48,999	41,523	10-Sep	9-Dec	3-Oct	22-Sep	17-Sep
2029	49,947	42,328	15-Sep	26-Dec	11-Oct	27-Sep	22-Sep

Questions For You

- Would a 300 lbs trip limit be profitable enough given the costs associated with taking a trip?

Accountability Measures

Action 9. Establish commercial accountability measures for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex

Purpose of Action: Accountability measures (AM) need to be established for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex to contribute to the rebuilding plan by ensuring that commercial ACLs are not exceeded and to correct for overages if they occur. Accountability measures can be triggered in-season when the ACL is met, or after the season, if the ACL is exceeded.



The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Alternative	In-Season AM		Post-Season AM	
	Triggers	AM	Triggers	AM
Alternative 1 (No Action)	No commercial AM for the South Atlantic Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper Complex, retain current AMs for scamp (individually) and yellowmouth grouper (within the OSASWG Complex)			
Alternative 2	Commercial landings reach or are expected to reach the sector ACL	Current commercial season closes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial landings exceed the commercial ACL • Total ACL exceeded • Stock is overfished <p>*All triggers must be present for AM to occur</p>	Commercial ACL is reduced for the following year by the amount of the overage
Preferred Alternative 3	Commercial landings reach or are expected to reach the sector ACL	Current commercial season closes	<p>Commercial landings exceed the commercial ACL</p> <p>*Not tied to stock status and total ACL</p>	Commercial ACL is reduced for the following year by the amount of the overage

Action 9 Discussion

Alternative 2 would adopt the current AM in place for scamp (individually) and yellowmouth grouper, which has an in-season AM if the commercial ACL is met and a post-season ACL reduction that has three triggers: the commercial ACL must be exceeded, the total ACL must be exceeded, and the stock status must be overfished. Preferred Alternative 3 retains the in-season closure but the post-season ACL payback is reliant only on the commercial ACL being exceeded.



The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Action 10. Establish recreational accountability measures for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex

Purpose of Action: Accountability measures (AM) need to be established for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex to contribute to the rebuilding plan by ensuring that recreational ACLs are not exceeded and to correct for overages if they occur.

Alternative	In-Season AM		Post-Season AM	
	Triggers	AM	Triggers	AM
Alternative 1 (No Action)	No recreational AM for the South Atlantic Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper Complex, retain current AMs for scamp (individually) and yellowmouth grouper (within the OSASWG Complex)			
Alternative 2	Recreational landings reach or are expected to reach the sector ACL	Current recreational season closes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreational landings exceed the recreational ACL Total ACL is exceeded Stock is overfished *All triggers must be present for AM to occur	Recreational season for the following year is reduced by the amount necessary to prevent the recreational ACL from being exceeded
Alternative 3	Recreational landings reach or are expected to reach the sector ACL	Current recreational season closes	Recreational landings exceed the recreational ACL *Not tied to stock status and total ACL	Recreational season for the following year is reduced by the amount necessary to prevent the recreational ACL from being exceeded
Alternative 4	Recreational landings reach or are expected to reach the sector ACL	Current recreational season closes	Recreational landings exceed the recreational ACL *Not tied to stock status and total ACL	Recreational ACL is reduced for the following year by the amount of the overage
Preferred Alternative 5	NONE		Recreational landings exceed the recreational ACL *Not tied to stock status and total ACL	Recreational season for the following year is reduced by the amount necessary to prevent the recreational ACL from being exceeded



Action 10 Discussion

Preferred Alternative 5 removes the in-season AM and uses the post-season AM from Alternative 3. Alternative 2 would adopt the current AM in place for scamp (individually) and yellowmouth grouper, which has an in-season AM if the recreational ACL is met and a post-season, season length reduction that has three triggers: the recreational ACL must be exceeded, the total ACL must be exceeded, and the stock status must be overfished. Alternative 3 and 4 would retain the in-season closure but the post-season AM is reliant only on one trigger – the recreational ACL being exceeded. The difference between the alternatives is the type of payback, Alternative 3 is a season reduction while Alternative 4 is an ACL reduction.

The Council proposes removing the in-season AM because recreational catch estimates are often not available in time to trigger a closure during a short season. The proposed post-season AM to correct for ACL overages would be more easily triggered than the one currently in place, hence more effectively contributing to rebuilding the stock.

Goal 4: Modify the existing Other South Atlantic Shallow Water Grouper Complex to Remove Yellowmouth Grouper Actions 11

Action 11. Revise the total annual catch limit and sector annual catch limits for the Other South Atlantic Shallow Water Grouper complex

Purpose of Action: Under Action 1, the Other South Atlantic Shallow Water Grouper complex (OSASWG) would be modified to remove yellowmouth grouper. Therefore, the OSASWG ACL must be updated to remove the portion of the ACL allocated for yellowmouth grouper. The ABC and ACL for this complex are currently inclusive of MRIP-Coastal Household Telephone Survey (CHTS) recreational estimates. The ABC would remain the same and the ACL would continue to be based on MRIP-CHTS recreational estimates. The sector allocation percentages would remain the same.

Alternative	ABC (lbs ww)	Total ACL (lbs ww)	Commercial ACL (lbs ww)	Recreational ACL (lbs ww)
Alternative 1 (No Action)	104,190	104,190	55,542	48,648
Preferred Alternative 2	104,190	100,151	53,380	46,771



Action 11 Discussion

The Council is removing the yellowmouth grouper portion of the OSASWG ACL to ensure that catch levels for yellowmouth grouper are not duplicated through the OSASWG and Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex established in Action 1. The Council is planning on updating the OSASWG ACL to be inclusive of MRIP FES recreational estimates in an upcoming unassessed species amendment.

How Do I Comment?

Comments must be received by 5:00 PM on Friday, August 16, 2024. There are several ways that you can submit your comment to the Council including:

Comments taken during webinars

Tuesday, August 13th at 6:00pm
Wednesday, August 14th at 6:00pm

Written comments

Written comments may be read and submitted on Amendment 55 using the online public comment form at the following links:

<https://safmc.net/amendments/snapper-grouper-amendment-55/>

Comments by mail

Send comments to: John Carmichael, Executive Director, SAFMC. 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201. N. Charleston, SC 29405

Comments by fax

843-769-4520