



THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

# **Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel**

## **October 2024 Meeting Summary**

James Paskiewicz,  
AP Chair

2024 December  
Council Meeting





# Not on December Agenda

- Completed Fishery Performance Reports (FPR) for Red Snapper and Yellowtail Snapper
- Other Business
  - Continued struggles with shark depredation; recommend the Council consider a letter to HMS to help address this issue
  - Golden tilefish longline endorsement holders are considering a proposal for a catch share program
  - One member noted concerns with recreational data uncertainty and effects on commercial quotas



# Not on December Agenda

- Other Business
  - Some desire for considering an income requirement with continued open entry for the for-hire component of the fishery rather than limited entry
  - Headboat representatives reiterated their opposition to federal bottom closures



**QUESTIONS?**



# Amendment 56 (Black Sea Bass Assessment Response)

- Recreational effort is unlikely to decrease under a retention closure
  - BSB are mixed in with other reef-associated bottom species, so little effectiveness in specific targeting/avoiding
- Some members against a Jan-April retention closure because few other species are available in nearshore areas off NC during that time of year
- Reducing the recreational size limit without reducing the bag limit could be detrimental if it leads to seasonal closures
  - Smaller bag limit is more livable for for-hire/headboat component than other measures that may shorten the season



# Amendment 56 (Black Sea Bass Assessment Response)

- A commercial member proposed consideration of a 12-inch size limit for both sectors
  - Larger fish are more commercially valuable
  - Not many large BSB off Florida, so may lead to increased discarding there
- Many inshore interactions with small/undersized black sea bass off NC
  - Shallow water survival is higher than deep water, but circle hooks are not required/used in shallow water, so gut-hooking by J-hooks hurts survival
  - Proper gear and releasing techniques that maximize survival could help survival of inshore juveniles

**QUESTIONS?**





# Snapper Grouper MSE

- Members noted that some of the topic stocks and other SG species may never return to historical levels under current environmental conditions
  - Fishing may not be driving the declines
  - As species decline/move out of the area, new species may increase/move in; access to available species is necessary
- Continuing to increase awareness and practice of proper releasing techniques is needed to reduce release mortality



# Snapper Grouper MSE

- Some AP members noted that the model runs presented in this meeting seem to indicate the need for a reduction in recreational effort to rebuild the topic stocks
  - Potential strategies to help:
    - 1-2 month closures around spawning seasons
    - Small, inshore MPAs focused on enhancing survival of juvenile fish
    - Stocking for some species
- Headboat representatives stated their opposition to bottom closures
  - If a bottom closure is necessary, a niche needs to be carved out for the headboat component to allow persistence of this part of the fishery



# Snapper Grouper MSE

- Bottom closures could result in business closures and further loss of working waterfronts and coastal fishing areas
- The AP reiterated the prominence of red snapper throughout the region, commenting they are now being caught closer to shore than ever (even from shore and in FL rivers)
- Members commented on the lack of on-the-water enforcement of fishing and boating regulations
  - There are fishermen operating as for-hire or commercial professionals without the required permits and certifications



**QUESTIONS?**