

Overview

Snapper Grouper Committee

December 8 & 9, 2010
Hilton New Bern/Riverfront
100 Middle Street
New Bern, NC

The Snapper Grouper Committee needs to: (A) receive a report from staff on *Oculina* research and outreach activities, (B) receive presentations on the November 2010 SSC and Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel Meetings; (C) review alternatives in the Comprehensive ACL Amendment, modify as necessary and approve the document for public hearings; (D) review public hearing comments on Amendment 18A and approve actions; (E) receive a presentation from Dr. Nick Farmer on analysis of red snapper closure alternatives to be included in Regulatory Amendment 10; review red snapper projections; review, modify and approve Regulatory Amendment 10 for submission to the Secretary of Commerce; (F) review analyses in Regulatory Amendment 9 and approve the document for public hearings, and (G) review alternatives in Amendment 24 and approve for scoping.

A. Oculina Reports

Research: Council staff will provide a brief update on research activities pertaining to *Oculina*.

Outreach: Distribution of the SAFMC Fishing Regulations and Regulations for Deepwater MPA Regulation brochures containing regulation information for the *Oculina* Experimental Closed Area and HAPC continue to be distributed as requested. Copies are also available at all meetings and public hearings.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Take action as necessary.

B. SSC Report (Attachment 1)

The Scientific and Statistical Committee met in Charleston on November 8-10, 2010. Dr. Carolyn Belcher will provide an overview of the meeting.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Take action as necessary.

C. Advisory Panel Report (Attachment 2)

The Advisory Panel met in Charleston on November 16-18, 2010. The Committee will receive a report with the AP's recommendations on developing amendments.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Take action as necessary.

D. Comprehensive Annual Catch Limit Amendment (Attachment 3)

The Committee will receive an overview of actions and alternatives currently included in the amendment along with recommendations for changes from the Team and the SSC. In particular, the Committee needs to provide guidance to the Team on ABC Control Rule actions and timing for this amendment.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Modify document as necessary, provide guidance to Team and approve for public hearings.

E. Amendment 18A – Public Hearing Draft (Attachment 4)

Amendment 18A contains management actions affecting the black sea bass and golden tilefish fisheries. At the September Council meeting, the Committee decided to split Amendment 18 into 18B (FMU Extension Action and designation of EFH for Snapper Grouper in Northern Extension Area) and 18A (rest of actions). The Committee also approved a motion to take Amendment 18A to public hearings. Public Hearings were held October 25-27 in New Bern, Charleston and Daytona Beach, respectively. Written comments were due on or before November 12. The Committee will review DEIS comments in March 2011 and approve for formal review.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Review public comments and approve all actions.

F. Regulatory Amendment 10 (Attachments 5a – 5e)

At the September Council meeting, the Committee received a presentation from NOAA Fisheries staff on possible changes to the proposed red snapper management actions as a result of the 2010 stock assessment. The Council decided that a Regulatory Amendment should be developed in order to analyze a change in regulations from those actions proposed in Amendment 17A. In order to conduct the required analyses NOAA Fisheries staff had to make changes to the model that was used to develop alternatives for Amendment 17A. Dr. Nick Farmer will present results of the analyses that were conducted since the September Council meeting. The Committee provided guidance to staff in terms of the range of alternatives to analyze for Regulatory Amendment 10. The Committee provided the following two alternatives to act as bookends for the analysis:

- (1) The combination of the prohibition on red snapper harvest and possession and the smallest possible closed area to snapper grouper fishing.
- (2) The combination of the prohibition on red snapper harvest and possession and the closed area proposed in Amendment 17A but possession and retention of snapper grouper species (other than red snapper) would be allowed a portion of the year.

The Committee will review additional red snapper model runs requested from the SEFSC and review the alternatives in the document.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Review, modify and approve Regulatory Amendment 10 for submission to the Secretary of Commerce for formal review and implementation.

G. Regulatory Amendment 9 (Attachment 6)

Regulatory Amendment 9 contains trip limit actions for black sea bass, vermilion snapper, gag, and greater amberjack. The amendment also addresses other management actions for black sea bass (i.e., split season and spawning season closure). At the September Council meeting, the Snapper Grouper Committee added various trip limit alternatives, including higher trip limits. The Committee also moved the turtle release gear changes to the Comprehensive Ecosystem Based Amendment 2.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Review analyses, provide guidance to Team and approve for public hearings.

H. Amendment 24 (Attachment 7)

Amendment 24 addresses management of red grouper in the South Atlantic.

At the September Council meeting, the Committee moved the actions pertaining to black grouper to the Comprehensive ACL amendment as that amendment considers species groupings for a shallow water grouper complex. The Committee decided to retain red grouper in Amendment 24 as there is a statutory deadline to implement a rebuilding plan. The Committee chose a preferred rebuilding period of 10 years for red grouper, but recognized that they will review the annual yield and corresponding economic analysis for a shorter rebuilding period in the future. Scoping meetings are scheduled for January/February 2011.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Review alternatives and approve for scoping.

I. Amendments 18B, 20 & 21 (Attachment 8)

NOAA GC will provide an update on Amendment 18B. Council staff will provide an overview of the content and status of Amendments 20 & 21 as well as a current timeline for each.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Review alternatives in Amendment 21 and approve for scoping.

J. Amendment 22

As the red snapper stock rebuilds, the Council will need to adjust management. Amendment 22 will explore alternative management methods for the species in order to maintain long-term harvest levels of red snapper at or below the ACL. At the September Council meeting, staff presented the alternatives in the options paper. The Committee approved the range of alternatives developed by the IPT and added a number of other options. The document was revised accordingly and presented to the Snapper Grouper AP for their input at their November meeting.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Provide guidance to Team as necessary and approve for scoping.