

Revised Overview

Snapper Grouper Committee

Renaissance Orlando Airport Hotel
5445 Forbes Place
Orlando, FL

The Committee will: (A) receive reports from SERO and the SEFSC on the status of commercial and recreational catches versus the respective quotas for snapper grouper species under quota management, including all snapper grouper species in the Comprehensive Annual Catch Limit (ACL) Amendment; (B) receive an update on recent *Oculina* research activities, if any; (C) receive an overview and status report from SEFSC staff on the new SEFSC Quota Monitoring Program; (D) receive a report from SERO/SEFSC on the status of the delinquent logbook review; (E) receive a status report from SERO staff on snapper grouper amendments under Secretarial review; (F) receive reports from the Chairs of the SSC and Snapper Grouper AP, respectively; (G) receive an overview of the document to re-submit Action 4 of Amendment 18A (transferability of black sea bass pot endorsements), make changes as necessary, approve for formal review, and deem the codified text as necessary and appropriate; (H) receive an overview of changes to Amendment 18B/EA (golden tilefish) since the March 2012 Council meeting, modify the amendment as appropriate, approve for formal review, and deem the codified text as necessary and appropriate; (I) discuss possible designation of MPAs for speckled hind and warsaw grouper in the Comprehensive Ecosystem-based Amendment 3--consider recommendations from advisory panels, and the SSC, input from public MPA workshops, recommendations from the MPA Expert Workgroup and make a recommendation to the Council whether to include consideration of MPAs for these two species in CE-BA 3; receive a presentation from SERO staff on percent area to protect and impact analyses, if appropriate, then select preferred alternatives and approve for public hearings; (J) receive a presentation from Dr. Marcel Reichert on CPUE trends for select snapper grouper species in fishery-independent MARMAP surveys; (K) receive background presentations from Council staff and a presentation from the SEFSC on levels of red snapper dead discards relative to the latest assessment (SEDAR 24) projections, then consider possibly re-opening red snapper fishing in South Atlantic federal waters depending on observed levels of dead discards; (L) receive a report from the SEFSC on updated projections used in the recent black sea bass assessment (SEDAR 25) with observed 2011 data, consider recreational ACL estimated closure dates for fishing year 2012/2013, and consider changes to black sea bass fishing levels as appropriate; and (M) address issues under Other Business as appropriate.

A. Status of landings for quota-managed snapper grouper species (Attachments 1a & 1b)

The Council will receive an update on the status of landings (commercial and recreational) for all quota-managed snapper grouper species, including those under the Comprehensive ACL Amendment.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Discuss and take action as necessary.

B. Update on Oculina research activities

There are no recent activities to report.

C. SEFSC Quota Monitoring Program

During the March 2012 Council meeting, Dr. Steve Turner made a presentation to the *Ad Hoc* Data Collection Committee on improvements being made to the SEFSC's commercial quota monitoring system. The new system (CLM – Commercial Landings Monitoring system) takes into account different boundaries for each stock, variable quota, and overlapping species groups (single species, aggregated species). It also draws data from multiple sources (i.e., SAFIS (GA and SC), FL and NC dealer reports via Bluefin Data's file upload system) and links directly to the SERO's permit database. The new system is expected to supply SERO with projections of when quotas will be met for primary species *before* the fishery opens. The new system will be implemented in May 2012. The SEFSC is also working with SERO and councils to develop uniform dealer reporting requirements and shorten reporting period.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Discuss and take action as necessary.

D. Status of Delinquent Logbook Review

During the March 2012 meeting, the Council approved a motion to request development of a protocol to address delinquent logbook reporting. The Council asked that the SEFSC present on this issue during the June 2012 meeting.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Discuss and take action as necessary.

E. Status of Amendments Approved for Secretarial Review

The Committee will receive a status report from SERO staff on the following amendments:

- Regulatory Amendment 11 (Alterations of Am. 17B Closure)
- Comprehensive ACL Amendment/EIS (ACLs & AMs)
- Amendment 24/EA (Red Grouper)
- Amendment 18A/EIS (Black Sea Bass)

- Amendment 20A/EA (Wreckfish ITQ)
- Regulatory Amendment 12 (Golden Tilefish)

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Discuss and take action as necessary.

F. SSC and Snapper Grouper AP Reports (Attachments 2 & 3)

The Scientific and Statistical Committee convened in Savannah, GA, on April 3-5, 2012. Items on the SSC's agenda included ABC Control Rule modifications, a review of landings and ABCs and discussion of proposed actions in the Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment 3 (CE-BA 3). The SSC also elected a new Chair, Dr. Luiz Barbieri, and vice-chair, Dr. Marcel Reichert. Dr. Carolyn Belcher, former Chair of the SSC, along with Dr. Luiz Barbieri will present an overview of the SSC's recommendations to the Committee.

The Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel met in Charleston, SC, on April 18-19, 2012. The AP discussed several items including Amendment 18A/EA (golden tilefish) and actions pertaining to snapper grouper included in CE-BA 3, specifically the possible designation of MPAs for speckled hind and warsaw grouper. The AP also elected a new chair, Capt. Robert Johnson, and vice-chair, Mr. Jim Atack. Capt. Johnson will present an overview of the AP's recommendations to the Committee and will be available to speak on behalf of the AP during the meeting.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Discuss and take action as necessary.

G. Action 4 of Amendment 18A (transferability of black sea bass pot endorsements; Attachments 4a & 4b)

The Committee will receive a copy of the resubmittal of Action 4 from Snapper Grouper Amendment 18A that was not approved by the Secretary.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Discuss, modify as needed, and make recommendations to the Council for submitting the revised action and the codified text for Secretarial review.

H. Amendment 18B/EA (golden tilefish; Attachments 5a-5c)

At the March 2012 meeting, the Council made a few changes to Amendment 18B. Most notably, the Council chose to no longer consider an endorsement program for the commercial hook and line sector and added three new alternatives to the action that would establish eligibility requirements to obtain a longline endorsement. Using the Decision Document (*Attachment 5b*) Council staff will provide an overview of the changes to the document since the March 2012 Council meeting and capture any further changes the Committee wishes to recommend to the Council. Amendment 18B has been under development since 2008 and is scheduled to be approved for submission to the Secretary of Commerce for formal review at the June 2012 meeting.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Modify draft Amendment 18B as appropriate, approve for formal review, and deem the codified text necessary and appropriate.

I. MPAs for speckled hind and warsaw grouper (CE-BA 3; Attachments 6a-6g)

The Comprehensive Ecosystem-based Amendment 3 contains two actions that affect the snapper grouper fishery: designations of MPAs to address bycatch mortality of speckled hind and warsaw grouper and establishment of HAPCs for these two species. At the March 2012 meeting, the Council instructed staff to conduct three workshops to garner input on possible locations for new MPAs. Two of the MPA Workshops sought feedback from the public and one (the MPA Expert Workgroup) focused on input from experts (scientists and commercial and recreational fishermen). Council staff will provide reports on the MPA Workshops while the SSC Chair, Snapper Grouper AP Chair, and Expert Workgroup Chair will offer specific recommendations as appropriate. The Committee will then make a recommendation to the Council whether to include consideration of MPAs for speckled hind and warsaw grouper in CE-BA 3. If appropriate, SERO staff will provide a presentation addressing the Council's request for specific analyses (*Attachments 6e-6f*). The Council is scheduled to approve CE-BA 3 for public hearings at the June 2012 meeting. The Committee should select preferred alternatives, if appropriate, and recommend approval of the two actions for public hearings in August 2012 as part of CE-BA 3.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Consider feedback from stakeholders and advisory bodies to determine the appropriate approach to address bycatch mortality of speckled hind and warsaw grouper. Select preferred alternatives as appropriate, and approve for public hearings as part of CE-BA 3.

J. Presentation on MARMAP CPUE trends for select snapper grouper species (Attachment 7)

At the request of Council vice-chair Ben Hartig, Dr. Marcel Reichert will make a presentation on CPUE trends for select snapper grouper species obtained through the MARMAP survey.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Discuss and take action as necessary.

K. Red Snapper (Attachments 8a-8d)

In a letter dated April 7, 2012 (*Attachment 8c*) the Council requested that the SEFSC provide estimates of dead discards (all sectors) for the years 2010 and 2011 to evaluate the actual and estimated level of mortality relative to the previously projected mortality levels. Based on the resulting comparison, the Committee should make a recommendation to the Council whether to modify the current moratorium on the harvest of red snapper via an emergency rule.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Consider the information provided by the SEFSC on the observed level of dead discards relative to the projected levels and determine whether the Council should consider allowing some harvest. If the moratorium were to be lifted, the Committee would need to recommend the commercial/recreational allocation, accountability measures to avoid overages, and timing.

L. Black Sea Bass (Attachments 9a-9c)

The acceptable biological catch for black sea bass was specified by the SSC for fishing years 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 at 746,610 lbs gutted weight (gw) and 881,356 lbs gw, respectively, using the Council's approved ABC Control Rule and latest assessment (SEDAR 25). The SSC based its ABC recommendations on a 50% probability of recovering the stock by the end of the 2015/2016 fishing year. However, the Council chose to specify a lower ABC that would have a 66% probability of rebuilding and hold constant the value of ABC (and ACL) from the previous stock assessment of 718,000 lbs gw for the 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 fishing years. The Council chose a precautionary approach to increase the probability the stock would be rebuilt by the end of the ten-year timeframe specified in Amendment 15A (rebuilt by 2016) and thus avoid taking more drastic measures in the final three years of the rebuilding schedule. However, at the time Amendment 18A was developed, overages for the 2010/2011 fishing year were not yet available. The SEDAR 25 projections, therefore, were done assuming various overage percentages. Ultimately, the assumption of 150% overage for fishing year 2010/2011 was used to consider adjustments to the ABC and ACL. Therefore the Council requested (*Attachment 9a*) that the SEFSC re-run the SEDAR 25 projections using the observed overage for fishing year 2010/2011 and provide it at the June 2012 meeting (*Attachment 9b*). In addition, the SERO used three approaches to estimate when the recreational black sea bass ACL would be met during fishing year 2012/2013 (*Attachment 9c*). Based on the results of the projection and estimated recreational closures, the Council may consider adjusting the rebuilding strategy and/or the ACL for black sea bass. Emergency Action would be necessary to have these changes in place for the 2012/2013 fishing year.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Discuss and take action as necessary.

M. Other Business

The Committee will address items under Other Business as appropriate.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Discuss and take action as necessary.