

**FINAL**  
**SUMMARY REPORT**  
**SNAPPER GROUPEL COMMITTEE**  
**SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**  
**September 16-18, 2025**

The Committee approved the minutes from the June 2025 meeting and the agenda for the September 2025 meeting. The Council also received updates from SERO on several amendments (Regulatory Amendment 36, Amendment 48, and Amendment 55) that have been submitted to NOAA Fisheries.

**Commercial Sub-Committee Report and Amendment 60 (Commercial Permit and Trip Efficiency)**

The Snapper Grouper Commercial Sub-Committee (Sub-Committee) met on September 15, 2025. A [summary report](#) for this meeting is included in the September 2025 Council meeting briefing book. In addition to the actions, ranges of alternatives, and directions to staff described in the Sub-Committee Report, the Committee gave the following directions to staff for Amendment 60:

- Revise Action 4 to only address allowance of snapper grouper harvest while stowed longline gear is on board.
  - Develop stowage requirements to be applicable to different types of longline gear.

The Committee also discussed the Sub-Committee's recommendation to revise the application of trip limits to the sale of fish. The Committee expressed intent for this revision to be addressed as quickly as possible, and passed the following motion:

**MOTION 1: INITIATE AN ACTION TO REVISE HOW TRIP LIMITS ARE APPLIED TO THE SALE OF FISH, WITH THE VEHICLE TO BE DETERMINED LATER.**

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

Language regarding sale of fish relative to the end of a commercial fishing trip is in the regulations for the Snapper Grouper (SG), Dolphin Wahoo, and Coastal Migratory Pelagics Fishery Management Plans (FMP).

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** Send a letter to NMFS to state the issue for all three of these FMPs. Focus on how the Council perceives the regulation should be interpreted for enforcement purposes. NOAA General Counsel advised to send the letter; however, there is no discussion on the record for FMPs other than SG. A change to the regulations will be needed in the long-term to clarify the trip limit language.

The Council requests that draft codified text be provided earlier in the process to ensure it accurately reflects the Council's intent for a rule.

The Committee also discussed the Sub-Committee's recommendation concerning Starlink as a potential approved telecommunication device for the Coast Guard and gave the following direction to staff:

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:**

- Send a letter to the Coast Guard, of similar form to a letter sent by the Gulf Council, requesting approval of Starlink as an approved telecommunication device.
- Include this topic on the agenda for the winter 2026 LEAP.

The Committee passed the following motion:

**MOTION 2: SEND A LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE EXPRESSING CONCERN ABOUT THE DELAY OF FISHERIES' SERVICE ACTIONS RELATED TO QUOTA-MANAGED FISHERIES (E.G., ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES).**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL (1 ABSTENTION)**

**Yellowtail Snapper & Mutton Snapper (Amendment 44)**

Joint Snapper Grouper Amendment 44/Reef Fish Amendment 55 is in response to SEDAR 79 for mutton snapper and SEDAR 96 for yellowtail snapper, where both assessments indicated that the stocks are not overfished or experiencing overfishing. The Council reviewed a decision document with an action that would establish the stock OFL and ABC and jurisdictional allocation between the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils for each species. The Council had previously planned on updating the ACL and sector allocations in a separate amendment, but this is not feasible because of the gap in time between amendments. Therefore the ACL for each species needs to be updated within the current amendment. The Committee discussed the best way to move forward updating the catch levels and settled on one amendment document to be prepared jointly with the Gulf Council and with the Gulf Council as the administrative lead.

The Committee made the following motions and gave the following direction to staff:

**MOTION 3: IN ACTION 1, MOVE ALTERNATIVE 4 TO CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED.**

**Action 1. Modify the stock overfishing limit, stock acceptable biological catch, and jurisdictional allocation of the stock acceptable biological catch between the South Atlantic and Gulf of America Fishery Management Councils for mutton snapper and yellowtail snapper**

**Alternative 1 (No Action).** Do not establish the updated stock OFL and ABC for mutton and yellowtail snapper and retain the current jurisdictional allocations percentages for each species.

**Alternative 2a-b.** Establish the stock OFL and ABC, apply the current jurisdictional allocation percentages for each species to the updated stock ABC.

**Alternative 3a.** Establish the stock OFL and ABC, allocate 9% of the mutton snapper stock to the Gulf Council and 91% to the South Atlantic Council.

**Alternative 3b.** Establish the stock OFL and ABC, allocate 8% of the mutton snapper stock to the Gulf Council and 92% to the South Atlantic Council.

**Alternative 3c.** Establish the stock OFL and ABC, allocate 16% of the yellowtail snapper stock to the Gulf Council and 84% to the South Atlantic Council.

**Alternative 3d.** Establish the stock OFL and ABC, allocate 15% of the

yellowtail snapper stock to the Gulf Council and 85% to the South Atlantic Council.

**Alternative 4a.** Establish the stock OFL and ABC, allocate 9% of the mutton snapper stock to the Gulf Council and 91% to the South Atlantic Council.

**Alternative 4b.** Establish the stock OFL and ABC, allocate 9% of the mutton snapper stock to the Gulf Council and 91% to the South Atlantic Council.

**Alternative 4c.** Establish the stock OFL and ABC, allocate 7% of the mutton snapper stock to the Gulf Council and 93% to the South Atlantic Council.

**Alternative 4d.** Establish the stock OFL and ABC, allocate 17% of the yellowtail snapper stock to the Gulf Council and 83% to the South Atlantic Council.

**Alternative 4e.** Establish the stock OFL and ABC, allocate 15% of the yellowtail snapper stock to the Gulf Council and 85% to the South Atlantic Council

**Alternative 4f.** Establish the stock OFL and ABC, allocate 14% of the yellowtail snapper stock to the Gulf Council and 86% to the South Atlantic Council

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

#### **DIRECTION TO STAFF:**

- Discussion at the Gulf Council noted that Action 1 should be split into two actions, one for each species. The Committee agreed and directed staff to split this action into two actions.
- Include language that would update the total ACLs for each species within Actions 1 and 2.
- Include two additional actions that would update the South Atlantic sector allocations for mutton snapper and yellowtail snapper and develop a suite of alternatives based on previous allocation methods and the Allocation Decision Tool, which will be presented at the December 2025 meeting.

#### **Updates**

##### Recreational Aggregate Bag Limit Discussion

Council staff presented an analysis of bag limits for snapper-grouper species. The results showed that most landings and catches occurred on trips where anglers harvested fewer than 10 fish in the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit per person. For some species, discarding did not appear to be driven by regulations (e.g., Gray Snapper), whereas for others, discards seemed more directly tied to regulatory measures (e.g., Black Sea Bass and Red Snapper).

The Committee expressed interest in whether similar patterns were observed in the Florida State Reef Fish Survey or under the Florida Exempted Fishing Permit. Members also noted that any recreational aggregate bag limits would need to be based on full retention with no size limits. In addition, it was recognized that anglers may choose to fish in an area if at least one target species is open for harvest. Members also expressed interest in exploring the data by region to find overlapping or differing species.

##### Blueline Tilefish Jurisdictional ABCs

Council staff informed the Council of communication with the Mid-Atlantic Council concerning jurisdictional allocations between the regions and the formation of a joint subcommittee, including members of both Councils, to collaboratively determine how the ABC should be divided.

More immediately, the Committee discussed the need to implement the increased ABC that has been recommended by the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC), based on SEDAR 92. The Committee recognized the time constraint with any potential amendment in order to get the new catch limits in place for the 2026 fishing season. As such, the Committee passed the following motion:

**MOTION 4: INITIATE AN ABBREVIATED FRAMEWORK FOR BLUELINE TILEFISH FOR 2026 TO IMPLEMENT THE SSC RECOMMENDED ABC AND ESTABLISH AN ACL.  
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE  
APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

To address this change through an abbreviated framework amendment, sector allocation percentages would need to be maintained, even though the recreational catch estimation method changed to incorporate the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) Fishing Effort Survey (FES) in the SEDAR 92 stock assessment. This method would be used to track recreational catch moving forward. Staff presented an analysis of recreational and commercial landings, with recreational landings calibrated to estimation methods using the Coastal Household Telephone Survey as well as the Fishing Effort Survey. The analysis indicated a relatively small difference between recreational and commercial landings relative to current sector allocation percentages. The Committee also discussed that the overall benefit to the fishery of quickly implementing the increased ABC is greater than potential benefits of waiting for a more prolonged process that would include re-evaluating sector or jurisdictional allocation percentages.

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** Include discussion about the upcoming revision to MRIP FES (2026) in the rationale for maintaining current sector allocations in the abbreviated framework amendment. The Council intends to work with the MAFMC to explore jurisdictional allocations later, through a separate process. The Council can also consider long-term changes to South Atlantic sector allocations at that time.

The Committee directed staff to draft the abbreviated framework amendment for consideration of final Council approval in December 2025. The public hearing for the abbreviated framework amendment would be conducted within the public comment session at the December 2025 Council meeting.

#### Golden Tilefish Landings Discrepancy

In June 2025, staff informed the Council of discrepancies among commercial data sources using in the [SEDAR 89](#) stock assessment of golden tilefish. Staff updated the Committee on continued discussions with the Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) and data providers, noting that a revised stock assessment is expected to be completed and presented at the December 2025 Council Meeting.

#### Vessel Limits for Headboats

Council staff reviewed previous discussion points related to vessel limits for headboats and updated the Committee on the upcoming discussion about headboat vessel limits scheduled for March 2026. The Committee requested the following additional information be provided for this discussion: investigate vessel limits and current catch rates per every six passengers for black

grouper, gag, and scamp, and snowy grouper; also, define and explain the requirements to be considered a headboat. For other species, vessel limits would be considered during amendment development for that species.

### **Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation**

Council staff provided an update on the Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) for the Snapper Grouper Fishery and requested the Committee provide guidance on management scenarios, performance objectives, and species to analyze. The Committee recommended including an aggregate bag limit, mandatory stopping, seasonal closure, and spatial closures as potential management scenarios. The Committee recommended not considering large area closures in the EEZ. Recommended performance objectives included rebuilding overfished stocks, short-term and long-term yield, fraction discarded, and angler access. The Committee wanted additional information to make a recommendation for species to include in the evaluation.

**MOTION 5: CONSIDER AGGREGATE BAG LIMITS, MANDATORY STOPPING (REEF FISH), SEASONAL MANAGEMENT, AND SPATIAL MANAGEMENT (CLOSED OR OPEN AREAS) IN THE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY EVALUATION.**

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** Do not include large area closures.

**MOTION 6: USE PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES: SUCCESSFUL REBUILD, SHORT-TERM LANDINGS, LONG-TERM LANDINGS, DISCARD FRACTION, AND ANGLER ACCESS IN THE SNAPPER GROUPE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY EVALUATION.**

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

The Council discussed species to include in the MSE, noting the following points:

- There are 6 regions in the MSE that differ in species' abundance
- What applies to the north FL region would also apply to GA. It's ok if there is overlap to avoid confidentiality issues.
- Consider the MSE is a simulation.
- Challenging to superimpose the distribution of species on the BAM.
- State directors and SG committee chair to work directly with Chip to give their input (goal: ~5 species).

### **Innovative Management Approach for the Snapper Grouper Fishery**

Council staff led the Committee through a brainstorming exercise to develop goalposts and principles that can guide and inform future discussions. Discussions from this exercise are described in Appendix 1.

### **Black Sea Bass (Regulatory Amendment 37)**

Council staff informed the Committee of the Council's request for additional modifications and review of the SEDAR 76 Update stock assessment. Information about this request will be

included in Regulatory Amendment 37 to note the long-term actions that are developing outside of that amendment process.

Council staff presented Regulatory Amendment 37 through a decision document. The Committee passed the following motions and gave the following direction to staff:

**MOTION 7:** FOR ACTION 1, SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 UNDER SUB-ACTION 1A; ALTERNATIVE 2 UNDER SUB-ACTION 1B; AND ALTERNATIVE 2 UNDER SUB-ACTION 1C AS PREFERRED.

**Action 1. Establish annual catch targets and revise the accountability measures for South Atlantic black sea bass**

- **Sub-Action 1a. Establish annual catch targets for black sea bass**

**Alternative 2.** Establish a commercial annual catch target of 48,557 pounds whole weight and a recreational annual catch target of 63,143 pounds whole weight for South Atlantic black sea bass. The annual catch limits for each sector would remain unchanged.

- **Sub-Action 1b. Revise the in-season accountability measure for the commercial sector**

**Alternative 2.** If the National Marine Fisheries Service estimates that commercial landings of South Atlantic black sea bass will reach or are projected to reach the commercial quota, set at the commercial **annual catch target** in Sub-Action 1a, Alternative 2, the National Marine Fisheries Service will close the commercial harvest of black sea bass for the remainder of the fishing year.

- **Sub-Action 1c. Revise accountability measure for the recreational sector**

**Alternative 2.** The National Marine Fisheries Service will project the length of the South Atlantic black sea bass recreational fishing season based on when the recreational **annual catch target** in Sub-Action 1a, Alternative 2, is projected to be met and announce the recreational fishing season end date in the Federal Register prior to the start of the recreational fishing year on April 1.

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**  
**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**MOTION 8:** SELECT SUB-ALTERNATIVE 2B (FEBRUARY; COMMERCIAL), SUB-ALTERNATIVE 2C (MARCH; COMMERCIAL), SUB-ALTERNATIVE 3B (FEBRUARY; RECREATIONAL), SUB-ALTERNATIVE 3C (MARCH; RECREATIONAL) UNDER ACTION 4 (SPAWNING CLOSURE) AS PREFERRED.

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** Add “spawning” under Action 4 seasonal closure alternatives

**Action 4. Establish a spawning season closure for South Atlantic black sea bass**

**Alternative 2.** Establish a commercial seasonal closure in which commercial sale, purchase, harvest, or possession of black sea bass in or from South Atlantic federal waters south of Cape Hatteras, NC, is prohibited and the commercial trip limit is zero.

The commercial spawning seasonal closure occurs from:

**Sub-Alternative 2b.** February 1 through the end of February.

**Sub-Alternative 2c.** March 1 through March 31.

**Alternative 3.** Establish a recreational seasonal closure in which recreational harvest or possession of black sea bass in or from South Atlantic federal waters south of Cape Hatteras, NC, is prohibited and the bag limit is zero.

The recreational spawning seasonal closure occurs from:

**Sub-Alternative 3b.** February 1 through the end of February.

**Sub-Alternative 3c.** March 1 through March 31.

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**MOTION 9:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 (2 FISH) UNDER ACTION 2 (BAG LIMIT) AND ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION; 13 INCH) UNDER ACTION 3 (SIZE LIMIT) AS PREFERRED.

**Action 2. Reduce the recreational bag limit for South Atlantic black sea bass**

**Alternative 3.** Reduce the recreational bag limit for South Atlantic black sea bass to 2 fish per person per day.

**Action 3. Reduce the recreational minimum size limit for South Atlantic black sea bass**

**Alternative 1 (No Action).** The recreational minimum size limit for South Atlantic black sea bass is 13 inches total length.

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:**

- Include up-front explanation of outcomes of the various size limit alternatives in the public hearing materials.
- Include season length and closure date projections in the draft amendment released for public comment.
- Conduct public hearings via webinar ahead of the december 2025 meeting.

**MOTION 10: APPROVE REGULATORY AMENDMENT 37 FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS.  
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE  
APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit Revision (Amendment 61)**

Through the development of Amendment 61, the Council has identified 17 species to examine more in-depth to determine whether the species should be removed from the fishery management unit (FMU) or designated as ecosystem component (EC) species. These species are misty grouper, margate, sailor's choice, tomtate, white grunt, bar jack, jolthead porgy, knobbed porgy, saucereye porgy, scup, whitebone porgy, banded rudderfish, blackfin snapper, cubera snapper, queen snapper, Atlantic spadefish, and sand tilefish.

The Committee reviewed previous Council actions that removed species from the FMU or designated EC species, the ability of states to manage species removed from federal conservation and management, parameters for designating EC species, EC species actions from several federal fishery management councils, and permit requirements for EC species. The Committee reviewed potential measures to include in the amendment, providing the following guidance and motions:

Include the following list of measures to include for scoping:

- Retain species within the FMP under current federal management (no action).
- Remove species from the FMP.
- Designate species as ecosystem components.
  - Retain a permit requirement.
  - Retain a reporting requirement.
  - Implement a possession limit.

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:**

- During scoping, emphasize that the Council has the ability to choose different actions for different species. The same action does not need to apply to all 17 species.
- For the December 2025 meeting, provide additional information on:
  - Prepare a discussion on developing ecosystem management objectives.
  - The extent of measures that can be implemented for EC species in regard to commercial and recreational retention limits. How restrictive can these measures be without being considered “conservation and management?”
  - Revisit the list of species to continue to include in Amendment 61.
- Regarding the report of landings for unmanaged and EC species, include landings from both state and federal waters. Also include landings by state when possible.

**MOTION 11: REQUEST TO RECEIVE AN ANNUAL REPORT OF COMMERCIAL LANDINGS OF UNMANAGED AND ECOSYSTEM COMPONENT SPECIES (SEE MID-ATLANTIC REPORT FOR REFERENCE).  
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE  
APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** Council staff and NMFS staff cooperate to develop and plan to prepare for the Council's September or December meeting.

**MOTION 12: APPROVE SNAPPER GROUPER AMENDMENT 61 FOR SCOPING.  
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE  
APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**Topics for Fall Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel Meeting**

The Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel is scheduled to meet in Charleston, SC, on October 27-29, 2025. The Committee directed staff to develop the AP's agenda with inclusion of the following topics:

- Regulatory Amendment 37 (Black Sea Bass) and update on SEDAR 76 Update stock assessment review
- Amendment 44 (Yellowtail Snapper and Mutton Snapper)
- Amendment 61 (Fishery Management Unit Revision)
- Blueline Tilefish Abbreviated Framework Amendment
- Commercial Trip Limitations on Sale/Conclusion of a Trip
- Blueline Tilefish Potential Trip Limit Increase from 300 to 400 pounds
- Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation
- Elect Chair and Vice Chair
- Updates on Developing Council Actions: Golden Tilefish Assessment, Recreational Aggregate Bag Limit, Headboat Vessel Limit, Amendment 60 (Commercial Permit and Trip Efficiency), Amendment for Joint State-Federal Management of Red Snapper
- Updates: Best Fishing Practices, SEDAR, Citizen Science, Florida Red Snapper EFP Projects

**Other Business**

**Timing and Tasks:**

**MOTION 13: DIRECT STAFF TO DO THE FOLLOWING:**

- Continue development of Amendment 60 (Commercial Permit and Trip Efficiency) for Council approval for public hearings in March 2026. Update the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel on progress of this amendment at their meeting in October 2025, but give the a detailed update at their April meeting, and present information on the amendment to the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel for discussion at their next meeting (January/February 2026).
- Send letters: 1) to the Secretary of Commerce concerning the delay in NMFS' actions on quota-managed species, and 2) to the Coast Guard requesting designation of Starlink as an approved telecommunication device.
- Develop a draft abbreviated framework amendment that would change the blueline tilefish acceptable biological catch and annual catch limits for consideration of final Council approval in December 2025.
- Gather and analyze information on the aggregate bag limit and headboat vessel limit ahead of future discussions.
- Continue development of the Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation using direction provided earlier in this report.
- Conduct public hearings for Regulatory Amendment 37 (Black Sea Bass) prior to the December Council meeting.

- Prepare Regulatory Amendment 37 (Black Sea Bass) for final Council approval in December 2025.
- Conduct scoping for Amendment 61 (Fishery Management Unit Revision) and continue developing the amendment for review at the December 2025 meeting.
- Develop a report of landings for unmanaged and ecosystem component species in the region with the intent that this report be updated and provided to the Council annually (in the second half of the year by Council and NMFS staff).
- Convene the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel to address topics as described earlier in this report.
- Continue development of Amendment 44 (Yellowtail Snapper and Mutton Snapper), including adding actions that update the ACL and include South Atlantic sector allocations for both species. This Amendment will go to the Gulf Council at their next meeting and then SAFMC will review again in December.
- Prepare the Allocation Decision Tool to review possible allocation changes for mutton and yellowtail snapper.

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**APPENDIX 1**  
**DRAFT**  
**SUMMARY REPORT**  
**SNAPPER GROUPE INNOVATIVE MANAGEMENT EXERCISE**  
**SNAPPER GROUPE COMMITTEE**  
**SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**  
**Charleston, South Carolina**  
**September 17, 2025**

The Committee discussed a proposed framework, first introduced during the June 2025 Council meeting, to reset Snapper Grouper fishery discussions and begin progress toward innovative actions that improve the overall fishery. The framework is built around establishing “goalposts” to describe overarching fishery objectives that will help guide individual decisions, agreeing to some basic “principles” and facts to avoid rehashing the same discussions, and developing a series of short, medium, and long-term actions that are achievable given the current science and regulatory challenges.

The Innovation Plan requires brainstorming, and the first steps need to be judgement-free. To that end, the Committee agreed upon a multi-step process that is intended to allow the Committee to:

- Come up with ideas and innovative solutions that can be evaluated objectively (goalposts).
- Apply some structure to reduce rehashing of the same unresolvable arguments and discussions of unknowns (principles).
- Develop a plan for moving forward to improve the fishery under a new science reality.

During this meeting, Committee members brainstormed ideas for goalposts and principles, followed by discussions and grouping of different ideas. Once goalposts and principles were grouped, Committee members were asked to place dots on the items they felt should be prioritized. At the December 2025 meeting, the Committee will continue to develop the Innovation Plan by reviewing and discussing identified priorities.

Below is a summary of the goalposts and principles that were identified by the Council:

### **Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan Goalposts**

#### **Process Goalposts**

- Figure out how to keep folks engaged (5 Dots, Stack of 3)
  - o Promote our fisheries as the best managed in the world (outreach).
  - o Improve trust and confidence of our stakeholders in the Council process.
- Creating a snapper grouper sub-committee was a good idea, use more sub-committees (4 Dots, Stack of 2)
  - o Be innovative to streamline the process so that it is more efficient.
- Ensure local knowledge is factored into management decisions (3 Dots, Stack of 2)
  - o Have fishermen knowledge on species at any SSC meeting.

- More communication and collaboration between states and NOAA outside of the Council process (1 Dot).
- Safe word to stop discussions.

#### Management Goalposts

- Council take more risk to try new things to achieve goals and fix problems (9 Dots).
- Develop allocations based on total catch (7 Dots).
- Evaluate portfolio fishing (commercial) (6 Dots, Stack of 2)
  - Reexamine S. Cadrin fishery portfolio approach for commercial fishery.
- Be proactive (5 Dots).
- Eliminate discards and quit wasting the resource (4 Dots, Stack of 3).
  - No wasted fish.
  - Eliminate discards in the recreational sector.
- Recreational optimum yield about access, not poundage of fish harvested (3 Dots).
- Regional management of fisheries to account for differences across the Council region (2 Dots, Stack of 4).
  - Sub-regional management.
  - Regional management.
  - Spatial management with year round fishing in some areas (areas may not be static).
- More holistic review of the fishery (multi-species, regime shift) (2 Dots).
- Everyone is happy (2 Dots)
- Less dependence on stock assessments. It is one tool in the tool box, not the hammer (1 Dot, Stack of 3).
  - Timely management; do not wait for “data” when we agree there is a problem.
  - Not just reacting to stock assessments.
- Act on information we have, not what we are hoping to get (1 Dot).
- A balanced sustainable stock(s) (1 Dot).
- No bottom closures.
- More simple regulations that are still effective.
- Regulatory flexibility to meet local needs.

#### Science Goalposts

- Simplify the science to meet management needs (simpler assessments) (9 Dots, Stack of 6).
  - Stock assessment methods that match available data.
  - Support more interim analyses.
  - Simplify and more timely stock status. Use indices and surveys.
  - Percent change of ABC doesn’t require action.
  - Evaluate stock assessment uncertainties to determine if a regulation change is necessary for the ABC (Action/No Action).

- Create real time data collection (Innovative, ex. EFPs, Citizen Science) (9 Dots).
- Expand fishery independent surveys (3 Dots, Stack of 2)
  - Fishery independent data throughout the Council’s jurisdiction.
- More cooperative research = more engagement with the industry (2 Dots, Stack of 2).
  - Create more surveys using cooperative sampling.
- Look at where species are caught geographically and both recreational and commercial (1 Dot).
- More timely, less complex science for management (1 Dot).
- Make response to data/assessment more timely.

#### Economic Goalpost

- Explore portfolio fishing for commercial (8 Dots, Stack of 5)
  - A stable commercial fishery this is so well managed that it can command good prices year-round, age of fishermen, and number of fishermen.
  - Ensure commercial trips are profitable because enough fisheries are available for harvest.
  - Enhanced commercial trip efficiency and viability.
  - Commercial trip profitability.
- Maximize recreational trip efficiencies.

#### Access Goalposts

- Optimize access (6 Dots).
- I don’t want to put headboats out of business or any fisheries (4 Dots).
  - Don’t let headboats go out of business.
- Optimize year-round access to all snapper grouper for commercial and recreational fisheries (3 Dots).
  - Ensure year-round access for recreational and commercial fisheries.
  - Reasonable access for commercial and recreational fisheries.
  - Access to commercial fisheries year round if possible.
  - Robust rebuilt snapper grouper stocks to provide year round access.
  - Year round access for the recreational sector.
  - Some year round access to fish.
- Ensure path for new entrants for commercial and for-hire (Stack of 4)
  - Maintain size of commercial fleet and access.
  - Need pathway for new entrants into commercial fisheries.
  - New entrants are able to place retired fishermen.
- Seafood consumers have a right to the resource.

#### Responsibility to Stakeholders Goalposts

- Understanding our audience better.
- Stakeholder and fishermen satisfaction.

- Fishermen don't want to share their feelings they want to show them.

### Input Added to the "Marina"

- Broader leadership of Council/Committees beyond state directors.
- Balance access with quality fishing experience and reduce waste/discards/



Figure 1. Sticky wall used by the Snapper Grouper Committee to brainstorm "goalposts" for the Snapper Grouper Innovation Plan in September 2025.

## Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan Principles

### Big Picture Process Principles

- Be solution oriented (11 Dots, Stack of 3)
  - o Arguing about regional differences without tools to address
  - o Fewer roadblocks, more off-ramps
- Be willing to test new and innovative ideas (8 Dots)
- Make difficult, unpopular decisions when needed in alignment with fishery goals (6 Dots, Stack of two)
  - o Think about the mess or positive situation we will leave a future SAFMC in (don't kick the can...)
- Grow 'pie' by exploring other available target species (4 Dots)

- Recognize population growth, technology, and effort continue to increase and will place increased downward pressure on resources (3 Dots)
- Don't let perfection stop progress (3 Dots)
- Take more risk when making decisions (2 Dots, Stack of 2)
  - o STOP Sugar Coating It!
- We will never have the perfect solution/approach for everyone (1 Dot, Stack of 3)
  - o We will always have data gaps, move on!
  - o Avoid falling in the same ditches
- Stick to our big picture goals (2 Dots)
- Don't continue to bring up ideas that Council decided not to move forward with – unless there is new rationale and you know the history (Stack of 2)
  - o Focus on single species management not serving fishery well
- Use science and data to make decisions

#### Committee Efficiency Principles

- Push for shorter time lines for actions (9 Dots, Stack of 3)
  - o Make hard decisions faster
  - o More sub-committees to solve problems / challenging issues
- Be creative and innovative while following MSA (6 Dots)
- Maximize time together focusing on decisions and strategic planning – minimize informational discussions (1 Dot)
- Not all assessments require action
- Give us each a booklet with important info we reach for every meeting including: SEDAR schedule, workplan, the principles, types of amendments / FW
- Better define your words – so all understand
- Safe Word – to stop discussions

#### 'No Go' Statements

- There are too many fishermen (commercial or recreational) is a 'no go' statement (2 Dots, Stack of 5)
  - o Get hooks out of the water is a 'no go' statement
  - o Only commercial fishermen are accountable is a 'no go' statement
  - o Recreational fishermen are unaccountable is a 'no go' statement
- That's too much work (2 Dots)
- Do not say we want changes to sector allocations (2 Dots, Stack of 6)
  - o We all agree that both sectors 'deserve' access as much as biologically possible
  - o Fair and balanced management between sectors
  - o Sector "accountability"
- No sector or NOAA shaming (3 stack)

- o Maintain our reputation as the ‘civil’ Council. Remember at the end of the day we all want the same thing
- o Try to understand where other sectors come from
- Focus on fish abundance

Input Added to the Marina

- Provide clear requests to congress on actual funding needed
- Be more clear about funding priorities

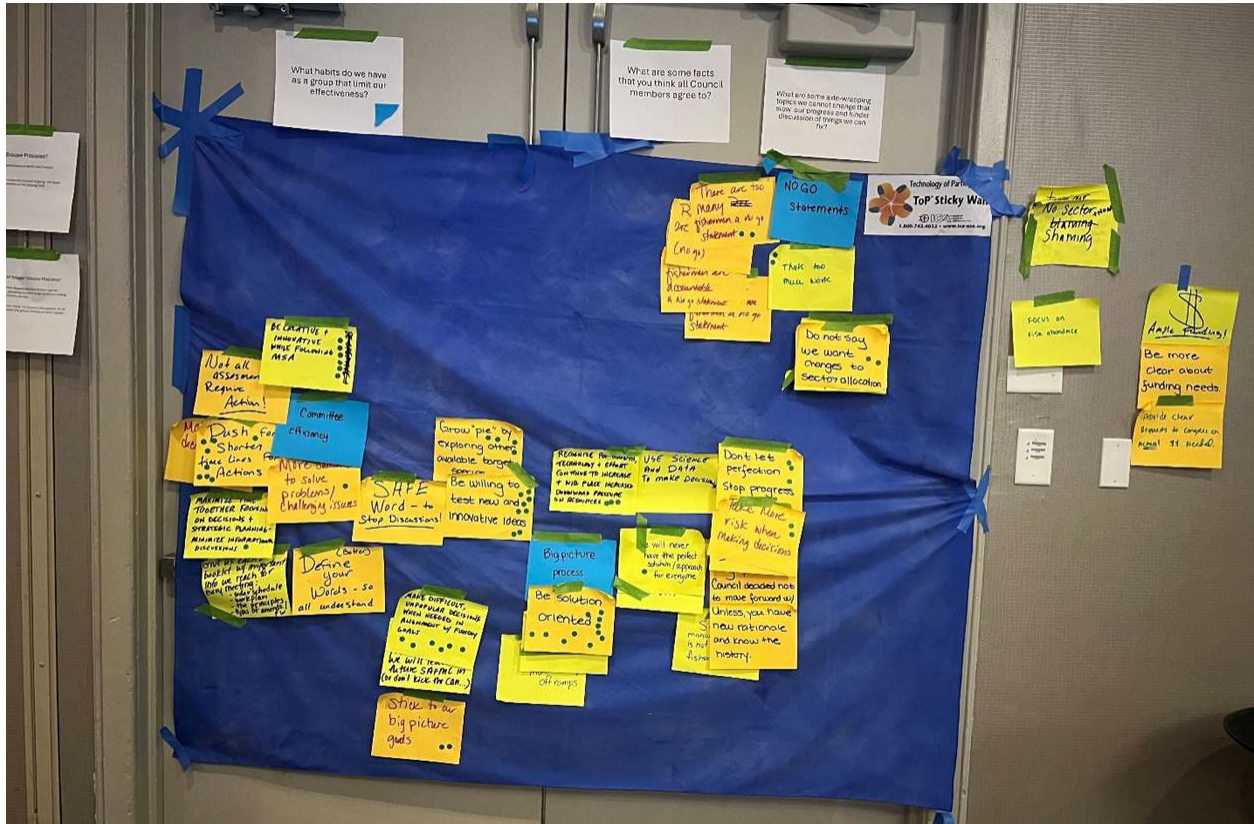


Figure 2. Sticky wall used by the Snapper Grouper Committee to brainstorm “principles” for the Snapper Grouper Innovation Plan in September 2025.