

FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT
SNAPPER GROUPE COMMITTEE
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
December 9-11, 2025

The Committee approved the minutes from the September 2025 meeting and the agenda for the December 2025 meeting. The Committee received updates from SERO on the following amendments that have been submitted to NOAA Fisheries: Regulatory Amendment 36 (Gag and Black Grouper vessel limits and Black Sea Bass on-demand gear), Amendment 48 (Wreckfish), Amendment 54 (Commercial E-Logbook), and Amendment 55 (Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper).

Black Sea Bass EFP

The Committee received a brief from the SERO on an application for an Exempted Fishing Permit titled “Project to Modernize Pot Fishing for the Southeast Commercial Black Sea Bass Pot Portion of the Snapper-Grouper Fishery using Subsea Buoy Retrieval Systems” by Kim Sawicki. The proposed project would be completed in 3 years. This is the third application submitted to further research on subsea buoy retrieval systems in the South Atlantic. The project’s purpose is to test different on-demand systems and address damage caused by sharks as well as explore socioeconomic feasibility of this gear type. One of the requested exemptions is fishing in the closed area. The Council expressed concern over the requested take of black sea bass given the upcoming reductions in harvest for that portion of the snapper grouper fishery. The Council requested clarification on how much black sea bass has been caught in previous EFPs and the number of participants. It was clarified that fishermen who participate do so voluntarily and are provided no stipends.

The comment period will start when it is noticed in the *Federal Register* and last for 30 days. Staff will develop a letter stating the Council’s comments.

- The applicant is reducing the amount of bsb requested to 20,000 annually spread across the vessels listed on the EFP. Council is still concerned about this proposed take since it is about half of the allowable catch level that will soon be implemented.
- The applicant provided the requested information regarding landing of bsb in previous studies. The information was provided via email and distributed to Council members.
- Concern regarding the lowered ACT (48,000 lbs) that will soon be implemented through Regulatory Amendment 37.
- Work and research that have been done through this EFP is important and has been valuable. However, the timing of the application is concerning when the Council is looking at substantial reductions in allowable catch. Also, EFP participants would be allowed to fish in an area that is not available to other fishermen.
- Uncertainty as to how Regulatory Amendment 36 (which is still undergoing rulemaking) would affect this proposed study. The amendment clarified transit provisions for on-demand gear.
- Need further clarification on which landings are under an EFP.
- Council generally expresses their support.

South Atlantic Red Snapper Research Project Update

Chip Collier gave an overview of the research study clarifying that results have not been finalized. In January 2026, there will be a review of the project’s methods and results by individuals appointed by the Center for Independent Experts (CIE) prior to incorporation in management. After reviews, the findings of the project will be reviewed for incorporation into the ongoing SEDAR 90 (Red Snapper) Assessment. The SSC is scheduled to review SEDAR 90 in October 2026 followed by a presentation to the Council in

December 2026. The Committee asked if reviewers had been appointed by the CIE, but the list has not been provided to Council staff.

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

Refer to the Sub-Committee report. Additionally, the Committee directed the Interdisciplinary Planning Team (IPT) to explore multiple options for procedural implementation of dynamic trip limits, including providing some bounds within which the Regional Administrator could have flexible authority to adjust trip limits as needed. The Committee also directed staff to remove vessel monitoring systems from consideration in implementing the gear stowage action and to develop that action only for vessels that have a valid directed shark permit or golden tilefish longline endorsement.

Snapper Grouper Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report

Chip Collier presented the draft SAFE report to the Committee highlighting the information included. The Committee requested that Georgia be grouped with South Carolina and that a figure be added showing landings relative to the sector annual catch limit (ACL). NOAA Fisheries requested consideration of adding ecosystem-related information and asked that their staff be given an opportunity to review the report. The final SAFE report will be posted on the Snapper-Grouper Fishery Management Plan webpage and the regulations webpage.

Red Snapper Exempted Fishing Permits

FWC 2024 Atlantic Red Snapper EFP Project Year 1 Results

Jessica McCawley delivered a presentation on results of year 1 of the ongoing projects that are part of the 2024 EFP application. The main take-aways of the first year of these projects are listed below:

- Strong cross- agency coordination and cooperation
- 15-fish snapper grouper aggregate is too large
- Anglers content with being able to hit their red snapper limit and stop bottom fishing
- Discards are reduced; turning discards into harvest
- Effort varies by season
- Anglers support reporting data to FWC
- Participation increased angler satisfaction
- Positive feedback with high interest

States' EFPs addressing management of recreational red snapper

Andy Strelcheck introduced Annie Hawkins, NOAA Chief of Strategy. Ms. Hawkins addressed the Council regarding the proposed state management EFPs and expressed optimism about the future of red snapper recreational fishery management. The Council has full support from the agency in exploring better ways to manage recreational red snapper in the South Atlantic.

Representatives from each of the South Atlantic states presented each of their EFP applications that were submitted on November 10, 2025 to explore state management of the recreational red snapper fishery.

- During the discussion, Council members expressed concern as to how the proposed level of red snapper harvest and increased recreational effort will impact the commercial ACL. The expectation is that *directed* recreational effort will change, but overall effort will be spread out over the length of open seasons. However, not all Council members were in agreement regarding this expectation.

Specific comments submitted by Council members are in Appendix 1. These will be used to help develop the Council's letters for these EFPs.

NOAA Fisheries is reviewing the EFPs currently and there is potential that the public comment period could overlap with the March 2026 Council meeting. States and SERO will coordinate on how the EFP process moves forward.

Black Sea Bass (Regulatory Amendment 37)

Chris Kimrey, Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel (AP) Chair, presented the AP's comments and recommendations related to Regulatory Amendment 37. Council staff presented the amendment actions, alternatives, and draft rationale.

The Committee reviewed their preferred alternatives, noting that additional discussion may be necessary following the Wednesday public comment session and prior to consideration of final approval at Full Council. The Committee did express concern about adding language that would prohibit "fishing for" black sea bass, commenting that interpretation of this language could be subjective and problematic. NOAA Fisheries noted that if the Council prefers a No Action alternative, moving that action to the Considered but Rejected section of the amendment could speed the federal rulemaking process following submission.

MOTION 1: DE-SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 (2 FISH) AND SELECT ALTERNATIVE 4 (3 FISH) AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR ACTION 3 (BAG LIMIT).

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Action 3. 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.

Preferred Alternative 4. Reduce the recreational bag limit for South Atlantic black sea bass to 3 fish per person per day.

MOTION 2: MOVE ACTION 4 (SIZE LIMIT) TO THE CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED APPENDIX
APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Action 4. Reduce the recreational minimum size limit for South Atlantic black sea bass

MOTION 3: APPROVE REGULATORY AMENDMENT 37 TO THE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE SNAPPER GROUPER FISHERY OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC REGION FOR FORMAL SECRETARIAL REVIEW AND DEEM THE CODIFIED TEXT AS NECESSARY AND APPROPRIATE. GIVE STAFF EDITORIAL LICENSE TO MAKE ANY NECESSARY EDITORIAL CHANGES TO THE DOCUMENT/CODIFIED TEXT AND GIVE THE COUNCIL CHAIR AUTHORITY TO APPROVE THE REVISIONS AND RE-DEEM THE CODIFIED TEXT.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL (1 ABSENT)

Blueline Tilefish (Abbreviated Framework 5)

In September 2025, the Council initiated Abbreviated Framework 5 for blueline tilefish to implement the SSC recommended catch levels based on SEDAR 92. Chris Kimrey, Snapper Grouper AP Chair, presented the AP's comments and recommendations related to Abbreviated Framework 5. Council staff presented the amendment document, analysis, and draft rationale.

The SSC's recommended ABC was in total removals (i.e. inclusive of dead discards and landed catch). Staff reviewed an analysis of commercial and recreational discards used to remove overall discards from

the recommended ABC to determine a total ACL based on landings. The Committee expressed concerns about the uncertainty of available discard estimates, but ultimately felt the benefit to the fishery of quickly implementing the recommended ABC was greater than the potential benefits of waiting for a more prolonged process. The Committee still intends to work on a subsequent amendment that would include reevaluating jurisdictional apportionment percentages with the Mid-Atlantic Council, sector allocations, and discard estimates.

MOTION 4: APPROVE ABBREVIATED FRAMEWORK 5 TO THE FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE SNAPPER GROUPER FISHERY OF THE SOUTH ATLANTIC REGION FOR FORMAL SECRETARIAL REVIEW AND DEEM THE CODIFIED TEXT AS NECESSARY AND APPROPRIATE. GIVE STAFF EDITORIAL LICENSE TO MAKE ANY NECESSARY EDITORIAL CHANGES TO THE DOCUMENT/CODIFIED TEXT AND GIVE THE COUNCIL CHAIR AUTHORITY TO APPROVE THE REVISIONS AND REDEEM THE CODIFIED TEXT.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL (1 ABSENT)

Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit Revision (Amendment 61)

The Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit (FMU) currently consists of 55 species, many of which are unassessed or have low landings. The Council is considering changes to the species composition of the Snapper Grouper FMU through Amendment 61 to streamline ongoing management of the fishery. In doing so, the Council has selected 17 species to evaluate if there is a continued need for conservation and management. The Council has indicated that these species may be up for removal from the FMU altogether or designated as ecosystem component (EC) species.

The Committee reviewed comments received from the Snapper Grouper AP and during scoping. The Committee also provided input on draft ecosystem management objectives relevant to EC species, the number of species that will continue to be considered in the amendment, and measures to include in the amendment. In doing so, the Committee provided the following guidance:

- The draft ecosystem management objectives are acceptable as presented.
- It was noted that a report on commercial landings for unmanaged and EC species in the South Atlantic Region is being developed and will be provided to the Council at a meeting in the latter half of 2026 and annually thereafter.
- In discussion of the species and potential measures that will be further considered in the amendment, it was noted that additional information was needed. As such, direction to staff was provided on the nature of the information that the Committee would like to see at the next meeting.

DIRECTION TO STAFF:

- AT THE MARCH 2026 MEETING, RECEIVE A PRESENTATION ON HOW THE MAFMC HAS DESIGNATED ECOSYSTEM COMPONENT SPECIES AND IMPLEMENTED ASSOCIATED MEASURES. (COUNCIL STAFF TO REACH OUT TO MAFMC TO COMPILE INFORMATION)
 - ALSO CONSIDER HOW OTHER COUNCILS HAVE DESIGNATED ECOSYSTEM COMPONENT SPECIES IN THEIR FMPS AND ASSOCIATED MEASURES.
- FURTHER EXAMINE PAST SAFMC ACTIONS REGARDING EC SPECIES AND REMOVAL OF SPECIES FROM THE FMU IN THE SG FMP.
- REQUEST INFORMATION FROM THE SEFSC ON WHAT A SIMPLIFIED APPROACH TO ASSESS SPECIES CONSIDERED IN AM 61 WOULD ENTAIL, INCLUDING THE TIMELINE AND STAFF CAPACITY TO CARRY OUT THESE ASSESSMENTS.
- PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE PATH FOR DESIGNATING ECOSYSTEM COMPONENT SPECIES.

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 an updated decision document with actions that would establish the stock OFL and ABC and jurisdictional apportionment between the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils, establish regional ACLs, and modify South Atlantic sector allocations for each species. Staff also reviewed how the plan team intends to analyze landings from Monroe County, FL, as well as feedback from the SG AP and the Gulf Council. The Committee discussed the range of alternatives for the jurisdictional apportionment actions and used the Allocation Decision Tool to develop alternatives for the South Atlantic sector allocation actions.

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

MOTION 5: APPROVE THE PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENT FOR SNAPPER GROUPE AMENDMENT 44.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

The *purpose* of these fishery management plan amendments is to revise the southeastern U.S. mutton snapper and yellowtail snapper stock overfishing limit, and stock acceptable biological catch, based on the results of the SEDAR 79 and SEDAR 96 stock assessments, respectively. The amendments would also revise the jurisdictional apportionment between the South Atlantic and Gulf Councils, the regional annual catch limits, and the South Atlantic sector allocations.

The *need* for these fishery management plan amendments is to update existing catch limits, jurisdictional apportionments of the ABCs, and South Atlantic sector allocations for southeastern U.S. mutton snapper and yellowtail snapper to be consistent with the best scientific information available, and achieve optimum yield while minimizing, to the extent practicable, adverse social and economic effects.

DIRECTION TO STAFF:

- Develop a preliminary set of alternatives for Actions 3 (South Atlantic sector allocations for mutton snapper) and 4 (South Atlantic sector allocations for yellowtail snapper).

Action 3. Modification of Southeastern U.S. mutton snapper sector allocations in the South Atlantic.

Alternative 1 (No Action): Retain the current commercial and recreational sector allocations as 17.02% and 82.98%, respectively, of the **current** total South Atlantic total annual catch limit for mutton snapper.

Alternative 2: Retain the current commercial and recreational sector allocations as 17.02% and 82.98%, respectively, of the **revised** total South Atlantic total annual catch limit for mutton snapper.

Alternative 3: Update the current allocation using $(0.5 \times \text{average landings from 2004-2023}) + (0.5 \times \text{average landings from 2021-2023})$.

Alternative 4: Update the current allocation formula using $(0.5 \times \text{average landings from 2014-2023}) + (0.5 \times \text{average landings from 2021-2023})$.

Alternative 5. Use a distribution method of allocation based on the most recent 3 years of average landings for both sectors.

Alternative 6. Use a distribution method of allocation based on the most recent 5 years of average landings for both sectors.

Action 4. Modification of Southeastern U.S. yellowtail snapper sector allocations in the South Atlantic.

Alternative 1 (No Action): Retain the current commercial and recreational sector allocations as 52.56% and 47.44%, respectively, of the **current** total South Atlantic total annual catch limit for yellowtail snapper.

Alternative 2: Retain the current commercial and recreational sector allocations as 52.56% and 47.44%, respectively, of the **revised** total South Atlantic total annual catch limit for yellowtail snapper.

Alternative 3: Update the current allocation using $(0.5 \times \text{average landings from 2004-2023}) + (0.5 \times \text{average landings from 2021-2023})$.

Alternative 4: Update the current allocation formula using $(0.5 \times \text{average landings from 2014-2023}) + (0.5 \times \text{average landings from 2021-2023})$.

Alternative 5. Use a distribution method of allocation based on the most recent 3 years of average landings for both sectors.

Alternative 6. Use a distribution method of allocation based on the most recent 5 years of average landings for both sectors.

Management Strategy Evaluations

Staff provided updates on the Snapper Grouper and Wreckfish Management Strategy Evaluations. Both projects remain on schedule and continue to advance based on recommendations from the Council, SSC, and Advisory Panels.

Golden Tilefish

Chip Collier presented the results of the revised golden tilefish stock assessment (SEDAR 89). The assessment was revised when a discrepancy in the commercial landings was identified. The Committee discussed whether to reinstate work on Abbreviated Framework 4 to adjust the golden tilefish ABC and ACL based on the SSC recommendation. During the discussion it was noted that the current total ACL is set to increase in 2026 but the newly recommended ABC is slightly below this level (~1,000 pounds). The Committee decided not to proceed with using Abbreviated Framework 4 to adjust catch levels, since the stock is not overfished and the adjustment to the annual catch limit would be minimal. Instead, the Committee passed the following motion:

MOTION 6: ADD UPDATING THE ABC AND ACL FOR GOLDEN TILEFISH IN A SNAPPER GROUPE FMP AMENDMENT BASED ON THE SSC RECOMMENDATION.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Advisory Panel Recommendations on Items not on the Agenda

The AP Chair presented two items not listed on the December 2025 agenda. These items were the application of commercial trip limits on sale of fish and a request that NOAA Fisheries have greater consistency in announcing closure dates for commercial species.

Innovative Management Approach for the Snapper Grouper Fishery

Council staff led the Committee through a brainstorming exercise to refine goalposts and principles that can guide and inform future discussions. The Committee intends to finalize these in March 2026. The revised document is in Appendix 2.

Other Business

Commercial Trip Limits on Sale

The Committee discussed the issue of commercial trip limits on sale. This issue will go to the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel in their next meeting (January 2026). Within this meeting, staff will request that the LE AP comment on suggestions for acceptable forms of evidence to denote that an attempt to

sell occurred and where there could be potential gaps in the system.

The Office of Law Enforcement's (OLE) representative also commented that for any change in the regulations concerning trip limits and sale, changing the regulation would also require change of prohibition.

Timing and Tasks:

MOTION 7: DIRECT STAFF TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Continue development of Amendment 60 (Commercial Permit and Trip Efficiency) via subcommittee for Council approval for public hearings in June 2026.
- Prepare information for Council discussion of the headboat vessel limits to bring to the March Council meeting.
- Continue development of the Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation.
- Prepare and submit Regulatory Amendment 37 (Black Sea Bass) and Abbreviated Framework 5 (Blueline Tilefish) to the Secretary of Commerce.
- 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).
- Continue development of Amendment 44 (Yellowtail Snapper and Mutton Snapper), including a preliminary analysis.
- Continue development of Amendment 61 (Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit Revision), including requested additional information and presentations, for review at the March 2026 meeting.
- Prepare list of topics for the Spring meeting of the Snapper Grouper AP to bring to the March 2026 meeting. (INCLUDE ON THE LIST OF TOPICS DISCUSSION OF CHANGING THE OPENING OF THE RECREATIONAL GOLDEN TILEFISH SEASON)
- Include time on the March 2026 agenda to finalize the SG Innovation Plan.
- Prepare a letter to send to NOAA Fisheries on the black sea bass EFP.
- Prepare a letter to send to NOAA Fisheries on the state management EFPs submitted by FL, GA, SC, and NC.
- Add updating the ABC and ACL for golden tilefish based on the SSC recommendation in a snapper grouper FMP amendment.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

APPENDIX 1
STATE EXEMPTED FISHING PERMIT COMMENTS

Enforcement, compatibility and compliance considerations:

- Ensure trip declaration reporting apps used by the respective states to include a law enforcement view/access that both state and federal officers can view and see trip verification codes. An easily accessible reporting app will expedite boarding and compliance checks, so officers can quickly verify trip activity and allow vessels to resume activity (if verified trip numbers are presented). There is currently a federal for-hire SEFHIER enforcement reporting view and that may be used as a template.
- Specify that authorized anglers/vessels must launch and return vessels from each respective state. This is already specified in FL and SC EFPs, but not GA or NC.
- In general, attempt to have compatibility to the fullest extent possible between all EFPs, same bag limit, vessel limit, min size, same reporting requirements, etc.

Council member comments on EFPs:

- Concern that EFP catch levels do not cause the commercial sector to lose access to their quota and affect sector allocation. This also would protect access for the non-fishing public that depend on commercial landings.
- Consider whether EFPs are needed once the new assessment comes out; which may alleviate the concerns that brought about EFPs.
- If the EFPs involve adding dead discards back to the recreational landed catch, then the commercial sector should also get dead discards added to their catch landings so the sectors' allocations don't change. Commercial does not need to be part of the EFP but sector allocation should not change by giving one sector access to dead discards and not the other... Commercial has "paid in" to the dead discard pot even though commercial discards are lower than recreational.
- Pros:
 - Thank you to the states for their work on trying to tackle this problem
 - Thank you for coming up with gameplans that would help with stakeholder trust.
 - We appreciate states starting to work on state recreational data collection programs that has been important to the Council
 - Thank you states for working to test programs and seeing what may work prior to the Council working on/finalizing the Council Amendment to delegate management for the recreational sector to the states
 - The council looks forward to seeing the results of these EFPs like we saw the results of the Florida EFPs
- Overarching Comments:
 - The individual state EFP proposals were designed in partnership with each South Atlantic state agency, and the intent was to craft these EFPs as consistent as possible with each other; however, individual state's laws and resources required some aspects to be different.
 - These EFPs focus on using innovative management tools and thinking "outside the box" vs. staying in the status quo for this fishery, which is NOT working.
 - Presently, MRIP recreational data on catch, effort, and discards are unreliable for use in management and has created distrust with the public.
 - Additionally, evidence from the Gulf suggests that catch, effort, and discard rates are reduced as fishing seasons expand from a "derby" season.

- The foundation of these EFPs are to obtain accurate baseline data about recreational catch, effort, and discards outside the “derby” season.
- Evidence suggests the Atlantic red snapper stock is healthier than it has been in decades, is not overfished or undergoing overfishing, is 20 years ahead of the rebuilding schedule, and potentially 2.7 times more abundant than previously estimated.
- FWC believes that there is ample biological, ecological, social, and economic justification to allow for the below exemptions to support improved data collection and management of RS
- FWC’s EFP complies with MSA because it allows “temporary, controlled research or testing of new fishing methods that would otherwise break current federal regulations”
- This EFP is crucial for innovation, improving efficiency, and gathering data for management
- This study would be reevaluated annually and can be adjusted based on the results
- Florida-specific EFP Comments:
 - FWC’s EFP will test Florida’s State Reef Fish Survey (SRFS) monitoring efforts and a voluntary reporting application to get a better understanding of recreational catch, effort, and discards over a longer fishing season.
 - FWC’s intent would be to utilize catch, effort, and discard rates from the longer season to inform what future fishing seasons could look like (same model is used in the Gulf).
 - In order to quantify and reduce discards, FWC is building off the success and lessons learned from our three FWC Atlantic Red Snapper EFP Projects and testing an aggregate bag limit.
 - Private anglers and for-hire captains will be required to fish for a 10-fish snapper grouper aggregate bag limit (red snapper included) in order to minimize interaction with snapper grouper species and reduce discard mortality across the complex.
 - The expected outcome is a reduction in discards across many snapper grouper species, including red snapper.
 - FWC is well-equipped to test state management of the Atlantic recreational red snapper fishery because of our established, MRIP-certified State Reef Fish Survey, agency resources, and experience with state management of red snapper in the Gulf of America for the last 7 years.
- While data collection of discards of both red snapper and other species in the complex will be conducted during the EFP window there is still no mechanism to study the amount of discards of red snapper by the private and for-hire fleets the other 54 weeks of the year.
 - The inequity of converting the dead discard portion of the ACL to landed fish for one sector while still holding the other sector to the original dead discard/landed fish proportioning.

APPENDIX 2
REVISED INNOVATION PLAN DOCUMENT

Innovation Discussion for December 2025 Council meeting

Jessica, Kerry, and John went through the results from the September meeting and put phrases in different categories and tried to reduce redundancy and resolve contradictory concepts.

Overarching goal – Refer to these goalposts and principles as future SG committee discussions occur and decisions are made.

Goal for December meeting – discuss the topics, clarify concepts, and make sure topics are in the right category. Decide if anything is missing.

Goal for March meeting – Have summarized list of Goalposts and Principles for final review. This final review would include items in the other categories too.

Summary of Goalposts

- Recreational OY is about access openings to harvest fish; ~~not poundage of fish harvested~~
 - When opportunity is presented (e.g. weather/life circumstances), want to be able to use that opportunity to harvest
 - Does species matter? Is it that “something” needs to be open or preference of species?
 - Variable, but many want “something”
 - Desire for openings for specific harvest
 - Year-round access to fishing
 - Where abundance and access meet; want good quality of opportunity to harvest
 - Optimum opportunity; not really “yield”
 - What are specific behavioral outcomes of regulations for recreational fishermen?
 - What does recreational satisfaction look like?
- Commercial OY is about providing ACCESS TO seafood FOR consumers
 - MSA: “greatest benefit to the nation”
 - “Truck drivers” to bring resource from ocean to consumers
 - Need prioritization of efficient harvest – maximum harvest with minimal effort
 - Access for all levels: harvester, dealer, markets/restaurants, consumers
- Regional and temporal management of fisheries to account for differences across Council region
 - Split-seasons can be used and designed to spread access throughout the region
 - Approaches that consider local seasons, particular times of year/holidays
- Consider holistic view of fishery (e.g., multi-species nature and regime shift)
 - Consider ecosystem view of fishery
- Maximize trip efficiencies for recreational and commercial
 - Spreading harvest out to be more predictable can be more economically efficient (avoid flooded markets, be able to shop around for better price)

- Split sectors for this item
 - Recreational may not apply here; efficiency of trip may not be economic
 - Value/worth is more in the experience
 - Efficiency - access to fish during seasons when better weather is more likely
 - Return on investment (bang for buck)
 - Not a dollar amount; return on involvement
 - Satisfaction
 - Some opposing objectives – maximizing satisfaction of specific trips may oppose season length/access
 - Intangible benefits for both sectors, especially recreational
- Optimize year-round access to all SG species for commercial and recreational
 - Optimize access
 - Consistent, year-round availability/access to seafood
 - Seasonal availability of specific species, but year-round availability of SG species in general
 - Restaurants are challenged in being able to find year-round local fish to fit menus
 - When opportunity is presented (e.g. weather/life circumstances), want to be able to use that opportunity to harvest
 - Year-round access to fishing (both sectors)
- Don't let perfection stop progress
 - Paralyzed into inaction by number of decisions
 - Science; sometimes need action as the science is currently
- Take more risks in making decisions
 - Do some things new
 - System sometimes feels too rigid to take risk
 - Limited amounts of available quota can work against flexibility or risk-taking
 - Some fear ability/inability to be able to pull back a 'risky' action
 - Learn from other Councils processes to try new management or move current management changes faster
 - Risk can be process improvements; 'unpopular' management decisions
- We will never have the perfect solution for everyone
 - Managing balance of expectations/tradeoffs among user groups
 - 'Nobody's really happy but everyone can live'
 - 'Unpopular' management decisions
 - Metric is an improvement in trust
- Focus on single species management isn't serving fishery well
 - Eco-based fishery management
 - 'Bucket rule' bottom fish limit then stop fishing to reduce recreational release mortality
 - Multi-species vs. Ecosystem based management

- Ways to manage co-occurring species
- Considerations about targeting one species will result in bycatch of others is an ecosystem-based approach
- Examples like CMOD to possibly integrate into South Atlantic management

Additional notes:

- Additional detail in Quota Monitoring could be useful to know information for these goalposts in real time
- Beginning to work on data gathering ahead of management discussions could facilitate decision-making

Summary of Principles to get to Goalposts

- Ensure local knowledge is factored into management decisions
- Council take more risks and try new things to achieve goal and in making management decisions
- Develop allocations based on total catch –
 - Discards are allocated before Total ACL is divided
 - Discard data is uncertain – need improvement in discard data to inform this discussion
 - May make challenges in achieving above goalposts listed above
 - Aspirational – want to get the data quality to be able to do this
- Be proactive
 - This is a broad term and may mean different things to different people. Clarification on what this means for our process so we can then consider how we can do it is desired.
 - Get ahead of an issue; don't wait for a stock assessment to react to
 - Also don't wait for the 'Cadillac' of assessments
 - Tools to be proactive: SAFE Report, SERFS report, interim analyses, ACL monitoring, more real-time detailed quota monitoring access
 - Red flags/indicators
 - Don't settle for status quo
 - Act on information we have not what we are hoping to get
- Minimize wasted fish
 - Discards into landings
 - Similar to recreational trip efficiency/satisfaction
 - Not fully utilizing the ACL

Economic

- Evaluate commercial portfolio fishing
 - Strengthen the value of our fisheries
 - Cadrin's student paper, ~2022-23; Staff paper by Kari Buck
 - Periodic evaluation

- Consider/Continue opportunities for new entrants for permitted fisheries and limited entry fisheries

Science and data collection

- Simplify science to meet management needs
 - Support interim assessments
 - More timely info needed on stock status
 - Stock assessments that match available data
 - Less reliance on traditional stock assessments
 - More trust/confidence in simpler stock assessments
 - More generalized rather than specified in assessment approaches
 - Possible procedures workshop
- Support and promote efforts to provide/obtain ecosystem and multi-species analyses for supporting catch recommendations and evaluating management alternatives.
- Use more cooperative research projects to get data
 - = more engagement with the stakeholders
 - More engagement with states
 - Citizen Science

Ideas for Process for SG committee and committee efficiency principles

- More communication and collaboration between states and NOAA outside the Council mtg
 - Sub-Committees for specialized issues
 - Agency to agency – EFPs give an opportunity
- Be more responsive and timely
 - Push for shorter timelines for actions
 - Make hard decisions faster
 - Optimize use of expedited procedures
 - Timely response to assessments
 - Make better use of our right to use informed judgement when presented with conflicting and incomplete information
- Get out of the rut (see above)
 - Be solution oriented
 - Get away from single species management
 - Be willing to test new and innovative ideas
 - Make difficult decisions when needed in alignment with fishery goals
- Maximize meeting time
 - Use subcommittees to tackle niche issues (e.g., wreckfish subcommittee),
 - this can save time and streamline the process
 - minimize informational presentations (*seems this is about Council as a whole too, not just SG committee*)
 - Use caution; consider the representation the Council has on other bodies

- “Safe word” to stop discussions
 - Call the question quicker
 - Words in a bowl for March Meeting
- Not just about Committee; whole Council meeting week
- Provide booklet of important info to council members that would include goalposts, principles, SEDAR schedule, workplan, types of Amendments, etc.
 - DONE

Responsibility to Stakeholders

- Understand our audience better
- Desire stakeholder and fishermen satisfaction
- Figure out how to keep fishermen engaged
- Improve confidence of stakeholders in process

Summary of ‘No Go’ statements and concepts

- Rather than a specific list of statements and concepts, encourage Council members to used tact and know that words matter
- Avoid broad, blaming/shaming statements, especially those directed at particular sectors, industries, or organizations