

FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT
SNAPPER GROUPEL COMMITTEE
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
December 4-5, 2024

The Committee approved the minutes from the September 2024 meeting and the agenda for the December 2024 meeting.

The Committee received updates about amendments that have been approved by the Council and are under development to be submitted for secretarial review. The Southeast Regional Office (SERO) updated the Council on potential actions and timing for the Secretarial amendment being developed to end overfishing of red snapper. Potential actions and other details are outlined in the [Fishery Bulletin](#) released on December 5, 2024. An updated stock assessment of red snapper with data through 2023 is being developed by the Southeast Fisheries Science Center to provide scientific advice for the Secretarial amendment. This stock assessment report will be available within the timing of amendment development. A more detailed update on the Secretarial amendment will be presented at the March 2025 Council meeting, and in-person public hearings are being scheduled by NOAA Fisheries around February 2025. Specific times and locations of the public hearings will be announced at a later date.

AP Report for Topics Not on the Agenda

The Snapper Grouper AP met on October 15-17, 2024, and discussed topics pertaining to the snapper grouper fishery that were not scheduled for Council discussion at this meeting. The AP Chair presented these discussions.

One of these items was notification from an AP member who holds a golden tilefish longline endorsement that this user group is considering proposal of a catch share program for that component of the fishery. The Council directed staff to gather information about the process for establishing an individual transferable quota (ITQ) fishery under the current Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (reauthorized in 2007).

Black Sea Bass (SG Amendment 56)

The AP and SSC Chairs presented discussions about black sea bass from their respective October 2024 meetings. The AP discussed potential fishery behavior responses to recreational management actions under consideration through Amendment 56. The SSC reviewed additional assessment projections of black sea bass catch levels. The SSC recommended against management use of the currently available set of catch projections, and instead recommended the development of an “enhanced projection” approach that updates several assessment inputs through 2023 and re-runs the assessment model to provide catch projections for 2026 and future years. Staff presented an overview of the current amendment timeline and decision points necessary for developing the assessment response. The Committee provided the following direction to staff:

- Request projections from the Science Center consistent with the SSC’s recommendation to be available for the SSC to review in April 2025 and the Council to review in June 2025.

- The SSC would apply the new ABC Control Rule; the stock risk rating for black sea bass will need to be evaluated IN SPRING 2025
- Conduct scoping meetings (staff will decide webinar or in-person) including the following actions:
 1. Reduce catch levels (ABC, annual catch limit [ACL], and optimum yield [OY])
 2. Revise status determination criteria (SDC)
 3. Discuss sector allocation percentages
 4. Accountability measures
 5. Change fishing year start date
 6. Re-opening nearshore areas to on-demand black sea bass pots.
 7. Recreational management measures
 - a. Discard reducing measures (e.g., single hook rigs)
 - b. Close nearshore areas for black sea bass retention that coincide with spawning season (potentially in alignment in time and space with roped pot closure)
 - c. Recreational bag limit reduction
 - d. Recreational size limit reduction
 - e. Recreational seasonal retention closure.
- With the currently considered actions, implementation would be tentatively expected for late 2026.
- In the absence of catch levels available for review during scoping meetings, note recent landings, discard removals, and other data that are indicating the strong decline in the black sea bass stock.
- Request a presentation from the SEFSC to the Council (at the March or June meeting, depending on number of items in the agenda) describing various levels of spawning potential ratio (SPR)-based proxies for maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and rationale for different levels.

Management Strategy Evaluation for the Snapper Grouper Fishery

The Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) explores long-term management strategies for the South Atlantic snapper grouper fishery. The AP and SSC Chairs presented comments and recommendations for management strategies that should be considered in future simulations. Staff from Blue Matter Science presented several potential management strategies for black sea bass, gag, and red snapper and requested input from the Council to refine the current suite of broad management strategies into implementable actions that should be further explored. The Committee provided the following guidance for development of future model iterations:

- Identify implementable management strategies (specific management decisions)
 - Effort reduction and sector caps
 - Recalculation of reference points (dynamic reference points)
- Specific management options like aggregate bag limit
 - Recreational fleet response to management actions (inshore/offshore shifts and season length changes (Sean Powers paper)
- Seasonal closures (weekend only fishing)
- Additional species, species interactions, and life history variation
- Key Uncertainties

- Fleet dynamics (responses to regulation)
- Spatial management options (north to south and depth) state water vs federal water management varying
- Future recruitment patterns – regime shift
- Compliance rates and angler satisfaction
- Start year of assessment
- Management objective
 - Maximize days at sea
 - Ensure for-hire fishery remains economically viable

Assessment Review and Response Planning Discussion for Ongoing Assessments

Three upcoming stock assessments straddle the jurisdictional boundary between the South Atlantic and another region – Mutton Snapper and Yellowtail Snapper have shared jurisdiction with the Gulf of Mexico, and Blueline Tilefish with the Mid-Atlantic – with each of the three species analytically treated as a single stock. As such, the review of stock assessments for these species needs to be conducted jointly among the Council’s respective SSCs to provide catch-level recommendations for the entire stock. A sub-group approach consisting of representatives from each Council’s SSC was proposed for the stock assessment review of these three species, and Council staff provided details on this sub-group approach, logistics, and timing of these assessment reviews. The Council agreed with and approved the proposed approach and the list of participants for the assessment review. The Council was also presented with a proposal for the joint management approach with the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council for Yellowtail Snapper and Mutton Snapper following the joint review of the assessments. The proposed approach was to complete a joint SAFMC/GMFMC amendment to establish the OFL and ABC for the single stock of Mutton Snapper and single stock of Yellowtail Snapper, and review jurisdictional allocation for both species and modify, if necessary. The Gulf Council would be the administrative lead for this amendment. The South Atlantic would then complete a follow-up amendment to the South Atlantic Snapper Grouper FMP to establish the South Atlantic ABC and ACL for mutton and yellowtail snapper, establish the SA sector allocations and sector ACLs for each stock, and introduce any management and accountability measures to manage the fisheries. The Committee supported moving forward with the SSC review and management plans as outlined by staff.

Stock Risk Ratings for Golden Tilefish, Blueline Tilefish, Red Snapper, Mutton Snapper, and Yellowtail Snapper

Under the ABC Control Rule, the Council incorporates an evaluation of how much risk of overfishing it would be willing to accept based on biological, fishery (human interaction), and environmental factors affecting each stock. The Committee reviewed recommended scores from the AP and SSC and related information for golden tilefish, blueline tilefish, red snapper, mutton snapper, and yellowtail snapper. The Committee developed stock risk ratings for use in application of the ABC Control Rule to each of these species and rated each of these stocks as High Risk.

Private Recreational Permit & Education Requirements (Amendment 46)

Amendment 46 considers establishing a private recreational permit and education requirement for the South Atlantic snapper grouper fishery. The amendment was recently reviewed by the Snapper Grouper Private Angler AP at their November 2024 meeting. The Committee was

provided with summary AP feedback and then provided the following comments and direction to staff:

- For the Purpose and Need Statements, direct staff to:
 - Adapt the statements to include planning for potential reporting and expansion to other FMPs in the future.
 - Further emphasize the intent to survey permit holders to enhance data collection.
- Action 2 (Species Covered By A Permit): Add an alternative that would cover “key stocks” (see SEDAR Committee Report). **NOTE THE NUMBER FO SPECIES MAY BE BROADER (KEY STOCKS AND FRIENDS)**
 - “Key stocks” will be discussed and identified by the Council at a future date.
 - During discussion of this action, the Committee provided direction to Council staff to review the Snapper Grouper complex to determine what species are in need OF federal conservation and management and change the Fishery Management Unit.
- Actions 3 and 4 (Education Requirement): Accept the IPT suggested edits to the alternatives.
Action 3. Establish an education component in conjunction with a federal private recreational snapper grouper permit
Alternative 2. Establish and require an education component in conjunction with a private recreational snapper grouper permit to fish for, harvest, or possess snapper grouper species in the South Atlantic exclusive economic zone. The education component would be **required before FOR initial issuance** of a federal private recreational permit.

Action 4. Specify the timing of the education component requirement for the private recreational snapper grouper permit
Alternative 4. Completion of the education component would be required **ONLY upon initial issuance** of a federal private recreational snapper grouper permit.
- Action 5 (Exemption To The Federal Permit and Education Requirement), direct staff to:
 - Add an allowance that would accommodate the existing Florida state reef fish survey.
 - Either exempt Florida or “grandfather” the existing program in to allow an exemption from a federal permit and education requirement.
 - Make sure that future state programs can be exempted from federal permit and education requirements.
 - Carry through “equivalent” or “comparable” in the wording of sub-alternatives rather than “same.”
 - Gather feedback on whether Florida, which has an angler-based permit, could be provided an exemption from the federal requirement if the federal permit is vessel-based.
- Accept the IPT suggested edits to the alternatives in Action 5.
Action 5. Establish an exemption to the federal private recreational snapper grouper permit and education requirements based on permitting and education by the states
Alternative 1 (No Action). Do not establish an exemption to the federal private recreational snapper grouper permit and education requirements to fish for, harvest, or possess snapper grouper species in the South Atlantic region.
Alternative 2. Establish an exemption to the federal private recreational snapper grouper permit and education requirements. The National Marine Fisheries Service would certify a state permit and education component as equivalent to a federal private recreational snapper

grouper permit and education component...

Golden Tilefish Stock Assessment

SEDAR 89 included data through 2022 and indicated that the golden tilefish stock in the South Atlantic is not overfished and overfishing is not occurring. SEFSC staff presented the assessment results to the Committee. The SSC Chair presented the SSC's comments on the assessment and recommendations for the overfishing limit and acceptable biological catch. Council staff presented the Fishery Overview, showing recent golden tilefish landings and other pertinent data. The Committee passed the following motion and gave the following direction:

MOTION 1: INITIATE AN AMENDMENT TO INCORPORATE SEDAR 89 CATCH LEVELS FOR GOLDEN TILEFISH.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

- In the amendment, include considerations of the following actions:
 - Allocation discussion (not necessarily an action but discussion to generate report with Council's rationale for not changing allocations)
 - Consult the SSC if golden tilefish would be a candidate for carry-over or phase-in under the ABC Control Rule
 - Staff reviewed the requirements of the ABC Control Rule for carry-over and phase-in provisions.
 - Golden tilefish are not eligible for phase-in because the recommended ABC is not less than 80% of the current ABC.
 - Neither golden tilefish sector is currently eligible for carry-over because the accountability measures (AM) do not include post-season reductions to the ACL if an overage occurs. If the AMs were changed to include such reductions in response to overages, the stock would meet eligibility requirements defined in the ABC Control Rule.
 - Modify the recreational season start date (currently January 1)
 - Consider revision of accountability measures

Commercial Sub-Committee Report

In November 2024, the Snapper Grouper Commercial Sub-Committee met via webinar. Staff summarized the meeting for the Committee. The Sub-Committee reviewed commercial information from the 2015 Snapper Grouper Vision Blueprint. The Sub-Committee concluded that additional and updated information is necessary to prioritize commercial management issues that need to be addressed. The Sub-Committee directed staff to compile this information, as available, for the Sub-Committee's next meeting, which is to be held in-person prior to or during the March 2025 Council meeting. Staff will follow up with Sub-Committee members to schedule a specific meeting time and location.

Other Business

Return 'Em Right Expansion

Following the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill, the Open Ocean Trustee Council created the Gulf Spill Restoration project portal to accept restoration project ideas from the public. The

submitted project ideas have been narrowed down to ten projects that are being recommended for implementation. One of the recommended projects would expand the “Return ’Em Right” Program, which works to advance the use of best fishing practices, into the south Atlantic and Caribbean regions as well as to other species including highly migratory species, coastal migratory pelagic species, and other species such as flounders, drums, and sea trout. The Committee supported drafting a comment letter expressing support for the expansion of the program to the South Atlantic region. Additionally, the Committee requested the letter strongly emphasize the importance of collaborating with and supporting already established programs in the region, specifically the Council’s Best Fishing Practices Initiative and Citizen Science Program, and relevant state and regional agencies.

MOTION 2: SUBMIT COMMENTS ON THE RETURN ‘EM RIGHT: SPECIES AND AREA EXPANSION PROJECT PROPOSED IN THE OPEN OCEAN TRUSTEE IMPLEMENTATION GROUP DRAFT RESTORATION PLAN 4.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Timing and Tasks:

MOTION 3: DIRECT STAFF TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Conduct scoping meetings for Amendment 56 prior to the March 2025 Council meeting.
- Request black sea bass projections from the Science Center consistent with the SSC’s recommendations.
 - Include runs based on 30%SPR and 40%SPR as MSY proxies.
- Request a presentation on the MAFMC’s Recreational Reform process.
- Request a presentation to the Council (at the March or June 2025 meeting) describing various levels of spawning potential ratio (SPR)-based proxies for maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and rationale for different levels.
- Coordinate with the MAFMC for blueline tilefish and the GMFMC for yellowtail snapper and mutton snapper to conduct SSC reviews of the assessments and develop management responses.
- Request further development of the Snapper Grouper MSE, per the guidance listed above.
- Continue work on Amendment 46 for review at the March 2025 meeting. Consider the amendment for approval for public hearings at the March 2025 meeting.
 - Request that NMFS consult with OST to provide clarity on the survey methodology at a future meeting.
- Compile information to review the snapper grouper fishery management unit to evaluate which species are in need of federal conservation and management.
- Prepare a document for the golden tilefish amendment to be considered for scoping at the March 2025 Council meeting.
- Convene the Snapper Grouper Commercial Sub-Committee in-person, prior to the March 2025 Council meeting.
- Submit comments on the proposed Return Em’ Right: Species and Area Expansion project.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT
SNAPPER GROUPER COMMITTEE
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
March 5-6, 2025

The Committee approved the minutes from the December 2024 meeting and the agenda for the March 2025 meeting.

The Committee received updates about amendments that have been approved by the Council and were recently submitted or are under development to be submitted for secretarial review. Amendment 55 (scamp and yellowmouth grouper) is under a statutory deadline. NMFS is working on proposed rules for this amendment as well as the Commercial Electronic Logbook (which covers species under the Snapper Grouper FMP as well as Coastal Migratory Pelagics and Dolphin Wahoo).

Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit Revision

In December 2024, the Council directed staff to compile information to evaluate the species included in the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit (FMU). Staff presented how any revisions to the FMU could affect other Council projects, including Amendment 46 (Private Recreational Permit and Education Requirement), identification of key stocks, and the For-Hire Reporting Amendment. The Committee reviewed assessment and annual catch limit (ACL) information for all species in the FMU. Based on this information, the Committee selected species in the FMU that are clearly in need of conservation and management under a federal FMP and do not need to be evaluated at this time. The Committee directed staff to compile information to evaluate the need for conservation and management of the following species at future meetings: Atlantic spadefish, bar jack, sand tilefish, misty grouper, blackfin snapper, queen snapper, cubera snapper, banded rudderfish, jolthead porgy, knobbed porgy, saucereye porgy, scup, whitebone porgy, white grunt, sailor's choice, tomtate, and margate.

Golden Tilefish Assessment Response

The SEDAR 89 stock assessment of South Atlantic golden tilefish was completed in 2024 and indicated that the stock is not overfished and not experiencing overfishing. The Committee reviewed potential actions and decided to develop actions to address: 1) updating catch levels to be consistent with the Scientific and Statistical Committee's (SSC) most recent recommendations, and 2) consider changing the recreational season start date. Council staff also reviewed potential timelines and amendment formats for developing these actions. The Committee requested staff to develop a timing and format recommendation and provide that at Full Council.

Council staff recommends addressing the catch level changes through an abbreviated framework that would tentatively be scheduled for public hearing and final Council approval in June or September 2025. To allow the more expedient timeline for these catch levels and avoid a separate rulemaking process for the recreational season start date change, staff recommends adding this action to Amendment 56 (Black Sea Bass; expected Council approval in March 2026).

DIRECTION TO STAFF: PREPARE AN ABBREVIATED FRAMEWORK TO ADJUST CATCH LEVELS OF GOLDEN TILEFISH AND ADDRESS MODIFICATION OF THE RECREATIONAL SEASON START DATE IN AMENDMENT 56 (BLACK SEA BASS).

Commercial Sub-Committee Report

The Snapper Grouper Commercial Sub-Committee (Sub-Committee) met on March 3, 2025. A [summary report](#) for this meeting is included in the March 2025 Council meeting briefing book. The Sub-Committee’s next meeting will occur in-person, ahead of the June 2025 Council Meeting. Based on the Sub-Committee’s recommendations, the Committee passed the following motion and provided the following direction to staff:

MOTION 1: INITIATE AN AMENDMENT THAT WILL ADDRESS COMMERCIAL PERMIT AND TRIP EFFICIENCY ISSUES.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

- Commercial permit issues may include:
 - Revision of the 2 for 1 commercial SG 1 (unlimited) permit policy
 - Consideration of limiting the number of permits that can be owned per entity
 - Consideration of establishing income requirements or “use it or lose it” provisions
 - **Direction to staff:** Gather information on the use of income requirements for fisheries in other regions.
- Ways to increase trip efficiency may include:
 - Trip limit increases if landings are below a threshold by a specified date in the season (“step-ups”)
 - Establishment of a non-target or out-of-season allowance for species that are not overfished.

DIRECTION TO STAFF: DO NOT INCLUDE CONSIDERATION OF AGGREGATE TRIP LIMITS AT THIS TIME IN THE INTEREST OF EFFICIENCY. THE COUNCIL HAS NOT HAD ENOUGH TIME TO DISCUSS THIS TOPIC IN DEPTH.

Presentation on Status Determination Criteria Proxies

The NOAA Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) staff presented information on MSY proxies and their use in management. The Council had the following discussion and gave the following direction to staff:

- The Committee agreed with the SEFSC’s recommended approach of species-specific evaluation of MSY and F_{MSY} proxies.
- The Committee discussed the possibility of requesting a range of SPR proxies, which the Council could use to consider different management goals through different associated selectivities.
- The Committee also discussed the possibility of incrementally shifting target SPR levels over time. This could allow a smoother transition from current targets to long-term targets.

- Request the following items for review and discussion at a future meeting:
 - A non-technical presentation from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute’s stock assessment group discussing their perspectives on developing spawning potential ratio (SPR)-based MSY proxies for state and federally-managed species.
 - A compilation and comparison of SPR proxies for Southeastern stocks that have MSY estimates based on stock-recruitment relationships.
 - A discussion of management situations that would require a higher or lower SPR.

Update on Secretarial Amendment to end overfishing of red snapper in the South Atlantic

The NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office presented information on Amendment 59 to the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan, which is a secretarial amendment that ends overfishing of South Atlantic red snapper and reduces discards. The Committee asked clarifying questions and discussed recommendations, which will be submitted to NOAA Fisheries on behalf of the Council via a letter by March 17, 2025. Staff will present a list of drafted bullet points in Full Council, which will be used to develop the Council’s comment letter.

Black Sea Bass (Amendment 56)

SEDAR 76 included data through 2021 and indicated that the black sea bass stock in the South Atlantic is at very low levels in recent years. In January – February 2025, Council staff conducted scoping for this amendment. The Committee reviewed scoping comments and discussed the ranges of actions and alternatives that should be drafted in the amendment. The Committee directed staff to develop the amendment with the following actions:

- Reduce catch levels (ABC, annual catch limit [ACL], and optimum yield [OY])
- Consider revising status determination criteria (SDC)
 - Develop several alternatives, including the current proxy (30% SPR), recommended proxy (40% SPR), and a flexible proxy based on the best scientific information (BSIA).
 - Additional alternatives may be developed following the Council’s MSY proxy discussions in June 2025.
- Change fishing year start date
 - Include an alternative to revise the fishing year for both sectors to begin on January 1.
- Re-open nearshore areas to on-demand black sea bass pots.
- Prohibit multi-hook rigs for the RECREATIONAL snapper grouper fishery
- Revise the recreational bag limit
 - Explore an alternative for a larger bag limit (currently 7 fish per person per day)
 - Analysts will provide a range of alternatives for review in June
- Reduce the recreational size limit (currently 13 inches)
 - Range from 11 inches to 13 inches.
- Recreational seasonal retention closure (seasonal closure for black sea bass only)
 - Include an alternative to close from January-April (include different alternatives for the length of closures)
 - Include information on whether discards were reduced during historical closures in the evaluation.
- Regional management actions

- Staff will draft actions to potentially vary management of black sea bass for different areas of the region.
- Include action to address recreational season start date for golden tilefish.

The Committee additionally directed staff to continue communicating with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and state agencies to discuss consistent or additional management in state waters, allowing for more effective management in federal waters.

The Committee directed staff not to include an action considering changes to sector allocations. This is consistent with the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel’s recommendation, which also noted that the poor stock condition limits any advantage to reallocating at this time.

Private Recreational Permit & Education Requirements (Amendment 46)

Purpose and Need

The Committee made the following edit to the purpose statement:

The **purpose** of the amendment is to develop a federal recreational permitting system that will identify the universe of private anglers or vessels targeting South Atlantic snapper grouper species and will enhance the ability to collect recreational effort and catch data through potential ~~increases~~ MODIFICATIONS in survey frame and precision of effort estimation. Also work to promote best recreational fishing practices through education.

Action 1

A Committee member requested information on tradeoff in costs and burden to the agency based on permit type. The agency is currently not able to provide such information as funding and staff capacity are uncertain.

Action 2

The Committee discussed Draft Alternative 5, which was added for consideration in December 2024. The alternative would have considered covering “key stocks” under the federal recreational permit. However, the Council has not yet defined key stocks beyond them being a sub-set of the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Unit. Therefore, the Committee opted to remove the alternative from consideration as it would not be possible to analyze until key stocks are selected. Thus, the Committee made no changes to Action 2 other than removing the draft alternative from further consideration. The Committee wants the public to understand that the permit may cover the entirety of the management unit or a subset of it. However, the Committee acknowledged the potential for a “loophole” if a permit were required only for certain species.

The Committee made no changes to Action 3 or Action 4.

Action 5

There was concern among Committee members about the way the action and alternatives are written in that there is not enough flexibility for states. The action should not be prescriptive and dictate what a state can and cannot do.

It was clarified that the structure of the action and alternatives is based on recommendations from the technical advisory panel.

The Committee would like to continue to consider a way to “grandfather in” or exempt a state that already has an existing program, such as Florida. The Florida state representative indicated that changing the structure of the Florida State Reef Fish Survey (SRFS) and the species it covers to match the requirements of a federal permit would be difficult and take time because it is tied to statutory language.

The Committee had the following comments and questions:

- Could a state be exempt from the permit requirement based on how prevalent a species or group of species is for that state?
- The Florida program is certified by MRIP. Could flexibility be built-in for states if certified by MRIP?
- Could the number of species be based initially on those covered by the FL SRFS, work up coast to see what species would be most relevant, and narrow down the list of core species from there?
- Could a time component be built in? For example, a state could be exempt for a certain amount of time while species are being changed?
- Could another broader sub-alternative be considered along the lines of “species proposed by the state contingent upon review and approval by the Council”?
- NMFS proposed having a conversation with state directors on what would be acceptable for the species covered under a federal permit.
- The Committee briefly discussed modeling this action on how the National Saltwater Angler Registry was implemented.

DIRECTION TO STAFF:

- DEVELOP A SUB-ALTERNATIVE THAT WOULD EXEMPT A STATE BASED ON ACCEPTING A PROPOSAL FROM THAT STATE (SIMILAR TO HOW THE NATIONAL SALTWATER ANGLER REGISTRY WORKS OR THE ASMFC CONSERVATION EQUIVALENCY).
- STATE DIRECTORS TO DISCUSS WITH NMFS THE SPECIFICS OF HOW STATES COULD BE EXEMPT.
- SUBMIT ADDITIONAL REQUEST TO SERO AND THE OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY TO INCLUDE IN THE PRESENTATION FOR JUNE AN UPDATE OF HOW THE NATIONAL SALTWATER ANGLER REGISTRY HAS BEEN WORKING. IN THIS PRESENTATION, COULD OST SPEAK TO WHETHER IT IS POSSIBLE TO ADD A STATE ISSUED FEDERAL FISHERIES ENDORSEMENT TO AN EXISTING ANGLER IN THE NSAR DATA DISSEMINATION PROCESS. ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE WILL BE SOUGHT BETWEEN SERO AND STATES TO CLARIFY THE ADDED REQUEST FOR THE JUNE PRESENTATION.

- BRING THE AMENDMENT BACK TO COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER FOR APPROVAL FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS IN JUNE 2025.

Topics for Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel Meeting

The Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel is scheduled to meet in Charleston, SC, on April 2-3, 2025. The Committee approved the following list of agenda items:

- Gag FPR Update (Including stock risk rating)
- Black Sea Bass Stock Risk Rating
- Amendment 56 (Black Sea Bass)
- For-Hire Reporting Amendment
- Golden Tilefish Assessment Response (Catch levels only?)
- Lines of Communication: Conversations with the Council Meeting Run-Through
- Review the Council’s Research Plan
- Spawning SMZ research presentation
- Amendment Update: Amendment 46 (Recreational Permitting and Education Requirements), Commercial Amendment, Amendment 59
- Other Updates: Best Fishing Practices, SEDAR, Citizen Science, Florida Red Snapper EFP Projects, For-hire limited entry

Other Business

The Committee approved the following motion:

MOTION 2: INITIATE AN AMENDMENT TO CONSIDER OPTIONS FOR SNAPPER GROUPEER AGGREGATE RECREATIONAL BAG LIMITS AND OTHER MANAGEMENT ACTIONS TO REDUCE RECREATIONAL DEAD DISCARDS. (THIS COULD BE INCLUDED IN ANOTHER AMENDMENT ALREADY ON THE WORKPLAN).

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Timing and Tasks:

MOTION 3: DIRECT STAFF TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

- Update the Shiny tool to evaluate the need for conservation and management of snapper grouper species.
- Prepare golden tilefish amendment as an abbreviated framework to adjust golden tilefish catch levels only that would be approved at the June or September Council meeting.
- Request additional information on MSY proxies from Florida FWRI and the SEFSC.
- Draft and submit the Council’s comment letter on Amendment 59 (secretarial amendment) and submit by the March 17 deadline.
- Develop draft actions and alternatives for Amendment 56, including the action to consider aligning the start date of the golden tilefish recreational season with that of other deep water species.
- Conduct the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel meeting.

- Plan and conduct the Snapper Grouper Commercial Sub-Committee's June 2025 meeting.
- Continue work on Amendment 46. Prepare the amendment for approval for public hearings in June 2025.
- Staff to begin development of the commercial amendment as soon as the abbreviated golden tilefish amendment is complete.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL