



Kerry Marhefka

Snapper Grouper Committee
Vice Chair

THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Snapper Grouper Committee Chair Advisory Panel Update

October 2026



JUNE 2026 & SEPT 2026 HIGHLIGHTS



Red Snapper Rec Season and Exempted Fishing Permits (EFP)

- Regionwide recreational season: October 9-11
- FL, GA, and SC submitted revised EFPs for recreational harvest and data collection on red snapper
 - Seasons under the terms of the EFPs were approved for October 9-22
- EFPs are implemented by NOAA Fisheries, outside of the Council process
- NOAA Fisheries staff or state agencies are primary sources for information on EFP red snapper seasons

JUNE 2026 & SEPT 2026 HIGHLIGHTS



SG Management Unit Revision (Am 61)

- Continued development of the amendment
- Discussed whether species should be removed from the fishery management unit (FMU) or designated as ecosystem component (EC) species
 - EC designation would remove federal management requirements like annual catch limits, but would keep these species in Council discussions about bycatch and ecosystem effects in the context of remaining FMU species
- Discussed whether any permit/reporting requirements or aggregate bag limit can/should be established for EC species
- Scheduled to consider public hearing approval in March 2027

JUNE 2026 & SEPT 2026 HIGHLIGHTS



Blueline Tilefish

- A joint Sub-Committee has been formed with South Atlantic and Mid-Atlantic Council reps to address regional apportionments of blueline tilefish
 - Met in May and July 2026
- The Sub-Committee is developing an apportionment method that incorporates information from:
 - fishery-independent survey(s)
 - sector landings
 - past regional apportionment percentages
- Current regional catch levels will be maintained and the regional split will be evaluated using the new method ahead of the next stock assessment in 2029

JUNE 2026 & SEPT 2026 HIGHLIGHTS



Golden Tilefish

- Developed a plan for addressing 2 issues:
 - Implement new catch levels from the SEDAR 89 assessment (Reg Am 38; will be discussed later in the meeting)
 - Consider changing the recreational fishing year or establishing a season to align the start date for that sector with blueline tilefish and snowy grouper (May 1) (separate framework amendment; discussion at a future AP meeting)

JUNE 2026 & SEPT 2026 HIGHLIGHTS



Comprehensive Commercial Sale & Abbr Framework Process Amendment

- Initiated in June 2026, includes Snapper Grouper and other South Atlantic FMPs
- Will address the issue of trip conclusion/sale during times when fish houses aren't open
- Addresses the Council's abbreviated framework process to allow more management speed and flexibility for minor changes other than annual catch limits (e.g. trip limits)
- Action considering a requirement for commercial harvest to be sold was removed from SG Am 60, and is now being considered on a broader scale in this amendment
- Some related discussion planned for later this meeting

NEW AND ONGOING AMENDMENTS



Newly-Initiated Amendments

- Council initiated the following amendments:
 - Comprehensive Commercial Sale and Abbreviated Framework Process Amendment
 - Golden Tilefish Recreational Season Framework Amendment

Ongoing Amendments

- Council continued developing the following amendments:
 - Reg Amendment 38 (Headboat Vessel Limits and Golden Tilefish Catch Levels)
 - Reg Amendment 39 (Spawning Special Management Zones)
 - Reg Amendment 40 (Black Sea Bass On-Demand Pot Area Re-Opening)
 - Amendment 44 (Yellowtail Snapper and Mutton Snapper)
 - Amendment 60 (Commercial Management Measures)
 - Amendment 61 (Fishery Management Unit Revision)

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES/DISCUSSIONS



Lines of Communication: Conversations with the Council

- Meetings will be conducted in 2 states per year
 - GA – Nov 2025; NC – Mar 2026
 - December 15-17, 2026 – SC
 - Dec 15: Okatie, SC
 - Dec 16: Charleston, SC
 - Dec 17: Myrtle Beach, SC
 - See Council [webpage](#) for specific details
 - Week of January 25, 2026 – FL

Wreckfish AP & ITQ Review

- AP meeting scheduled for November 4-6
- ITQ Review scheduled for December 2026 Council Meeting



TOPICS FOR THIS AP MEETING

Council staff will give updates from recent Council meetings and facilitate discussions for the following topics later in the meeting:

- Amendment 44 (Yellowtail Snapper and Mutton Snapper)
- Amendment 60 (Commercial Management Measures)
- Reg Amendment 38 (Headboat Vessel Limits and Golden Tilefish Catch Levels)
- Reg Amendment 39 (Spawning Special Management Zones)
- Reg Amendment 40 (Black Sea Bass On-Demand Pot Area Re-Opening)
- Comprehensive Commercial Sale & Abbr Framework Process Amendment
- Commercial Discard Monitoring



A large, dark-colored fish, possibly a snapper or similar species, is being held by a person wearing a blue jacket and camouflage pants. The fish is shown in profile, facing right, with its mouth open, revealing small teeth. The background shows the blue ocean and the white hull of a boat. A green bucket is visible on the boat's deck. The word "QUESTIONS?" is overlaid in large, bold, yellow capital letters across the middle of the fish.

QUESTIONS?