

**FINAL**  
**SUMMARY REPORT**  
**SNAPPER GROUPE COMMITTEE**  
**SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**  
**December 5-6, 2023**

The Committee approved the minutes from the September 2023 meeting and the agenda for the December 2023 meeting.

**Updates**

The Committee received updates on the red snapper Notice of Funding Opportunity and Exempted Fishing Permits, regulations and accountability measures resulting from recent implementation of Snapper Grouper Amendment 53 (Gag and Black Grouper), and the System Management Plan Work Group. For gag, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Southeast Regional Office (SERO) will inform the Council at the March meeting of the projected recreational season and adjusted commercial catch level for 2024.

**Wreckfish (SG Amendment 48)**

A review of the Wreckfish Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) Program was completed in 2019 and included recommendations for improvement, including stakeholder concerns with offloading site and time requirements. At their June 2023 meeting the Council established an ad-hoc advisory group consisting of the current shareholders (Wreckfish Advisory Group) and Council Wreckfish Sub-Committee to discuss continued development of Amendment 48. Those two groups met to discuss Amendment 48 on September 19th and 20th. Staff presented the Wreckfish Advisory Group report and the Wreckfish Sub-Committee report for Committee discussion.

**MOTION 1:** APPROVE ALL MOTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE WRECKFISH SUB-COMMITTEE, AS PRESENTED IN THE SEPTEMBER 2023 SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT [APPENDED].

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**Private Recreational Permitting (SG Amendment 46)**

Amendment 46 considers establishing a private recreational permit and education requirement for the South Atlantic snapper grouper fishery. Over multiple meetings, the Council has received input and technical guidance from the Private Recreational Reporting Working Group, Joint Council Workgroup on Section 102 of the Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Management Act, and several advisory panels (AP). After reviewing this input, the Council began work on the amendment and approved it for scoping at the December 2022 meeting. Of note at this meeting was also the removal of a reporting component from further consideration in the amendment.

The Council has since further developed Amendment 46, with the amendment being most recently reviewed by the Snapper Grouper AP and Outreach and Communications AP at their October 2023 meetings. The Committee received the AP summary reports from the respective AP Chairs, passed the following motions, and provided the following direction to staff:

**MOTION 2: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS PREFERRED IN ACTION 1.**

**Action 1. Establish a private recreational snapper grouper permit to fish for, harvest, or possess snapper grouper species in the South Atlantic region**

**PREFERRED Alternative 3.** Require a federal permit for all private anglers to fish for, harvest, or possess snapper grouper species in the South Atlantic exclusive economic zone.

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**MOTION 3: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS PREFERRED IN ACTION 2.**

**Action 2. Specify the species for which a private recreational snapper grouper permit would be required**

**PREFERRED Alternative 2.** A federal private recreational snapper grouper permit would be required when fishing for, harvesting, or possessing any species in the snapper grouper fishery management unit.

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**MOTION 4: APPROVE AMENDMENT 46 AND ALL ACTIONS, AS REVISED.**

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:**

- Allow the IPT to incorporate the Committee’s guidance into the actions and alternatives.
- Action 2: Include the addition of blueline tilefish, golden tilefish, snowy grouper, and wreckfish to Alternative 4.

**Action 2. Specify the species for which a private recreational snapper grouper permit would be required**

**Alternative 4.** A federal private recreational snapper grouper permit would be required when fishing for, harvesting, or possessing any deepwater species.

- Action 3: Approve inclusion of draft Alternatives 2 and 3.
  - In Alternative 2, task the IPT to change “implemented at the same time” to wording similar to “would be required before initial issuance of a permit”.
  - In Alternative 3, task the IPT to add sub-alternatives that would allow delayed implementation including:
    - Within a time period specified by the Council.
    - If a permit holder is selected to take the education module.
    - Before initial renewal of the permit.

**Action 3. Establish an education component in conjunction with a private recreational snapper grouper permit**

~~DRAFT~~ **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 implemented at the same time as the private recreational permit requirement.

~~DRAFT~~ **Alternative 3.** 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 implemented at a later date after the private recreational permit requirement has been established.

- Action 4: Approve inclusion of draft Alternative 5.
  - Prepare a discussion of the general contents of education materials and what may constitute an update to these materials. Topics may include:
    - Species ID
    - Species in the Snapper Grouper FMU
    - Best fishing practices
    - MPA and SMZs locations and regulations
    - Basic regulations
      - Descending device rigged and ready requirement
      - Size limits

**Action 4. Specify the timing of the education component requirement for the private recreational snapper grouper permit**

~~DRAFT~~ **Alternative 5.** Completion of the education component would be required upon initial issuance of a federal private recreational snapper grouper permit and each time that the education component materials are updated.

- Action 5: Include the revised version of draft Action 5 in Amendment 46.

**~~DRAFT~~ Action 5. Establish an exemption to the federal private recreational snapper grouper permit requirement based on permitting by the states.**

**Alternative 1 (No Action).** Do not establish an exemption to the federal private recreational snapper grouper permit requirement 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 requirement. The National Marine Fisheries Service would certify a state permit as equivalent to a federal private recreational snapper grouper permit provided the state implements equivalent measures that at a minimum include the following:

**Sub-alternative 2a.** The state permit is required for the same entity as the federal permit.

**Sub-alternative 2b.** The state permit is required for the same snapper grouper species as the federal permit.

**Sub-alternative 2c.** The state permit would remain valid for the same period of time as the federal permit.

**Sub-alternative 2d.** The state permit would have the same education requirement as the federal permit.

## **NEAR-TERM NEXT STEPS FOR AMENDMENT 46:**

### **Order of AP review and Council Meetings**

- 1) Gather input from the Law Enforcement AP prior to the March 2024 meeting.
  - Request that the Law Enforcement AP provide input on:
    - Enforceability by permit type (Action 1).
    - Enforceability of a permit covering the entire Snapper Grouper FMU vs a subset of species (Action 2).
    - Enforcement of a permit that only covers fishing activity in federal waters.
    - Enforceability of an education requirement (Action 3 and 4) – Weigh in with input regarding the education program. What is important to educating anglers?
- 2) Council reviews Amendment 46 at the March 2024 meeting.
  - Discuss revisions based on input from the December 2023 meeting.
  - Further discuss details of actions and alternatives.
  - The amendment would not be prepared for public hearings.
  - Compile and organize all previous Technical AP reports and recommendations into a single document.
  - Consider questions and topics that would benefit from input by the Technical AP and Private Angler AP.
- 3) Convene the Technical AP and Private Angler AP to provide input on Amendment 46.
- 4) Council reviews Amendment 46 at the June 2024 meeting.
  - Consider AP recommendations.
  - Potentially consider approval for public hearings, depending on progress made in March.

### **Gag and Black Grouper Recreational Vessel Limits and On-Demand Gear for Black Sea Bass (Regulatory Amendment 36)**

Regulatory Amendment 36 considers revising the gag and black grouper recreational vessel limits and revising commercial black sea bass pot requirements to allow the use of on-demand black sea bass pots.

Council staff presented a decision document describing the issues being addressed by this amendment, including some drafted actions and alternatives. The Committee made the following motion and provided the following guidance:

**MOTION 5: APPROVE REGULATORY AMENDMENT 36 FOR SCOPING.**  
**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**  
**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

- Do not include misidentification of gag and black grouper as rationale for recreational vessel limit changes.
- As part of scoping, communicate with black sea bass pot endorsement holders, particularly those that participated in the Exempted Fishing Permit project, asking which types of on-demand gear they would want to be available for use.

**Scamp/Yellowmouth Grouper (SG Amendment 55)**

The results of SEDAR 68 were reviewed by the Council in March 2023 and staff were directed to start a plan amendment to reorganize the Other Shallow Water Grouper Complex, establish the new Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper Complex and then establish a rebuilding plan, catch levels, allocations, and accountability measures (AM) for this new complex. In June 2023 the Council approved the amendment for scoping. Scoping hearings were held July 31, August 1 and 2. In October 2023, the AP reviewed the amendment and provided feedback. The Council was provided an overview of the AP's discussion and staff reviewed a decision document. The committee passed the following motions, and provided the following direction to staff:

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** Make the following edits to the Purpose and Need:

**REVISED Purpose:** The purpose of this fishery management plan amendment is to modify the Other South Atlantic Shallow Water Grouper complex by removing yellowmouth grouper from the complex and establishing a new Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex. For the new complex, modify conservation and management measures, establish stock determination criteria, a rebuilding plan, catch levels, sector allocations, and accountability measures based on the results of the SEDAR 68 (2022) stock assessment. For the Other Shallow Water Grouper complex, modify catch levels.

- SEDAR 68 is research track. Operational assessment may need to be referenced differently to clarify.

**Need:** The *need* for this fishery management plan amendment is to rebuild the scamp and yellowmouth grouper stock, and achieve optimum yield while minimizing, to the extent practicable, adverse social and economic effects.

**MOTION 6:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR ACTION 1.

**Action 1. Reorganize the Other South Atlantic Shallow Water Grouper complex and establish a new Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex**

**Alternative 2.** Remove yellowmouth grouper from the Other South Atlantic Shallow Water Grouper complex and establish a new Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex. The reorganized Other South Atlantic Shallow Water Grouper complex would contain rock hind, red hind, coney, graysby, and yellowfin grouper.

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**MOTION 7:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR SUB-ACTION 2A.

**Action 2. Establish maximum sustainable yield, maximum fishing mortality threshold, minimum stock size threshold, and equilibrium optimum yield for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex**

**Sub-Action 2a. Establish the maximum sustainable yield for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex.**

**Alternative 3.** Establish the maximum sustainable yield proxy at the fishing mortality at 40% of the spawning potential ratio for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex.

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**MOTION 8:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR SUB-ACTION 2B.

**Sub-Action 2b. Establish the maximum fishing mortality threshold for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex.**

**Alternative 3.** Establish the maximum fishing mortality threshold equal to the maximum sustainable yield proxy of fishing mortality at 40% spawning potential ratio for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex.

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**MOTION 9:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR SUB-ACTION 2C.

**Sub-Action 2c. Establish the minimum stock size threshold for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex.**

**Alternative 3.** Establish the minimum stock size threshold equal to 75% of the spawning stock biomass at maximum sustainable yield.

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**MOTION 10:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR ACTION 3.

**Action 3. Establish a rebuilding timeframe for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex**

**Alternative 3.** Establish a rebuilding timeframe equal to  $T_{\max}$ . This would equal 10 years with the rebuilding period ending in 2035. 2025 would be Year 1.

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**MOTION 11:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR ACTION 4.

2 ABSTENTIONS, 8 IN FAVOR, 0 OPPOSED

**Action 4. Establish the acceptable biological catch and total annual catch limit for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex**

**Alternative 2.** Establish the acceptable biological catch and set it equal to the recommendation from the Scientific and Statistical Committee. Establish the total annual catch limit for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex and set it equal to the recommended acceptable biological catch. The recommended acceptable biological catch is inclusive of recreational estimates from the Marine Recreational Information Program's Fishing Effort Survey.

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**MOTION 12:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR ACTION 6.

**Action 6. Establish commercial accountability measures for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex**

**Alternative 2.** If commercial landings for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex reach or are projected to reach the commercial annual catch limit, the commercial sector will close for the remainder of the fishing year.

If commercial landings for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex exceed the commercial annual catch limit, the total annual catch limit is exceeded, and the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex is overfished, the commercial annual catch limit for the following fishing year will be reduced by the amount of the commercial annual catch limit overage in the prior fishing year.

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** Include an alternative in Action 7 that includes a payback in the post-season AM for the recreational sector.

**Action 7. Establish recreational accountability measures for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex**

**Alternative 6.** If recreational landings for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex reached or are projected to reach the recreational annual catch limit, recreational harvest is closed for the remainder of the fishing year.

If recreational landings for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex exceed the recreational annual catch limit, the recreational annual catch limit for the following fishing year will be reduced by the amount of the recreational annual catch limit overage in the prior fishing year, regardless of stock status and if the total annual catch limit is exceeded.

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** Clarify that the current OY (formulaic definition as established in SFA Amendment) is the equilibrium OY and add discussion to explain in the document.

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:**

Include in Amendment 55:

- Adjustment to fishing season
  - Maintain May 1 opening and explore a range of season lengths.
- Modification to bag limit (include vessel limit)
  - 1-3 fish
- Modification to trip limit
  - Match alternatives that were analyzed for gag.

**Yellowtail Snapper (SG Amendment 44/RF Amendment 55)**

The Council reviewed the results of the SEDAR 68 Interim Analysis and instructed staff to resume work on this joint plan amendment in September 2022. This amendment will modify catch levels for South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico yellowtail snapper as well updating the jurisdictional allocation of the stock acceptable biological catch, total South Atlantic annual catch limit, Gulf of Mexico annual catch limit, and South Atlantic sector allocations. During the September South Atlantic Council meeting, in light of the MRIP-FES pilot study results, the Council requested that the SSC re-consider their ABC recommendation and stated their intent to prioritize an updated assessment for yellowtail snapper that includes SRFS recreational estimates. A clarification letter was sent to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (GMFMC) in October 2023 explaining the South Atlantic Council's intent. The GMFMC subsequently approved a motion to deprioritize work on the amendment until completion of the updated assessment. The Council reviewed the Gulf Council's motions and passed the following motion:

**MOTION 13: DEPRIORITIZE WORK ON SNAPPER GROUPE AMENDMENT 44/REEF FISH AMENDMENT 55 UNTIL AFTER THE COMPLETION OF THE UPDATED SEDAR 64 OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENT THAT INCORPORATES CALIBRATED SRFS RECREATIONAL LANDINGS ESTIMATES.**

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**



### **Red Snapper (Regulatory Amendment 35)**

In September 2023, the Council directed staff to not submit Regulatory Amendment 35 for secretarial review pending additional discussion. Council staff presented a review of the timeline, analyses and work completed, and rationale for the Council's multipronged plan to end overfishing of red snapper, which included Regulatory Amendment 35. The Committee made the following motion and provided the following guidance:

**MOTION 14: RESCIND THE MARCH 2023 ACTION TO APPROVE SNAPPER GROUPE REGULARITY AMENDMENT 35 FOR SECRETARIAL REVIEW.**

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

The Committee discussed potential actions and information that could be considered in the Council's response to the overfished and experiencing overfishing stock status of red snapper from SEDAR 73.

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** Compile information on the following topics for discussion at the March 2024 Council Meeting:

- Review information that was compiled during development of Reg 35 and consider what additional information would be needed to consider a different “short-term” action (would need to conduct public meetings).
- Aggregate Snapper Grouper bag limit – Jessica (FL) can provide info submitted for Red Snapper Exempted Fishing Permit application.
- Consider results of Crosson and Shertzer paper exploring management procedures – REQUEST PRESENTATION FOR MARCH 2024 AFTER PRESENTED TO SSC
- Temporary closures for some areas – Get feedback from LE AP at their upcoming meeting.
  - Rotating closures – CONCEPTUALLY, NOT SPECIFIC FEEDBACK FROM LE AP.
- Consider with Amendment 46 process, reporting requirements for recreational catch and discard data.
- Changes in indices or SERFS data since SEDAR 73.
- Review vision for the snapper grouper fishery (include vision blueprint and goals and objectives for March 2024 meeting) to inform discussions.

### **Best Fishing Practices Outreach**

The Committee received updates from staff on the Best Fishing Practices Campaign, including the video project, “What It Means to Me”, the Best Fishing Practices Master Volunteer Program, and the Sea Grant Reef Fish Fellowship.

### **AP recommendations on topics not on agenda**

The Snapper Grouper AP met on October 10-12, 2023, and discussed additional topics pertaining to the snapper grouper fishery. Robert Lorenz, AP Chair, presented the Snapper Grouper AP's recommendations to the Committee on items not covered on the Committee's agenda. The Committee requested the following items related to the AP's discussions:

#### Commercial Permits

- Analysis to consider an optimal number of snapper grouper commercial permits
  - Consider capacity of modern, declining infrastructure.
- Consult Kevin McIntosh (SERO) to help address permit questions.

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

- Update the commercial 2 for 1 white paper with information on 225 permits – prepare for review at the March 2024 meeting.

**MOTION 15:** INITIATE AN AMENDMENT TO ESTABLISH LIMITED ENTRY FOR THE FOR-HIRE COMPONENTS OF THE SNAPPER GROUPER, COASTAL MIGRATORY PELAGICS, AND DOLPHIN WAHOO FISHERIES.

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**MOTION 16:** TO PREVENT SPECULATIVE ENTRY, ESTABLISH AN ADDITIONAL CONTROL DATE OF DECEMBER 8, 2023, THAT THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL (COUNCIL) MAY USE IF IT DECIDES TO CREATE RESTRICTIONS LIMITING PARTICIPATION IN THE EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE FOR THE FEDERAL CHARTER VESSEL/HEADBOAT (FOR-HIRE) COMPONENT OF THE RECREATIONAL SECTORS OF THE COASTAL MIGRATORY PELAGICS FISHERY IN THE ATLANTIC, DOLPHIN AND WAHOO FISHERY IN THE ATLANTIC, AND SNAPPER-GROUPER FISHERY IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC. ANYONE OBTAINING A FEDERAL FOR-HIRE PERMIT FOR THESE RECREATIONAL SECTORS AFTER THE CONTROL DATE WILL NOT BE ASSURED OF FUTURE ACCESS SHOULD A MANAGEMENT REGIME THAT LIMITS PARTICIPATION IN THE SECTOR BE PREPARED AND IMPLEMENTED. ADDITIONALLY, FEDERAL PERMIT HOLDERS THAT HAVE NOT REPORTED SNAPPER-GROUPER, COASTAL MIGRATORY PELAGIC, AND/OR DOLPHIN AND WAHOO CATCH FROM THE SOUTH ATLANTIC TO THE SOUTHEAST FOR-HIRE INTEGRATED ELECTRONIC REPORTING PROGRAM ON OR PRIOR TO DECEMBER 5, 2023 WILL NOT BE ASSURED OF FUTURE ACCESS SHOULD A MANAGEMENT REGIME THAT LIMITS PARTICIPATION IN THE SECTOR BE PREPARED AND IMPLEMENTED.

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

#### For-Hire Limited Entry Document

- Summarize information compiled for Amendment 47.
- Investigate changes in the for-hire industry since Amendment 47.
- Include dolphin-wahoo and coastal migratory pelagics in for-hire limited entry considerations.

Explore optimal effort/yield via the management strategy evaluation and test management procedures that can achieve that.

- Need to get to initial set of effort estimates for fishery components/sectors.
- Ensure that the MSE eventually accounts for commercial effort once objectives are clarified.

**Other Business**

New catch limits for golden tilefish were implemented in December 2023 (Amendment 52). Based on accountability measures, SERO will project the 2024 season length and announce early in the year.

**Timing and Tasks:****MOTION 17: DIRECT STAFF TO DO THE FOLLOWING:**

- Continue to develop Snapper Grouper Amendment 48 (Wreckfish) and convene the next meeting of the Wreckfish Sub-Committee via webinar prior to the March 2024 Council meeting.
- Continue development of Amendment 46 for review at the March 2024 Council meeting (see direction to staff above).
- Conduct scoping for Regulatory Amendment 36, including communication with black sea bass pot endorsement holders.
- Draft a letter on behalf of the Council regarding what the Council would like included in future stock status letters.
- Red snapper tasks (see direction to staff above).
- Prepare an updated information paper describing the snapper Grouper commercial 2 for 1 permit policy and SG2 permits.

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**DRAFT**  
**SUMMARY REPORT**  
**WRECKFISH SUB-COMMITTEE**  
**SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**  
**Saint Augustine, Florida**  
**September 20, 2023**

The Sub-Committee approved the September 2023 meeting agenda.

**Snapper Grouper Amendment 48 (Wreckfish)**

A review of the Wreckfish Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) Program was completed in 2019 and included recommendations for improvement, specifically modernization of the program. At their June 2023 meeting, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's (Council) Snapper Grouper Committee received presentations from National Marine Fisheries Service's Southeast Regional Office (SERO) on different monitoring options for the wreckfish ITQ fishery and participation and eligibility decisions required to modernize the fishery. Due to the complexity and depth of discussion needed on these topics, the Council established an ad-hoc advisory group consisting of the current shareholders (Wreckfish Advisory Group) and a Wreckfish Sub-Committee to discuss continued development of Amendment 48.

Snapper Grouper Amendment 48 considers actions to move from the current paper-based coupon systems to an electronic reporting system. Moving to electronic reporting will require the Council to review current participation and eligibility requirements in the fishery. Currently, there are some aspects of eligibility and participation in an electronic system that are not specified in the current wreckfish ITQ regulations. As such, simply retaining the status quo requirements is not sufficient to move forward with electronic reporting.

Additionally, Amendment 48 considers modifications to monitoring requirements for the fishery, specifically the offloading site and time requirements. Shareholders report that they never encounter law enforcement officials at the dock and the offloading time requirement negatively affects the efficiency of their fishing operations. Since fishermen report that they rarely encounter law enforcement when offloading, the intended outcome of approved offloading sites and times as a deterrent for landing unreported fish has not been realized. As such, Amendment 48 considers additional options for monitoring of the wreckfish ITQ fishery.

Council staff reviewed input received from the most recent Wreckfish Advisory Group (ITQ shareholders) meeting and presented draft actions and alternatives related to monitoring, participation, and eligibility for the Sub-Committee to consider for inclusion in Amendment 48.

The following motions were approved:

**DIRECTION TO STAFF: LOOK UP RATIONALE FOR THE ORIGINAL SPAWNING SEASON CLOSURE TIME PERIOD.**

**MOTION 1:** SPLIT ACTION 5 INTO TWO ACTIONS, ONE ADDRESSING OFFLOADING HOURS AND ONE ADDRESSING OFFLOADING SITES.

**APPROVED BY SUB-COMMITTEE.**

DIRECTION TO STAFF: BRING THIS AMENDMENT AND NEW ACTIONS TO THE LAW ENFORCEMENT ADVISORY PANEL BEFORE THE MARCH 2024 MEETING. TOPICS: OFFLOADING SITE (FIXED FACILITY) AND TIME REQUIREMENTS, MONITORING ACTIONS.

**MOTION 2:** CHANGE THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE IN SUB-ACTION 6-4 TO ALTERNATIVE 2.

**Sub-Action 6-4. Determination of wreckfish individual transferable quota program cost recovery fees.**

**Alternative 2.** The cost recovery fee will be based on actual\* ex-vessel value of the wreckfish landings.

**APPROVED BY SUB-COMMITTEE.**

**MOTION 3:** ADD CONSIDERATION OF TIME FOR PRICE DETERMINATION FOLLOWING LANDING, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVES FOR 15-DAYS, 30-DAYS.

**APPROVED BY SUB-COMMITTEE.**

- DIRECTION TO STAFF: IPT TO DISCUSS HOW TO INCORPORATE THIS INTO THE AMENDMENT AND CONSIDER INPUT PROVIDED BY SHAREHOLDERS

**MOTION 4:** DO NOT INCLUDE AN ACTION FOR A TRIP DECLARATION (HAIL OUT) REQUIREMENT IN AMENDMENT 48.

**APPROVED BY SUB-COMMITTEE.**

**MOTION 5:** ADD ACTION B. (HAIL-IN) TO AMENDMENT 48, AS MODIFIED.

**Action B. Pre-landing Notification Requirement for Commercial Vessels Participating in the Wreckfish Component of the Snapper Grouper Fishery.**

**Alternative 1 (No Action).** Commercial vessels participating in the wreckfish component of the snapper grouper fishery are not required to notify the National Marine Fisheries Service in advance of landing wreckfish.

**Alternative 2.** The owner or operator of a commercial snapper grouper unlimited permitted vessel participating in the wreckfish component of the snapper grouper fishery is responsible for ensuring that the National Marine Fisheries Service is contacted at least three hours, but no more than 24 hours, in advance of landing using a National Marine Fisheries Service approved method (other than a vessel monitoring system). When providing advance notice of landing, they must include the expected date and time, pre-approved landing location, estimated weight of wreckfish on-board the vessel, dealer where the wreckfish are to be received, shareholder, and vessel.

**APPROVED BY SUB-COMMITTEE.**

DIRECTION TO STAFF: HAVE NOAA OLE AND STATE AGENCIES PROVIDE INFORMATION ON WRECKFISH CITATIONS AND HOW OFTEN WRECKFISH VESSELS ARE INTERCEPTED AT THE DOCK.

DIRECTION TO STAFF: CONSIDER A NOTIFICATION TIME OF LESS THAN 3 HOURS IN ADVANCE AND PROVIDE MORE CLARITY ON “NMFS APPROVED METHOD” LANGUAGE. PROVIDE INFORMATION ON HOW OTHER SYSTEMS THAT INCLUDE CALL-IN TO A 24-HOUR LINE FUNCTION AND ACCOUNT FOR THINGS LIKE TECHNICAL ISSUES.

**MOTION 6:** ADD ACTION C TO AMENDMENT 48, AS MODIFIED.

**Action C. Wreckfish Individual Transferable Quota Online Shareholder Account Eligibility**

**Alternative 1 (No Action).** To be eligible to open a wreckfish individual transferable quota shareholder account, individuals must be United States citizens, permanent resident aliens, or a corporation, partnership, or other entity eligible to own and control a United States fishing vessel.

**Alternative 2.** To be eligible to open a wreckfish individual transferable quota shareholder account, individuals must be entities who are United States citizens, permanent resident aliens, or a corporation, partnership, or other entity eligible to own and control a United States fishing vessel and hold a valid or renewable commercial snapper grouper unlimited permit.

~~**Alternative 3.** To be eligible to open a wreckfish individual transferable quota shareholder account, individuals must be entities who are United States citizens, permanent resident aliens, or a corporation, partnership, or other entity eligible to own and control a United States fishing vessel and hold a valid or renewable commercial snapper grouper unlimited permit and a valid wreckfish permit.~~

**APPROVED BY SUB-COMMITTEE.**

**MOTION 7:** ADD ACTION D TO AMENDMENT 48, AS MODIFIED.

**Action D. Requirements for Obtaining and Maintaining Wreckfish Individual Transferable Quota Shares in the Online System**

**Alternative 1 (No Action).** No requirements to obtain or maintain wreckfish individual transferable quota shares in an online system.

**Alternative 2.** To obtain (transfer into a shareholder account) or maintain shares (hold existing shares in a shareholder account), all shareholder accounts must be associated with individuals who are United States citizens, permanent resident aliens, or a corporation, partnership, or other entity eligible to own and control a United States fishing vessel.

**Alternative 3.** To obtain (transfer into a shareholder account) or maintain shares (hold existing shares in a shareholder account), all shareholder accounts must be associated with entities who are United States citizens, permanent resident aliens, or a corporation, partnership, or other entity

eligible to own and control a United States fishing vessel and hold a valid or renewable commercial snapper grouper unlimited permit or the shares will be reclaimed by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). A shareholder account is associated with a permit if the permit has the exact same entities listed on both the shareholder account and permit.

~~**Alternative 4.** To obtain (transfer into a shareholder account) or maintain shares (hold existing shares in a shareholder account), all shareholder accounts must be associated with entities who are United States citizens, permanent resident aliens, or a corporation, partnership, or other entity eligible to own and control a United States fishing vessel and hold a valid or renewable commercial snapper grouper unlimited permit and hold a valid wreckfish permit or the shares will be reclaimed by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). A shareholder account is associated with a permit if the permit has the exact same entities listed on both the shareholder account and permit.~~

**APPROVED BY SUB-COMMITTEE.**

DIRECTION TO STAFF: PROVIDE INFORMATION FROM NOAA GC ON SANCTIONS AND HAVE THE IPT DISCUSS VALID VS. VALID OR RENEWABLE LANGUAGE.

**MOTION 8:** BRING ACTION E INTO THE DOCUMENT AS MODIFIED.

### **Action E. Share Divestment for Permit-Required Accounts**

**Alternative 1 (No Action).** NMFS will not reclaim shares of shareholder accounts not in compliance with the requirements to maintain shares.

**Alternative 2.** Shareholder accounts must be in compliance with the requirements to maintain shares, or NMFS will reclaim all shares in a shareholder account:

**Sub-alternative 2a.** On the effective date implementing this amendment.

**Sub-alternative 2a.** 1 year following the effective date implementing this amendment.

**Sub-alternative 2b.** 3 years following the effective date implementing this amendment.

~~**Sub-alternative 2c.** 5 years following the effective date implementing this amendment.~~

**Alternative 3.** After implementation of this amendment, if a shareholder is no longer in compliance with the requirements to maintain shares, the shareholder(s) must divest of the account's shares, or the shares will be reclaimed by NMFS:

**Sub-alternative 3a.** 1 year following the transfer or termination of the permit.

**Sub-alternative 3b.** 3 years following the transfer or termination of the permit.

~~**Sub-alternative 3c.** 5 years following the transfer or termination of the permit.~~

**APPROVED BY SUB-COMMITTEE.**

DIRECTION TO STAFF: WORK WITH IPT TO ADD LANGUAGE ON HOW DIVESTMENT WORKS IN CASE OF DEATH.

**MOTION 9: ADD ACTION F TO AMENDMENT 48**

**Action F. Redistribution of reclaimed shares to remaining shareholders.**

**Alternative 1 (No Action).** NMFS will not reclaim and redistribute shares of shareholder accounts not in compliance with the requirements to maintain shares.

**Alternative 2.** Redistribute reclaimed shares to remaining shareholders equally.

**Alternative 3.** Redistribute reclaimed shares to remaining shareholders based on the proportion of remaining shares held by each remaining shareholder.

**Alternative 4.** Redistribute reclaimed shares to remaining shareholders based on landings history.

**Sub-alternative 4a.** Proportion of total wreckfish landings over the most recent five fishing years.

**Sub-alternative 4b.** Proportion of total wreckfish landings over the most recent three fishing years.

**APPROVED BY SUB-COMMITTEE.**

**MOTION 10: ADD ACTION G TO AMENDMENT 48, AS MODIFIED**

**Action G. Wreckfish Individual Transferable Quota Requirements to Obtain Annual Allocation from Shares.**

**Alternative 1 (No Action).** To obtain annual allocation from shares, an account must hold active wreckfish individual transferable quota shares.

**Alternative 2.** To obtain annual allocation from shares, an account must hold active wreckfish individual transferable quota shares and be in good standing with respect to:

**Sub-alternative 2a.** Collection and submission of cost recovery fees.

**Sub-alternative 2b.** Wreckfish individual transferable quota reporting requirements.

~~**Sub-alternative 2c.** Commercial snapper grouper unlimited permit reporting requirements.~~

**APPROVED BY SUB-COMMITTEE.**

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** ADD AN ALTERNATIVE UNDER ACTION G TO REQUIRE AN SG1 PERMIT TO OBTAIN ANNUAL ALLOCATION FROM SHARES. IPT TO DISCUSS VALID VS. VALID AND RENEWABLE.



**MOTION 11: ADD ACTION H TO AMENDMENT 48, AS MODIFIED**

**Action H. Wreckfish Individual Transferable Quota Requirements to Obtain Annual Allocation through Transfer.**

**Alternative 1 (No Action).** Do not limit who can receive annual allocation through transfer in the online system.

**Alternative 2.** Individual transferable quota annual allocation can be transferred only to individual transferable quota accounts holding shares. Eligible accounts must be held by individuals who are United States citizens or permanent resident aliens.

**Alternative 3.** Individual transferable quota annual allocation can be transferred only to accounts with an associated valid snapper grouper unlimited permit. Eligible accounts must be associated with individuals who are United States citizens or permanent resident aliens.

~~**Alternative 4.** Individual transferable quota annual allocation can be transferred only to accounts with a valid snapper grouper unlimited permit and valid wreckfish permit. Eligible accounts must be associated with individuals who are United States citizens or permanent resident aliens.~~  
**APPROVED BY SUB-COMMITTEE.**

**MOTION 12: ADD ACTION I TO AMENDMENT 48**

**Action I. Retaining Annual Allocation before a Commercial Annual Catch Limit Reduction**

**Purpose of Action:** While no stock assessment or ACL reduction is expected for wreckfish, this action would provide the Regional Administrator with the ability to withhold annual allocation in the event a reduction is required in the future.

**Alternative 1 (No Action).** Distribute 100% of the wreckfish annual allocation to individual transferable quota shareholders on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

**Alternative 2.** Provide the Regional Administrator with the authority to withhold the amount of wreckfish annual allocation before distribution at the beginning of a year in which a commercial annual catch limit reduction is expected to occur. Withheld wreckfish annual allocation will be distributed to shareholders if the effective date of the final rule implementing the quota reduction has not occurred by:

**Sub-alternative 2a.** June 1.

**Sub-alternative 2b.** August 1.

**APPROVED BY SUB-COMMITTEE.**

**Other Business**

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Note: Council staff drafts the timing and task motion based on Sub-Committee action. If points require clarification, they will be added to the draft motion. The Sub-Committee should review this wording carefully to be sure it accurately reflects their intent prior to making the motion.

## 1. Timing and Task(s)

### **MOTION 13:** ADOPT THE FOLLOWING TIMING AND TASKS:

2. Update the full Snapper Grouper Committee on decisions made during the December 2023 Council meeting.
3. Continue to develop Snapper Grouper Amendment 48 (Wreckfish) including the addition of monitoring, participation, and eligibility actions, as approved.
4. Convene the next meeting of the Wreckfish Sub-Committee via webinar prior to the March 2024 Council meeting.

**FINAL**  
**SUMMARY REPORT**  
**SNAPPER GROUPE COMMITTEE**  
**SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**  
**March 5-7, 2024**

The Committee approved the minutes from the December 2023 meeting and the agenda for the March 2024 meeting.

**Updates**

The Committee received an update on the red snapper Notice of Funding Opportunity and Exempted Fishing Permits (EFP). Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) presented information on their applications for EFPs. The Committee received the EFP presentation favorably and provided comments to FWC for consideration, including reducing the maximum red snapper vessel limit from 60 fish, ensuring no commercial sale of fish harvested under the EFP, and reconsideration of trips lost due to poor weather. The Committee asked and received clarification from NOAA Fisheries (NMFS) that red snapper harvested in these EFPs for 2024 would be excluded from the 2024 annual catch limit (ACL).

NMFS also gave an update on recreational season announcements for gag and red snapper.

**Gag**

- Recreational season is projected to be open in 2024 from May 1 to June 15.
- Because there was a 65,000 pound overage of the commercial ACL in 2023, the commercial ACL for 2024 will need to be reduced by the amount of the overage. The adjusted ACL for the commercial sector will be approximately 62,000 lbs. The commercial season will open May 1 and end when the ACL is met or projected to be met.

**Red Snapper**

- NMFS has not conducted a 2024 recreational season projection for red snapper. The agency is evaluating whether to take interim measures to address overfishing of red snapper. The agency will make an announcement later this spring regarding how the red snapper catch levels will be adjusted (likely in the range of levels considered in Regulatory Amendment 35).
- NMFS did not state whether there will be a recreational or a commercial season in 2024.

**Wreckfish (SG Amendment 48)**

A review of the Wreckfish Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) Program was completed in 2019 and included recommendations for improvement, including stakeholder concerns with offloading site and time requirements. At their June 2023 meeting the Council established a Wreckfish Sub-Committee to discuss continued development of Amendment 48. The Sub-Committee met to discuss Amendment 48 on February 8, 2024. The Sub-Committee selected preferred alternatives for most actions and requested additional information on wreckfish reporting requirements and pre-landing notifications. Staff presented the Wreckfish Sub-Committee report and the requested additional information for Committee discussion.

**MOTION 1: APPROVED THE REVISED LANGUAGE FOR ACTION 13, PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE 2**

**Action 13.** Modify offloading site requirements and establish approved landing locations for wreckfish.

**Preferred Alternative 2.** Remove the offloading site requirements for wreckfish. Individual transferable quota wreckfish must be landed at an approved landing location. Landing locations must be approved by NMFS Office for Law Enforcement prior to a vessel landing individual transferable wreckfish at these sites. Landing locations must be publicly accessible via freely traversable roads and navigable waters and no other condition may impede free and immediate access to the site by an authorized law enforcement officer.

**\*\*Note:** the NMFS Office of Law Enforcement may choose to revoke approval of a pre-landing location if it is determined that officers do not have free and immediate access to the site.

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**MOTION 2: APPROVE ALL MOTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE WRECKFISH SUB-COMMITTEE, AS PRESENTED IN THE [FEBRUARY 2024 SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT](#) [APPENDED].**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**MOTION 3: APPROVE ALL ADDITIONAL WRECKFISH MOTIONS PASSED BY THE SNAPPER GROUPER COMMITTEE AT THE MARCH 2024 COUNCIL MEETING. (MOTIONS 5, 8, 10, AND 11 OF THE APPENDED [SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT](#)).**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**Scamp/Yellowmouth Grouper (SG Amendment 55)**

Snapper Grouper Amendment 55 is being developed to reorganize the Other Shallow Water Grouper Complex, establish the new Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper Complex and then establish a rebuilding plan, catch levels, allocations, and accountability measures (AM) for this new complex. The committee passed the following motions, and provided the following direction to staff:

**MOTION 4: APPROVE THE PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENT.**

**Purpose:** The *purpose* of this amendment is to modify the Other South Atlantic Shallow Water Grouper complex by removing yellowmouth grouper from the complex and establishing a new Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex. For the new complex, establish conservation and management measures, stock status determination criteria, a rebuilding plan, catch levels, sector allocations, and accountability measures based on the results of the SEDAR 68 operational assessment (2022) stock assessment. For the South Atlantic Other Shallow Water Grouper complex, modify catch levels.

**Need:** The *need* for this amendment is to rebuild the scamp and yellowmouth grouper stock, and achieve optimum yield while minimizing, to the extent practicable, adverse social and economic effect.

**APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**MOTION 5:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR ACTION 5.

**Action 5. Establish sector allocations and sector annual catch limits for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex**

**Alternative 2.** Commercial and recreational allocations would change each year from 2025-2029, where they would remain in place until modified, based on the total average commercial and recreational landings of scamp and yellowmouth grouper from 2018 through 2022. (Split Reduction Method – 5 yrs.)

**APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL (1 OBJECTION AND 1 ABSTENTION)**

**MOTION 6:** MOVE ALTERNATIVES 4 AND 5 FROM ACTION 5 TO CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED.

**Action 5. Establish sector allocations and sector annual catch limits for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex**

**Alternative 4.** Allocate 63.40% of the total annual catch limit of Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex to the commercial sector and 36.60% to the recreational sector.

**Alternative 5.** Allocate 64.90% of the total annual catch limit of Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex to the commercial sector and 35.10% to the recreational sector.

**APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** REMOVE THE COMMERCIAL SECTOR FROM ACTION 6.

**Action 6. Reduce the recreational fishing season for scamp and yellowmouth grouper**

**Alternative 1 (No Action).** The recreational fishing season for scamp and yellowmouth grouper in the exclusive economic zone is open May 1 – December 31. A spawning season closure is in place annually from January 1 through April 30.

**Alternative 2.** Reduce the recreational fishing season for scamp and yellowmouth grouper in the exclusive economic zone to be open May 1 through July 31. The season will be closed January 1 through April 30 (spawning season closure) and August 1 through December 31.

**Alternative 3.** Reduce the recreational fishing season for scamp and yellowmouth grouper in the exclusive economic zone to be open May 1 through August 31. The season will be closed January 1 through April 30 (spawning season closure) and September 1 through December 31.

**Alternative 4.** Reduce the recreational fishing season for scamp and yellowmouth grouper in the exclusive economic zone to be open May 1 through September 30. The season will be closed January 1 through April 30 (spawning season closure) and October 1 through December 31.

**MOTION 7:** MOVE ACTION 6 ALTERNATIVE 2 TO CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED AFTER MODIFICATIONS TO THE ACTION AND ALTERNATIVE LANGUAGE.

**Action 6. Reduce the recreational fishing season for scamp and yellowmouth grouper**

**Alternative 2.** Reduce the recreational fishing season for scamp and yellowmouth grouper in the exclusive economic zone to be open May 1 through July 31. The season will be closed January 1 through April 30 (spawning season closure) and August 1 through December 31.

**APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**MOTION 8: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR ACTION 6.**

**Action 6. Reduce the recreational fishing season for scamp and yellowmouth grouper**

**Alternative 3.** Reduce the recreational fishing season for scamp and yellowmouth grouper in the exclusive economic zone to be open May 1 through August 31. The season will be closed January 1 through April 30 (spawning season closure) and September 1 through December 31.

**APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**DIRECTION TO STAFF: MODIFY ACTION 8 ALTERNATIVES TO EVEN POUNDS GUTTED WEIGHT AND DISPLAY THE COMMERCIAL ANNUAL CATCH LIMIT IN POUNDS GUTTED WEIGHT UNDER ACTION 5.**

**Action 8. Establish an aggregate commercial trip limit for scamp and yellowmouth grouper**

**Alternative 1 (No Action).** There is no commercial trip limit for scamp and yellowmouth grouper.

**Alternative 2.** Establish an aggregate commercial trip limit for scamp and yellowmouth grouper of 200 pounds gutted weight.

**Alternative 3.** Establish an aggregate commercial trip limit for scamp and yellowmouth grouper of 300 pounds gutted weight.

**Alternative 4.** Establish an aggregate commercial trip limit for scamp and yellowmouth grouper of 400 pounds gutted weight.

**Alternative 5.** Establish an aggregate commercial trip limit for scamp and yellowmouth grouper of 500 pounds gutted weight.

**Action 5. Establish sector allocations and sector annual catch limits for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex**

**Preferred Alternative 2.** Commercial and recreational allocations would change each year from 2025-2029, where they would remain in place until modified, based on the total average commercial and recreational landings of scamp and yellowmouth grouper from 2018 through 2022.

ACL Alternatives	Committee Preferred Alternative 2 Split Reduction (2018-2022)	
Action 4, Preferred Alternative 2 (ACL = ABC)	Commercial POUNDS WHOLE WEIGHT	Commercial POUNDS GUTTED WEIGHT
67450 (2025)	43,775	37,097

72200 (2026)	46,150	39,110
75050 (2027)	47,574	40,317
77900 (2028)	48,999	41,525
79800 (2029)	49,947	42,328

**MOTION 9:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 (300 POUNDS GUTTED WEIGHT) AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR ACTION 8 AFTER MODIFICATIONS TO THE ALTERNATIVE LANGUAGE.

**Action 8. Establish an aggregate commercial trip limit for scamp and yellowmouth grouper**

**Alternative 3.** Establish an aggregate commercial trip limit for scamp and yellowmouth grouper of 300 pounds gutted weight.

**APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**MOTION 10:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR ACTION 9.

**Action 9. Establish commercial accountability measures for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex**

**Alternative 3.** If commercial landings for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex reach or are projected to reach the complex commercial annual catch limit, commercial harvest of scamp and yellowmouth grouper is closed for the remainder of the fishing year.

If commercial landings for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex exceed the complex commercial annual catch limit, regardless of stock status or whether the total annual catch limit was exceeded the complex commercial annual catch limit for the following fishing year will be reduced by the amount of the complex commercial annual catch limit overage in the prior fishing year.

**APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**MOTION 11:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 5 AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR ACTION 10.

**Action 10. Establish recreational accountability measures for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex**

**Alternative 5.** If recreational landings for the Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper complex exceed the recreational annual catch limit for the complex the length of the following year's recreational fishing season for the complex will be reduced by the amount necessary to prevent the recreational annual catch limit for the complex from being exceeded in the following year, regardless of stock status.

**APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**MOTION 12:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR ACTION 11.

## **APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE**

### **Action 11. Revise the total annual catch limit and sector annual catch limits for the Other South Atlantic Shallow Water Grouper complex**

**Alternative 2.** The acceptable biological catch for the updated Other South Atlantic Shallow Water Grouper complex is 104,190 pounds whole weight. The total annual catch limit is 100,151 and is inclusive of recreational estimates from the Marine Recreational Information Program's Coastal Household Telephone Survey. The commercial annual catch limit is 53,380 pounds whole weight and the recreational annual catch limit is 46,771 pounds whole weight.

## **APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

### **Gag and Black Grouper Recreational Vessel Limits and On-Demand Gear for Black Sea Bass (Regulatory Amendment 36)**

Regulatory Amendment 36 considers revising the gag and black grouper recreational vessel limits and revising commercial black sea bass pot requirements to accommodate the use of on-demand black sea bass pots.

The Law Enforcement Advisory Panel (AP) Chair presented the Law Enforcement AP's comments concerning enforcement of on-demand pots. Council staff presented a decision document summarizing scoping comments and describing the issues being addressed by this amendment, including some drafted actions and alternatives. The Committee reviewed the information, briefly discussed considering the opening of areas closed to pot fishing due to potential whale interactions, and recommended continued development of the amendment as scheduled.

### **Black Sea Bass Assessment and Response (SG Amendment 56)**

SEDAR 76 indicated that the Black Sea Bass stock in the South Atlantic is overfished, with persistently declining recruitment. The Committee received a presentation from the Southeast Fisheries Science Center showing the revised projections of future catch used for setting acceptable biological catch (ABC) and a rebuilding timeline. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Chair presented the SSC's ABC, overfishing limit, and rebuilding recommendations and comments. Council staff presented initial management issues to be considered while developing Amendment 56, based on the results of SEDAR 76. The Committee requested the following information be compiled to inform discussions and consideration of the amendment for scoping in June 2024:

- Additional information on MRIP estimates and SEFHIER data
  - Breakdowns by area/depth/wave, co-caught species
  - Trip level information on landings/discards
  - Discard rates
- Information on phasing in ABC changes
- Tradeoffs in projections from reducing dead discards to increasing landings
- Evaluation of size limit changes, bag/trip limits, seasonality
  - L50, Catch at Length stats
  - 11-13 inch size limits for both sectors (same size for both sectors)
  - Slot limit
    - Consider protogynous hermaphroditism effects



- Check for Mid-Atlantic work
- Discard mortality (rates and numbers of fish) by depth
  - Check with SEDAR 76 analysts
  - Any information on gear differences by depth/area that affect mortality
- Gather information on catches in inshore/state waters
- Consider angler metrics for success
- Spawning areas
- Information on use/impact of sub-aquatic vegetation for juvenile black sea bass
- Co-occurring species that can affect BSB discards (& vice versa)
  - Consider species not federally managed (e.g. sheepshead)
- Commercial data by gear and time of year
- Interactions with red snapper (any updates on Ecopath/Ecosim)

### **Private Recreational Permitting (SG Amendment 46)**

Amendment 46 considers establishing a private recreational permit and education requirement for the South Atlantic snapper grouper fishery. The Council has developed Amendment 46 over several meetings, with the amendment being most recently reviewed by the Law Enforcement AP at their January 2024 meeting. The Committee received the AP summary report from the AP Chair, provided the following direction to staff, and passed the following motion:

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

- Allow the IPT to incorporate the Committee’s guidance into the amendment’s actions and alternatives.
- Action 1: Approved revised wording of title and Alternative 1 (No Action)

#### **Action 1. Establish a private recreational permit requirement in the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region**

**Alternative 1 (No Action).** Do not establish a private recreational permit requirement for vessels or anglers in the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region.

- Action 2: Approved revised wording of Alternative 1 (No Action)

#### **Action 2. Specify the species for which a private recreational snapper grouper permit would be required**

**Alternative 1 (No Action).** A federal private recreational permit requirement does not apply to any snapper grouper species.

- Action 3: Approved revised wording of alternatives and sub-alternatives. Do not further consider Draft Sub-Alternative 3c.

#### **Action 3. Establish an education component in conjunction with a private recreational snapper grouper permit**

**Alternative 1 (No Action).** Do not require an education component for private recreational permit holders to fish for, harvest, or possess snapper grouper species in the South Atlantic exclusive economic zone.

**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 initial issuance** of a private recreational permit.

**Alternative 3.** 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 **implemented after** the private recreational permit requirement has been established.

Completion of the education requirement would be REQUIRED:

**Sub-alternative 3a.** Before initial reissuance of the permit.

**Sub-alternative 3b.** When permit holders are required to complete the education requirement by the issuing authority.

- Clarified that under sub-alternative 3b, all applicable permit holders would be selected at the same time by NMFS or the appropriate state agency.
- Tasked the IPT to clarify whether the issuing authority of the education requirement can be federal, state, or both (depending on the outcome of Action 5).
  - Would it be possible to have one education course that could cover the whole region, regardless of whether administered by NMFS or a state agency?
    - Consider using the potential upcoming Florida exempted fishing permit education component as a template.
- **Action 4:** Avoid education materials that directly reference regulations that may be subject to regular change. The general contents of education materials may include:
  - Species ID
  - Species in the Snapper Grouper FMU
  - Best fishing practices
  - MPA and SMZs locations and regulations
  - Basic regulations
    - Descending device “rigged and ready” requirement
  - How to properly measure a fish
  - Resources to know regulations
  - How to get involved
  - Technical problem troubleshooting
  - If reporting is added in the future: how to use app or reporting mechanism. how to record information and report properly.
- **Action 5:** Direct the IPT to reword the action title to integrate an exemption from both a federal permit and education requirement. If wording for a state exemption also needs to be added to the actions covering the education requirement, also make changes accordingly.
  - Also make sure that this is integrated into Action 5 itself. If a state education course meets the federal requirements then it could be exempt from the federal requirement.
  - Add state-specific options for Sub-alternative 2b that would accommodate the existing Florida State Reef Fish Survey.

- Additional rationale for action: allowing states to be exempt from the federal permit and education requirement would take advantage of existing or upcoming state infrastructure, thereby reducing costs. Also such an exemption would alleviate duplicate permitting so permit holders would not need to obtain both a state and federal permit covering the same topic.

**Action 5. Establish an exemption to the federal private recreational snapper grouper permit requirement based on permitting by the states.**

**Alternative 2.** Establish an exemption to the federal private recreational snapper grouper permit requirement. The National Marine Fisheries Service would certify a state permit as equivalent to a federal private recreational snapper grouper permit provided the state implements equivalent measures that at a minimum include the following:

**Sub-alternative 2a.** The state permit is required for the same entity as the federal permit.

**Sub-alternative 2b.** The state permit is required for the same snapper grouper species as the federal permit.

**Sub-alternative 2c.** The state permit would remain valid for the same period of time as the federal permit.

**Sub-alternative 2d.** The state permit would have the same education requirement as the federal permit.

Advisory Panel Direction:

- Convene the Outreach and Communications AP, Technical AP, and Private Angler AP ahead of the Council's June meeting.
- Additional topics not included will be added by staff to the AP's discussion materials.

**Outreach and Communications AP:**

- Ask the AP to outline an education program: If you were building this program, how would you build it?
  - Who is responsible for:
    - Developing the education materials
    - Developing the education program framework
    - Maintaining the education program
  - Should there be a test for the requirement or is going through the education module enough for the certification process?
    - If there is a test, should it be pass/fail, achieve a certain % to pass, etc.?

**Technical AP:**

Action 1

- Discuss how potential data collection improvements from a vessel-based permit could be affected by rental vessels and boat clubs.
- Discuss the integration of a permit with an education requirement and whether it would affect the AP's existing recommendation for the vessel-based permit.

Action 2

- Are there ways to specifically improve estimates of catch for deepwater species within the current structure of this amendment?

**Private Angler AP:**

- How prevalent are rental vessels or boat clubs in your region?
- For education requirement, what is the optimal length of time for a course?
- What topics should be covered by education materials?

**MOTION 13: APPROVE AMENDMENT 46 AND ALL ACTIONS, AS REVISED, FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT.**

**APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**Red Snapper (Regulatory Amendment 35)**

In December 2023, the Council rescinded its approval of Regulatory Amendment 35 and directed staff to compile information for consideration of other actions. NMFS informed the Council that an interim rule to reduce overfishing of red snapper is being considered. Council staff presented the requested information. The Committee discussed waiting until a few months of EFP project information is ready before considering additional management in a Council amendment. The Committee also discussed that further information on management options is necessary to determine the best path forward for managing red snapper and snapper grouper discards. The Committee requested the following information:

- Ask the SSC to review scientific merits of the Shertzer et al. management strategy paper and evaluate to what extent strategies discussed in that paper could be expected to meet Council goals for reducing discards and rebuilding.
- Request that staff review SSC's previous recommendation (from around 2001) on size limits as a management tool and provide any updated information or recommendations.
- Request Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) Planning Team bring an initial prioritized list for Council review to the June meeting.
  - Consider Shertzer et al. paper & discussion by SSC in prioritization
  - Prioritize by ability of strategies to reduce discards while preventing overfishing and optimizing access
  - Note whether strategies are likely to be short-term/long-term for development timeframe
- June Council meeting – Compile & prioritize management procedures/options for Blue Matter to evaluate in MSE
- When available, schedule presentation of preliminary information from red snapper discard studies (FWC, SC, Mote) and MSE later in 2024.

**Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation**

Blue Matter Science presented a progress update on the development of the Snapper Grouper MSE, including a preliminary tool structure with some management strategy examples for red snapper and gag. The SSC reviewed and discussed the Snapper Grouper MSE at their February webinar meeting, and the SSC Chair presented the SSC comments.

The Council provided feedback on initial management strategies to evaluate. The Council requested a comprehensive table of management options that are being considered under each

broad topic (e.g., size limits, effort control, spatial closures, bag limits) be brought to the June Council meeting for the Council to review and prioritize. The Council will continue to provide input for the MSE in future meetings up to the expected completion of the project in December.

### **Snapper Grouper Commercial Permits**

At the Council's December 2023 meeting and the Council directed staff to update the commercial "2 for 1" discussion document as well as information on 225 commercial permits in response to the Snapper Grouper AP's discussion on the topic of commercial permits. The Committee was provided background information on creation of commercial snapper permits, summary AP discussion, and recent information on permit trends as well as vessels that are active in the fishery. The Committee provided the following direction to staff:

- When available provide additional information on:
  - Vessels active in the fishery
    - Include additional information on revenue including mean, median, range
      - Show number of vessels by revenue increments
  - Leasing of permitted vessels
    - Information on regulatory and legal mechanisms for leasing
    - Statistics on leasing
  - Trends in imports of snapper grouper species
  - Permit trends
- At a future meeting ask the Snapper Grouper AP about:
  - Innovative and new ideas to improve returns in the commercial fishery.
    - Are the split seasons still working?
    - Permit stacking
    - Multi-day trips
  - Focus on factors that the Council can control or modify
- Visioning: Summarize and identify aspects that are still applicable to the current fishery
- Consideration of potential commercially-focused port meetings – staff to come up potential timeline that would fit into the workplan and bring back feedback to the Council in June 2024.
  - Could ask for input on SG fishery during upcoming round of "town hall" meetings
  - Use info gathered thru town hall meetings to identify where focused effort is needed
  - Prepare short straw man document to outline short and long-term approaches, including use of a sub-committee approach, to discuss SG vision and other issues
  - Don't want to have top-down approach; important to maintain stakeholder engagement for planning

### **Agenda Topics for March 2024 Advisory Panel Meeting**

The Snapper Grouper AP is scheduled to convene on March 26-28, 2024. The Committee developed the following list of proposed topics for the AP's agenda:

- Hogfish Fishery Performance Report

- Management Strategy Evaluation Update and Discussion
- Vessel Limits for Head Boats
- Regulatory Amendment 36 (Gag, Black Grouper, and Black Sea Bass On-Demand Pots)
- Amendment 55 (Scamp/Yellowmouth Grouper)
- Amendment 56 (Black Sea Bass Assessment Response)
- Aligning recreational season start dates for deep water species
- Amendment Updates: Amendment 46 (Recreational Permitting), Amendment 48 (Wreckfish), Regulatory Amendment 35 (Red Snapper and Release Mortality)
- Council Discussion Updates: Commercial Permits, Limited Access to the Snapper Grouper For-Hire Fishery, Red Snapper Discard Research Projects
- Council Program Updates: Best Fishing Practices, Citizen Science, SEDAR

Make SG AP aware of SEFHIER improvement plan (e.g., new AP, etc).

### **Other Business**

In other business, the Council briefly discussed snapper grouper visioning, the challenges facing the snapper grouper fishery, and the need to consider non-traditional management approaches in the future.

Recommendation on EFP applications provided during the meeting.

### **Timing and Tasks:**

#### **MOTION 14: DIRECT STAFF TO DO THE FOLLOWING:**

- Continue to develop Snapper Grouper Amendment 48 (Wreckfish) as detailed in the timing and tasks motion from the Wreckfish Sub-Committee report (appended).
- Continue development of Amendment 46 for review at the June 2024 Council meeting. Prepare the amendment for approval for public hearings for September 2024.
  - Convene the Technical AP, Private Angler AP, and Outreach and Communications AP to review Amendment 46.
  - Convene the Outreach and Communications AP to request feedback on the education component
- Convene the Snapper Grouper AP.
- Update commercial permit information and present to the Committee in the latter half of 2024 or early 2025 (depending on availability of updated permit, logbook, and landings data).
- Continue development of Regulatory Amendment 36 for review in June 2024.
- Send letters to black sea bass pot endorsement holders to inform them of the upcoming management changes for black sea bass.
- Compile requested information for Amendment 56 and prepare for review in June 2024.
- Compile requested information on management strategies for red snapper and snapper grouper discard reduction and prepare for review in June 2024.

**APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

**SUMMARY REPORT  
WRECKFISH SUB-COMMITTEE  
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL  
Webinar  
February 8, 2024**

The Sub-Committee approved the February 2024 meeting agenda.

**Snapper Grouper Amendment 48 (Wreckfish)**

A review of the Wreckfish Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) Program was completed in 2019 and included recommendations for improvement, specifically modernization of the program. Due to the complexity and depth of discussion needed on these topics, the Council established an ad-hoc advisory group consisting of the current shareholders (Wreckfish Advisory Group) and a Wreckfish Sub-Committee to discuss continued development of Amendment 48.

Snapper Grouper Amendment 48 considers actions that address recommendations from the 2019 review, including moving from the current paper-based coupon systems to an electronic reporting system. Moving to electronic reporting will require the Council to review current participation and eligibility requirements in the fishery. Currently, there are some aspects of eligibility and participation in an electronic system that are not specified in the current wreckfish ITQ regulations. As such, simply retaining the status quo requirements is not sufficient to move forward with electronic reporting.

Additionally, Amendment 48 considers modifications to monitoring requirements for the fishery. Shareholders report that they never encounter law enforcement officials at the dock and the offloading time requirement negatively affects the efficiency of their fishing operations. Since fishermen report that they rarely encounter law enforcement when offloading, the intended outcome of approved offloading sites and times as a deterrent for landing unreported fish has not been realized.

In September 2023, the Sub-Committee added additional actions to Amendment 48 to address monitoring and participation and eligibility requirements for the Wreckfish ITQ program. The Council approved these decisions in December 2023. At the February 2024 meeting, Council staff presented updated amendment and decision documents for Sub-Committee discussion.

The following motions were approved:

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** ENSURE THAT DISCUSSION OF DEALER REPORTING REQUIREMENTS IS INCLUDED IN THE DISCUSSION OF ACTION 2 (ELECTRONIC REPORTING).

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** MODIFY THE LANGUAGE OF THE ACTION 3 (PERMIT REQUIREMENTS) TITLE TO CLARIFY THAT IT IS PERMIT REQUIREMENTS TO COMMERCIALLY *HARVEST* WRECKFISH.

**Action 3. Modify the requirements to commercially harvest or sell wreckfish.**

**MOTION 1: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS PREFERRED UNDER ACTION 4.**

**Action 4. Wreckfish Individual Transferable Quota Online Shareholder Account Eligibility**

**Alternative 2.** To be eligible to open a wreckfish individual transferable quota shareholder account, individuals must be entities who are United States citizens, permanent resident aliens, or a corporation, partnership, or other entity eligible to own and control a United States fishing vessel and hold a valid commercial snapper grouper unlimited permit.

APPROVED BY SUB-COMMITTEE

**MOTION 2: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3 AS PREFERRED UNDER ACTION 5.**

**Action 5. Requirements for Obtaining and Maintaining Wreckfish Individual Transferable Quota Shares in the Online System**

**Alternative 3.** To obtain (transfer into a shareholder account) all shareholder accounts must be associated with entities who are United States citizens, permanent resident aliens, or a corporation, partnership, or other entity eligible to own and control a United States fishing vessel and hold a valid commercial snapper grouper unlimited permit. To maintain shares (hold existing shares in a shareholder account) an account must hold a valid or renewable commercial snapper grouper unlimited permit, or the shares will be reclaimed by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). A shareholder account is associated with a permit if the permit has the exact same entities listed on both the shareholder account and permit.

APPROVED BY SUB-COMMITTEE

**MOTION 3: SELECT SUB-ALTERNATIVE 2B and SUB-ALTERNATIVE 3A AS PREFERRED UNDER ACTION 6.**

**Action 6. Share Divestment for Permit-Required Accounts**

**Alternative 2.** Shareholder accounts must be in compliance with the requirements to maintain shares, or NMFS will reclaim all shares in a shareholder account:

**Sub-alternative 2b.** 1 year following the effective date implementing this amendment.

**Alternative 3.** After implementation of this amendment, if a shareholder is no longer in compliance with the requirements to maintain shares, the shareholder(s) must divest of the account's shares, or the shares will be reclaimed by NMFS:

**Sub-alternative 3a.** 1 year following the end date on a permit.

APPROVED BY SUB-COMMITTEE

**DIRECTION TO STAFF: MODIFY THE LANGUAGE OF ALTERNATIVE 3 SUB-ALTERNATIVES TO SPECIFY THAT IT IS THE END DATE OF THE REQUIRED SNAPPER GROUPER UNLIMITED PERMIT.**



**Alternative 3.** After implementation of this amendment, if a shareholder is no longer in compliance with the requirements to maintain shares, the shareholder(s) must divest of the account's shares, or the shares will be reclaimed by NMFS:

**Sub-alternative 3a.** 1 year following the end date on a shareholder's snapper grouper unlimited permit.

**Sub-alternative 3b.** 3 years following the end date on a shareholder's snapper grouper unlimited permit.

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** ADD TEXT BOX EXAMPLES INTO AMENDMENT, FOR TERMS USED IN THIS ACTION. SPECIFICALLY, DETAIL WHAT AN "END DATE" IS AND PROVIDE INFORMATION ON HOW IT CAN BE TRIGGERED AND HOW IT IS DIFFERENT FROM A TERMINATION DATE.

**Regulation Effective Date:** the date the regulations in Snapper Grouper Amendment 48 specific to obtaining and maintaining wreckfish individual transferable quota through an online system become effective, as listed in the amendment final rule published in the federal register.

**Permit End Date:** the date when a permit is no longer valid for harvest (permit remains in renewable state for one year from the end date). Permit end dates can be triggered by permit transfers, sale of a vessel, end of vessel lease agreement, or expiration of the permit.

**Permit Expiration Date:** a permit is valid for one year from the effective date. This is known as the expiration date. When a permit expires, the expiration date becomes the end date.

**Permit Termination Date:** if not renewed, a permit will be terminated one year after the permit expiration date.

**MOTION 4:** SELECT SUB-ALTERNATIVE 4B AS PREFERRED UNDER ACTION 7.

**Action 7. Redistribution of reclaimed shares to remaining shareholders.**

**Alternative 4.** Redistribute reclaimed shares to remaining shareholders based on landings history.

**Sub-alternative 4b.** Proportion of total wreckfish landings over the most recent three fishing years.

APPROVED BY SUB-COMMITTEE

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** HAVE THE IPT DISCUSS WHAT "WRECKFISH ITQ REPORTING REQUIREMENTS" COULD INCLUDE AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN OF MONITORING COMPLIANCE. BRING THIS INFORMATION TO THE

MARCH 2024 COUNCIL MEETING (ACTION 8. WRECKFISH INDIVIDUAL TRANSFERABLE QUOTA REQUIREMENTS TO OBTAIN ALLOCATION FROM SHARES).

Wreckfish individual transferable quota shareholder reporting requirements:

- Coastal fisheries logbook (upon implementation of this amendment and Snapper Grouper Amendment 54 (commercial e-logbook));
- Up to date personal information in their permit application (ex. affirming US citizenship, telephone number, mailing and physical addresses, and business ownership);
- Landings reported in the online system.

To monitor wreckfish reporting requirements and cost recovery fee submission the agency would need to develop database code that authorizes actions within the electronic system to meet the criteria for obtaining allocation from shares. Requiring the snapper grouper unlimited permit (**Alternative 2**) would require database connections to the permits system. Requiring good standing with reporting requirements and cost recovery submission (**Alternative 3**) would require additional database coding.

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** CLARIFY THAT THE INTENT IS TO USE RELEASING ALLOCATION AS AN ENFORCEMENT TOOL.

**MOTION 5:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AND SUB-ALTERNATIVE 3A AS PREFERRED UNDER ACTION 8.

**Action 8. Wreckfish Individual Transferable Quota Requirements to Obtain Annual Allocation from Shares.**

**Alternative 2.** To obtain annual allocation from shares, an account must hold a valid or renewable commercial snapper grouper unlimited permit.

**Alternative 3.** To obtain annual allocation from shares, an account must hold active wreckfish individual transferable quota shares and be in good standing with respect to:

**Sub-alternative 3a.** Collection and submission of cost recovery fees.

MOTION APPROVED BY SNAPPER GROUPE COMMITTEE

**MOTION 6:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AND ALTERNATIVE 3 AS PREFERRED UNDER ACTION 9.

**Action 9. Wreckfish Individual Transferable Quota Requirements to Obtain Annual Allocation through Transfer.**

**Alternative 2.** Individual transferable quota annual allocation can be transferred only to individual transferable quota accounts holding shares. Eligible accounts must be held by individuals who are United States citizens or permanent resident aliens.

**Alternative 3.** Individual transferable quota annual allocation can be transferred only to accounts with an associated valid snapper grouper unlimited permit. Eligible accounts must be associated with individuals who are United States citizens or permanent resident aliens.

APPROVED BY SUB-COMMITTEE

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** HAVE THE IPT CREATE A GRAPHIC TO EXPLAIN HOW A GIVEN VESSEL MIGHT NAVIGATE THE ABILITY TO HOLD SHARES, RECEIVE ALLOCATION FROM SHARES, RECEIVE TRANSFERRED ALLOCATION, AND HARVEST UNDER THE CURRENT PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES.

**Under the current preferred alternatives, what do I need to participate in the commercial wreckfish individual transferable quota fishery?**

**Step 1 (Action 4): To be eligible for an online account:**

- ✓ United States citizenship;
- ✓ Valid snapper grouper unlimited permit.

**Step 2 (Action 5): To obtain and maintain ITQ shares:**

- ✓ United States citizenship;
- ✓ Valid snapper grouper unlimited permit (obtain);
- ✓ Valid or renewable snapper grouper unlimited permit (maintain).

**Step 3a (Action 8): To obtain allocation from shares:**

*No preferred alternatives currently selected under this action, but the options are as follows:*

- ✓ Wreckfish individual transferable quota shares;
- ☐ Valid or renewable snapper grouper unlimited permit;
- ☐ In good standing with collection and submission of cost recovery fees;
- ☐ In good standing with wreckfish reporting requirements.

**Step 3b (Action 9): To obtain allocation via transfer:**

- ✓ United States citizenship;
- ✓ Wreckfish individual transferable quota shares;
- ✓ Valid snapper grouper unlimited permit.

**Step 4 (Action 3): To commercially harvest wreckfish:**

- ✓ Wreckfish individual transferable quota shares;
- ✓ Valid snapper grouper unlimited permit.

**MOTION 7: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2A AS PREFERRED UNDER ACTION 10.**

**Action 10. Retaining Annual Allocation before a Commercial Annual Catch Limit Reduction**

**Alternative 2.** Provide the Regional Administrator with the authority to withhold the amount of wreckfish annual allocation before distribution at the beginning of a year in which a commercial annual catch limit reduction is expected to occur. Withheld wreckfish annual allocation will be distributed to shareholders if the effective date of the final rule implementing the quota reduction has not occurred by:

**Sub-alternative 2a.** June 1.

APPROVED BY SUB-COMMITTEE

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** SPECIFY THAT THE AMOUNT WITHHELD WOULD BE EQUIVALENT TO THE DECREASE IN ACL APPROVED BY THE COUNCIL.

**DIRECTION TO STAFF:** BRING MORE DETAILS ON THE NMFS APPROVED OPTIONS TO THE MARCH COUNCIL MEETING (ACTION 12. PRE-LANDING NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENT FOR COMMERCIAL VESSELS PARTICIPATING IN THE WRECKFISH COMPONENT OF THE SNAPPER GROUPER FISHERY).

**NMFS would authorize two different methods to provide the pre-notification:**

- Fishermen may log into the electronic system and submit the pre-landing notification.
- NMFS would pay for a call service to staff a 24-hour line, where the call service will ask and enter all required fields within the pre-landing notification and submit on behalf of the fishermen.

*Note:* for the purpose of this action landing would mean to arrive at a dock, berth, beach, seawall, or ramp (matches Gulf IFQ definition).

**MOTION 8:** SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS PREFERRED UNDER ACTION 12.  
MOTION APPROVED

**Action 12. Pre-landing Notification Requirement for Commercial Vessels Participating in the Wreckfish Component of the Snapper Grouper Fishery.**

**Alternative 2.** The owner or operator of a commercial snapper grouper unlimited permitted vessel participating in the wreckfish component of the snapper grouper fishery is responsible for ensuring that the National Marine Fisheries Service is contacted at least three hours, but no more than 24 hours, in advance of landing using a National Marine Fisheries Service approved method. When providing advance notice of landing, they must include the expected date and time of landing, the pre-approved landing location, the estimated weight of wreckfish on-board the vessel, the dealer where the wreckfish are to be received, and the identity of the shareholder and vessel. LANDING MEANS TO ARRIVE AT A DOCK, BERTH, BEACH, SEAWALL, OR RAMP.

APPROVED BY SNAPPER GROUPER COMMITTEE

**What do I need to do now that I have completed fishing for wreckfish (IF Alternative 2 is chosen as preferred under Action 12)?**

**Step 1: Provide a pre-landing notification to NMFS (Action 12):**

- ✓ Contact NMFS at least three hours, but no more than 24 hours, in advance of landing.
- ✓ Provide the expected date and time of landing, the pre-approved landing location, the estimated weight of wreckfish on-board the vessel, the dealer where the wreckfish are to be received, and the identity of the shareholder and vessel.

**Step 2: Land at a pre-approved landing location (Action 13):**

- ✓ Must be publicly accessible via public roads and navigable waters and no other condition may impede free and immediate access to the site by an authorized law enforcement officer.
- ✓ Must be approved by NMFS Office for Law Enforcement in advance of landing.

**Step 3: Offload wreckfish (Action 14):**

- ✓ Must occur between the hours of 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., local time.
  - unless an authorized officer is present at the offloading at 6 p.m., is available to remain at the site while offloading continues and authorizes the owner or operator of the vessel to continue offloading after 6 p.m., local time.

**MOTION 9: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS PREFERRED UNDER ACTION 13.**

**Action 13. Modify offloading site requirements and establish approved landing locations for wreckfish.**

**Alternative 2.** Remove the offloading site requirements for wreckfish. Individual transferable quota wreckfish must be landed at an approved landing location. Landing locations must be approved by NMFS Office for Law Enforcement prior to a vessel landing individual transferable wreckfish at these sites. Landing locations must be publicly accessible via public roads and navigable waters and no other condition may impede free and immediate access to the site by an authorized law enforcement officer.

APPROVED BY SUB-COMMITTEE

**MOTION 10: APPROVE SNAPPER GROUPER AMENDMENT 48 FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS AT THE JUNE 2024 COUNCIL MEETING.**

APPROVED BY SNAPPER GROUPER COMMITTEE

**Other Business**

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Note: Council staff drafts the timing and task motion based on Sub-Committee action. If points require clarification, they will be added to the draft motion. The Sub-Committee should review this wording carefully to be sure it accurately reflects their intent prior to making the motion.

**Timing and Task(s)**

**MOTION 11:** ADOPT THE FOLLOWING TIMING AND TASKS:

1. Conduct public hearings for Snapper Grouper Amendment 48 (Wreckfish) during the June 2024 Council meeting.
2. Continue to develop Snapper Grouper Amendment 48 (Wreckfish) for final approval consideration at the June 2024 Council meeting.

MOTION APPROVED BY SNAPPER GROUPE COMMITTEE