

Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel
Yellowtail Snapper Fishery Performance Report Updates
Discussion Questions
October 2024



The Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel (AP) is being asked to provide information to develop the fishery performance report (FPR) for yellowtail snapper. The purpose of the FPR is to assemble information from AP members' experience and observations on the water and in the marketplace to complement scientific and landings data. The FPR will be provided to the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and the Socio-Economic Panel (SEP) to complement material being used in the upcoming assessment of yellowtail snapper and to inform future management of this stock.

The questions listed below are intended to provoke thoughts about the current state and changes to the yellowtail snapper stock and fishery. However, some questions may not be applicable at this time. The scope of the FPR is not limited to the questions listed below, as the intent is to incorporate all relevant observational information that can help with assessing and developing management measures for yellowtail snapper.

All South Atlantic FPRs are available in the Council's [FPR Application](#). The yellowtail snapper FPR will be uploaded to this application when completed

Questions for Advisory Panel:

The AP is asked to provide the following information about yellowtail snapper based on their expertise, as appropriate:

1) Have there been **substantial changes** in the Florida hogfish fishery since 2017 (terminal year of SEDAR 64)? If so, describe the timing, location, and what you think caused the change?

2) Fishing Behavior/Catch Levels:

- Have there been effort shifts to/from yellowtail snapper? If so, please describe, including the time frame for when these shifts occurred.
- Have there been considerable changes in fishing techniques and/or gears used to target yellowtail snapper? If so, please describe, including the time frame for when these changes occurred.
- Have you noticed an increase in shore-based landings of yellowtail snapper?
- How much fishing for yellowtail snapper typically occurs during the day versus at night? Has this changed?
- Do you actively avoid fishing for yellowtail snapper in certain areas to avoid catching undersized fish (12in minimum for both sectors) or highly regulated fish (e.g., red

snapper) to lessen bait loss?

- What do you see in terms of discards in the commercial sector? In the recreational sector?
 - How often are yellowtail snapper discarded? What are the reasons they are discarded?
 - Do you encounter yellowtail snapper as bycatch when fishing for other species? If so, what species are being targeted on these trips?
 - Do you think discard mortality is a significant factor for this species? Has this changed? If so, please describe, including the time frame when the change occurred.

3) **Social and economic influences:**

- For the commercial sector, how has price and demand for yellowtail snapper changed?
 - Is there increased demand for a specific size of yellowtail snapper (e.g. plate sized)?
- Among the species you target, how important are yellowtail snapper to your overall business (charter or commercial)?
- What communities are dependent on the yellowtail snapper fishery?
- Have changes in infrastructure (docks, marinas, fish houses) affected fishing opportunities for yellowtail snapper?
- How have fishermen and communities adapted to changes in the yellowtail snapper fishery?

4) **Management measures:**

- Do you feel the current jurisdictional allocation (25% Gulf of Mexico/75% South Atlantic, based on average MRFSS landings from 1993-2008) is appropriate? If not, then what methods do you think would be most appropriate to allocate the stock ABC between the regions?
- Are there new management measures that the Council should consider or are there existing management measures (such as size limit, trip limit, bag limit, season, etc.) that should be changed?
- Are the current ACL and allocations appropriate for each sector?

5) **Environmental/ecological/habitat:**

- Do you perceive that the abundance of yellowtail snapper has changed over the past ten years? If so, how has it changed?
- When/where are the fish available, and has this changed? For instance, has there been any shift in catch (annually/seasonally) inshore/offshore or north/south? If so, please describe.
- Has the size of the fish that you typically encounter changed? If so, could you briefly describe the trend?
- Have you noticed any unique effects of environmental conditions on yellowtail

snapper? If so, please describe.

- What are your observations on the timing and length of the yellowtail snapper spawning season in your area (time periods when fish are observed with large ovaries or eggs spilling out externally)?
- What do you see now in terms of recruitment? Where are the small fish? Are large and small fish found in the same locations?
- Have you observed changes in catch depth or apparent bottom type fished on?
- How have sea conditions (monthly/seasonally) affected fishable days?
- Have you noticed any change in the species caught with yellowtail snapper over the years or seasonally?

6) Other:

- What else is important for the Council to know about Florida hogfish?

Stock Risk Rating

Under the ABC Control Rule, the Council incorporates an evaluation of how much risk of overfishing it should be willing to accept based on biological, fishery (human interaction), and environmental factors affecting each stock. Input on these factors will be provided ahead of each assessment by the appropriate advisory panel and Scientific and Statistical Committee, and the Council will consider this input in determining the appropriate risk level (conveyed as a Stock Risk Rating of High, Medium, or Low) to apply in the ABC Control Rule. Risk Ratings will be used with relative biomass levels estimated through a stock assessment to determine the probability of overfishing that would be acceptable for that stock (P*).

Final Risk Scores (numeric) for all South Atlantic snapper grouper species and dolphin and wahoo are ranked and apportioned into thirds to determine the final Stock Risk Ratings. Based on current scores, stocks are considered High Risk if their Final Risk Score is less than 2.03, Medium Risk if their Final Risk Score is between 2.03 and 2.35, and Low Risk if their Final Risk Score is greater than 2.35.

AP Action:

- Review initial scores for each attribute (Attachment 6 for the October 2024 Snapper Grouper AP meeting). Comment whether any scores seem unreasonable, providing input on why and how scores should be adjusted.
- Comment on any special circumstances that should be considered in addition to the included information when evaluating attributes of the yellowtail snapper fishery.