



**Snapper
Grouper
Advisory Panel
October 2025**

THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

**Commercial Trip Limit Sale
Discussion**

Michael Schmidtke
Mike.Schmidtke@safmc.net

BACKGROUND

- During scoping of Snapper Grouper Amendment 60 (Commercial Permit and Trip Efficiency), public comments were submitted noting difficulties in some parts of the region for commercial fishermen in being able to sell fish caught over weekends, when local fish houses were closed
 - Council members and staff followed up on this issue and learned that some different interpretations of legal language were being enforced in different areas



BACKGROUND

- Relevant language from the Code of Federal Regulations:
 - 50 CFR 622.2 “Trip”
 - *Trip* means a fishing trip, regardless of number of days duration, that begins with departure from a dock, berth, beach, seawall, or ramp and that terminates with return to a dock, berth, beach, seawall, or ramp.
 - 50 CFR 622.191
 - Commercial trip limits are limits on the amount of the applicable species that may be possessed on board or landed, purchased, or sold from a vessel per day...
- Council members stated in September 2025 that the intent of limiting purchase or sale was to allow for more efficient enforcement, not to prohibit harvest on days when fish houses are closed
- Council members also noted that the completion of a “sale” is unclear, given current practices in the commercial sector (fish may be transferred from the fishermen to the dealer, but payment for those fish may occur at a later time)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you experienced limitation on being able to sell fish due to the operating hours of your local fish house?
 - Have you been unable to fish for a daily trip limit due to not having a final proof of sale for fish caught on a previous day?
 - Is there a day (or days) of the week when fish houses in your area are closed and unable to purchase fish landed on that day?
2. How would you be affected if you could not sell your fish to a dealer upon landing and needed to go back offshore?
 - If all trips were enforced to end upon sale of the landed fish (meaning another trip could not begin until the fish are sold), how would your business be affected?
3. What are ways to allow the sale of fish harvested outside of fish house operating hours, while also maintaining law enforcement's ability to efficiently monitor trip limits?