



# SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Melvin Bell, Chair | Carolyn N. Belcher, Ph.D., Vice Chair  
John Carmichael, Executive Director

## Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel Meeting Agenda

Crowne Plaza Hotel  
4831 Tanger Outlet Blvd.  
North Charleston, SC 29418

April 18-20, 2022

Public comment will be solicited at the beginning and at the end of the meeting. Those wishing to comment should indicate such in the manner requested by the Chair, who will recognize individuals to provide comment in-person or on the webinar.

**Monday April 18, 2022, 1:30 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.**

**Tuesday April 19, 2022, 9:00 A.M. – 4:30 P.M.**

**Wednesday, April 20, 2022, 9:00 A.M. – Noon**

Approval of Agenda – Jimmy Hull

Approval of October 2021 AP minutes – Jimmy Hull

Committee Chair Remarks – Jessica McCawley (*Attachment 1*)

1. Update on recent regulations and status of amendments (*Attachment 2*)
2. Fishery Performance Report Update for Black Sea Bass (<https://safmc-shinyapps.shinyapps.io/FPRAll/>) (*Attachment 3a-3c*)
3. Amendment 46 – Recreational Permitting/Reporting (*Attachment 4a and 4b*) – John Hadley
4. Regulatory Amendment 35 – Snapper Grouper Release Mortality and Red Snapper (*Attachment 5*)
5. Amendment 49 – Greater Amberjack (*Attachment 6a and 6b*)
6. Amendment 51 – Snowy Grouper (*Attachment 7a and 7b*) – Allie Iberle
7. Amendment 52 – Golden Tilefish and Blueline Tilefish (*Attachment 8*) – Roger Pugliese & Myra Brouwer
8. Update on Amendment 53 – Gag Grouper (*Attachment 9*) – Allie Iberle

9. Elect Chair/Vice Chair

10. Other Business

a. Discussion about NMFS Observer Program and Commercial Discard Logbook

Adjourn

**Advisory Panel Members:**

James Hull Jr., Chair

Robert Lorenz, Vice Chair

Vincent Bonura

Richen “Dick” Brame

Randall Beardsley

Tony Constant

Jack Cox Jr.

Andrew Fish

Robert Freeman

Richard Gomez

Lawton Howard

Chris Kimrey

Selby Lewis

Andrew Mahoney

Randy McKinley

Thomas Meeks

Chris Militello

Harry Morales

David Moss

Paul Nelson

James Paskiewicz

Andy Piland

Cameron Sebastian

David Snyder

Todd Kellison (non-voting)

**Attachments**

**Attachment 1:** Snapper Grouper December 2021 and March 2022 Committee Reports

**Attachment 2:** Update on recent regulation changes and status of amendments

**Attachment 3a:** 2017 Black Sea Bass Fishery Performance Report

**Attachment 3b:** Black Sea Bass Fishery Performance Report Questions

**Attachment 3c (Late Materials):** Black Sea Bass Fishery Performance Report Summary and Update Presentation

**Attachment 4a:** Amendment 46 Presentation

**Attachment 4b:** Private Recreational Reporting Workgroup Recommendations

**Attachment 5:** Regulatory Amendment 35 Discussion Document

**Attachment 6a:** Amendment 49 Discussion Document

**Attachment 6b (Late Materials):** Amendment 49 Presentation

**Attachment 7a:** Amendment 51 Discussion Document

**Attachment 7b:** Amendment 51 Presentation

**Attachment 8:** Amendment 52 Presentation

**Attachment 9:** Amendment 53 Overview Presentation

**Staff Lead:** Michael Schmidtke ([Mike.Schmidtke@safmc.net](mailto:Mike.Schmidtke@safmc.net))

# OVERVIEW

## Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel

The AP will approve minutes from the October 2021 meeting and the agenda for the current meeting.

**1. Update on recent regulations and status of amendments**

Council staff will update the AP on the status of recently approved and developing amendments.

**2. Fishery Performance Report for Black Sea Bass (<https://safmc-shinyapps.shinyapps.io/FPRAll/>)**

With input from the AP, Fishery Performance Reports (FPRs) have been developed for several snapper grouper species, including black sea bass in 2017. The intent of the FPRs is to assemble information from AP members' experience and observations on the water and in the marketplace to complement scientific and landings data. The FPRs will be provided to the SSC, the Socio-Economic Panel (SEP), and the Council to assist in their discussions. An operational assessment (SEDAR 76) for the black sea bass stock in the South Atlantic is scheduled for completion by mid-2023.

Using an online application, Council staff will provide an overview of landings trends and other background information. Council staff will also present a summary of the current FPR for black sea bass and questions to prompt discussion, including information requests from the SEDAR 76 analytical team. The AP will update the FPR using the current version and provided questions.

**3. Amendment 46 – Recreational Permitting/Reporting**

At the December 2021 Council meeting, the Committee requested that Amendment 46 to the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan (FMP) be added to the agenda for discussion in March 2022. Amendment 46 was previously developed in the first half of 2018 and was approved for scoping at the [June 2018 Council meeting](#). Due to time constraints over the Council's workplan and the need to obtain more information on potential approaches for private recreational data gathering, the amendment was never scoped. From 2018 through 2020 staff focused instead on piloting the MyFishCount mobile app and portal. Other related efforts have also been underway, most notably the development of the Private Recreational Reporting Workgroup which has met five times in 2021 and 2022. The briefing materials and summary reports for these meetings can be found on the [Council's website](#).

The Council's Private Recreational Workgroup last met on February 9, 2022 to continue discussing approaches to private recreational reporting and how a recreational permit could be integrated with existing programs to improve estimates of recreational catch and effort. At the March 2022 meeting, the Workgroup Chair, Spud Woodward, provided an update on the group's recommendations and next steps. Afterwards, the Council discussed the amendment and decided to continue work on the amendment by:

- Considering development of a private recreational permit for the snapper grouper fishery with options that would create a vessel or individual permit.
- Implement reporting requirements that may cover all species or a select group of species.
- Establish an ad hoc advisory panel to aid in the technical aspects of permit development.

The Council is scheduled to establish membership of the ad hoc advisory panel at the June 2022 meeting and will next discuss Amendment 46 at the September 2022 meeting.

**4. Regulatory Amendment 35 – Snapper Grouper Release Mortality and Red Snapper**

In March 2022, the Council initiated a regulatory amendment to reduce release mortality in the snapper grouper fishery and implement catch levels for red snapper based on the SEDAR 73 stock assessment. SEDAR 73 indicating that the South Atlantic red snapper stock is overfished and experiencing overfishing, but is making adequate progress according to its current rebuilding plan. The assessment indicated that the majority of red snapper fishing mortality occurs as release mortality rather than through landings. While increased use of best practices, including descending devices, has increased survival rates for released fish, the high number of red snapper caught out of season has continued the high number of fish estimated to die as a result of being caught and released. Therefore, the Council is investigating potential management measures to reduce out-of-season encounters for red snapper, as well as other snapper grouper species.

**5. Amendment 49 – Greater Amberjack**

In March 2022, the Council reviewed the draft amendment and approved it for public hearings. The Council changed its selected preferred alternatives for Action 2 (sector allocations) and Action 3 (recreational minimum size limit) and chose not to select a preferred alternative for Action 4 (commercial minimum size limit) prior to public hearings. The Council requested additional feedback from the AP on actions included in Amendment 49, particularly with consideration of cumulative effects of multiple management changes for greater amberjack as well as management changes being considered through other ongoing amendments for the snapper grouper fishery.

**6. Amendment 51 – Snowy Grouper**

The Council directed staff to start work on a plan amendment in June of 2021 in response to the most recent snowy grouper assessment (SEDAR 36 Update 2020). This assessment indicated that the South Atlantic stock of snowy grouper is both overfished and experiencing overfishing. Amendment 51 will update the ABC, ACL and OY, allocations, and management measures for snowy grouper. Snowy grouper currently has a 34-year rebuilding plan in place ending in 2042 that will not be modified through Amendment 51. An options paper was reviewed in September 2021 and the Council sought the input of the AP in October 2021. At the December 2021 meeting, the Council reviewed the AP’s feedback, actions and options and approved the amendment for scoping. Scoping was conducted in February of 2022. During the March 2022 meeting the Council reviewed scoping comments, which mainly discussed the reduction of the commercial trip limit, made modifications to actions and options, and requested specific

feedback from the AP on the commercial trip limit and recreational season. Final approval for Amendment 51 is scheduled for December 2022.

**7. Amendment 52 – Golden Tilefish and Blueline Tilefish**

The Council received the results of the golden tilefish assessment ([SEDAR 66](#)) and the SSC's recommendations for the overfishing limit (OFL) and ABC at their June 2021 meeting. The SSC determined the stock is no longer experiencing overfishing, nor overfished. The Council directed staff to begin work on a plan amendment. The Council, during the December 2021 meeting, reviewed the AP's input in October 2021 and an options paper for golden tilefish. After receiving an overview from NMFS SERO on overages of the blueline tilefish, the Council added blueline tilefish to the amendment and approved it for scoping. Scoping was conducted in February of 2022 and during the March 2022 meeting the Council reviewed scoping comments and modified golden tilefish actions and alternatives and added actions to address postseason accountability measures for the blueline tilefish recreational sector and modification to recreational management measures. The Council is scheduled to review a public hearing draft at the June 2022 meeting.

**8. Update on Amendment 53 – Gag Grouper**

The Council directed staff to start work on a plan amendment in September of 2021 in response to the most recent gag assessment (SEDAR 71 2021). This assessment indicated that the South Atlantic stock of gag is both overfished and experiencing overfishing. Amendment 53 will establish a rebuilding plan, update the ABC, ACL and OY, allocations, and management measures for gag. In October the AP was given an overview of Amendment 53. In December of 2021 the Council reviewed an options paper and the AP's feedback, made modifications to actions and options, and approved the amendment for scoping. In February 2022 scoping was conducted. During the March 2022 meeting the Council reviewed the scoping comments, which pertained mainly to the restriction of spearfishing gear and made modifications to actions and options. Final approval for Amendment 53 is scheduled for March 2023.

**9. Elect Chair/Vice Chair**

**10. Other Business**

- a. Discussion about NMFS Observer Program and Commercial Discard Logbook**

**Adjourn**