



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Charlie Phillips, Chair | Captain Mark Brown, Vice Chair
Gregg T. Waugh, Executive Director

AGENDA **Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel**

Crowne Plaza Hotel
4831 Tanger Outlet Boulevard
North Charleston, SC

Other than the starting and ending times of the meeting, times indicated on the agenda are approximate, and the order of business may be adjusted as necessary to accommodate the completion of agenda items. Interested parties should be aware that discussions may start earlier or later than indicated.

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 then recognize individuals to provide comment.

Wednesday, April 11, 2018 – 1:30 P.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Thursday, April 12, 2018 – 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Friday, April 13, 2018 – 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon.

Approval of Agenda – David Moss

Approval of November 2017 AP minutes – David Moss

1. Status of Snapper Grouper amendments recently submitted and under development (*Attachment 1*)
 - a) Recently Submitted:
 - Amendment 41 (Mutton Snapper)
 - Amendment 43 (Red Snapper)
 - Abbreviated Framework 1 (Red Grouper)
 - Electronic Reporting for Charter Vessels
 - b) Approved for Public Hearings:
 - Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26 (Recreational)
 - Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 (Commercial)
 - c) Approved for Scoping:
 - Amendment 42 (Sea Turtle Release Gear and Framework Update)
 - d) Pre-scoping:
 - Amendment 38 (blueline tilefish)
 - Amendment 46 (Recreational Permit and Reporting)
 - Regulatory Amendment 29 (Best Fishing Practices)
 - Amendment 47 (For-Hire Permit Moratorium)
 - Regulatory Amendment 30 (Red Grouper Rebuilding)

- Regulatory Amendment 32 (Yellowtail Snapper Annual Catch Limit and Accountability Measures)
 - Amendment 45 (ABC Control Rule Revisions)
 - Regulatory Amendment 31 (Revisions to Recreational Accountability Measures)
2. Regulatory Amendment 28 – Golden tilefish (*Attachment 2*)
 - a) Overview of Document – Brian Chevront
 - b) Discuss and provide recommendations – David Moss
 3. Wreckfish Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) Program Review (*Attachment 3*)
 - a) Overview of Document – Brian Chevront
 - b) Discuss and provide recommendations – David Moss
 4. Citizen Science Research Needs (*Attachment 4*)
 - a) Overview – Amber Von Harten
 - b) Discuss and provide recommendations – David Moss
 5. Socio-economic Profile of the Commercial Fishery (*Attachments 5 and 6*)
 - a) Presentation – Kari MacLauchlin
 - b) Discuss and provide recommendations – David Moss
 6. Fishery Performance Reports – Greater Amberjack and Red Porgy (*Attachments 7-10*)
 - a) Overview of Greater Amberjack Information Document (*Attachment 7*) and Discussion Questions (*Attachment 8*) – Myra Brouwer
 - b) Provide information and recommendations – David Moss
 - c) Overview of Red Porgy Information Document (*Attachment 9*) and Discussion Questions (*Attachment 10*) – Myra Brouwer
 - d) Provide information and recommendations – David Moss
 7. MyFishCount Private Recreational Reporting App Update (*Attachment 11a and 11b*) – Kelsey Dick
 8. Southeast Data, Assessment and Review (SEDAR) Updates (*Attachment 12*) – SEDAR Staff
 9. Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Updates – Council staff
 10. U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Priorities – USCG
 11. Regulations recommended for removal (*Attachment 13*) – Brian Chevront
- Other Business – David Moss
- Gear conflicts
- Adjourn – David Moss

Advisory Panel Members:

David Moss (Chairman)
Jimmy Hull (Vice-Chairman)
Robert Johnson
Jim Atack
Red Munden
Rusty Hudson
David Snyder
James Freeman
Kerry Marhefka
Robert Lorenz
Dick Brame

Deidra Jeffcoat
Robert Freeman
Greg Mercurio
Jack Cox
Gary Manigault Sr.
Richard Gomez
Vincent Bonura
Jim Moring
Ron Rozier
James Paskiewicz
Dr. Todd Kellison (NMFS non-voting)

Attachments

- Attachment 1:** Status of amendments recently approved and under development
- Attachment 2:** Regulatory Amendment 28 Discussion Document
- Attachment 3:** Wreckfish ITQ Program Review Presentation
- Attachment 4:** Citizen Science Research Needs Draft Document
- Attachment 5:** Socio Economic Profile of the Commercial Fishery -- Presentation
- Attachment 6:** Socio Economic Profile of the Commercial Fishery -- Report
- Attachment 7:** Greater Amberjack Information Document
- Attachment 8:** Greater Amberjack Discussion Questions
- Attachment 9:** Red Porgy Information Document
- Attachment 10:** Red Porgy Discussion Questions
- Attachment 11a:** MyFishCount App presentation
- Attachment 11b:** MyFishCount 2017 Red Snapper Mini Season Report
- Attachment 12:** SEDAR Updates
- Attachment 13:** Snapper Grouper regulations recommended for removal

Staff: Myra Brouwer

OVERVIEW

Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel

The AP will approve of minutes from November 2017 meeting and agenda.

1. Update on amendments recently submitted (*Attachment 1*)

Description: Council staff will update the AP on the status of amendments undergoing formal review and under development.

Requested AP Action: Provide input as appropriate

2. Regulatory Amendment 28 – Golden Tilefish (*Attachment 2*)

Description: An update to the golden tilefish assessment, completed in April 2016 (SEDAR 25 Update 2016), indicated the golden tilefish stock in the South Atlantic is undergoing overfishing but is not overfished. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) notified the Council (via letter dated 1/3/17), that management action was necessary to address overfishing of golden tilefish. To address the overfishing determination, the Council requested that NMFS implement an interim rule to set the 2018 annual catch limit at the projected yield at 75%F_{MSY} (323,000 pounds gutted weight) until the Council develops an amendment to revise the long-term catch levels. The interim rule is effective for 180 days from its implementation (January 2, 2018) and can be extended for an additional 186 days.

Regulatory Amendment 28 would address long-term management of golden tilefish. The Council discussed this amendment at their March 2018 meeting and considered options to modify the acceptable biological catch and annual catch limits in addition to possibly changing the commercial trip limits and modifying the start date of the fishing year for the commercial hook-and-line component. The Council requested that the Scientific and Statistical Committee reconsider their acceptable biological catch recommendation at their May 2018 meeting as the current recommendation would result in a substantial reduction in allowable harvest. In addition, the Council opted to retain consideration of the fishing year change in this amendment but remove consideration of trip limit changes. The Council will discuss this amendment again at their June meeting in Ft. Lauderdale, FL.

Requested AP Action: Provide input as appropriate.

3. Wreckfish Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) Program Review (*Attachment 3*)

Description: Council staff will brief the AP on the status of the review. The Socio-economic Sub-panel of the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) reviewed a draft of the document in February of 2018 and will report back to the SSC at their May 2018 meeting. Specific SEP comments and recommendations will be included in the May 2018 SSC report. During the March 2018 Council meeting, the Council provided the following guidance:

- Have the SSC, Law Enforcement AP and Snapper Grouper AP review the draft document at their Spring 2018 meetings.
- Council staff should plan a meeting with ITQ shareholders in late June, early July.
- Bring a complete document back to the Council in September 2018 for approval or further direction.

Requested AP Action: Provide input as appropriate.

4. Citizen Science Research Needs (*Attachment 4*)

Description: As part of the Council's Citizen Science program development efforts, the Citizen Science Action teams have been working on developing different components of the program including how to establish appropriate topics and research ideas that could be addressed using citizen science. To help outline citizen science topics and research ideas for the Program, the Teams used the Council's Research & Monitoring Plan to inform the development of a draft Citizen Science Research Needs document. The draft document outlines specific topics and research needs for projects developed under the Program. Staff will review how the document was developed, its intended use, and the content of the document. The AP will have an opportunity to provide feedback and guidance on additional topics/research needs to be considered for inclusion in the document.

Requested AP Action: Provide input as appropriate

5. Socio-economic Profile of the Commercial Fishery (*Attachments 5 and 6*)

The Socio-economic Profile of the South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Commercial Fishery is a broad project characterizing the commercial sector of the snapper grouper fishery. The project includes detailed information about permits and permit holders, snapper grouper vessels, participation, catch portfolios, and landings and revenue over the last 20 years. The Council contracted Dr. Kari MacLauchlin to conduct the analysis and produce a report. Dr. MacLauchlin will present an overview of the report and key findings.

Requested AP Action: Provide input as appropriate.

6. Fishery Performance Reports: Greater Amberjack and Red Porgy (*Attachments 7-10*)

Description: With input from the AP, Fishery Performance Reports (FPRs) have been developed for red grouper, black sea bass and vermilion snapper. 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 Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC), the Socio-Economic Panel (SEP), and the Council to assist in their discussions.

Requested AP Action: Provide information based on discussion for development of FPRs.

7. Update on MyFishCount (*Attachment 11a and 11b*)

Description: The AP will receive an update on the MyFishCount recreational reporting tool (**Attachment 11a**). The tool was developed to assist with recreational data collection in the South Atlantic region. Last year, MyFishCount was only available to fishermen as a web-portal for the fall 2017 red snapper mini-season (see **Attachment 11b**). This year it will be available as a phone app which will allow fishermen to use the app offshore to record information about their catch on private recreational trips. The app has been developed in consultation with the Council to ensure it includes all the features they would like to see in the tool. As it is currently set up, fishermen can submit number of fish caught and released, length and weight of fish, areas fished, photos of fish, hook type, how fish were released, reason for release, and depth caught. Staff will provide a brief description and demonstration of the app.

Requested AP Action: Provide input as appropriate

8. SEDAR Update (*Attachment 12*)

Description: The AP will receive updates on ongoing and upcoming stock assessments.

Requested AP Action: Provide input as appropriate

9. Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Updates

Description: Updates below are provided for the AP's information on blueline tilefish and red snapper:

Blueline Tilefish

The SSC reviewed the SEDAR 50 assessment for blueline tilefish at their October 2017 meeting in Charleston, SC. Due to issues encountered at the SEDAR 50 Data Workshop, the blueline tilefish stock could not be assessed as a single unit. Therefore, the segments of the population north and south of Cape Hatteras, NC were assessed separately. The South Atlantic Council has management jurisdiction over blueline tilefish off the entire NC coast. Therefore, the Council needed information to manage the blueline tilefish stock north of Cape Hatteras to the NC/VA border. The Mid-Atlantic Council has management jurisdiction over blueline tilefish north of the NV/VA border.

Lack of data for the stock north of Cape Hatteras hindered the use of traditional assessment methods so data-limited methods were used to develop catch level estimates for that portion of the stock. The SSC was unable to give an ABC recommendation for the portion of the stock north of Hatteras due to the limitations of the current acceptable biological catch (ABC) Control Rule. Therefore, they decided to form a workgroup (comprised of South Atlantic and Mid-Atlantic SSC members and analysts who conducted the SEDAR 50 stock assessment) to look into methods of deriving a viable ABC estimate and scientific methods for splitting that ABC between the Mid-Atlantic (MAFMC) and South Atlantic Councils' jurisdictions.

The workgroup reviewed the landings history from both Councils' jurisdictions to determine whether reliable indicators of stock distribution existed. After much discussion, the group decided that landings histories were not indicative of stock distribution. In the absence of reliable fishery-dependent information, the group considered the use of the fishery-independent results of recent scientific sampling in the Mid-Atlantic, including the area north of Cape Hatteras.

The working group recommended the following:

1. Use data-limited methods for the area of north of Cape Hatteras with some minor modifications.
2. Recommend that the blueline tilefish ABC for the area north of Cape Hatteras be allocated 56% to the Mid-Atlantic Council and 44% to the South Atlantic Council.

The Mid-Atlantic Council's SSC reviewed the recommendations of the workgroup at their March 2018 meeting and determined a value of 179,500 pounds for the blueline tilefish ABC in the Mid-Atlantic Council's area of jurisdiction. Applying the 56% split results in 100,520 pounds of blueline tilefish allocated to the area north of the NC/VA border.

The South Atlantic SSC will be discussing this topic at their upcoming May 1-3, 2018 meeting.

Red Snapper:

The South Atlantic stock of red snapper was last assessed during SEDAR 41, with data through 2014. The SSC reviewed the assessment at their May 2016 meeting. They determined that the stock was still overfished, and that overfishing was occurring. However, due to the amount of uncertainty in the catch data over the last 5 years (mostly comprised of discards), the SSC could not determine the extent of overfishing that was occurring.

At their April 2017 meeting, the SSC again discussed how to specify an ABC for red snapper. The Council had requested revised analyses; however, the SEFSC indicated that the

projections could not be provided on the grounds that they could not be considered best scientific information available (BSIA). A clarification of the SEFSC memo is excerpted below.

- ❖ *Clarification was provided by NMFS to the SSC that the assessment is still considered BSIA. However, the data available to monitor the landings and discards are too uncertain to track any projected ABC. Therefore, an index-based approach is being proposed to track and monitor the condition of Red Snapper.*
- ❖ *The current projected yield streams are still considered BSIA but are not useful for management and monitoring because of the uncertainty in the catch data (as most of the catch is discarded).*

The SSC acknowledged that they were unable to provide an ABC for red snapper and supported the SEFSC efforts to use data-limited methods and index-based methods to develop an ABC recommendation. In September 2017, the SEFSC informed the SSC that research on an approach to use fishery-independent information to evaluate and monitor red snapper was not proceeding. In light of this, at their October 2017 meeting, the SSC formed a working group comprised of SSC members and SEFSC staff to review all available data and methodologies and evaluating their potential for setting an ABC for red Snapper in the South Atlantic. Those methods include index-based methods, data limited methods, and projection-based methods. Below is a preliminary ranking, from the most viable alternatives to those least likely to produce a viable ABC value for red snapper.

1. SEFSC Interim Analysis (modified projection analysis)
2. SEDAR 41 assessment (updated standard projections)
3. Data Limited Methods (DLMToolkit)
4. Index methods used by other Science Centers
5. Index method proposed by Council staff

The SSC will again discuss how to proceed to determine an ABC for red snapper during their May 1-3, 2018 meeting.

Requested AP Action: None

10. U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Priorities

Description: Representatives from the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Sector Charleston, contacted Council staff in late 2017 to request input on law enforcement priorities for fisheries under the Council's jurisdiction, in particular for the South Carolina and Georgia coasts. AP members are encouraged to provide information, such as specific areas of high fishing activity and/or timeframes, that would assist the USCG to focus their enforcement efforts related to Living Marine Resources (LMR). A USCG representative will provide a brief overview and request specific input from the AP.

Requested AP Action: Provide input as appropriate.

11. Regulations recommended for removal (*Attachment 13*)

Description: On February 24, 2017 the President issued Executive Order 13777 as part of efforts to lower regulatory burdens on the American people by implementing and enforcing regulatory reform. The NMFS requested that each of the fishery management councils identify a process to review/evaluate existing regulations by the end of December 2017. Each Council is to

conduct the review/evaluation and provide recommendations on rules to be removed by the end of June 2018. The Council is reaching out to all of its APs to get their recommendations. Attachment 13 contains the initial attempts by Council staff to identify regulations that could be considered for removal.

Requested AP Action: Provide input on snapper grouper regulations that may be unnecessary or outdated.

Other Business

During the March 2018 Council meeting, a brief discussion took place regarding fishermen off North Carolina who use spearfishing gear and those using hook-and-line increasingly experiencing conflict. Fishermen who have drawn attention to the issue cited concern over gear efficiency and resource conservation. The Council requests the AP's input on this topic.