



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Jessica McCawley, Chair | Mel Bell, Vice Chair
Gregg T. Waugh, Executive Director

AGENDA **Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel**

Crowne Plaza
4831 Tanger Outlet Blvd.
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 24, 2019 – 1:30 P.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Thursday, April 25, 2019 – 8:30 A.M to 5:00 P.M.

Friday, April 26, 2019 – 8:30 A.M. to 12:00 Noon.

Approval of Agenda – David Moss

Approval of October 2018 AP minutes – David Moss

1. Status of amendments under development or under review (*Attachment 1*)
 - Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26 (Recreational)
 - Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 (Commercial)
 - Abbreviated Framework 2 (Vermilion Snapper and Black Sea Bass)
 - Amendment 38 (Blueline Tilefish)
 - Amendment 42 (Sea Turtle Release Gear and Framework Update)
 - Amendment 46 (Recreational Permit and Reporting)
 - Regulatory Amendment 30 (Red Grouper rebuilding)
 - Regulatory Amendment 32 (Yellowtail Snapper)
 - Regulatory Amendment 33 (Red Snapper Season Modifications)
 - Regulatory Amendment 34 (SMZs off NC and SC)
 - For-hire Electronic Reporting Amendment
2. Regulatory Amendment 29 (Best Fishing Practices) (*Attachment 2*)
 - a. Overview – Christina Wiegand
 - b. Recommendations on definition of descending devices – David Moss

3. ABC Control Rule Amendment (*Attachment 3*)
 - a. Overview – John Carmichael
 - b. Recommendations on risk of overfishing categories for unassessed species – David Moss
 4. Recreational Accountability Measures Amendment (*Attachment 4*)
 - a. Overview – Brian Chevront
 - b. Discussion and recommendations on proposed actions/alternatives – David Moss
 5. Fishery Performance Report – Blueline Tilefish
 - a. Overview of fishery trends (<http://data.safmc.net/FPRAll/>) – Myra Brouwer
 - b. Discussion – David Moss
 6. Results of Recreational Workshops (*Attachments 5a and 5b*) – Kellie Ralston, American Sportfishing Association
 - a. Discussion and recommendations on practicability of suggested approaches – David Moss
 7. NMFS Southeast Region Permits Office Presentation (*Attachment 6*) – Kevin McIntosh
 8. Citizen Science Update (*Attachment 7*)
 - a. Overview – Julia Byrd
 - b. Discussion and recommendations – David Moss
 9. Spearfishing in the Snapper Grouper Fishery (*Attachments 8a and 8b*)
 - a. Overview – Myra Brouwer
 - b. Discussion and Recommendations – David Moss
 10. Effects of Recreational Management Actions on Select Snapper Grouper Species (*Attachment 9*) – Allie Iberle
 11. Review of Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan Objectives (*Attachments 10a and 10b*)
 - a. Overview – Myra Brouwer
 - b. Discussion and Recommendations – David Moss
 12. Election of Chair and Vice Chair – David Moss
 13. Other Business – David Moss
- Adjourn – David Moss

Advisory Panel Members:

David Moss (Chairman)
Jimmy Hull (Vice-Chairman)
Jim Atack
Red Munden
Rusty Hudson
David Snyder
James Freeman
Kerry Marhefka
Robert Lorenz
Dick Brame
Deidra Jeffcoat
Andy Piland
Randy McKinley

Randy Beardsley
Robert Freeman
Greg Mercurio
Jack Cox
Gary Manigault Sr.
Richard Gomez
Vincent Bonura
Jim Moring
James Paskiewicz
Lawton Howard
Cameron Sebastian
Dr. Todd Kellison (NMFS non-voting)

Attachments

- Attachment 1:** Status of Snapper Grouper FMP Amendments
- Attachment 2:** Regulatory Amendment 29 Summary
- Attachment 3:** ABC Control Rule Amendment Summary
- Attachment 4:** Recreational Accountability Measures Amendment Discussion Document
- Attachment 5a:** Recreational Workshops Results Report
- Attachment 5b:** Recreational Workshops Results Presentation
- Attachment 6:** SERO Permits Presentation
- Attachment 7:** Citizen Science Update
- Attachment 8a:** Spearfishing White Paper
- Attachment 8b:** Spearfishing Presentation
- Attachment 9:** Presentation - Effect of recreational management actions on select snapper grouper species
- Attachment 10a:** FMP Objectives with AP input, June 2013
- Attachment 10b:** Revised FMP Objectives, September 2013

Staff: Myra Brouwer

OVERVIEW

Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel

The AP will approve minutes from the October 2018 meeting and the agenda for the current meeting.

1. Update on Snapper Grouper FMP Amendments (*Attachment 1*)

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

Requested AP Action: None.

2. Regulatory Amendment 29 (Best Fishing Practices) (*Attachment 2*)

Description: The Council reviewed a draft public hearing document at their March 2019 meeting. Preferred alternatives were selected that would require a descending device be *on board* vessels fishing for or possessing snapper grouper species; non-offset, non-stainless-steel circle hooks to fish for snapper grouper species north of 28 degrees North Latitude; non-stainless-steel hooks to fish for snapper grouper species throughout the South Atlantic federal waters; and allow the use of powerheads to harvest snapper grouper species in federal waters off South Carolina. The Council also requested development of a research and monitoring plan for descending device use and for the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) to advise on how best fishing practices might be considered in future stock assessments. The Council approved Regulatory Amendment 29 for public hearings (to take place via webinar prior to the June 2019 meeting). At the June 2019 meeting the Council will review public comments and input from the APs and consider modifications to the document, if necessary.

Requested AP Action: Provide input on the definition of descending devices used in the document.

3. ABC Control Rule Amendment (*Attachment 3*)

Description: In December 2016, the Council directed staff to start work on a plan amendment that would modify the ABC Control Rule to address flexibility allowed under the Magnuson-Stevens Act and revise how uncertainty and risk tolerance are addressed in setting acceptable biological catches (ABCs). The Amendment includes actions to 1) revise how the Scientific and Statistical Committee evaluates assessment uncertainty; 2) revise how the risk tolerance is specified; and 3) allow phase-in and carry-over of ABCs. The SSC and Council have regularly reviewed progress and provided guidance during 2017 and 2018. Scoping hearings were conducted in January 2019 and the Council reviewed comments in March 2019. The SSC will be asked to review the risk rating approach and initial risk ratings at its April 9-11, 2019 meeting. The AP will be asked to review these ratings.

Requested AP Action: Provide recommendations on actions and on risk ratings for managed stocks.

4. Regulatory Amendment 31 (Recreational Accountability Measures) (*Attachment 4*)

Description: Over the past five years, the Council has requested information on possible approaches to improve recreational landings estimates, particularly for species that are

infrequently intercepted in the recreational survey. However, the accuracy of such estimates has not improved enough to allow efficient tracking of recreational annual catch limits (ACLs) and has led to mounting frustration among fishery managers, stock assessment analysts, and recreational anglers. The Council is already working on methods to obtain additional data (e.g., Amendment 46, MyFishCount App) that could eventually be used to improve management of recreational fisheries in the region. A possible avenue to lessen the impact of uncertain recreational data on stakeholders is revision of accountability measures to allow more flexibility. Amendment 31 also seeks to provide consistency in accountability measures and fishing season predictability across species for the recreational sector. The Council has reviewed preliminary actions/alternatives to amend the snapper grouper and dolphin wahoo fishery management plans. Work on this amendment will continue through 2019.

Requested AP Action: Discuss and provide input on draft actions and alternatives.

5. Fishery Performance Reports: Blueline Tilefish

Description: With input from the AP, Fishery Performance Reports (FPRs) have been developed for several snapper grouper species. 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. Using an online application <http://data.safmc.net/FPRAll/> staff will provide a brief overview of landings trends and other background information and request the AP's input to develop the FPR for blueline tilefish.

Requested AP Action: Provide information for development of blueline tilefish FPR.

6. Results of Recreational Workshops (*Attachments 5a and 5b*)

Description: In September 2018, the American Sportfishing Association (ASA) sponsored a workshop with the Council to discuss new ideas for managing the private recreational sector of the snapper grouper fishery. Subsequently, a series of regional meetings were conducted by ASA to obtain input from local recreational representatives on angler preferences, harvest rate management, harvest tags for deep-water species, registration and reporting, and barotrauma reduction. Results of the workshops and recommendations were presented to the Council at their March 2019 meeting. Kellie Ralston, ASA's Southeast Fisheries Policy Director, will deliver the presentation to the AP. Final recommendations in the ASA's report are listed below:

- The Council should consider regional regulations for appropriate species.
- The Council should continue to explore harvest rate management for high value snapper grouper species, especially for red snapper.
- The Council could consider an Exempted Fishing Permit for a pilot program to test harvest tags for certain deep-water species (i.e., those with low annual catch limits or low abundance).
- The Council should work with state partners to establish a registration for anglers targeting snapper grouper species, with consistency across all states.
- The Council should continue development of Snapper Grouper Amendment 46 to implement required or selective reporting for recreational anglers and continue outreach on benefits of providing data.

- The Council should continue development of Snapper Grouper Amendment 29 to require use of descending devices or venting tools, along with other best fishing practices, to reduce release mortality.

Requested AP Action: Provide recommendations/perspective on the practicability of the suggested approaches for management of the recreational snapper grouper fishery.

7. NMFS Southeast Regional Office Permits Presentation (Attachment 6)

Description: The AP discussed issues related to permits during their meetings in 2018. The Council provided further guidance at their December 2018 meeting and a request was sent to NMFS for a presentation to be given during the spring 2019 Council and AP meetings. Kevin McIntosh, Acting Permits Branch Chief, delivered the presentation to the Council at their recent meeting and will present to the AP and address any questions/concerns.

Requested AP Action: Discuss and provide input as appropriate.

8. Citizen Science Update (Attachment 7?)

Description: Staff will present an update on the progress of the development of the Council's Citizen Science Program and on the Program's pilot project that will focus on working with commercial and recreational fishermen to collect data on scamp grouper discards using a mobile application, *SAFMC Release*. The AP will be asked to provide input on strategies to recruit volunteers and the best way to communicate with volunteers about data collection, use of the data, and project results.

Additionally, the Citizen Science Program will be updating their Research Priorities later this year which will help guide the projects the Program pursues over the next two years. Program staff will provide an overview of the process that will be used to update the Research Priorities document. The AP will be asked to identify a representative to serve on the Citizen Science Projects Advisory Team who will help develop the draft Citizen Science Research Priorities document. This team will be comprised of a representative (chair or other designee) from each of the SAFMC's species related Advisory Panels and will meet via webinar 1-2 times per year.

Requested AP Action: Discuss and provide input as appropriate.

9. Spearfishing in the Snapper Grouper Fishery (Attachments 8a and 8b)

Description: The Snapper Grouper AP discussed spearfishing at their spring 2018 meeting and approved two motions to encourage the Council to characterize use of this gear in the commercial and recreational sectors of the snapper grouper fishery. At their October 2018 meeting, the AP approved another motion to recommend a gear endorsement for the commercial sector. The Council then instructed staff to prepare a white paper to discuss the topic in March 2019 and subsequently requested that the white paper and presentation be delivered to the Snapper Grouper AP at their Spring 2019 meeting. A suggestion was made for each state to identify prominent commercial spearfishing participants and possibly bring them together via webinar to discuss the topic after the June 2019 meeting.

Requested AP Action: Discuss and provide input as appropriate.

10. Effects of Recreational Management Actions on Select Snapper Grouper Species (Attachment 9)

Description: The Council uses a variety of management measure to restrict landings of snapper grouper species to sustainable levels. Some of the more common management approaches for the recreational sector are size limits, bag limits, and seasons. However, the effectiveness of these management measures has not been analyzed. Allie Iberle, a graduate student at Johns Hopkins University, will present her findings on the effects of recreational management measures for black sea bass, gag, and red snapper. Her work provides one of the first reviews on changes in recreational landings and fishing mortality in the South Atlantic region due to management actions.

Requested AP Action: Discuss and provide input as appropriate.

11. Review of Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan Objectives (*Attachments 10a and 10b*)

Description: The 2016-2020 Vision Blueprint for the Snapper Grouper Fishery was approved in December 2015 and includes prioritized short-term objectives around broad goals addressing science, management, communication, and governance. At the March 2019 Council meeting, staff presented outreach material including an overview of the short-term actions left to address in the Vision Blueprint (also presented at the October 2018 AP meeting). The Council opted not to request direct stakeholder input on the Vision Blueprint at this time, noting that stakeholders are encouraged to provide their input to the Council at any time. Instead the Council requested that the AP provide feedback on the current objectives in the Snapper Grouper FMP. The AP last provided input on objectives in 2013-2014 as part of the visioning project.

Requested AP Action: Review AP input on FMP objectives and provide additional recommendations as appropriate.

12. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

David Moss was elected AP chair during the April 2017 meeting while Jimmy Hull was elected vice-chair. The AP has determined that the term for chair/vice chair should be two years or four meetings; hence, the AP will hold elections at this meeting.

13. Other Business