



# SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Carolyn N. Belcher, Ph.D., Chair | Trish Murphey, Vice Chair  
John Carmichael, Executive Director

## Agenda

### Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel

Hilton Garden Inn Charleston Airport

5265 International Blvd.

N. Charleston, SC 29418

April 25-27, 2023

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.

**Tuesday, April 25, 2023, 1:00 P.M. – 5:00 P.M.**

**Wednesday, April 26, 2023, 8:30 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.**

**Thursday, April 27, 2023, 8:30 A.M. – Noon**

Welcome and Introductions

Approval of Agenda – Bob Lorenz

Approval of October 2022 AP minutes – Bob Lorenz

Public Comment

1. Committee Vice Chair Remarks – Kerry Marhefka (*Attachment 1*)
2. Updates
  - a. Recent regulations and status of amendments (*Attachment 2a*)
    - i. Amendment 50 – Red Porgy
    - ii. Amendment 49 – Greater Amberjack
    - iii. Amendment 51 – Snowy Grouper
    - iv. Amendment 52 – Golden Tilefish and Blueline Tilefish
    - v. Amendment 53 – Gag and Black Grouper
    - vi. Regulatory Amendment 35 – Red Snapper and Release Mortality
  - b. Citizen Science (*Attachment 2b*) – Julia Byrd
  - c. Southeast Reef Fish Survey (SERFS) 2022 Trends Report (*Attachment 2c*) – Dr. Walter Bubley, SCDNR

3. AP Updates to the Red Grouper Fishery Performance Report (*Attachment 3*)
  - a. [Fishery Overview](#) (will be updated ahead of the meeting) – Dr. Mike Schmidtke
  - b. AP Discussion – Bob Lorenz
  
4. SG Amendment 44/ RF Amendment 55 (Yellowtail Snapper) (*Attachment 4*)
  - a. Overview – Allie Iberle
  - b. AP Discussion – Bob Lorenz
  
5. Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper (*Attachment 5*)
  - a. [Fishery Overview](#) – Dr. Chip Collier
  - b. Management Response – Allie Iberle
  - c. AP Discussion – Bob Lorenz
  
6. Amendment 48 (Wreckfish) (*Attachment 6*)
  - a. Overview – Christina Wiegand
  - b. AP Discussion – Bob Lorenz
  
7. Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation Input (*Attachment 7*)
  - a. Overview – Dr. Tom Carruthers and Dr. Adrian Hordyk
  - b. AP Discussion – Bob Lorenz
  
8. Amendment 46 (Recreational Permitting) (*Attachment 8*)
  - a. Overview – John Hadley
  - b. AP Discussion – Bob Lorenz
  
9. AP Feedback on Impacts of Space Center Operations on Fishing Activities off Florida – Bob Lorenz
  
10. Research Recommendations for the Snapper Grouper Fishery (*Attachment 9*)
  - a. Overview – Council Staff
  - b. AP Discussion – Bob Lorenz
  
11. Other Updates:
  - a. SEDAR – Kathleen Howington
  - b. Best Fishing Practices Outreach and Reef Fish Fellowship – Ashley Oliver and Christina Wiegand
  
12. Other Business

Public Comment

Adjourn

***A scoping meeting to gather public input for the Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation will be held beginning at 6:00 P.M. on Wednesday, April 26, in the same room as the Snapper Grouper AP Meeting.***

Staff Lead: Dr. Mike Schmidtke ([mike.schmidtke@safmc.net](mailto:mike.schmidtke@safmc.net))

**Attachments:**

**Attachment 1** (*in Recent Documents by April 18*): Snapper Grouper Vice Chair Presentation

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

**Attachment 2b:** Citizen Science Program Update Presentation

**Attachment 2c:** Southeast Reef Fish Survey (SERFS) Update Presentation

**Attachment 3:** Red Grouper Fishery Performance Report Questions

**Attachment 4:** Scamp/Yellowmouth Management Response Presentation

**Attachment 5:** SGAM44/RFAM55\_DiscussionDocument

**Attachment 6:** SG Amendment 48 Discussion Document

**Attachment 7** (*in Recent Documents by April 18*): Management Strategy Evaluation  
Presentation

**Attachment 8:** SG Amendment 46 (Recreational Permitting) Discussion Document

**Attachment 9:** South Atlantic Research and Monitoring Prioritization Plan for 2023-2027 (SG  
AP Draft)

# OVERVIEW

## Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel

The AP will approve minutes from the October 2022 meeting and the agenda for the current meeting.

### 1. Committee Vice Chair Remarks

#### 2. Updates (*Attachments 2a-2c*)

**Recent Amendments:** Council staff will provide updates on amendments under development and recently submitted.

**Citizen Science:** Staff will present a brief update on the Council’s Citizen Science Program and pilot projects highlighting activities that have occurred since the Fall 2022 Snapper Grouper AP meeting, including SAFMC Release, upcoming FISHstory scanning nights and the Citizen Science program evaluation project.

**Southeast Reef Fish Survey (SERFS):** An update will also be provide to the AP on fishery-independent trends from the SERFS.

**AP Action:** Discuss and provide input, as appropriate.

#### 3. Red Grouper Fishery Performance Report (*Attachment 3*)

With input from the AP, Fishery Performance Reports (FPRs) have been developed for several snapper grouper species, including red grouper 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 FPR will be provided to the SSC, the Socio-Economic Panel (SEP), and the Council to assist in their discussions. An operational assessment (SEDAR 86) for the red grouper stock in the South Atlantic is scheduled for completion by the end of 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 red grouper and questions to prompt discussion, including information requests from the SEDAR 86 analytical team. The AP will update the FPR using the current version and provided questions.

**AP Action:** Provide information to update the FPR.

#### 4. Amendment 55 Scamp and Yellowmouth Grouper (*Attachment 4*)

The Council received a presentation on the results of the SEDAR 68 stock assessment for scamp and yellowmouth grouper in March 2023. Staff provided an overview of management changes that are needed to incorporate the results from SEDAR 68 into management. The Council directed staff to initiate work on the amendment.

**AP Action:** Review assessment results and management response and provide guidance to the Council on the important aspects of the scamp/yellowmouth fishery when moving forward with the amendment.

**5. SG Amendment 44/ RF Amendment 55 (Yellowtail Snapper) (Attachment 5)**

The Council reviewed the results of the SEDAR 68 Interim Analysis and instructed staff to resume work on this joint plan amendment. This amendment will modify catch levels for South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico yellowtail snapper as well updating the jurisdictional allocation of the stock acceptable biological catch, Total South Atlantic annual catch limit, Gulf of Mexico annual catch limit, and South Atlantic sector allocations.

**AP Action:** Review the discussion document and provide feedback for the Council on the actions in this amendment.

**6. Amendment 48 (Wreckfish) (Attachment 6)**

A review of the Wreckfish ITQ Program was completed in 2019 and included recommendations for improvement, particularly with respect to confidentiality issues and related constraints; moving away from a paper coupon-based program to an electronic program; cost recovery; wreckfish permit requirement; allocation issues; offloading sites and times; and economic data collection. The Council solicited public comment on this amendment during their March 2023 meeting and is scheduled to consider the amendment for formal approval in September 2023.

**AP Action:** Review Council preferred alternatives and provide input, as appropriate.

**7. Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation Input (Attachment 7)**

The Council is conducting a Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) to explore long-term management strategies for the South Atlantic snapper grouper fishery. Dr. Tom Carruthers and Dr. Adrian Hordyk of Blue Matter Science will discuss progress thus far and request AP input to further develop the MSE.

**AP Action:** Provide input to help specify MSE objectives.

**8. Amendment 46 (Recreational Permitting) (Attachment 8)**

Amendment 46 considers the establishment of a private recreational permit and education component for the South Atlantic snapper grouper fishery. The Council reviewed scoping comments and provided guidance on actions and alternatives to develop for discussion in June 2023.

**AP Action:** Review the discussion document and provide feedback for the Council to consider on development of a private recreational permit and education component.

**9. Impacts of Space Center Operations on Fishing Activities off Florida**

During the December 2022 Council meeting Council member Laurilee Thompson noted that the rocket launches from Cape Canaveral which have been increasing in frequency are expected to continue and expand significantly in 2023 and beyond. In order to ensure public safety, temporary Safety Zones have been established to limit all vessel access during splash down and recovery efforts which affects local fishery activities.

**AP Action:** Provide feedback on whether and how the snapper grouper fishery is being affected.

**10. Research Recommendations for the Snapper Grouper Fishery (*Attachment 9*)**

The Council is developing its Research and Monitoring Plan for 2023-2027. A draft list of research priorities has been developed. Input on prioritization is being collected from all APs ahead of Council decisions on the plan in June 2023.

**AP Action:** Provide input on how the Council should prioritize research goals.

**11. Other Updates**

**SEDAR:** SEDAR Staff will provide an update of recently finished, ongoing, and upcoming projects.

**Best Fishing Practices Outreach:** Staff will provide an update on recent actions related to the Best Fishing Practices Initiative included in Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 35 and the Sea Grant Reef Fish Communication Fellowship.

**AP Action:** None.

**12. Other Business**