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THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Black Grouper Fishery Performance Report Discussion Questions



Overall Fishery Changes



Have there been substantial changes in the black grouper fishery since 2021?

If so, describe the timing, location, and what you think caused the change?

Fishing Behavior and Catch Levels



When/where are the fish available? Has this changed?

Has the size of fish you are catching changed? If so, please describe the trend.

Have there been effort shifts to/from black grouper? If so, please describe, including the time frame for when these shifts occurred.

Have there been considerable changes in fishing techniques and/or gears used to target black grouper? If so, please describe, including the time frame for when these changes occurred.

How much fishing for black grouper typically occurs during the day versus at night? Has this changed?

Fishing Behavior and Catch Levels



Do you actively avoid fishing for black grouper in certain areas to avoid catching undersized fish or highly regulated fish (e.g., red snapper) to lessen bait loss and how feasible is it to avoid black grouper?

What do you see in terms of discards in the commercial sector? In the recreational sector?

- How often are black grouper discarded? What are the reasons they are discarded?
- Do you encounter black grouper as bycatch when fishing for other species? If so, what species are being targeted on these trips?

Do you think discard mortality is a significant factor for this species? Has this changed? If so, please describe, including the time frame when the change occurred.

Social and Economic Influences

For the commercial sector, how has price and demand for black grouper changed?

- Is there increased demand for a specific size of black grouper?

How has demand for charter/headboat trips targeting black grouper changed?

Social and Economic Influences

Among the species you target, how important are black grouper to your overall business (charter or commercial)?

What communities are dependent on the black grouper fishery?

Social and Economic Influences

Have changes in infrastructure (docks, marinas, fish houses) affected fishing opportunities for black grouper?

How have fishermen and communities adapted to changes in the black grouper fishery?

Management Measures

Are there new management measures the Council should consider or are there existing management measures (such as size limit, trip limit, bag limit, season, etc.) that should be changed?

Are the current ACL and allocations appropriate for each sector?



Environmental, Ecological, & Habitat Factors



Do you perceive that the abundance of black grouper has changed over the past ten years? If so, how has it changed?

When/where are the fish available, and has this changed? For instance, has there been any shift in catch (annually/seasonally) inshore/offshore or north/south? If so, please describe.

Has the size of the fish that you typically encounter changed? If so, could you briefly describe the trend?

Environmental, Ecological, & Habitat Factors



Have you noticed any unique effects of environmental conditions on black grouper? If so, please describe.

What are your observations on the timing and length of the black grouper spawning season in your area (time periods when fish are observed with large ovaries or eggs spilling out externally or while venting)?

What do you see now in terms of recruitment? Where are the small fish? Are large and small fish found in the same locations?

Environmental, Ecological, & Habitat Factors



Have you observed changes in catch depth or apparent bottom type fished on?

How have sea conditions (monthly/seasonally) affected fishable days?

Have you noticed any change in the species caught with black grouper over the years or seasonally?



Anything else?