

FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT
SNAPPER GROUPEE COMMITTEE
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Fort Lauderdale, FL
June 12-13, 2018

The Committee approved minutes from the March 2018 meeting and the agenda.

Status of Commercial & Recreational Catches versus Quotas for Species under ACLs

NMFS Southeast Regional Office (SERO) staff delivered briefings to the Committee on the status of commercial and recreational landings relative to ACLs. It was noted that an in-season closure for the commercial yellowtail snapper fishery was effective on June 5, whereas commercial harvest of gray triggerfish closed on June 13. Commercial harvest of vermilion snapper is on track to remain open through June (under a reduced trip limit that was effective on April 26). For the recreational sector, it was noted that landings of greater amberjack have slightly exceeded the recreational annual catch limit (ACL) for the past three fishing years. Recreational landings of blueline tilefish were high in wave 2 (March/April) of 2017 (PSE = 99%) despite federal waters being closed at the time. One particular intercept reported in Florida state waters (off of Pompano Beach) appears to have caused the recreational ACL to be exceeded (by 189%). It was also noted that private recreational landings of scamp in Georgia were reportedly zero in 2017.

Status of Amendments under Formal Review

SERO staff updated the Committee on the status amendments currently under review:

- Amendment 43 (Red Snapper): comments on the proposed rule close on June 18
- Abbreviated Framework Amendment 1 (Red Grouper): SERO is currently preparing the final rule package.

Extension of Interim Rule for Golden Tilefish

The interim rule is set to expire July 1, 2018 but can be extended for an additional 186 days. An extension of the current catch levels would continue to ensure the level of overfishing is reduced and would allow time for the Council to finalize work on Regulatory Amendment 28. The Committee made the following motion:

MOTION #1: MOVE TO REQUEST EXTENSION OF THE GOLDEN TILEFISH INTERIM RULE FOR AN ADDITIONAL 186 DAYS

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Red Snapper 2018 Season

NMFS SERO staff provided an update to the Committee on the expected implementation date of Amendment 43, if the amendment is approved. The Committee discussed whether to request that NMFS consider waiving the 30-day “cooling off” period that would put the public on notice that new regulations would soon change. As stated above, the comment period on the proposed rule will close on June 18 making it likely that new regulations would not be implemented until mid to late August. Committee members offered the following comments for NMFS to consider whether to waive the cooling off period (or a portion of it):

- For-hire businesses would need at least three weeks' notice whereas a two-week notice would be appropriate for private recreational anglers.
- One week would be sufficient notice for the commercial sector.
- Allowing a 30-day cooling off period would be beneficial to the red snapper stock as it would focus fishing pressure away from the period of peak spawning. However, allowing for limited harvest into September is not desirable due to the potential for inclement weather.

Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel Report

The Snapper Grouper AP met in Charleston on April 11-13, 2018. David Moss, AP Chair, delivered a summary of the AP's discussions and recommendations. Besides offering specific recommendations on actions under consideration in the various developing amendment, the AP requested a presentation on the permit renewal process from the SERO Permits Office. Based on AP comments regarding penalties for failing to abide by regulations, NOAA GC suggested that a presentation could be given to the AP on this topic at their fall 2018 meeting.

Bag Limits and Trip Satisfaction in the For-Hire Sector: A Case Study of South Atlantic Black Sea Bass

Stacey Weinstock, a graduate student at the College of Charleston, delivered a presentation highlighting results of her research on factors that drive trip satisfaction among customers and captains/crew of the South Carolina for-hire industry using black sea bass as a case study.

Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Report

The SSC met in Charleston on May 1-3, 2018 and via webinar on May 7, 2018. Dr. George Sedberry, SSC Chair, summarized the SSC's recommendations on the topics below. Specific recommendations are contained in the April 2017 and May 2017 SSC reports.

- Results of stock assessments and ABC recommendation for black sea bass
- Results of stock assessment and ABC recommendation for vermilion snapper
- Blueline tilefish ABC recommendation for area north of Cape Hatteras
- Red snapper ABC Workgroup update
- Golden tilefish ABC recommendation
- Recommendation on analytical methodology for actions in Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27

The Committee made the following motion:

MOTION #2: MOVE FORWARD WITH ADJUSTING CATCH LEVELS FOR VERMILION SNAPPER AND BLACK SEA BASS BASED ON LATEST ASSESSMENTS THROUGH AN ABBREVIATED FRAMEWORK AMENDMENT.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE (7 IN FAVOR/6 OPPOSED)

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Size-selectivity of hook and line gear, chevron traps, and underwater cameras for red snapper and other reef fishes in the U.S. South Atlantic

Dr. Luiz Barbieri presented results of a one-year cooperative study assessing the selectivity of fishery-independent and fishery-dependent gear on red snapper. It was noted that results of this study were not available for consideration at the time the Red Snapper Workgroup issued their recommendation on an approach to derive an acceptable biological catch for red snapper. The

new information could be incorporated into the red snapper interim analysis if the SSC were to recommend its use.

The Committee made the following motion:

MOTION #3: REQUEST THAT THE SSC EVALUATE THE FWRI SELECTIVITY STUDY TO DETERMINE ITS UTILITY IN STOCK ASSESSMENTS AND THE RED SNAPPER INTERIM ANALYSIS

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Southeast Reef Fish Survey (SERFS) Update

Dr. Marcel Reichert presented an update of fishery-independent survey results through 2017.

The following was mentioned during the discussion:

- The 2017 sampling season was affected by numerous hurricanes.
- A new method (Zero Inflated Negative Binomial) was used to standardize the catch per unit effort.
- A Council member requested examining catches of red snapper since the 2010 closure.
- The SERFS sampling does include areas where juvenile vermilion snapper are found.
- A decline in the abundance of bank sea bass, similar to that observed for black sea bass, was noted.
- Very low numbers of red grouper in samples off South Carolina and Georgia
- Abundance of scamp has been low since 2006/2007. A request was made to examine the distribution of historical and current catches of scamp.

Snapper Grouper Amendment 46 (Permitting and Reporting for Private Recreational Anglers)

At the March 2018 meeting, the Council removed actions addressing best fishing practices and powerhead regulations and approved continuing to develop those actions in a framework amendment (Regulatory Amendment 29). Staff presented an overview of an options paper. The Committee provided the following guidance:

- Obtain more information on permit for Highly Migratory Species (HMS) and provide to the Committee at the September 2018 meeting.
- Ensure that Marine Recreational Information Program staff is involved during the development of this amendment.
- A revision was requested to Table 4 to include north Carolina's tag requirement and catch card program for HMS. Additional information on Florida's programs will be provided to staff for inclusion in the table.
- The scoping document should include information on an anticipated timeframe for developing the amendment and implementing a possible permit for the private recreational sector. Provide enough information to clarify stakeholder expectations and ensure they are realistic (the MRIP certification process is lengthy).

The Committee made the following motions:

MOTION #4: APPROVE OPTION 2 FOR THE PURPOSE OF ACTIONS IN AMENDMENT 46.

The purpose is to improve information on effort and catch (landed and released) of fish in the private recreational component of the recreational sector of the snapper grouper fishery.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE
APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #5: APPROVE AMENDMENT 46 FOR SCOPING.
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE
APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Regulatory Amendment 29 – (Best Fishing Practices and Powerheads)

At the March 2018 meeting, the Council directed staff to continue to work on actions to address the use of best fishing practices and powerhead regulations in a framework amendment to expedite development. These actions were previously included in Amendment 46.

The Committee provided the following comments:

- Include options for a definition of descending device in scoping document (consider modeling after definition in state of Washington regulations).
- Remove the word “approved” from the alternatives.
- Suggest requesting public input on an appropriate boundary to delineate circle hook regulations on the Atlantic.
- Include information on reduced rates of discard mortality on red snapper with the use of circle hooks.
- Add an alternative that requires the use of non-stainless steel hook rigs.
- Retain the action addressing single hook rigs and add a parenthetical to Alternative 2: one hook per rod and reel.
- Add a question to the scoping document regarding a depth specification for single-hook rigs.

The Committee made the following motion:

MOTION #6: APPROVE SNAPPER GROUPER REGULATORY AMENDMENT 29 FOR SCOPING.
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE
APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26 (Recreational Management Measures)

The Committee received a presentation from Brendan Runde on his research on release mortality of gray triggerfish. His team used a tag-recapture approach to produce an overall discard survival estimate for the South Atlantic recreational hook-and-line fishery. The mean estimated survival rate across all depths in North Carolina and Florida was substantially lower than the value (0.875) used for the most recent stock assessment of this species in the South Atlantic region.

At the March 2018 meeting, the Council selected preferred alternatives for the majority of the actions in the amendment and approved the amendment for public hearings. Hearings were held via webinar and listening stations on May 8-10, 2018. Council staff presented an overview of revisions to date and a summary of comments received through May 11, 2018.

The Committee made the following revisions to the Purpose statement:

Address recreational stakeholder input to increase access and predictability for the DEEPWATER COMPONENT OF THE recreational SNAPPER GROUPER FISHERY of the snapper grouper fishery, minimize regulatory discards, and improve regulatory compliance and consistency.

CLARIFICATION THAT ACTIONS WOULD AFFECT ALL COMPONENTS OF THE RECREATIONAL FISHERY, NOT JUST FOR-HIRE.

The Committee provided guidance and made the following motions:

MOTION #7: DISCONTINUE WORK ON VISION BLUEPRINT REGULATORY AMENDMENT 26

MOTION FAILS (1 IN FAVOR, 12 OPPOSED)

MOTION #8: DESELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS PREFERRED UNDER ACTION 1 AND SELECT ALTERNATIVE 1 AS PREFERRED

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 SUB-ALTERNATIVE 2B AS PREFERRED

Preferred Alternative 2. Modify existing Snapper Grouper aggregates to establish a Deep-water Species Aggregate, Shallow-water Grouper Aggregate, and Other Shallow-water Species Aggregate.

Deep-water Species Aggregate: queen snapper, blackfin snapper, silk snapper, snowy grouper, misty grouper, yellowedge grouper, blueline tilefish, golden tilefish, wreckfish

Shallow-water Grouper Aggregate: gag, black grouper, red grouper, scamp, yellowfin grouper, yellowmouth grouper, red hind, rock hind, graysby, and coney.

Other Shallow-water Species Aggregate: whitebone porgy, jolthead porgy, knobbed porgy, saucereye porgy, scup, almaco jack, banded rudderfish, lesser amberjack, white grunt, margate, sailor's choice, tomtate, Atlantic spadefish, gray triggerfish, bar jack, lane snapper, yellowtail snapper, gray snapper, mutton snapper, cubera snapper, and sand tilefish, and:

Sub-alternative 2b. Exclude black sea bass, vermilion snapper, greater amberjack, hogfish, and red porgy from the Other Shallow-Water Species Aggregate.

MOTION TO TABLE

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

SUBSTITUTE MOTION FAILS

MAIN MOTION FAILS

MOTION #9: MOVE ACTION TO REDUCE MINIMUM SIZE LIMIT OF GRAY TRIGGERFISH OFF EAST FLORIDA FROM REGULATORY AMENDMENT 26 TO REGULATORY AMENDMENT 27. ADD AN ACTION TO REG 27 TO ADDRESS REVISING THE GRAY TRIGGERFISH RECREATIONAL BAG LIMIT.

MOTION FAILS (2 IN FAVOR/ 7 OPPOSED, 1 ABSTENTION)

Retain the following items in Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26:

- Deep-water species aggregate and modification of species composition to include snowy grouper, misty grouper, golden tilefish, blueline tilefish, wreckfish, and yellowedge grouper.
- Removal of minimum size limits for three deep-water snappers.
- Season & aggregate bag limit for deep-water species.
- Recreational bag limits for the Other Shallow Water species (sub alternatives for no more than 10 gray triggerfish, no more than 10 Atlantic spadefish, and no more than 10 of any one species). *** CLARIFICATION THAT THIS ACTION WOULD APPLY TO THE 20-FISH AGGREGATE FOR SPECIES WITHOUT BAG LIMITS***
- Gray triggerfish minimum size limit change

- Revise timing of amendment development to approve for formal review at the December 2018 meeting.
- Obtain additional public input in August 2018 during scoping hearings for Amendment 46 (recreational permit and reporting) and Regulatory Amendment 29 (best fishing practices).

MOTION #10: MOVE ACTION ADDRESSING MODIFICATION OF RED GROUPER SEASONAL CLOSURE OFF THE CAROLINAS FROM REG 26 & REG 27 AND DEVELOP IN REGULATORY AMENDMENT 30 (RED GROUPER REBUILDING)
 APPROVED BY COMMITTEE
 APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 (Commercial Management Measures)

At the March 2018 meeting, the Council selected preferred alternatives for the majority of the actions in the amendment and approved the amendment for public hearings. Hearings were held via webinar and listening stations on May 8-10, 2018. Council staff presented an overview of revisions to date and a summary of comments received through May 11, 2018.

The Committee provided guidance and made the following motions:

MOTION #11: DE-SELECT PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE 3/3A UNDER ACTION 1 AND SELECT ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION) AS PREFERRED

Action 1. Establish a commercial split season and modify the commercial trip limit for blueline tilefish

Preferred Alternative 3. Retain the January 1 through December 31 commercial fishing year for blueline tilefish in the South Atlantic exclusive economic zone. Modify the commercial trip limit for blueline tilefish:

Preferred Sub-alternative 3a. 100 pounds gutted weight from January 1 through April 30 and 300 pounds gutted weight from May 1 through December 31.

MOTION FAILS

MOTION #12: APPROVE THE IPT'S SUGGESTED EDITS TO ACTION 3.

Action 3. Establish a commercial split season and modify the commercial trip limit for greater amberjack

Preferred Alternative 2. Specify two commercial fishing seasons for greater amberjack. Allocate the commercial annual catch limit for greater amberjack into two quotas: 50% to the period March 1 through August 31 and 50% to the period September 1 through the end of February. Any remaining quota from Season 1 would transfer to Season 2. Any remaining quota from Season 2 would not be carried forward. During April each year, no person may sell or purchase a greater amberjack harvested from the South Atlantic exclusive economic zone and the harvest and possession limit is one per person per day or one per person per trip, whichever is more restrictive.

Alternative 3. Specify two commercial fishing seasons for greater amberjack. Allocate the commercial annual catch limit for greater amberjack into two quotas: 60% to the period March 1 through August 31 and 40% to the period September 1 through the end of February. Any remaining quota from Season 1 would transfer to Season 2. Any remaining quota from Season 2 would not be carried forward. During April each year, no person may sell or purchase a greater amberjack harvested from the South Atlantic exclusive economic zone and the harvest and

possession limit is one per person per day or one per person per trip, whichever is more restrictive.

Alternative 4. Retain the March through February fishing year. Reduce the greater amberjack commercial trip limit. During April each year, no person may sell or purchase a greater amberjack harvested from the South Atlantic exclusive economic zone and the harvest and possession limit is one per person per day or one per person per trip, whichever is more restrictive. Reduce the greater amberjack commercial trip limit to:

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #13: APPROVE THE IPT'S SUGGESTED EDITS TO ACTION 4

Action 4. Establish a commercial split season and modify the commercial trip limit for red porgy

Alternative 1 (No Action). The commercial fishing year for red porgy in the South Atlantic exclusive economic zone is from January 1 to December 31. During January 1 through April 30 each year, no person may sell or purchase red porgy harvested from the South Atlantic exclusive economic zone, and the harvest and possession limit is three per person per day or three per person per trip, whichever is more restrictive. From May 1 through December 31 each year, the commercial trip limit for red porgy is 120 fish.

Preferred Alternative 2. Specify two commercial fishing seasons for red porgy. Allocate the commercial red porgy annual catch limit into two quotas: 30% to the period January 1 through April 30 and 70% to the period May 1 through December 31. Any remaining quota from Season 1 would transfer to Season 2. Any remaining quota from Season 2 would not be carried forward. Remove the sale and purchase prohibition and the possession limit of three per person per day or three per person per trip, whichever is more restrictive, during January 1 to April 30 each year. Retain the commercial trip limit of 120 fish from May 1 through December 31 and specify a commercial trip limit from January 1 through April 30 of:

Sub-alternative 2a. 30 fish.

Sub-alternative 2b. 45 fish.

Preferred Sub-alternative 2c. 60 fish.

Alternative 3. Specify two commercial fishing seasons for red porgy. Allocate the commercial red porgy ACL into two quotas: 50% to the period January 1 through April 30 and 50% to the period May 1 through December 31. Any remaining quota from Season 1 would transfer to Season 2. Any remaining quota from Season 2 would not be carried forward. Remove the sale and purchase prohibition during January 1 to April 30 each year and the possession limit of three per person per day or three per person per trip, whichever is more restrictive. Retain the commercial trip limit of 120 fish from May 1 through December 31 and specify a commercial trip limit from January 1 through April 30 of:

Sub-alternative 3a. 30 fish.

Sub-alternative 3b. 45 fish.

Sub-alternative 3c. 60 fish.

Alternative 4. Remove the sale and purchase prohibition and the possession limit of three per person per day or three per person per trip, whichever is more restrictive, and harvest and possession restrictions for red porgy from the South Atlantic exclusive economic zone during January 1 to April 30 each year. Specify a commercial trip limit of 120 fish from January 1 through December 31.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #14: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 4/4A AS PREFERRED FOR ACTION 5

Action 5. Modify the commercial trip limit for vermilion snapper

Alternative 4. Modify the commercial trip limit for both seasons and remove trip-limit reductions:

Sub-alternative 4a. 1,000 pounds gutted weight

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS PREFERRED

Alternative 2. Retain the commercial trip limit and trip limit reduction in Season 1 (January 1 through June 30). For Season 2 (July 1 through December 31), modify the commercial trip limit to 750 pounds gutted weight and remove the trip limit reduction. Any remaining quota from Season 1 transfers to Season 2. Any remaining quota from Season 2 is not carried forward.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION APPROVED AND BECOMES MAIN MOTION

MAIN MOTION APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #15: ADOPT THE IPT'S SUGGESTED EDITS UNDER ACTION 5

Action 5. Modify the commercial trip limit for vermilion snapper

Alternative 4. Modify the commercial trip limit for both seasons and remove trip-limit reductions:

Sub-alternative 4a. 1,000 pounds gutted weight

Sub-alternative 4b. 850 pounds gutted weight

Sub-alternative 4c. 700 pounds gutted weight

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #16: ADOPT THE IPT'S SUGGESTED EDITS UNDER ACTION 6

Action 6. ~~Implement~~ Establish a minimum size limit for almaco jack for the commercial sector

Alternative 2. ~~Specify~~ Establish a minimum size limit for almaco jack for the commercial sector

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #17: ADOPT THE IPT'S SUGGESTED EDITS UNDER ACTION 7

Action 7. ~~Implement~~ Establish a commercial trip limit for the Other Jacks Complex

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #18: ADOPT THE IPT'S SUGGESTED EDITS UNDER ACTION 8

Modify the seasonal prohibition on commercial harvest and possession and sale and purchase of red grouper in the Exclusive Economic Zone off South Carolina and North Carolina

Preferred Alternative 2. During January through April, no person may fish for, harvest, or possess in or from the South Atlantic exclusive economic zone any shallow-water grouper (gag, black grouper, scamp, red grouper, yellowfin grouper, yellowmouth grouper, red hind, rock hind, graysby, or coney). Additionally, during January through April, no person may sell or purchase any shallow-water grouper harvested from or possessed in the South Atlantic exclusive economic zone. Off North Carolina and South Carolina, revise the timing of these restrictions only for red grouper as follows:

Preferred Sub-alternative 2a. January – May (five months).

Sub-alternative 2b. February – May (four months).

Sub-alternative 2c. March – June (four months).
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE
APPROVED BY COUNCIL

NOTE: AN EARLIER MOTION MOVED THIS ACTION TO REGULATORY
AMENDMENT 30

MOTION #19: APPROVE ALL ACTIONS IN VISION BLUEPRINT REGULATORY
AMENDMENT 27 TO CONSIDER APPROVAL FOR FORMAL REVIEW IN SEPTEMBER
2018

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE
APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Amendment 47 (Snapper Grouper For-Hire Permit Moratorium)

At the March 2018 meeting, the Council requested that staff prepare a revised options paper and draft scoping document for their consideration in June. Staff presented an overview of the documents and received the following guidance:

- Remove “moratorium” from the title of the amendment. Instead use “for-hire permit modifications” or something similar.
- Revise discussion of “overcapitalization” since there is not quantitative evidence provided to back up this statement.
- Concern that even though the for-hire electronic reporting amendment has been approved (awaiting publication of final rule) it is difficult to anticipate the effects of new regulations.
- There is evidence that compliance with reporting requirements in the Gulf of Mexico is higher than in the South Atlantic and this may be directly attributed to the for-hire limited entry program.
- Add that Council could consider multiple permit types.
- Request public input on other ways to address Council concerns rather than limiting entry.
- If possible, differentiate “6-pack” vessels vs. “headboats” in the scoping document in regard to potential permit types.
- Add option to put an identifying number on SG for-hire permits.
- Add information on penalties for non-reporting.
- Request to reach out to all federal permit holders via mailout to notice the scoping meetings.
- Scoping meetings should be held in-person, if possible. Request to include a location in Mid-Atlantic region (Council meeting is in Virginia Beach in mid-August) and Key West. The following locations are suggested as potential scoping meeting locations:

Florida

- Key West, FL
- (TBD)

Georgia

- Savannah, GA
- Brunswick, GA

- Midway, GA (if only one location is possible)

South Carolina

- Murrells Inlet, SC
- Charleston, SC
- Hilton Head, SC

North Carolina

- Wilmington, NC
- Morehead City, NC
- Manteo or Hatteras, NC (depending on meeting site availability)

Virginia

- Virginia Beach, VA (August MAFMC meeting)

The Committee made the following motions:

MOTION#20: SEND SNAPPER GROUPE AMENDMENT 47, AS MODIFIED, OUT FOR SCOPING BEFORE THE SEPTEMBER 2018 MEETING.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

CLARIFICATION THAT A POSTCARD WILL BE MAILED TO PERMIT HOLDERS AND SCOPING WILL BE CONDUCTED VIA WEBINAR PRIOR TO THE SEPTEMBER MEETING. IN SEPTEMBER, DECIDE WHETHER ADDITIONAL INPUT SHOULD BE SOUGHT*

Regulatory Amendment 30 (Red grouper Rebuilding)

During the March 2018 meeting, the Committee directed staff to begin work on a framework amendment to revise the rebuilding plan for red grouper. In order to meet the statutory deadline, a revised rebuilding plan needs to be in place by September 2019. Staff presented an options paper and received the following guidance:

- Staff clarified that projections used to adjust catch levels in Abbreviated Framework 1 were under a low-recruitment scenario, per the SSC’s recommendation, whereas rebuilding projections use average recruitment. This is necessary to maintain stock productivity estimates and biological benchmarks.
- It was noted that bag limit analyses for red grouper in Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26 showed less than a 1% change in landings for this species. Hence, there is no need at this time to make changes to recreational management measures.
- The intent of a commercial trip limit is to apply to the open harvest season only.

The Committee made the following motions:

MOTION #21: APPROVE INCLUSION OF ACTION 1 AND RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES IN SNAPPER GROUPE REGULATORY AMENDMENT 30.

Action 1. Revise the Rebuilding Schedule for Red Grouper.

Alternative 1 (No Action). The current rebuilding schedule is set at the maximum time period allowed to rebuild (T_{max}). This is equal to 10 years with the rebuilding time period ending in 2020. 2011 was Year 1.

Alternative 2. Revise the rebuilding schedule to equal the shortest possible time period to rebuild in the absence of fishing mortality (T_{Min}). This would equal 6 years with the rebuilding time period ending in 2023. 2018 would be Year 1.

Alternative 3. Revise the rebuilding schedule to equal 8 years with the rebuilding time period ending in 2025. 2018 would be Year 1.

Alternative 4. Revise the rebuilding schedule to equal the maximum time period allowed to rebuild (T_{Max}). This would equal 10 years with the rebuilding time period ending in 2027. 2018 would be Year 1.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #22: CONSIDER A COMMERCIAL TRIP LIMIT WITH SUB-ALTERNATIVES OF 75 POUNDS, 100 POUNDS, 150 POUNDS, AND 200 POUNDS GUTTED WEIGHT.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #23: SEND SNAPPER GROUPER REGULATORY AMENDMENT 30 (RED GROUPER REBUILDNG), AS MODIFIED, OUT FOR SCOPING.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

MOTION TO AMEND: REPLACE “OUT FOR SCOPING” TO “FOR PUBLIC HEARING AT THE SEPTEMBER COUNCIL MEETING”

MOTION TO AMEND APPROVED

AMENDED MOTION APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Regulatory Amendment 28 (Golden Tilefish)

The amendment would establish ACLs based on results of the SEDAR 25 update (2016) and the SSC’s recommended ABC. Additionally, an action to modify the fishing year for the hook-and-line component of the commercial sector is included. Public comment was received during the meeting.

The Committee made the following motions:

MOTION #24: ACCEPT THE PURPOSE AND NEED AS MODIFIED.

Purpose for Action

~~Adjust catch levels and implement management measures of golden tilefish in the South Atlantic~~

End overfishing of golden tilefish and implement management measures in the South Atlantic.

Need for Action

~~End overfishing of golden tilefish, while minimizing to the extent practicable, adverse socio-economic effects and achieve optimum yield on a continuing basis as per the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.~~

End overfishing of golden tilefish, maximize economic opportunity for the commercial hook and line component, while minimizing to the extent practicable, adverse socio-economic effects and achieve optimum yield on a continuing basis as per the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION#25: GUTTED WEIGHT ABC FOR GOLDEN TILEFISH BE CALCULATED USING THE 1.059 CONVERSION FACTOR RESULTING IN A CATCH LEVEL OF 342,000 POUNDS GUTTED WEIGHT AND BE USED TO DERIVE THE QUOTAS.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #26: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 3/SUB-ALTERNATIVE 3A UNDER ACTION 1 AS THE PREFERRED.

Action 1: Revise the Annual Catch Limit for Golden Tilefish

Alternative 3. ~~Revise the golden tilefish annual catch limits. The total annual catch limit =90% of ABC. (The acceptable biological catch recommendation from the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee is $P^*=30\%$.)~~ Allow the total annual catch limit for golden tilefish to remain equal to the yield at 75% of FMSY based on the acceptable biological catch recommendation from the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee when the population is at equilibrium. The annual catch limit value in place in 2020 will remain in effect in future years unless changed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council.

Sub-Alternative 3a. ACL = ABC

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #27: APPROVE THE IPT'S SUGGESTED EDITS TO ACTION 1

Action 1: Revise the Annual Catch Limit for Golden Tilefish

Alternative 2. ~~Revise the golden tilefish annual catch limits. The total annual catch limit would equal the acceptable biological catch. (The acceptable biological catch recommendation from the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee is $P^*=30\%$.)~~ Revise the total annual catch limit for golden tilefish based on an acceptable biological catch of $P^*=30\%$. The annual catch limit value in place in 2024 will remain in effect in future years unless changed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council.

Sub-Alternative 2a. ACL = ABC

Sub-Alternative 2b. ACL = 90% of ABC

Sub-Alternative 2c. ACL = 80% of ABC

Alternative 3. ~~Revise the golden tilefish annual catch limits. The total annual catch limit =90% of ABC. (The acceptable biological catch recommendation from the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee is $P^*=30\%$.)~~ Allow the total annual catch limit for golden tilefish to remain equal to the yield at 75% of FMSY based on the acceptable biological catch recommendation from the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee when the population is at equilibrium. The annual catch limit value in place in 2020 will remain in effect in future years unless changed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council.

Sub-Alternative 3a. ACL = ABC

Sub-Alternative 3b. ACL = 90% of ABC

Sub-Alternative 3c. ACL = 80% of ABC

Alternative 4. ~~Revise the golden tilefish annual catch limits. The total annual catch limit = 80% of ABC. (The acceptable biological catch recommendation from the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee is $P^*=30\%$.)~~ Revise the total annual catch limit for golden tilefish based on the yield at 75% of F_{MSY} . The annual catch limit value in place in 2024 will remain in effect in future years unless changed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council.

Sub-Alternative 4a. ACL = ABC

Sub-Alternative 4b. ACL = 90% of ABC

Sub-Alternative 4c. ACL = 80% of ABC

~~**Alternative 5.** Allow the ACL to be set to pre-interim rule values. The total annual catch limit would equal 558,036 pounds gutted weight.~~

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #28: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 4 UNDER ACTION 2 AS PREFERRED

Action 2. Adjust the Fishing Year for the Commercial Hook and Line component

Alternative 4. Modify the fishing year for the hook and line component to May 1 through April 30.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION: SELECT ALTERNATIVE 1 (NO ACTION) AS THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE.

Alternative 1 (No Action). The total annual catch limit for golden tilefish is equal to the yield at 75% of FMSY when the population is at equilibrium. The current total annual catch limit for golden tilefish is 323,000 pounds gutted weight, as established temporarily through an interim rule for golden tilefish implemented on January 2, 2017 (83 FR 65). The interim rule value is based on projected yield of 75% of FMSY. This interim rule is valid through July 1, 2018 and may be extended for an additional 186 days. Once the interim rule expires, the ACL will revert back to the previous ACL of 558,036 pounds gutted weight.

SUBSTITUTE MOTION APPROVED

SUBSTITUTE MOTION BECOMES MAIN MOTION

MAIN MOTION APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #29: APPROVE SNAPPER GROUPEL REGULATORY AMENDMENT 28 FOR FORMAL SECRETARIAL REVIEW AND DEEM THE CODIFIED TEXT AS NECESSARY AND APPROPRIATE. GIVE STAFF EDITORIAL LICENSE TO MAKE ANY NECESSARY EDITORIAL CHANGES TO THE DOCUMENT/CODIFIED TEXT AND GIVE THE COUNCIL CHAIR AUTHORITY TO APPROVE THE REVISIONS AND RE-DEEM THE CODIFIED TEXT.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Amendment 42 (Modifications to Sea Turtle Release Gear and Snapper Grouper Framework)

At the March 2018 meeting, the Council directed staff to conduct scoping webinars for proposed modifications to regulations for vessels with South Atlantic snapper grouper commercial or for-hire permits to allow the use of three additional sea turtle release gear types. The amendment also proposes changes to the snapper grouper framework procedure to facilitate modifying protected resources release gear and handling requirements in the future. Scoping hearings were conducted on April 23-24, 2018. Council staff delivered a summary of scoping comments and an overview of the decision document. The Committee provided made the following motions:

MOTION #30: APPROVE THE PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENT

The **purpose** is to include three new sea turtle release gear types in the current regulations for the commercial and for-hire components of the snapper grouper fishery and revise the snapper grouper framework to include modifications to protected resources release gear requirements and handling procedures after they are approved by the SEFSC.

The **need** is to provide flexibility to participants in the federal commercial and for-hire snapper grouper fishery in complying with sea turtle release gear requirements and handling procedures and allow for more timely modifications to the regulations.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #31: APPROVE ALTERNATIVES 1 THROUGH 2 UNDER ACTION 1

Action 1. Modify sea turtle release gear requirements for vessels with snapper grouper permits in the South Atlantic region

Alternative 1: No Action. Do not modify the regulations to allow the use of new approved sea turtle release gears for vessels with commercial or charter vessel/headboat South Atlantic snapper grouper permits.

Alternative 2: Modify the regulations for vessels with commercial or charter vessel/headboat South Atlantic snapper grouper permits to allow the use of the new collapsible hoop net, dehooking device, and small hoist to release incidentally hooked sea turtles.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #32: APPROVE ALTERNATIVES 1 THROUGH 2 UNDER ACTION 2

Action 2. Modify the Snapper Grouper Framework Protocol

Alternative 1: No Action. Do not modify the snapper grouper framework procedure amended through Snapper Grouper Amendment 27.

Alternative 2: Modify the snapper grouper framework procedure to include changes to release gear requirements and handling protocols for sea turtles and other protected resources through the abbreviated documentation process for framework actions. Release gear requirements and handling protocols that could be implemented or changed would include:

Sub-alternative 2a: Release gear requirements for sea turtles and other protected resources

Sub-alternative 2b: Handling requirements for sea turtles and other protected resources

Note: In Alternative 2, both Sub-alternative 2a and Sub-alternative 2b could be selected as preferred.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Regulatory Amendment 32 (Yellowtail Snapper)

The Committee reviewed an options paper to revise in-season accountability measures for yellowtail snapper. The Committee clarified that actions in this amendment are very short-term solutions to alleviate the impacts of in-season closures. The Committee acknowledged a stock assessment will be completed for yellowtail snapper in the next year or two and modifications to management may also be warranted after the revisions to MRIP recreational landings estimates become available later this year.

The Committee made the following motions:

MOTION #33: APPROVE THE PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENTS:

The **purpose** of this framework amendment is to revise accountability measures to minimize the probability of in-season closures for yellowtail snapper.

The **need** for the amendment is to achieve optimum yield for yellowtail snapper while minimizing, to the extent possible, adverse social and economic effects due to in-season closures.
APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #34: ADD ALTERNATIVE TO ACTION 1: AN IN-SEASON CLOSURE WILL OCCUR FOR THE COMMERCIAL SECTOR WHEN THE TOTAL CATCH MEETS OR IS PROJECTED TO MEET 80% OF THE TOTAL ACL AND THE COMMERCIAL QUOTA IS REACHED.

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

GUIDANCE TO ALLOW IPT TO OFFER OTHER SIMILAR ALTERNATIVES THAT WOULD ALLOW EQUITABLE ACCESS TO BOTH SECTORS

MOTION #35: REMOVE ACTION 2 FROM CONSIDERATION IN REGULATORY AMENDMENT 32

Action 2. Revise the Post-season Accountability Measures for Yellowtail Snapper

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #36: APPROVE REGULATORY AMENDMENT 32 FOR SCOPING

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

MOTION #37:

APPROVE THE FOLLOWING TIMING AND TASKS:

- REQUEST THAT THE SSC REVIEW THE FWRI SELECTIVITY STUDY DURING THEIR OCTOBER 2018 MEETING AND RECOMMEND WHETHER TO INCLUDE IN INTERIM ANALYSIS FOR RED SNAPPER
- OBTAIN INFORMATION ON HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES RECREATIONAL PERMIT FOR POSSIBLE INCLUSION IN AMENDMENT 46
- REQUEST THAT THE PRESENTATION ON GRAY TRIGGERFISH DISCARD MORTALITY BE DELIVERED TO THE SSC DURING THEIR OCTOBER 2018 MEETING AND REQUEST RECOMMENDATION ON THE UTILITY OF THE SIZE LIMIT GIVEN THE NEW INFORMATION
- MAKE REQUESTED MODIFICATIONS TO VISION BLUEPRINT REGULATORY AMENDMENT 26 AND OBTAIN ADDITIONAL PUBLIC INPUT DURING SCOPING HEARINGS FOR REGULATORY AMENDMENT 29
- CONDUCT SCOPING HEARINGS FOR THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENTS:
 - REGULATORY AMENDMENT 29 (BEST FISHING PRACTICES)
 - AMENDMENT 47 (FOR-HIRE PERMIT MODIFICATIONS)
 - REGULATORY AMENDMENT 30 (RED GROUPER REBUILDING AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES)
 - REGULATORY AMENDMENT 32 (YELLOWTAIL SNAPPER ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES)

- PREPARE REGULATORY AMENDMENT 28 FOR FORMAL REVIEW AND SUBMIT
- PREPARE VISION BLUEPRINT REGULATORY AMENDMENT 27 TO CONSIDER APPROVAL FOR FORMAL REVIEW IN SEPTEMBER 2018
- BEGIN WORK ON AN ABBREVIATED FRAMEWORK AMENDMENT TO ADJUST CATCH LEVELS OF VERMILION SNAPPER AND BLACK SEA BASS – APPROVED BY COUNCIL