



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North Charleston SC 29405
Call: (843) 571-4366 | Toll-Free: (866) SAFMC-10 | Fax: (843) 769-4520 | Connect: www.safmc.net

Dr. Michelle Duval, Chair | Charlie Phillips, Vice Chair
Gregg T. Waugh, Executive Director

AGENDA Snapper Grouper Committee

Town & Country Inn
2008 Savannah Highway
Charleston, SC

Tuesday, September 26, 2017 – 4:30 to 6:00 P.M. (Times subject to change)

Wednesday, September 27, 2017 – 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

Approval of Agenda – Dr. Michelle Duval

Approval of June 2017 Committee minutes – Dr. Michelle Duval

1. Status of Commercial Catches versus Quotas for Species under ACLs – NMFS SERO (*Attachment 1*)
2. Status of Amendments under Formal Review – NMFS SERO
 - a) Amendment 37 (Hogfish) – sent for formal review on 9/23/16
 - b) Amendment 41 (Mutton Snapper) – sent for formal review on 2/28/17
 - c) Golden tilefish interim rule (*Attachment 2*) – requested on 6/27/17
3. Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26 – Recreational (*Attachment 3*)
 - a) Overview of Decision Document – Myra Brouwer
 - b) **Committee action:** review and modify document as necessary – Dr. Michelle Duval
4. Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 – Commercial (*Attachments 4a and 4b*)
 - a) Overview of Decision Document – Myra Brouwer
 - b) **Committee action:** review and modify document as necessary – Dr. Michelle Duval
5. Update on socio-economic characterization/portfolio analysis of the commercial snapper grouper fishery (*Attachment 5*)
 - a) Overview of outline – John Hadley
 - b) **Committee action:** provide guidance to staff – Dr. Michelle Duval
6. Red Grouper (*Attachments 6a and 6b*)
 - a) Projections with high and low recruitment scenarios – NMFS SEFSC
 - b) Overview of options for amendment development – Myra Brouwer

- c) **Committee action:** discuss and provide guidance to staff on amendment development – Dr. Michelle Duval
7. ABC Control Rule Modifications Amendment (*Attachment 7*)
 - a) Update on control rule modifications and possible adjustment(s) to accountability measures – John Carmichael
 - b) **Committee action:** discuss and provide guidance on amendment development – Dr. Michelle Duval
 8. Wreckfish ITQ Review (*Attachments 8a-8d*)
 - a) SERO Presentation on ITQ Review Process – Dr. Jessica Stephen, NMFS SERO
 - b) Shareholders meeting report – Dr. Brian Chevront
 - c) Overview of development of the review – Dr. Brian Chevront
 - d) **Committee action:** discuss and provide guidance as needed – Dr. Michelle Duval
 9. Atlantic Coast Wide Planning to Address Climate Change (*Attachments 9a and 9b*)
 - a) State regulations and landings for snapper grouper species in the Greater Atlantic Region – Myra Brouwer
 - b) Data collection and monitoring; Response to joint letter sent from
 - c) MAFMC and SAFMC – NMFS SEFSC
 - d) Discussion on working with the MAFMC to encourage states north of North Carolina implement complementary regulations for snapper grouper species in Greater Atlantic Region – Dr. Michelle Duval
 - e) **Committee action:** discuss and provide guidance as needed – Dr. Michelle Duval

Other Business – Dr. Michelle Duval

Adjourn – Dr. Michelle Duval

Committee Members

Michelle Duval, Chair
 Jessica McCawley, Vice Chair
 Anna Beckwith
 Mel Bell
 Zack Bowen
 Chester Brewer
 Mark Brown
 Chris Conklin
 Roy Crabtree
 Tim Griner
 Ben Hartig
 Doug Haymans
 Charlie Phillips
 Mid-Atlantic Liaison, Tony DiLernia/Dewey Hemilright

Attachments

- Attachment 1:** Status of commercial catches vs. ACLs
- Attachment 2:** Background on interim rule request for golden tilefish
- Attachment 3:** Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26 Decision Document
- Attachment 4a:** Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 Decision Document
- Attachment 4b:** Preliminary Commercial Analyses (Appendix J)
- Attachment 5:** Draft outline of socio-economic characterization/portfolio analysis
- Attachment 6a:** Red grouper projections
- Attachment 6b:** Expedited Snapper Grouper Framework Procedure
- Attachment 7:** ABC control rule discussion document
- Attachment 8a:** Presentation on ITQ review process
- Attachment 8b:** Summary report of wreckfish ITQ shareholders meeting
- Attachment 8c:** Meeting minutes from Wreckfish ITQ shareholders meeting
- Attachment 8d:** Outline of wreckfish ITQ review
- Attachment 9a:** Summary document of state regulations and landings of snapper grouper species in the Greater Atlantic Region
- Attachment 9b:** SAFMC & MAFMC letter to SEFSC and NEFSC (August 2016)

Staff: Myra Brouwer

OVERVIEW

Snapper Grouper Committee

The Committee will approve of minutes from June 2017 meeting and agenda.

1. Status of Commercial Catches versus Quotas for Species under ACLs – (*Attachment 1*)

Description: NMFS Southeast Regional Office (SERO) staff will update the Committee on the status of commercial landings of snapper grouper species and species complexes versus their respective ACLs.

Required Committee Action: None.

2. Status of Amendments under Formal Review

Description: NMFS SERO staff will update the Committee on the status of two amendments (Amendment 37 and Amendment 41) submitted for formal review in September 2016 and March 2017, respectively. In June, the Council requested that NMFS issue interim regulations to reduce overfishing of golden tilefish while long-term revisions to fishing levels and management measures are developed (*Attachment 2*). NMFS SERO staff will also update the Committee on the status of that request.

Required Committee Action: None.

3. Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26 (*Attachment 3*)

Description: The Committee reviewed actions and alternatives and preliminary analyses during the June 2017 meeting. The Committee/Council provided guidance and requested several changes. The Committee/Council did not approve the amendment for public hearings pending revisions to actions and alternatives and subsequent analyses. Preliminary analyses for this amendment were not updated given the level of adjustments to actions and alternatives that were requested at the June meeting and other priorities. Further Committee guidance and clarification on actions and alternatives is needed for the IPT to advance analyses.

Status of amendment: Scoping completed in early 2017. Amendment development to continue based on Committee/Council revisions with intent to approve for public hearings in December 2017.

Required Committee Action: Review revised actions and alternatives and modify as appropriate.

4. Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 (*Attachments 4a & 4b*)

Description: The Committee reviewed actions and alternatives and preliminary analyses during the June 2017 meeting. The Committee/Council provided guidance and requested several changes. The Committee/Council did not approve the amendment for public hearings pending revisions to actions and alternatives and subsequent analyses. Some of the preliminary analyses were revised and additional information provided based on Committee/Council guidance and are included in *Attachment 4b*.

Status of amendment: Scoping completed in early 2017. Amendment development to continue based on Committee/Council revisions with intent to approve for public hearings in December 2017.

Required Committee Action: Review revised actions and alternatives and modify as appropriate.

5. Update on socio-economic characterization/portfolio analysis of the commercial snapper grouper fishery (*Attachment 5*)

Description: As part of Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 (Commercial Management Measures), the public was asked to comment on management approaches that would meet the needs of “traditional bandit boats.” In addition, the Council expressed the need for an in-depth characterization of the fishery when considering substantial changes to how the fishery is managed. Hence, in March 2017 the Council directed staff to begin work on a socio-economic characterization of the commercial snapper grouper (SG) fishery that would address items such as descriptive statistics (location, permit portfolios, corporation vs. individual ownership, demographics, etc.) about SG permit holders and changes over time; leased permits (via vessel leasing); latent permits; vessel characteristics (for evaluation of ‘traditional bandit boat’ definition); qualitative descriptions of fishing communities; SG participant catch portfolios; SG dealer information; economic importance of the total fishery and by species sub-complex; seasonality and regional distribution of landings; and growth potential analysis. Council staff will provide an outline of the analysis, an overview of the work plan, and timing for the project.

Status of report: Corresponds with Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27

Required Committee Action: Provide direction to staff by reviewing the snapper grouper socio-economic characterization/portfolio analysis outline and work plan.

6. Red Grouper (*Attachments 6a and 6b*)

Description: During the June 2017 Council meeting, the SEFSC delivered a presentation on the results of the red grouper stock assessment (SEDAR 53). The red grouper stock in the South Atlantic was found to be overfished and undergoing overfishing. The assessment results suggest that there has been below average recruitment in recent years and, under the current rebuilding plan, the red grouper stock would not rebuild within the specified timeframe (by 2020). The Council discussed options for addressing the overfished and overfishing determinations for red grouper and staff explained that the projections delivered with the assessment are based on management starting in 2017. In addition, staff explained that the Council could request projections from the SEFSC based on different recruitment scenarios (*Attachment 6a*). Hence, the Council passed a motion to request projections based on management starting in 2018, under both high and low recruitment scenarios for exploitations levels of $F_{REBUILD}$ (75% F_{MSY}) and F_{MSY} . The SSC is scheduled to convene on October 24-26, 2017, at which time they will review the red grouper projections and recommend an ABC. The Council should decide how to implement the new fishing level recommendations given the following options:

Option 1. Use the expedited framework procedure (*Attachment 6b*) to adjust ABC, ACLs, and ACT, once the SSC has reviewed the new projections and recommended an ABC. A public hearing would be held during the December 2017 Council meeting. The Council would submit the request to the RA at that meeting or shortly thereafter. Changes would be implemented in early 2018.

Option 2. Request that staff initiate preparation of a regulatory amendment to implement revised biological benchmarks and fishing levels (and a revised rebuilding schedule if

needed) and possibly adjust management measures. Scoping would be held in early 2018, public hearings could be held during the March 2018 Council meeting, and the Council could approve for formal review in June 2018. Changes would be implemented in late 2018.

Others?

Status of amendment: Pending Committee/Council guidance.

Required Committee Action: Review projections and provide or request guidance from the SSC for their discussions on this topic in October 2017. Determine the vehicle to revise fishing levels and management measures (if appropriate) for red grouper.

7. ABC Control Rule Modifications Amendment (*Attachment 7*)

Description: The Council and SSC have held numerous discussions on ABC control rule revisions over the last several years. Control rule revisions have been proposed in several recently considered amendments, such as Dolphin Wahoo 10 (DW 10) and golden tilefish (SG 45). Work has continued on developing control rule modifications to provide flexibility allowed under the National Standard Guidelines and address logistical problems and limitations that have arisen since the rule was initially adopted. There have been discussions at previous Council and SSC meetings suggesting a comprehensive ABC control rule amendment could be the best approach to resolving control rule issues. Specific control rule issues and possible solutions are detailed in *Attachment 7*. The SSC reviewed these items in April 2017, and will be asked to review further, including the guidance developed at this meeting, in October 2017.

Required Committee Action: Provide guidance on ABC control rule revisions. Identify any additional control rule changes to consider.

8. Wreckfish ITQ Review (*Attachments 8a-8d*)

Description: At their June 2017 meeting, the Council instructed staff to begin a review of the Wreckfish ITQ Program. An initial review of the program was completed in 2009, prior to NMFS issuing specific review guidelines. NMFS SERO staff will make a presentation on the ITQ review process (*Attachment 8a*). Council staff were directed to holding a meeting of the current shareholders prior to the September 2017 meeting. That meeting was held on August 2, 2017 at the Daytona Beach Resort in Daytona Beach, Florida. Council staff will present the report/minutes from the meeting (*Attachments 8b – 8c*) and discuss the outline of the review report (*Attachment 8d*).

Status of review: The Committee will receive an update on the progress and timing of the review.

Required Committee Action: Discuss and provide guidance to staff.

9. Atlantic Coast Wide Planning to Address Climate Change (*Attachments 9a and 9b*)

Council staff and the Council Chair reached out to MAFMC and NEFMC leadership to discuss approaches to address climate change and shifting species distributions. The discussion resulted in the following preliminary approach:

- Long term – the MAFMC would hold discussions with the Northeast Regional Coordinating Council (NRCC) -- a group with representatives from the Mid-Atlantic and New England Councils, ASMFC, and the NMFS Greater Atlantic Region Fisheries Office -- about forming an additional Atlantic coast wide group that would

include the South Atlantic Council, NMFS Southeast Regional Office, and SEFSC. Such an advisory coast-wide group would allow planning for data collection, monitoring, etc. as South Atlantic-managed snapper grouper species continue to be more prevalent in the catches in the Greater Atlantic Region.

- Short-term – Management agencies would gather information about the level of catch of snapper grouper species in states north of North Carolina and compile existing regulations by state. Council staff will present this initial summary to the Committee (*Attachment 9a*). If the Committee/Council agrees, the Council would send a letter, along with the background information, asking that the MAFMC encourage the states north of North Carolina to implement complementary regulations, similar to those in Virginia and Maryland, for appropriate snapper grouper species.

In addition to recent discussions mentioned above, the SAFMC and MAFMC also addressed a letter (dated 8/17/16) to Dr. Ponwith (SEFSC) and Dr. Karp (NEFSC) (*Attachment 9b*) to urge support for an expanded coast-wide fishery-independent data collection system to meet the challenges of managing data-limited species, particularly those exhibiting signs of northward expansion due to the effects of a changing climate.

Required Committee Action: Discuss and provide guidance to staff.

Other Business