



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Charlie Phillips, Chair | Captain Mark Brown, Vice Chair
Gregg T. Waugh, Executive Director

AGENDA

Snapper Grouper Committee

Double Tree by Hilton Atlantic
Beach Oceanfront
2717 W. Fort Macon Road
Atlantic Beach, NC

Tuesday, December 5, 2017 – 1:30 to 5:30 P.M.

Wednesday, December 6, 2017 – 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. (Times subject to change)

Approval of Agenda – Dr. Michelle Duval

Approval of September 2017 Committee minutes – Dr. Michelle Duval

1. Status of Commercial & Recreational Catches versus Quotas for Species under ACLs – NMFS SERO (*Attachments 1a and 1b*)
2. Status of Amendments under Formal Review – NMFS SERO
 - a) Amendment 41 (mutton snapper) – sent for formal review on 2/28/17
 - b) Golden tilefish interim rule – requested on 6/27/17
 - c) Amendment 43 (red snapper) – sent for formal review on 11/17/17
3. Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel Report (*Attachments 2a-2e*) – David Moss, AP Chair
4. Amendment 46 (red snapper, recreational reporting, and powerhead regulation) (*Attachment 3*)
 - a) Overview of options paper – Dr. Chip Collier
 - b) **Committee action:** review and provide guidance – Dr. Michelle Duval
5. Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26 – Recreational (*Attachments 4a and 4b*)
 - a) Overview of Decision Document – Myra Brouwer
 - b) Approach to analyses of landings by species groupings – John Hadley
 - c) **Committee action:** review and finalize revised actions/alternatives and purpose and need – Dr. Michelle Duval
6. Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 – Commercial (*Attachments 5a and 5b*)
 - a) Overview of Decision Document – Myra Brouwer
 - b) SSC Recommendations – Dr. Marcel Reichert

- c) **Committee action:** review and finalize revised actions/alternatives and purpose and need and review updated analyses – Dr. Michelle Duval
7. Amendment 38 (blueline tilefish) (*Attachment 6*)
 - a) Overview – Roger Pugliese
 - b) Presentation on blueline tilefish benchmark assessment (SEDAR 50) – SEFSC
 - c) SSC recommendations – Dr. Marcel Reichert
 - d) **Committee action:** discuss and provide guidance – Dr. Michelle Duval
 8. For-hire moratorium amendment (*Attachment 7*)
 - a) Overview of options – John Hadley
 - b) **Committee action:** review and provide guidance, approve for public scoping – Dr. Michelle Duval
 9. Red Grouper (*Attachment 8a-8c*)
 - a) Overview – Dr. Brian Chevront
 - b) SSC recommendations – Dr. Marcel Reichert
 - c) **Committee action:** review and approve for formal review – Dr. Michelle Duval
 10. Golden Tilefish
 - a) Overview – Myra Brouwer
 - b) SSC recommendations – Dr. Marcel Reichert
 - c) **Committee action:** discuss and provide guidance – Dr. Michelle Duval
 11. Wreckfish ITQ Review (*Attachments 9a and 9b*)
 - a) Overview of development of the review – Dr. Brian Chevront
 - b) Presentation on ITQ review progress – Dr. Brian Chevront
 - c) **Committee action:** discuss and provide guidance – Dr. Michelle Duval
 12. Yellowtail snapper (*Attachments 10a-10c*)
 - a) Overview – John Hadley
 - b) Discussion on potential joint amendment with Gulf Council to explore management solutions for yellowtail snapper
 - c) **Committee action:** discuss and provide guidance – 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

Scientific and Statistical Committee Report

- Attachment 1a:** Status of commercial catches vs. ACLs
- Attachment 1b:** Status of recreational catches vs. ACLs
- Attachment 2a:** Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel Report
- Attachment 2b:** Black Sea Bass Information Document
- Attachment 2c:** Black Sea Bass Fishery Performance Report Discussion Questions
- Attachment 2d:** Vermilion Snapper Information Document
- Attachment 2e:** Vermilion Snapper Fishery Performance Report Discussion Questions
- Attachment 3:** Amendment 46 Options Paper
- Attachment 4a:** Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26 Decision Document
- Attachment 4b:** Approach to analyses of landings by species groupings
- Attachment 5a:** Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 Decision Document
- Attachment 5b:** Updated Commercial Analyses (Appendix J)
- Attachment 6:** SEDAR 50 presentation
- Attachment 7:** For-hire Moratorium Amendment Options Paper
- Attachment 8a:** Decision Document for Abbreviated Framework Amendment 1 (Red grouper ACL)
- Attachment 8b:** Draft Abbreviated Framework 1 (Red grouper ACL)
- Attachment 8c:** Draft Codified Text for Abbreviated Framework 1
- Attachment 9a:** Draft Wreckfish Review Document
- Attachment 9b:** Presentation on Wreckfish Review
- Attachment 10a:** SAFMC letter to the Gulf Council and the Gulf Council's response
- Attachment 10b:** Background document on yellowtail snapper
- Attachment 10c:** Yellowtail Snapper Amendment 44 Decision Document from the March 2017 SAFMC meeting

Staff: Myra Brouwer

OVERVIEW

Snapper Grouper Committee

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

1. Status of Commercial and Recreational Catches for Species under ACLs – (*Attachments 1a and 1b*)

Description: NMFS Southeast Regional Office (SERO) staff will update the Committee on the status of commercial and recreational 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 (Amendments 41 and 43) submitted for formal review in March 2017 and November 2017, respectively. In addition, the Committee will receive an update the request to implement an ACL for golden tilefish in 2018 that would reduce overfishing (golden tilefish interim rule).

Required Committee Action: None.

3. Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel (AP) Report (*Attachments 2a-2e*)

Description: The AP met in Charleston on November 8-9 to address several items related to the management of snapper grouper species, including development of Fishery Performance Reports for black sea bass and vermilion snapper, and input on developing amendments to the FMP. David Moss, AP Chair, will deliver the AP's input to the Committee

Required Committee Action: None.

4. Amendment 46 (red snapper, recreational reporting, and powerhead regulation) (*Attachment 3*)

Description: Snapper Grouper Amendment 46 will include many of the actions moved out of Amendment 43 (ACLs for red snapper) and Visioning Amendments 26 and 27. Actions removed from Amendment 43 included actions to specify OFL/ABC for red snapper, address recreational permitting and reporting for private recreational fishermen, best fishing practices (also include an option to remove circle hook requirements for snapper grouper fishing). An action to remove powerhead restrictions in special management zones off South Carolina was recommended to be included in Amendment 46 (action formerly included in the Visioning Amendments). OFL/ABC/ACL for red snapper based on SEDAR 41 (2017) have not been adopted through the amendment process; however, the SEFSC could not provide new projections due to the time since the last amendment, uncertainty in recreational landings and discards, and upcoming changes to recreational landings estimates. During their meeting in October 2017, the SSC formed a workgroup to develop an approach to obtain an ABC for red snapper that can be effectively monitored.

Required Committee Action: Review options paper and provide guidance.

5. Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26 (*Attachments 4a and 4b*)

Description: The Committee reviewed actions and alternatives during the September 2017 meeting and approved an alternative approach to structuring the amendment. The Committee/Council provided guidance and requested several changes to the purpose and need and actions/alternatives. The Committee/Council also approved a revised timing for the amendment. Further Committee guidance and clarification on actions and alternatives is needed for the IPT to advance analyses.

Status of amendment: Amendment development to continue based on Committee/Council revisions with intent to approve for public hearings in March 2018.

Required Committee Action: Review, modify as appropriate, and finalize actions and alternatives and Purpose and Need.

6. Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 (*Attachments 5a and 5b*)

Description: The Committee reviewed actions and alternatives during the September 2017 meeting and approved an alternative approach to structuring the amendment. The Committee/Council provided guidance and requested several changes to the actions/alternatives. The Committee/Council also approved a revised timing for the amendment. Updated background information/analyses completed to date are in *Attachment 5b*. The SSC discussed the analytical approach for actions addressing changes to commercial seasons and trip limits and provided some guidance for the Committee to consider. Further Committee guidance and clarification on actions and alternatives is needed for the IPT to advance analyses.

Status of amendment: Amendment development to continue based on Committee/Council revisions with intent to approve for public hearings in March 2018.

Required Committee Action: Review, modify as appropriate, and finalize actions and alternatives and Purpose and Need.

7. Amendment 38 (blueline tilefish) (*Attachment 6*)

Description: The SSC reviewed results of SEDAR 50 at their October 2017 meeting and provided catch level recommendations for blueline tilefish for the area south of Cape Hatteras, NC. SEFSC staff will deliver a presentation to the Committee on the assessment results (*Attachment 6*). As ABC recommendations that match the jurisdictional boundaries of the Mid- and South Atlantic Councils (boundary at the NC/VA state line) are needed to develop fishing levels and management measures, the SSC formed a workgroup whose task will be to determine a suitable approach to obtaining an ABC that would be useable under the existing management structure.

Status of amendment: The Committee has not yet discussed development of this amendment in detail since ABC recommendations have yet to be finalized.

Required Committee Action: Provide direction to staff on amendment development and timing.

8. Amendment 47 (For-hire Moratorium; *Attachment 7*)

Description: At recent meetings, the Council has discussed issues with the for-hire sector of the snapper grouper fishery that could be addressed through limiting the number of Atlantic Charter/Headboat For Snapper Grouper permits, and potential benefits to the for-hire

component from this management approach. The Committee will review an Options Paper and provide guidance to staff.

Status of amendment: The Committee has not yet decided to pursue an amendment. In June 2017, the Council directed staff to prepare an options paper on a moratorium for for-hire Snapper Grouper permits to be reviewed at the December 2017 meeting.

Required Committee Action: Provide guidance to staff on amendment development and timing. If amendment development is to proceed in 2018, the Committee should approve for public scoping.

9. Red Grouper (*Attachments 8a-8c*)

Description: During the June 2017 meeting, the Council discussed options for addressing the overfished and overfishing determinations for red grouper and staff explained that the projections delivered with the assessment were based on management starting in 2017. Also, staff explained that the Council could request projections from the SEFSC based on different recruitment scenarios. 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 75% F_{MSY} and F_{MSY} . The SSC convened on October 24-26, 2017, and reviewed the red grouper projections and recommended an ABC based on the low-recruitment scenario to manage the red grouper stock over the short-term. In September 2017, the Council directed staff to develop an abbreviated framework amendment to adjust the ACL based an ABC recommendation from the SSC using the low recruitment scenario. The SSC convened on October 24-26, 2017, and reviewed the red grouper projections and recommended an ABC based on the low-recruitment scenario to manage the red grouper stock over the short-term.

Status of amendment: *Attachment 8b* is a draft red grouper amendment (Abbreviated Framework Amendment 1) to set an ACL using the low recruitment scenario based on the ABC determined by the SSC.

Required Committee Action: Review *Attachment 8a* (Decision Document), provide guidance to staff, and make a recommendation to the Council whether to approve Abbreviated Framework Amendment 1 (*Attachment 8b*) to send to the U.S. Secretary of Commerce for review.

10. Golden Tilefish

Description: An update to the golden tilefish assessment, completed in April 2016 (SEDAR 25 Update 2016), indicated the golden tilefish stock in the South Atlantic is undergoing overfishing. The National Marine Fisheries Service notified the Council (via letter dated 1/3/17), that management action was necessary to address overfishing of golden tilefish. In May 2017, the SEDAR Steering Committee recommended exploring a different fitting approach in the assessment model. Hence, during the June 2017 meeting, the Council requested that the golden tilefish assessment be revised to apply the Dirichlet multinomial fitting procedure. To address the overfishing determination, the Council requested that NMFS implement an interim rule to set the 2018 ACL at the projected yield at 75% F_{MSY} (323,000 pounds gutted weight) until the Council develops an amendment to revise the long-term catch levels. The SSC reviewed the revised assessment runs at their October 2017 meeting and determined them to be unsuitable for management. Therefore, the ABC recommendation for golden tilefish remains that from the SEDAR 25 Update (2016) at a $P^* = 0.30$:

	Recommendations from SEDAR 25 (2016) Update (pounds gutted weight)
MSY	560,000
OFL	
2017	377,000
2018	402,000
2019	426,000
ABC	
2017	233,000
2018	267,000
2019	302,000

At the September 2017 meeting, NMFS updated the Council on the status of the interim rule. It is expected that the adjusted fishing levels will be effective by January 1, 2018.

Required Committee Action: Provide guidance on development of an amendment (Amendment 45) to implement the revised fishing levels for golden tilefish and possible revisions to management measures. Provide guidance on timing of amendment development.

11. Wreckfish ITQ Review (*Attachments 9a and 9b*)

Description: The Committee will receive a presentation (*Attachment 9b*) on the status of the wreckfish ITQ review focusing on data issues, confidentiality, and other issues.

Status of review: The IPT is continuing to work on the development of the review and resolving specific issues related primarily to data and confidentiality. The SSC weighed in on the data and confidentiality issues at their October 2017 meeting. The SEP will review draft sections of the review in February of 2018 and report back to the SSC.

Required Committee Action: Provide guidance on the continued development of the review.

9. Yellowtail snapper (*Attachments 10a-10c*)

Description: In 2016 and early 2017 the Council began developing Snapper Grouper Amendment 44 that considered modifications to jurisdictional and sector allocations as well as the creation of commercial trip limits for yellowtail snapper. In March 2017, the Council approved a motion to suspend work on Amendment 44 until revised MRIP data are available. At the June 2017 meeting, the Council approved sending a letter to the Gulf Council to get input on developing a joint amendment to combine ACLs for yellowtail snapper. The Gulf Council discussed the letter at their October 2017 meeting and sent a reply to the South Atlantic Council stating that they are willing to work jointly to develop solutions for yellowtail snapper.

Status of amendment: Work on Amendment 44 is currently suspended until revised MRIP data are available.

Required Committee Action: Discuss and provide guidance to staff.

Other Business