



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Melvin Bell, Chair | Stephen J. Poland, Vice Chair
John Carmichael, Executive Director

AGENDA Snapper Grouper Committee Via Webinar

Monday December 7, 2020, 2:30 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. (Times subject to change)

Approval of Agenda – Jessica McCawley

Approval of September 2020 Minutes – Jessica McCawley

1. Status of Amendments under Formal Review – NMFS SERO
 - a. Regulatory Amendment 34 (SMZs in NC and SC) – sent to NMFS on 8/11/2020
2. Yellowtail Snapper Assessment (*Attachment 1*)
 - a. Presentation –Shanae Allen/Chris Swanson, FWRI
 - b. SSC Recommendation – Genny Nesslage, SSC Chair
 - c. **Committee Action:** Determine Acceptable Biological Catch and management response – Jessica McCawley
3. Discussion on the Need for Conservation and Management of 9 Snapper Grouper Species (*Attachments 2a and 2b (link below)*)
 - a. Overview – Myra Brouwer/Mike Schmidtke
 - b. AP Recommendation – Jimmy Hull, AP Chair
 - c. **Committee Action:** Provide direction to staff – Jessica McCawley

Tuesday, December 8, 2020, 8:30 A.M. to 12:00 Noon

4. Wreckfish ITQ Modernization (Amendment 48; *Attachments 3a – 3c*)
 - a. Review of input from the Wreckfish ITQ shareholder and wholesale dealer meeting – Brian Chevront
 - b. Presentation on ITQ program administration and Wreckfish permit – Jessica Stephen, SERO
 - c. Overview of Options Paper – Brian Chevront
 - d. **Committee Action:** Discuss, provide guidance to staff, consider recommending for public scoping – Jessica McCawley
5. Red Porgy (Amendment 50; *Attachments 4a and 4b*)
 - a. Overview of Decision Document – Myra Brouwer
 - b. AP Recommendation – Jimmy Hull, AP Chair

- c. **Committee Action:** Review actions and alternatives and preliminary analyses, select preferred alternatives for analysis, and consider recommending for public scoping – Jessica McCawley
- 6. Greater Amberjack (Amendment 49; *Attachments 5a and 5b*)
 - a. Overview of Options Paper – Mike Schmidtke
 - b. **Committee Action:** Provide direction to staff – Jessica McCawley
- 7. AP items not covered elsewhere on the agenda (*Attachment 6*) – Jimmy Hull
- 8. Other Business – Jessica McCawley

Adjourn

Committee Members

Jessica McCawley, Chair
 Kerry Marhefka, Vice-chair
 Mel Bell
 Anna Beckwith
 Chester Brewer
 Kyle Christiansen
 Chris Conklin
 Roy Crabtree
 Tim Griner
 Carolyn Belcher
 LT Robert Copeland
 Steve Poland
 Art Sapp
 Spud Woodward
 Mid-Atlantic Liaisons: Tony DiLernia, Dewey Hemilright

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Yellowtail Snapper Assessment Presentation
Attachment 2a: Presentation on Evaluating the Need for Conservation and Management
Attachment 2b: Online application to conduct evaluation
[\(https://data.safmc.net/MgmtNeedEval2020/\)](https://data.safmc.net/MgmtNeedEval2020/)
Attachment 3a: Wreckfish ITQ Shareholder and Wholesale Dealer Meeting Report
Attachment 3b: ITQ Program Administration and Wreckfish Permit Presentation
Attachment 3c: Wreckfish ITQ Modernization (Amendment 48) Options Paper
Attachment 4a: Red Porgy (Amendment 50) Decision Document
Attachment 4b: Red Porgy Fishery Performance Report
Attachment 5a: Greater Amberjack (Amendment 49) Options Paper Presentation
Attachment 5b: Greater Amberjack (Amendment 49) Options Paper
Attachment 6: Snapper Grouper AP Summary Report

Staff Lead: Myra Brouwer (myra.brouwer@safmc.net)

Staff Support PM: Christina Wiegand (christina.wiegand@safmc.net)

Staff Support PM: Cindy Chaya (cindy.chaya@safmc.net)

Technical Support AM: Chip Collier (chip.collier@safmc.net)

Technical Support AM: Suzanna Thomas (suzanna.thomas@safmc.net)

OVERVIEW

Snapper Grouper Committee

The Committee will approve the transcript from the September 2020 meeting and the agenda for the December 2020 Committee meeting.

1. Status of Amendments under Formal Review

Description: NMFS SERO staff will update the Committee on the status of amendments under review or recently submitted.

Required Committee Action: None.

2. Yellowtail Snapper Stock Assessment (*Attachment 1*)

Description: The South Atlantic and Gulf SSCs met jointly in July 2020 to review the SEDAR 64 Yellowtail Snapper assessment and recommend fishing levels for this stock. The SSCs deemed the assessment best scientific information available and useful for management. The stock was found to be not overfished and not undergoing overfishing. However, the SSCs did identify issues with the assessment that made it difficult to recommend fishing levels. One issue was the fact that the resulting projected yields from the assessment were similar or lower than the projected yields from the previous assessment even though the catch levels input into the model were significantly higher than previous assessments due to revised MRIP estimates. The main difference described by the analysts was the ability to estimate weight at age more explicitly for the catch by fleet. The SSCs requested the opportunity to discuss the implications of these issues as well as other concerns (e.g., the buffer between OFL and ABC resulting from projections using the ABC Control Rule in relation to the uncertainty) in more detail before making fishing level recommendations for the stock. The Gulf and South Atlantic SSCs met jointly on October 30, 2020 to provide an ABC recommendation. Genny Nesslage, SSC Chair, will deliver the SSC's recommendations to the Committee.

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

3. Evaluating the Need for Conservation and Management for 9 Snapper Grouper Species (*Attachments 2a and 2b*)

Description: The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) requires that a Council prepare a fishery management plan (FMP) for each fishery under its authority that requires conservation and management. Not every fishery requires federal management. Any stocks that are predominately caught in federal waters and are or are likely to become overfished or be subject to overfishing, are considered to require conservation and management. Beyond such stocks, Councils may determine that additional stocks require "conservation and management" by considering a list of 10 factors. If it is determined that a species does not require conservation and management, Councils can designate species as Ecosystem Component (EC). EC species are defined as "stocks that a Council or the Secretary has determined do not require conservation and management, but desire to list in an FMP in order to achieve ecosystem management objectives." Such species are not required to have annual catch limits or accountability measures. Currently, 5 species in the Snapper Grouper Complex are considered EC

species: Cottonwick, Longspine Porgy, Bank Sea Bass, Rock Sea Bass, and Ocean Triggerfish. In December 2020, the Council will discuss whether Blackfin Snapper, Coney, Cubera Snapper, Margate, Misty Grouper, Silk Snapper, Saucereye Porgy, Yellowedge Grouper, and Yellowfin Grouper need conservation and management or merit designation as EC species. Myra Brouwer will provide an overview of the SSC's recommendations from October 2019 and review the factors used to evaluate whether a species needs conservation and management at the federal level. Mike Schmidtke will present landings and other information on the nine species to assist the evaluation. Jimmy Hull, Snapper Grouper AP Chair, will present the AP's recommendations on this topic.
Required Committee Action: Discuss and provide direction to staff

4. Wreckfish ITQ Modernization (Amendment 48; Attachments 3a – 3c)

Description: In September 2019, the Council reviewed the final version of the 2019 Wreckfish ITQ Review. They received a presentation that outlined work done since the June 2019 meeting and outlined the Conclusions and Recommendations from the review. The Council approved the review as written and directed staff to begin the develop a plan amendment in 2020 to modernize the Wreckfish ITQ Program and include actions that address all of the conclusions and recommendations from the Wreckfish ITQ Review that can be addressed through a plan amendment. At the September 2020 meeting, the Committee reviewed an options paper based on the conclusions and recommendations prepared by staff. The Council also directed that the goals and objectives approved in the 2016-2020 Vision Blueprint for the Snapper Grouper Fishery be included in the amendment as the new goals and objectives of the FMP. The Council also directed staff to hold a meeting of the Wreckfish ITQ shareholders and wholesale dealers prior to the December 2020 meeting to discuss the pending development of Amendment 48 to get their input. The Committee will be presented with the findings of that meeting held on October 26, 2020 (*Attachment 3a*). The Council requested in September 2020 a presentation on how other ITQ Programs are administered in the Gulf of Mexico and on the usefulness of the current Wreckfish Permit (*Attachment 3b*). The Council will review an options document for this amendment (*Attachment 3c*).

Required Committee Action: Discuss the findings from the meeting with the shareholders and wholesale dealers, provide guidance to staff on further development of Amendment 48, and consider recommending for public scoping.

5. Red Porgy (Amendment 50; Attachments 4a and 4b)

Description: At the September 2020 meeting, the Council reviewed an options paper including actions to end overfishing of red porgy, revise the rebuilding schedule, revise sector allocations, and management measures. Myra Brouwer will present an overview of a decision document including preliminary analyses. Jimmy Hull, Snapper Grouper AP Chair, will present the AP's recommendations on this topic.

Required Committee Action: Discuss and provide guidance to staff, select preferred alternatives for analysis, consider recommending for public scoping.

6. Greater Amberjack (Amendment 49; Attachments 5a and 5b)

Description: The Council received a presentation on the results of the stock assessment for Greater Amberjack (SEDAR 59) in June 2020. At the same meeting, the Council also received an ABC recommendation from the SSC. Mike Schmidtke will present an overview of an options paper to initiate development of Amendment 49 to adjust catch levels and consider revising sector allocations and management measures for Greater Amberjack.

Required Committee Action: Discuss and provide guidance to staff on amendment development and timing.

7. Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel (AP) Recommendations not covered in previous items (Attachment 6)

Description: The Snapper Grouper AP met on November 4-6, 2020 and discussed a list of topics besides those addressed in this Committee meeting. Jimmy Hull, Snapper Grouper AP Chair, will provide a summary of the meeting and deliver the AP's recommendations to the Committee.

Required Committee Action: Discuss and provide guidance as appropriate.