

SPINY LOBSTER COMMITTEE
JEKYLL ISLAND, GA
March 3, 2009

The committee received a status report on the Import Amendment: the amendment was approved in December 2008 and the final rule became effective on 2/11/09. Mark Robson gave a report on the State of Florida's activity to renew the trap certificate program.

The committee received guidance from NMFS/NOAA GC that the amendment to address the new MSA requirements should be implemented during the 20011 fishing year to meet the deadline specified by Congress and that the ACL/AM requirements will apply to all species in the fishery management unit. The committee approved development of a joint amendment with the Gulf Council to address the necessary changes.

The committee then gave staff guidance on times to include in the amendment and requested a draft list of potential items that could be delegated to the State of Florida be developed for consideration at full Council. The committee also discussed potential impacts from the trap fishery on stag horn and elk horn corals; closed areas where these corals occur and a potential buffer area to the south and southeast could help reduce potential impacts.

The committee approved the following motions:

MOTION #1: DEVELOP A SEPARATE AMENDMENT WITH THE GULF COUNCIL TO BRING THE SPINY LOBSTER PLAN INTO COMPLIANCE WITH THE NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR ACLS AND AMS.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

MOTION #3: DEVELOP THE FOLLOWING TAILING OPTIONS IN THE AMENDMENT

- a. Continue to allow – “The possession aboard a fishing vessel of a separated spiny lobster tail in or from the EEZ is authorized only when the possession is incidental to fishing exclusively in the EEZ on a trip of 48 hours or more and a Federal tail-separation permit specified in Section 640.4(a) (2) has been issued to and is on board the vessel.”
- b. Do not allow tailing; this would require all lobsters to be landed whole. This would help prevent the use of hooks and spears to harvest lobsters.
- C. ALLOW TAILING ON COMMERCIAL TRAP VESSELS AND SHRIMP VESSELS MAKING MULTI-DAY (OVER 48 HOURS) TRIPS.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

MOTION #4 (Federal 50-short rule): DEVELOP THE FOLLOWING SHORT OPTIONS IN THE AMENDMENT

- a. Continue to allow – “A live spiny lobster under the minimum size limit specified in paragraph (b)(1) of this section that is harvested in the EEZ by a trap may be retained aboard the harvesting vessel for future use as an attractant in a trap provided it is held in a live well aboard the vessel. No more than fifty undersize spiny lobsters, or one per trap aboard the vessel, whichever is greater, may be retained aboard for use as attractants. The live well must provide a minimum of $\frac{3}{4}$ gallons (1.7 liters) of seawater per spiny lobster. An undersized spiny lobster so retained must be released to the water alive and unharmed immediately upon leaving the trap lines and prior to one hour after official sunset each day.”

- b. Prohibit possession and use of shorts as attractants.

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

**MOTION #5: DO NOT ADDRESS CHANGES TO THE NORTHERN FISHERY
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**MOTION #6 (Updating the Council/State of Florida process): UPDATE THE PROCESS
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

**MOTION #2: INCLUDE AN ACTION TO DELEGATE CERTAIN OPERATIONAL ASPECTS OF THE FISHERY OFF FLORIDA TO THE STATE OF FLORIDA WITH THE AGREEMENT OF THE TWO COUNCILS AND THE STATE OF FLORIDA
APPROVED BY COMMITTEE**

Examples of items could include:

1. Numerical specification of ACL and breakdown into sector-specific ACLs based on the definitions included in the amendment to the Spiny Lobster FMP.
2. Commercial quotas and recreational allocations based on the allocations specified in the amendment to the Spiny Lobster FMP.
3. Size limit modifications.
4. Bag limit modifications.
5. Trip limits.
6. Modifications to the length of the season.
7. Application of the AMs including closing the fishery when a sector reaches its quota and/or allocation.
8. Rules and regulations for possession of traps including gear marking, etc.
9. Data collection and reporting requirements.
10. Closed areas – this may be difficult and Florida might need to have NMFS prepare an EA.

Draft motion concerning timing and tasks for staff to work on between now and the June 2009 meeting:

MOTION: DIRECT STAFF TO:

1. PROVIDE THE SAFMC ACTIONS TO THE GULF COUNCIL AND DISCUSS THE GULF COUNCIL'S TIMING FOR WORK ON THIS AMENDMENT. REPORT BACK TO THE COMMITTEE IN JUNE 2009.
2. CONTACT THE STATE OF FLORIDA REPRESENTATIVES CONCERNING THE SCHEDULE FOR A STOCK ASSESSMENT UPDATE. REPORT BACK TO THE COMMITTEE IN JUNE 2009.
3. DEVELOP A DETAILED DECISION DOCUMENT FOR USE AT THE JUNE 2009 COMMITTEE MEETING THAT BEGINS TO EVALUATE THE ALTERNATIVES TO BE INCLUDED.