



COMMERCIAL REGULATIONS South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Complex

(Updated April 16, 2021)

NOTE: This listing is published for informational purposes and has no legal force or effect. Fishery regulations are subject to change. For updated information, visit www.safmc.net, download our mobile app or call 843-571-4366

List of Species

SNAPPERS

Lane Snapper
Yellowtail Snapper
Gray Snapper
Mutton Snapper
Vermilion Snapper
Red Snapper
Queen Snapper
Blackfin Snapper
Cubera Snapper
Silk Snapper

TILEFISHES

Golden Tilefish
Blueline Tilefish
Sand Tilefish

PORGYS

Red
Jolthead
Saucereye
Whitebone
Knobbed
Longspine*
Scup

TRIGGERFISH

Gray
Ocean*

GRUNTS

White Grunt
Margate
Tomtate
Cottonwick*
Sailors Choice

GROUPEES

Gag
Scamp
Red Grouper
Black Grouper
Speckled Hind
Snowy Grouper
Warsaw Grouper
Wreckfish
Rock Hind
Graysby
Yellowedge Grouper
Coney
Red Hind
Goliath Grouper
Misty Grouper
Nassau Grouper
Yellowmouth Grouper
Yellowfin Grouper

JACKS

Greater Amberjack
Bar Jack
Almaco Jack
Lesser Amberjack
Banded Rudderfish

SEA BASSES

Black Sea Bass
Bank Sea Bass*
Rock Sea Bass*

SPADEFISH

Spadefish

WRASSES

Hogfish

*denotes Ecosystem Species

Commercial Closures - CURRENT

Species	Effective Date of Closure	Harvest Reopens
Red Snapper	September 5, 2020	July 12, 2021, if allowed by NOAA Fisheries
Shallow Water Grouper*	January 1, 2021	May 1, 2021
Red Grouper in the Carolinas	January 1, 2021	June 1, 2021
Golden Tilefish (longline)	March 31, 2021	January 1, 2022
Greater Amberjack	April 1, 2021	May 1, 2021

*Shallow Water Grouper: gag, black grouper, red grouper, scamp, red hind, rock hind, yellowmouth grouper, yellowfin grouper, graysby, coney

-The following species are closed to harvest or possession in federal waters, unless otherwise specified: Goliath Grouper, Nassau Grouper, Speckled Hind, & Warsaw Grouper.

-Wreckfish - Only ITQ shareholders or their designees may commercially harvest wreckfish.

-Recreational and commercial fishermen are required to have a [descending device](#) on board and readily available for use when fishing for or possessing snapper and grouper species in federal waters of the South Atlantic. Descending devices must be attached to at least 16 ounces of weight and at least 60 ft of line.

Know Before You Go!

Download the **FREE Fish Rules App** for federal regulations in the South Atlantic.

*commercial regs in additional information section



Additional Notes

- Hooks:** The use of non-offset, non-stainless steel [circle hooks](#) is required for all species in the snapper grouper complex when using hook-and-line gear with natural baits in waters north of 28 degrees N. latitude.
- Non-stainless steel hooks are required when using hook-and-line gear with natural baits when fishing for snapper and grouper species south of 28 degrees N. latitude.
- Landing Condition:** All species in the snapper grouper complex must be maintained with heads and fins intact. (Cobia, king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, dolphin, and wahoo must also be landed with heads and fins intact.)
- Goliath and Nassau grouper:** Must be released by cutting the line and **not** removing the fish from the water.
- Dehooking tools:** Recreational and commercial fishermen are required to use [dehooking tools](#) when fishing for snapper grouper species.

Commercial Trip Limits:

Species	Trip Limit
Black sea bass -Hook & Line -Pot fishery	- 300-lbs (gw) - 1,000-lbs (gw); <i>Seasonal prohibited areas in place</i>
Golden tilefish -Longline -Hook & Line	4,000-lbs (gw) 500-lb (gw)
Vermilion snapper	1,000-lbs (gw)
Gray triggerfish	1,000-lbs (ww)
Blueline tilefish	Jan-April: 100-lbs (gw) May-Dec: 300-lbs (gw)
Snowy grouper	200-lbs (gw)
Greater amberjack	March-August: 1,200-lbs (gw or ww) Sept-Feb: 1,000-lbs (gw or ww)

BLACK SEA BASS Commercial Fishery Information

FISHING YEAR =
January 1 - December 31, annually

TRIP LIMITS - Hook-and-line component:

- January - April = 300-lbs (gw); 354 ww)
- May - December = 1,000-lbs (gw); 1,180 ww)

TRIP LIMITS - Pot fishery component:

- May - October = 1,000-lbs (gw); 1,180 ww)
- November - April = Seasonal prohibited areas in effect

• **After a commercial quota has been met, all purchase and sale is prohibited, and harvest and/or possession is limited to the recreational bag limit.** This prohibition does not apply to fish harvested, landed and sold prior to the quota being met and held in cold storage by a dealer.

• **Sea turtle and smalltooth sawfish:** Commercial snapper grouper vessels must have onboard NMFS approved sea turtle release gear and follow smalltooth sawfish release protocol.

For more information visit: http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_sa/turtle_sawfish_release/index.html

Summary of Commercial Regulations for Common Species-

Species - Common Name	Size Limit	Trip Limit	Harvest Status/ Other Regulations
Red Grouper*	20-in TL	200 lbs (gw)	NC & SC: CLOSED GA & FL: CLOSED
Black Sea Bass	11-in TL	Pot fishery: 1000-lbs (gw) Hook-Line: 1,000-lbs (gw) 300-lbs (gw): Jan-April	Pot fishery: OPEN; Seasonal prohibited areas in place Hook-Line: OPEN Fishing year is Jan 1 - Dec 31 annually
Blackfin Snapper	None	None	OPEN
Cubera Snapper	12-in TL	None	OPEN
Gag*	24-in TL	1,000-lbs (gw)	CLOSED
Gray Triggerfish	12-in FL	1,000-lbs (ww)	OPEN; Split season (Jan-Jun; Jul-Dec) annually
Greater Amberjack	36-in FL (no coring)	Mar -Aug: 1,000-lbs (gw or ww) Sept-Feb: 1,200-lbs (gw or ww)	CLOSED
Hogfish	16-in FL (<i>E. FL & FL Keys</i>) 17-in FL (<i>NC, SC, GA</i>)	25 lbs (ww) in <i>E. FL</i> 500 lbs (ww) in <i>NC, SC, GA</i>	OPEN in <i>E FL & FL Keys</i> ; OPEN in <i>NC, SC, & GA</i>
Mutton Snapper	18-in TL	Jan-March: 500 lbs (ww) April-June: 5/ person/day or 5/ person/trip July-Dec: 500 lbs (ww)	OPEN; Note: April-June spawning season: 5/person/day or 5/person/trip
Other Jacks Complex (almaco jack, banded rudderfish, & lesser amberjack)	None except for almaco jack (20-in FL)	500-lbs (gw)	OPEN
Red Pogy	14-in TL	Jan-April: 60 fish May-Dec: 120 fish	OPEN
Red Snapper	None	75-lbs (gw)	CLOSED
Scamp*	20-in TL	None	CLOSED
Snowy Grouper	None	200-lbs (gw)	OPEN
Tilefish, Blueline	None	Jan-April: 100-lbs (gw) May-Dec: 300-lbs (gw)	OPEN
Tilefish, Golden	None	Longline: 4,000-lbs (gw) Hook-Line: 500-lbs (gw)	Longline: CLOSED Hook-Line: OPEN
Vermilion Snapper	12-in TL	1,000-lbs (gw)	OPEN
Yellowfin Grouper*	20-in TL	None	CLOSED
Yellowmouth Grouper*	20-in TL	None	CLOSED
Yellowtail Snapper	12-in TL	None	OPEN

*Indicates species in the Annual Shallow-water Grouper Spawning Season Closure Jan 1 through April 30, except red grouper off NC & SC, which remain closed through May 31st.

The following species are closed to possession or harvest: Goliath Grouper, Warsaw Grouper, Nassau Grouper, and Speckled Hind.

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