

**South Atlantic Fishery Management Council:
DRAFT Vision Blueprint for the Snapper Grouper Fishery– GOVERNANCE
June 2015**

**Governance – Strategic Goal:
Snapper Grouper Fishery, Draft Vision Blueprint**

Background:

In December 2012, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) began its Visioning Project to construct a long-term vision for the snapper grouper fishery through development of a strategic plan for the fishery that would guide management actions into the future. The foundation of the project has been the engagement and involvement of fishery stakeholders throughout the region and across all sectors in the development of the long-term plan. This strategic plan, called the *Vision Blueprint*, consists of four strategic focus areas – *Science, Communication, Management, and Governance*. Each focus area will have a specific goal and associated objectives and action strategies that will be used by the Council to guide future management of the snapper grouper fishery.

Following an approach similar to what the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council used to draft a strategic plan for its managed fisheries, the Council sought stakeholder input early in the process and held a series of 26 informal meetings to solicit stakeholder input in coastal communities throughout the South Atlantic region. Because stakeholder needs and perceptions can vary widely, the Council has been careful not to exclude any input pertaining to the management of the snapper grouper fishery. Therefore, at this stage of the process, items that have been considered in the past as possible management tools but have not been developed further will continue to be included among the many tools the Council may consider for long-term management of the snapper grouper fishery in the South Atlantic region. As such, the table below encompasses management actions/strategies as suggested by stakeholders in the fishery as well as those brought forth by the Council members themselves. The goals and objectives are not in order of priority and are all considered draft at this time. As the draft Vision Blueprint for the Snapper Grouper Fishery takes shape in 2015, the Council will provide their rationale for management strategies that are eventually excluded from further consideration.

GOVERNANCE

GOAL: Commit to a transparent, balanced, and timely decision-making process that allows flexible yet well-defined protocols and strategies for managing the snapper grouper fishery.		
Objective 1. Create an accountable and flexible decision making process for development and evaluation of management measures.	Strategy 1.1 Support an efficient decision making process for development of management measures for the snapper grouper fishery.	
	Actions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Evaluate the current Council process. B. Consider mechanisms for streamlining the process of amendment development. C. Consider alternative methods for collecting public input on proposed management actions. D. Ensure timely access of amendment documents and other materials to the Council and the public.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E. Develop mechanisms for evaluating the decision making process to ensure consistency and accountability. F. Consider how scientific information is incorporated into management actions and provide flexibility in this process.
Objective 2. Build capacity to streamline management efforts and better coordinate with management partners.	Strategy 2.1	Enhance existing and develop new partnerships with agencies, academic institutions, and other organizations to support comprehensive management strategies for the snapper grouper fishery.
	Actions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Establish working relationships with non-fishery entities and agencies (offshore energy development, etc.) for future marine management issues. B. Strengthen relationships with existing fishery management partners to clearly establish roles and responsibilities. C. Consider involvement with regional planning initiatives affecting the snapper grouper fishery in the region. D. Expand partnerships with academic and research institutions to coordinate fisheries science research to address data needs within the snapper grouper fishery. E. Identify non-traditional partnerships and sources of funding to support fisheries science, research and management activities (industry, NGO supported, etc.)
Objective 3. Improve communication with stakeholders to ensure the needs of the fishery are understood and considered throughout the Council process.	Strategy 3.1	Support a formal and informal process for engaging stakeholders in the snapper grouper fishery.
	Actions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Provide information to stakeholders that is timely and in an appropriate format about proposed management actions. B. Consider alternative methods for collecting public input. C. Evaluate the composition of advisory panels, committees, etc. to ensure representation meets the interests and needs of the fishery. D. Establish clear ground rules and process for public meetings held by the Council to improve stakeholder engagement.